

El Shaddai

RUN INTO & REST IN THE STRONG TOWER OF EL SHADDAI		
GOD'S PAST REVELATION (GENESIS 1-16)	GOD'S NEXT REVELATION (GENESIS 17)	MAN'S RESPONSE IN LIGHT OF THE REVELATION
<p>Remember that God's Names always reveal an aspect or attribute of His character and witness to an awareness of God's presence and help in various ways. Notice how this revelation occurs progressively in the Genesis...</p>	<p>El Shaddai is better known to most Christians from contemporary music (lyrics and melody) than from the Scriptures!</p>	<p>Our Response Is Commanded</p> <p><u>Walk before Me</u></p>
<p>GENESIS 1</p> <p>Elohim — My Creator (see notes)</p> <p>Isaiah 43:7</p> <p>Why does God say we were created?</p> <p>Everyone who is called by My name and whom I have created for My glory</p> <p>Each person is created by God with and for a purpose.</p> <p>We need to accept ourselves as creations of God, each of whom has the privileged purpose to bring Him glory</p> <p>Ephesians 2:10</p> <p>What does Paul say about us when we are "re-created" (regenerated, born again)?</p> <p>Eph 2:10+ teaches that believers are now His workmanship (poiema - "masterpiece") created in Christ for good works</p> <p>Matthew 5:16</p> <p>What association do good works have with the glory of God?</p> <p>Jesus exhorts His hearers to "Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify (give a proper opinion) of your Father Who is in heaven" (See note Mt 5:16)</p> <p>Have you accepted the fact that Elohim</p>	<p>Abraham's Life Provides Context for Genesis 17</p> <p>Genesis 12 Abram - Age 75</p> <p>God gave Abram a condition and a promise. God called him to leave his country and go to a land which He would show him. This took a "leap of faith" to obey, but faith is always based on truth and Abram responded affirmatively strengthened by the truth of God's promise...</p> <p>Ge 12:3+ I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families (Jew and Gentile) of the earth shall be blessed</p> <p>Genesis 15</p> <p>God promised Abram an heir.</p> <p>Ge 15:5+ (God) took him outside and said, "Now look toward the heavens, and count the stars, if you are able to count them." And He said to him, "So shall your (seed - masculine singular) descendants be." Ge 15:6 Then he believed in the LORD; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness.</p> <p>What did Abraham believe?</p> <p>He believed in the promised Seed (masculine singular) of the Messiah. He believed in the Gospel.</p> <p>Paul agrees writing...</p> <p>Gal 3:8+ And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by</p>	<p>The Hebrew verb is a reflexive command - You yourself walk. Note that walk here is not taking one step after another, but is used in a more figurative sense to picture one's behavior or daily conduct.</p> <p>Before Me is more literally before My face (see panim/paniym/paneH = face - See Spurgeon on "face"). The idea is that all of our steps are ever before the face of God. This same picture is conveyed by the well known Latin phrase Coram Deo = Before the face of God. (see Mackintosh's comments)</p> <p>In the Septuagint (LXX), walk before is translated by the verb euaresteo (related adjective euarestos from eu = well + aresko = to please) which means to behave in a manner that causes another to be pleased. Paul uses the adjective euarestos in his well known exhortation in Ro 12:1+ where he calls for believers to present themselves "acceptable to God". Euaresteo is also used in the Lxx translation of Ge 5:22 (= Enoch walked with God; LXX = Enoch was well pleasing to God - He 11:5, 6+). (Cp same idea in Ge 6:9 "Noah was... blameless [tamiym-see below]. Noah walked with [Lxx = well pleasing to] God") (see Spurgeon's comments)</p> <p><u>Be blameless</u></p> <p>The Hebrew verb be is qal imperative which is also a command. (In the Lxx be is also a command in the present tense = continually be blameless)</p> <p>Principle to ponder: Abram does not have license to live as he pleases. His behavior is to reflect the character of</p>

is your Creator?

Do you believe that He has a purpose for your life?

Do you understand that the way to bring glory to your Father in Heaven is to let your light so shine before men on earth that they see your visible supernatural good works and give glory to invisible supernatural God?

Am I fulfilling the purpose for which Elohim created me? Does the way I live give a proper opinion of my Elohim?

GENESIS 15

After Abram had rescued Lot, God spoke to Abram in a vision...

Do not fear, Abram, I am a shield to you. Your reward shall be very great" (Ge 15:1+)

Abram proceeds to suggest that Eliezer would be the heir but immediately God confirms that the heir will be his own seed...

And He took him outside and said, "Now look toward the heavens, and count the stars, if you are able to count them." And He said to him, "So shall your descendants be" (Ge 15:5+)

Then he believed in the LORD; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness. (Ge 15:6+)

After God initiated and carried out the "walk of death" between the dead animals, Moses records...

On that day the LORD made (cut) a **covenant** with Abram, saying, "To your descendants I have given **this land**..." (N.B. This promise is not to the church but Abraham, Isaac and Jacob [Covenant Abrahamic vs Mosaic] - to national Israel - it will be consummated in the Millennium)...because He is [El Shaddai - God Almighty](#), [Pantokrator](#), Omnipotent and Sufficient). (Ge 15:18+)

Genesis 14:18, 19, 20

El Elyon — God Most High

Sovereign Over All
(see notes - El Elyon)

faith, **preached the gospel** beforehand to Abraham, saying, "All the nations shall be blessed in you."

Paul explains...

Gal 3:16+ Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his **seed**. He does not say, "And to seeds," as referring to many, but rather to one, "And to your **seed** (masc, sing)," that is, **Christ** (Messiah).

Principle: OT saints were saved in the same way as NT saints - by grace through faith in the coming Messiah promised in the Gospel (cf Hab 2:4+) They were NOT saved by good works!

Genesis 16

Abraham - Age 86

He temporarily failed the test of faith by taking a "Hagar detour"

Ge 16:2 Sarai said to Abram, "Now behold, the LORD has prevented me from bearing children. Please go in to my maid; perhaps I shall obtain children through her." And Abram listened to the voice of Sarai... 4 And he went in to Hagar, and she conceived (Ishmael "a wild donkey of a man" - father of all Arabs who henceforth became the implacable enemy of Israel, which endures to our modern day)

Application: Fleshly attempts to accomplish the will of God are fundamentally sins of unbelief. How many times have we struggled with the promises of God and like Abraham attempted to help Him out – we trust Him fully for our salvation but so often live our day to day life as if everything else depended on us! (See Gal 3:3+)

Remember...

Man's extremity is God's opportunity

Beware...

Man's security is Satan's opportunity

Genesis 17

Age 99

How does God reaffirm His promise?

Ge 17:1 Now when Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to

the One Who called him. Did your thoughts, words and deeds reflect this day reflect the One Who called you, dear beloved of the Father?

Blameless ([tamiym](#)) means to be whole, complete, sound, perfect. The idea is one who has integrity and whose life is in accord with the truth of God's word and His righteous character (cp "Job... was blameless [tam]" - Job 1:1)

The Greek translation (LXX) of the Hebrew adjective **tamiym** is translated with **amemptos** (from **a** = negative + **mémphomai** = find fault) which means irreproachable, faultless, without defect or blemish and thus describes one in whom others are not able to find fault. **Amemptos** is used by Paul in his giving a charge to NT believers similar to God's charge to Abraham in Genesis 17. (Php 2:15+ = "prove yourselves to be **blameless** and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world,;" And pray that "He may establish your hearts **without blame** in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints." 1Th 3:11-13+) ([See Spurgeon's comment on "Be thou perfect"](#))

The question arises as to how Abraham (OT believer) or believers in the NT can carry out this lofty command?

The answer is found in the context where Jehovah had just revealed Himself to Abraham (Abram) as **El Shaddai**, the God Who is **omnipotent**, able to do anything including able to make us walk in His sight in a manner which pleases Him and in a way which is blameless in the eyes of others.

He is **El Shaddai**, the God Who is **sufficient** to meet all of our needs so that we might be pleasing and perfect.

We can accomplish neither of these lofty goals by self effort but only by "Shaddai dependence", continually leaning on the everlasting arms of the One we have come to know and trust as El Shaddai - Who Alone can empower us to walk worthy of the calling to which we have been called. We cannot live this supernatural life in our strength, but God can live it in and through

Sovereignty reminds us that God is in control regardless of appearances. Here God reveals Himself to Abram as God Most High, the possessor of heaven and earth (see Ge 14:19)

Nothing happens without El Elyon's permission

Will I accept my circumstances as allowed by God, understanding that everything is orchestrated not by chance but by an omnipotent God Who seeks to bring about my highest good (Ro 8:28+)?

If we come to know God as El Elyon, it should germinate an attitude of gratitude so that we are enabled by the Spirit to truly give thanks in everything (1Th 5:18-note), cp He 13:15-note, Jas 1:2-note)

Genesis 16:13-14

El Roi — God Who Sees (see notes)

Abram takes a "faith detour" and agrees with Sarai that Hagar can bear his child but Ishmael is the child of the flesh not of promise. Then Sarai tells Abram to cast Hagar out, which is when God revealed Himself as **El Roi**.

The Living God saw Hagar's plight. The same God sees our plight today and is concerned with our circumstances.

El Elyon allows people and circumstances into our lives but **El Roi** sees and is aware of what is transpiring, a truth which should strengthen us

Let us learn to live in the presence of the living God Who sees all. (See C H Spurgeon's comments)

As an aside, we might all be tempted to judge Abram for his "faith detour" in Genesis 16, but don't we all have similar struggles? Sure we have trusted in Christ alone for our eternal salvation but then we go out and live our day to day Christian life as though everything depended on us! We all need to learn the secret of daily yielding ourselves to Him, allowing His

Abram and said to him, "I am **God Almighty** Walk before Me, and be blameless 2 And I will establish My covenant between Me and you, And I will multiply you exceedingly."

God Almighty = **El Shaddai**

When did God reveal Himself to Abraham? What was Abraham struggling to believe?

God revealed Himself as God Almighty when Abraham was struggling to believe that God could still carry out His promise to make him a father of many nations. God's Name in this context conveys His ability to fulfill His promises. The question for us today is...

Dearly beloved, offspring (seed) of Abraham (Gal 3:29+) what promises of God are you struggling to believe? Recall to your mind the truth inherent in His Name, El Shaddai. Then run into the strong tower of His name and you will be safe.

As you come to truly know God as El Shaddai, God Almighty, you will be enabled to lay hold of the truth of His power and His sufficiency to carry out what He has promised. Remember that Paul teaches faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. So to hear and understand the meaning of El Shaddai is to have one's faith bolstered and undergirded. Then, when fear or doubt creep in or are thrown at us like fiery missiles from the Evil One, we can take up this shield of faith (Ep 6:16+) based on the truth about El Shaddai.

El Shaddai

From the etymology of Shaddai and the OT uses ([see discussion below](#)), two major ideas are associated with this Name

(1)**Omnipotence**

(2)**Sufficiency**

Both these attributes of God's character have powerful applications to our lives.

The idea of the **sufficiency** of Shaddai is brought out especially in Naomi's lament

us as we learn to rely on Him as our El Shaddai, for as the song ([play](#)) says...

Age to age You're still the same, by the power of Your the Name. El Shaddai. El Shaddai... We will praise and lift You high, El Shaddai.

Have you come to the point in your life as a believer where you recognize your inadequacy and impotence to live the "Christ life"?

If we choose to obey His command to walk before Him (well pleasing) and be blameless, we shall come to know intimately and experientially the omnipotence and sufficiency of His Name El Shaddai. The timeless principle that **obedience** leads to **greater knowledge** is seen in Jesus' words...

"If any man is willing to **do** His (God's) will (**walk** before Him and **be** blameless), he shall **know** (ginosko - knowing that goes beyond mere facts, and is even used to describe the intimate knowing of a husband and wife) of the teaching (the stabilizing truths inherent in His Name El Shaddai)...." (John 7:17)

Paul teaches a similar idea in Colossians 1:10[±]

so that you will **walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects** (OBEDIENCE), bearing fruit in every good work and **increasing in the knowledge** of God (GREATER INSIGHT INTO THE ALMIGHTY);

Obedience is an OT truth as Samuel said

Behold, to OBEY is better than sacrifice, And to HEED than the fat of rams. (1 Sa 15:22)

Perhaps you don't intimately know God as your El Shaddai because you have hesitated to give Him your wholehearted **OBEDIENCE**. **Would you not be willing to say/pray "not my will be done but Thine" (Mt 6:10[±]) and reap the wonderful reward of not only fruit that will endure eternity (Jn 15:8, 16), but face to face relationship, really knowing El Shaddai as your Omnipotent, Sufficient God?**

Listen to this incredible promise by Jesus

"He who has My commandments and

Spirit to live the supernatural Christ life that alone brings glory to His Name (cp Ro 12:1+).

Paul addressed a similar "faith detour" in the Galatian church asking...

Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith? Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh? (Gal 3:2; 3+)

In Genesis 17 Abraham learned the secret of surrender of his will to the will of his God, El Shaddai, Who is mighty and sufficient to bring about the fulfillment of His promises in His perfect timing. May we all learn from Abram's example, and choose to submit to our El Shaddai, in every area of our life, that He might bring forth His supernatural promises, including not just spiritual life, but life abundant in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

In summary we observe that thus far in Genesis, God has revealed Himself as

**Elohim
El Elyon
El Roi**

Now He will reveal Himself to Abraham as..

**El
Shaddai**

Principle to ponder - Remember that one way to get to know God better is to pay attention to His names. However, it is one thing to know God's name and quite something else to trust that name and allow God to work in the difficult situations of life (Psalm 9:10-[note](#))

in Ruth 1 ([see notes](#))

As an aside, why did Abram have to wait almost 25 years for God to fulfill His promise?

Like many who are filled with self confidence, Abram had to be brought to the end of himself.

God often does not show us his **OMNIPOTENCE** until he shows us our **IMPOTENCE**.

Paul learned this same principle in 2Co 12:7, 8, 9, 10+ writing that...

because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, for this reason, **to keep me from exalting myself**, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet me-- to keep me from exalting myself! 8 Concerning this I entreated the Lord three times that it might depart from me. 9 And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may dwell in me. 10 Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong.

Is El Shaddai enough? Is He sufficient to meet my needs? Can He be trusted to fulfill His promises?

As Abraham and Paul (and many other saints) learned, it is when we come to the end of ourselves and our resources, that we begin to "tap into" the sufficiency of the supply of El Shaddai, and find that it is more than adequate for all our needs according to His riches in Christ Jesus.

Remember 3 things about problems: we cannot run from them, we cannot prevent them from coming into our life and we can't always solve all of them – Yet El Shaddai can be our sufficiency for in the midst of every impossible circumstance.

Are you facing a difficult or even impossible circumstance? Have you considered calling out to El Shaddai?

What will it take to make you happy? Or asked another way "How much is

keeps them (OBEDIENCE) is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and **will disclose** ([emphanizo](#)) **Myself to him.**" (INTIMACY WITH JESUS!)(Jn 14:21)

Read the **testimony** of the **psalmist** who quotes God...

Because he has loved Me (cf Jn 14:15, Jn 15:10), therefore I will deliver (Lxx = rhuomai) him. I will set him securely on high ([sagab](#) = same word as "safe" [\[07682\]](#) in Pr 18:10+), because he has known (not just the facts but intimately, experientially) **My Name**. (Ps 91:14+)

Spurgeon explains Ps 91:14

The man has known the attributes of God so as to trust in Him, and then by experience has arrived at a yet deeper knowledge, this shall be regarded by the Lord as a pledge of His grace, and He will set the owner of it above danger or fear, where he shall dwell in peace and joy. None abide in intimate fellowship with God unless they possess a warm affection towards God, and an intelligent trust in Him; these gifts of grace are precious in Jehovah's eyes, and wherever He sees them He smiles upon them. How elevated is the standing which the Lord gives to the believer. We ought to covet it right earnestly. If we climb on high it may be dangerous, but if God sets us there it is glorious."

David wrote that...

And those who know (not just the facts but intimately, experientially know) **Thy Name** will put their trust in Thee, for Thou, O LORD, hast not forsaken those who seek Thee. (Ps 9:10+)

Spurgeon comments on Ps 9:10

Ignorance is worst when it amounts to ignorance of God, and knowledge is best when it exercises itself upon the name of God. This most excellent knowledge leads to the most excellent grace of faith. **O, to learn more of the attributes and character of God.** Unbelief, that hooting night bird, cannot live in the light of divine knowledge, it flies before the sun of God's great and gracious Name. If we read this verse literally, there is, no doubt,

enough"?

Most of us (even sadly many believers) would answer in monetary terms. But of course we know that the answer is never in money or things or even circumstances. It is only when we come to know that God is enough, El Shaddai is the Sufficient One. Abram faced a faith crisis event that God used to show him that He alone was El Shaddai, the only One sufficient to fulfill His promises.

Have you come to the point in your personal relationship with God that He is enough? Is He sufficient to meet all your needs? Can He be trusted to fulfill the promises of His Word?

a glorious fullness of assurance in the **Names of God**. (See [Summary Chart on Names of God](#))...By knowing His name is also meant an experimental (experiencing) acquaintance with the attributes of God (see Spurgeon's comments on the Attributes of God), which are every one of them anchors to hold the soul from drifting in seasons of peril. The Lord may hide His face for a season from His people, but He never has utterly, finally, really, or angrily forsaken them that seek Him. Let the poor seekers draw comfort from this fact, and let the finders rejoice yet more exceedingly, for what must be the Lord's faithfulness to those who find, if He is so gracious to those who seek.

Related Resource:

[Shaddai - Psalm 91](#) (see notes)

MUSIC THAT HONORS EL SHADDAI, GOD ALMIGHTY

- [EL SHADDAI](#) the great classic written by Michael Card and sung by Amy Grant
- [Almighty God](#) by Tim Hughes
- [Holy Is The Lord God Almighty](#) - Chris Tomlin
- [Almighty God](#) by Jesse Wilson
- [Almighty God](#) by Wayne Watson
- [Mighty to Save](#) by Hillsong

PRAISE TO THE LORD THE ALMIGHTY

[Play Fernando Ortega' beautiful vocal version](#)

Praise to the Lord,
The Almighty, the king of creation!
O my soul, praise Him,
For He is thy health and salvation!
All ye who hear,
Now to His temple draw near;
Praise Him in glad adoration.

Praise to the Lord,
Who o'er all things so wondrously reigneth,
Shelters thee under His wings,
Yea, so gently sustaineth!
Hast thou not seen
How thy desires ever have been
Granted in what He ordaineth?

Praise to the Lord,
Who hath fearfully, wondrously, made thee;
Health hath vouchsafed
And, when heedlessly falling, hath stayed thee.
What need or grief
Ever hath failed of relief?
Wings of His mercy did shade thee.

Praise to the Lord,
Who doth prosper thy work and defend thee;
Surely His goodness
And mercy here daily attend thee.
Ponder anew
What the Almighty can do,
If with His love He befriend thee.

Praise to the Lord,
Who, when tempests their warfare are waging,
Who, when the elements
Madly around thee are raging,
Biddeth them cease,
Turneth their fury to peace,
Whirlwinds and waters assuaging.

Praise to the Lord,
Who, when darkness of sin is abounding,
Who, when the godless
Do triumph, all virtue confounding,
Sheddeth His light,
Chaseth the horrors of night,
Saints with His mercy surrounding.

Praise to the Lord,
O let all that is in me adore Him!
All that hath life and breath,
Come now with praises before Him.
Let the Amen sound from His people again,
Gladly for aye we adore Him.

Notes on El Shaddai

Shaddai (07706) (**Shadday**) means Almighty, most powerful. As alluded to in the preceding table and elaborated on in more detail in the following notes, the Name **Shaddai** conveys the truth on the one hand that He is **omnipotent** and on the other that He is **sufficient**. El Shaddai = God Almighty the ever-present God who protects and provides, presents Himself as the One who makes a covenant with a human being named Abraham.

There are 48 OT uses of **Shaddai** (see below) and in every use the reference is to God. Approximately one third of these uses of Shaddai are translated in the LXX by the Greek word **pantokrator** (see below).

Lest we become too dogmatic in our interpretation of the etymological derivation of **Shaddai**, Davison makes a cogent point noting that...

The exact origin, history, and etymology of the name (Shaddai) are highly debated. Traditionally, it has been connected to Hebrew šādad, “deal mightily with,” but the verb actually has the connotation “deal violently.” Other scholars associate it with Assyrian šadu, “mountain” or “high,” thus rendering the Hebrew as “High God” or “God of the Mountains.” The usual English translation, “Almighty,” derives from the rendering of the Hebrew in the LXX (**Ed note**: See [pantokrator](#) below) and Vulgate (**Ed note**: E.g.,

Genesis 17:1 = "*ego Deus omnipotens*")., which was a free translation of what was by then an obscure term. (Eerdman's Dictionary of the Bible)

There are some authorities (most notably Nathan Stone - see [note](#)) (or see notes below) who feel that the Hebrew **Shaddai** is derived from the Hebrew word **shad** which means breast (an etymology also made popular by the Scofield Reference Bible). If this is valid, it in turn suggests that Shaddai might signify the one who nourishes or supplies. El Shaddai then would be the one who is able to pour out His promises of provision and power in abundance. Those who hold to this interpretation call attention to **Genesis 49** where we read of Joseph (as Jacob is preparing to die)...

But his bow remained firm, and his arms were agile, from the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob (From there is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel), from the **God** ('El) of your father who helps you (cp notes Jehovah Ezer - LORD our Helper), and by the **Almighty** (Shaddai) who blesses you with blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lies beneath, blessings of the **breasts** (Hebrew = **shad**) and of the womb. (Genesis 49:24, 25)

In this passage note that it is '**El** Who gives strength to the arms, and it is the **Almighty** or **Shaddai** Who brings the blessings of the breast and the womb, including the blessing of the promised seed from the line of Abraham. Nevertheless while the meaning of Shaddai as the God Who nourishes and Who blesses the breasts and the womb is certainly a possible derivation, many commentators do not favor this etymology.

John Davis in Grace Journal (Volume 4) writes that...

The basic understanding of the conservative view is that the name "El Shaddai" is of divine, not natural origin. The name, it is asserted, was revealed by God, and not conceived by man. While all conservative scholars agree on this basic principle, **there is little agreement as to the etymology and significance of this name in relation to the patriarchs**. There are four basic views in this regard. The first view is that Shaddai comes from the root šādad (shadad) "to be strong" or "powerful." This view seems to be the more popular. The emphasis, therefore, in respect to the patriarchs, is that of God's power and strength. Oehler favors this view in his Theology of the Old Testament.

The second view of the name Shaddai is that its root is šādad (shadad) "to destroy" or "to terrify." This view is held by Mack.

The third view maintains that Shaddai comes from a compound word (from še (šer) and day which in Hebrew means "sufficiency." For a statement of this view compare John Calvin.

The fourth, and not too well accepted view is that proposed by the Scofield Bible. This view contends that the name comes from šad which has primary reference to the female breast. The name, therefore, signified nourishment and strength to the Patriarchs.

Wayne House writes that **El Shaddai** means

"The God of Strength" Probably related to the word "Mountain" and suggests the power or strength of God. This name also emphasizes God's covenant keeping nature (Ge 17:1)... Some feel Shaddai is derived from a root that refers to a mother's breast, sustaining a newborn infant. If so, it conveys love, tenderness, mercy, all that a mother is to a dependent newborn, God is to his children... Job chastened by God. God often corrects His own to make them fruitful. Used this way in the book of Job 31 times. Job was a "perfect" man. God wanted to refine him still more, make him even more fruitful. And by the end of the book, God had given to Job more than he had to begin with. (H. Wayne House: Charts of Christian Theology and Doctrine, Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1992)

Louis Berkhof (Systematic Theology) points out that whereas God as **El Shaddai** is indeed presented as the all-powerful One who overpowers nature, the name, where it occurs in the Bible, does not present God as an object of fear or terror, but rather as a source of blessing and comfort.

The **NET Bible** has a good summary of Shaddai noting that...

Heb "Shaddai"; traditionally "the Almighty." The etymology and meaning of this divine name is uncertain but its significance is clear. It may be derived from:

(1) **Shadad**, "**to be strong**", cognate to Arabic sdd, meaning "The Strong One" or "Almighty";

(2) **Shadah**, "**mountain**", cognate to Akkadian shadu, meaning "The Mountain Dweller" or "God of the Mountains";

(3) **Shadad**, "to devastate" and **shad**, "destroyer", Akkadian Shedum, meaning "The Destroyer" or "The Malevolent One"; or

(4) **She** "who" plus **diy**, "sufficient", meaning "The One Who is Sufficient" or "All-Sufficient One" (HALOT 1420-22).

In terms of use, Shaddai (or El Shaddai) is presented as the sovereign king/judge of the world Who grants life/blesses and

kills/judges. In Genesis He blesses the patriarchs with fertility and promises numerous descendants.

Outside Genesis He blesses/protects and also takes away life/happiness. In (Ruth 1:20) in light of Naomi's emphasis on God's sovereign, malevolent deprivation of her family, one can understand her use of this name for God. For discussion of this divine name, see T. N. D. Mettinger, In Search of God, 69-72.

Wiersbe writes that...

Hebrew scholars traditionally have interpreted El-Shaddai to mean "God Almighty" or "God All-Sufficient," relating it to the Hebrew word for "breast." Thus He is the God who nourishes and provides, who sustains and enables. Recent studies have suggested "the God of the mountain" (strength, stability) or "God my destroyer" (power against the enemy). (Wiersbe, W. W. Be Authentic. An Old Testament Study. Victor Pub)

Below are all 48 uses of **Shaddai** in Scripture. Observe that 31 uses occur in **Job** where 16 of these uses are translated in the **Septuagint** with the Greek word [pantokrator](#) and 3 uses are translated with the Greek adjective **hikanos** **[word study]** which means sufficient, adequate, enough, able, competent, qualified. In summary, when one compares the way **Shaddai** is translated in the **Septuagint** , two main ideas emerge...

SHADDAI

All powerful
All sufficient

Genesis 17:1 Now when Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am **God Almighty**; Walk before Me, and be blameless.

Genesis 28:3 (**Isaac** called **Jacob** and blessed him saying) "And may **God Almighty** bless you and make you fruitful and multiply you, that you may become a company of peoples.

Comment: Note that El Shaddai is found in passages such as this one that report God's promises of fertility, land, and abundance to those in covenant with Him, indicating that He, the Almighty Omnipotent One, could fulfill those promises.

Genesis 35:9 Then God appeared to Jacob again when he came from Paddan-aram, and He blessed him.10 And God said to him, "Your name is Jacob; You shall no longer be called Jacob, But **Israel** shall be your name." Thus He called him Israel.

Genesis 35:11 God also said to him, "I am **God Almighty** (El Shaddai); Be fruitful and multiply; A nation and a company of nations shall come from you, And kings shall come forth from you. (Here again as with Abram's name change to Abraham when El Shaddai reaffirmed the covenant, He changes Jacob's name to Israel and reaffirms the promises made to Abraham and Isaac). 12 "And the land which I gave to Abraham and Isaac, I will give it to you, And I will give the land to your descendants after you."

Comment: Note that **the land** is not given to the church but to Jacob. The church is never called Jacob in Scripture. The promises are for a **literal land**, and **El Shaddai** has all power and sufficiency to fulfill these covenant promises, which He will bring to consummation in the book of the Revelation, where the God is repeatedly referred to as "**The Almighty**" (ho pantokrator), the very name that the **LXX** uses repeatedly to translate **Shaddai** in the book of **Job**. El Shaddai affirms the promises of the Land of Israel to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and fulfills the promise some 4000+ years later following the after the Great Tribulation or time of Jacob's trouble . when Messiah returns as the King of kings to establish His Millennial Kingdom (click for schematic picture of this kingdom) in which He rules for 1000 years.

13 Then God went up from him in the place where He had spoken with him. 14 And Jacob set up a pillar in the place where He had spoken with him, a pillar of stone, and he poured out a libation on it; he also poured oil on it. 15 So Jacob named the place where God had spoken with him, Bethel.

Comment: Establishing a **memorial** (stone and name of place) was a common component of **covenant** in the OT, in this case memorializing the affirmation of the covenant originally cut with his grandfather Abraham

Genesis 43:14 (Jacob to his sons preparing to return to Joseph in Egypt) and may **God Almighty** (the One Who is powerful and sufficient to) grant you compassion in the sight of the man, that he may release to you your other brother and Benjamin. And as for me, if I am bereaved of my children, I am bereaved." 15 So the men took this present, and they took double the money in their hand, and Benjamin; then they arose and went down to Egypt and stood before Joseph.

Comment: What is the context? There is a famine in the land of promise, but Jacob knows that there is no famine in the name El Shaddai. Jacob realizing that they must have grain, commits his sons to the covenant care of God Almighty, the One Who is sufficient for every emergency! In Him there is never any lack. **Do you know Him as Shaddai, not just in your head but in your heart? Have you found Him sufficient for every need? Or perhaps we need to ask have you been willing to trust Him to meet your every need?**

Genesis 48:3 Then Jacob said to Joseph, '**God Almighty** appeared to me at Luz in the land of Canaan and blessed me, 4 and He (El Shaddai reaffirmed the covenant with Abraham and Isaac) said to me, 'Behold, I will make you fruitful and numerous, and I will make you a company of peoples, and **will give this land** to your descendants after you for an **everlasting** possession.'

Comment: The Land belongs to Israel. They are back in the Land in unbelief but in the Millennium all Israel will be saved and occupy the Land promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Genesis 49:25 From the God of your father Who helps you (see related name Jehovah Ezer: The LORD our Helper), and by **the Almighty** Who blesses you with blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lies beneath, blessings of the breasts and of the womb. **26** The blessings of your father have surpassed the blessings of my ancestors up to the utmost bound of the everlasting hills. May they be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of the one distinguished among his brothers.

Exodus 6:3 and I appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as God Almighty, but by My name, LORD, I did not make Myself known to them.

Numbers 24:4 The oracle of him who hears the words of God, Who sees the vision of the **Almighty**, Falling down, yet having his eyes uncovered,

Numbers 24:16 The oracle of him who hears the words of God, And knows the knowledge of the Most High, Who sees the vision of the **Almighty**, Falling down, yet having his eyes uncovered.

Comment: Observe that Balaam used three different names for God: El, Elyon (Most High), and Shaddai (Almighty). He had a head knowledge of Israel's God but not a heart relationship with Him. It is one thing to know God's name and quite something else to trust that name and allow God to work in one's heart ([Psalm 9:10](#))

[Ruth 1:20 \(note\)](#) And she said to them, "Do not call me Naomi; call me Mara (bitter), for the **Almighty** (Shaddai) has dealt very bitterly with me. **21** "I went out full, but the LORD has brought me back empty. Why do you call me Naomi, since the LORD has witnessed against me and the **Almighty** (Shaddai) has afflicted me?"

Job 5:17 "Behold, how happy is the man whom God reproves, So do not despise the discipline of the **Almighty**. (Lxx = [pantokrator](#))

Job 6:4 "For the arrows of the **Almighty** are within me; Their poison my spirit drinks; The terrors of God are arrayed against me.

Job 6:14 "For the despairing man there should be kindness from his friend; Lest he forsake the fear of the **Almighty**.

Job 8:3 "Does God pervert justice Or does the **Almighty** pervert what is right?

Job 8:5 "If you would seek God And implore the compassion of the **Almighty** (Lxx = [pantokrator](#))

Job 11:7 "Can you discover the depths of God? Can you discover the limits of the **Almighty** (Lxx = [pantokrator](#))?

Job 13:3 "But I would speak to the **Almighty**, And I desire to argue with God.

Job 15:25 Because he has stretched out his hand against God, And conducts himself arrogantly against the **Almighty** (Lxx = [pantokrator](#)).

Job 21:15 'Who is the **Almighty** (Lxx = **hikanos** = sufficient, adequate, enough, able, competent, qualified), that we should serve Him, And what would we gain if we entreat Him?'

Job 21:20 "Let his own eyes see his decay, And let him drink of the wrath of the **Almighty**.

Job 22:3 "Is there any pleasure to the **Almighty** if you are righteous, Or profit if you make your ways perfect?

Job 22:17 "They said to God, 'Depart from us!' And 'What can the **Almighty** (Lxx = [pantokrator](#)) do to them?'

Job 22:23 "If you return to the **Almighty**, you will be restored; If you remove unrighteousness far from your tent,

Job 22:25 Then the **Almighty** (Lxx = [pantokrator](#)) will be your gold And choice silver to you.

Job 22:26 "For then you will delight in the **Almighty**, and lift up your face to God.

Job 23:16 "It is God who has made my heart faint, And the **Almighty** (Lxx = [pantokrator](#)) who has dismayed me,

Job 24:1 "Why are times not stored up by the **Almighty**, And why do those who know Him not see His days?

Job 27:2 "As God lives, who has taken away my right, And the **Almighty** (Lxx = [pantokrator](#)), who has embittered my soul,
(**Comment:** Compare this statement by Job with that of Naomi in Ruth 1:20,21. Remember that this is not a sin nor is he blaming God, for Scripture itself testifies "Through all this Job did not sin nor did he blame God." Job 1:22).

Job 27:10 "Will he take delight in the **Almighty**, Will he call on God at all times? **11** "I will instruct you in the power of God; What is with the **Almighty** (Lxx = [pantokrator](#)) I will not conceal.

Job 27:13 "This is the portion of a wicked man from God, And the inheritance which tyrants receive from the **Almighty** (Lxx = [pantokrator](#)).

Job 29:5 When the **Almighty** was yet with me, And my children were around me;

Job 31:2 "And what is the portion of God from above Or the heritage of the **Almighty** (Lxx = **hikanos** = sufficient, adequate, enough, able, competent, qualified) from on high?

Job 31:35 "Oh that I had one to hear me! Behold, here is my signature; Let the **Almighty** answer me! And the indictment which my adversary has written,

Job 32:8 "But it is a spirit in man, And the breath of the **Almighty** (Lxx = [pantokrator](#)) gives them understanding.

Job 33:4 "The Spirit of God has made me, And the breath of the **Almighty** (Lxx = [pantokrator](#)) gives me life.

Job 34:10 "Therefore, listen to me, you men of understanding. Far be it from God to do wickedness, And from the **Almighty** (Lxx = [pantokrator](#)) to do wrong.

Job 34:12 "Surely, God will not act wickedly, And the **Almighty** (Lxx = [pantokrator](#)) will not pervert justice.

Job 35:13 "Surely God will not listen to an empty cry, Nor will the **Almighty** (Lxx = [pantokrator](#)) regard it.

Job 37:23 "The **Almighty**-- we cannot find Him; He is exalted in power; And He will not do violence to justice and abundant righteousness.

Job 40:2 "Will the faultfinder contend with the **Almighty** (Lxx = **hikanos** = sufficient, adequate, enough, able, competent, qualified)? Let him who reproves God answer it."

Psalm 68:14 (see note) When the **Almighty** scattered the kings there, It was snowing in Zalmon.

Psalm 91:1 (see note) He who dwells in the shelter of the **Most High** (El Elyon) will abide in the shadow of the **Almighty**.

Comment: The names of God used in these verses encourage us to trust Him.

Isaiah 13:6 Wail, for the **Day of the LORD** is near! It will come as destruction from the **Almighty**.

Amplified Version renders it "Wail, for the day of the Lord is at hand; as destruction from the **Almighty and Sufficient One** [Shaddai] will it come! [Ge 17:1.]

Ezekiel 1:24 I also heard the sound of their wings like the sound of abundant waters as they went, like the voice of the **Almighty**, a sound of tumult like the sound of an army camp; whenever they stood still, they dropped their wings.

Ezekiel 10:5 Moreover, the sound of the wings of the cherubim was heard as far as the outer court, like the voice of God **Almighty** (more literally "God - the mighty One") when He speaks.

Joel 1:15 Alas for the day! For the **Day of the LORD** is near, And it will come as destruction from the **Almighty**.

Comment: Note the two uses in **Isaiah** and **Joel** in the context of the **Day of the LORD**, the day of Jehovah's wrath, which comes to fruition in the book of the Revelation where we see God designated as the **Almighty** (**pantokrator**). He is able to complete the work He began when He cut the covenant initially with Abram.

Where are the majority of OT uses of **Shaddai**? Why? Clearly the majority of uses are in the book of Job, in the context of a man who is suffering severely and being tempted to doubt the goodness, fairness and justice of God.

Vine comments....

How futile are our own schemes for bettering ourselves! How constant and ready are the provisions of our great El Shaddai!

R C Sproul commenting on **El Shaddai** writes that...

When God revealed himself by this name to the patriarchs in Genesis he focused on his power, revealing himself as the God who makes and keeps his promises. It was a name that demanded faith in what was coming but not yet; the God behind the promise was sufficient for now, even if the fulfillment of the promises could not be seen... God makes promises, and God is mighty to perform them. God is strong enough to accomplish everything He has said He will do. He has the power to fulfil every promise He has made to His people. Isn't this where our faith tends to fail? (Sproul, R. Vol. 3: Before the Face of God)

Although I generally respect **Oswald Chambers**, albeit find him a bit "mystical" at times, I was shocked to find the following comment of his that makes mention of El Shaddai. I pray you too will be shocked by his aberrant theology...

Jesus Christ is the last Adam in this sense, viz.: that He reveals the characteristics of El-Shaddai, the Father-Mother God, all vested in the unique manifestation of the Incarnation. (Chambers, O. Conformed to His image) (**Ed note**: One wonders if Chambers was not led to write this description because of a belief that Shaddai is from *shad*, Hebrew for breast. In any event, El Shaddai is unequivocally **NOT** "the Father-Mother God"! Chamber's quote makes the point that we must constantly be Bereans [Ac 17:11-note], taking all of men's writings [including the one's you are currently reading!] back to the plumbline of God's inerrant Word of Truth.)

Tyndale Bible Dictionary has an excellent summary of the origin and meaning of **Shaddai** writing...

In these passages the combined ideas of God as the all-powerful, all-sufficient, transcendent, sovereign ruler and disposer are present. This meaning is generally accepted, but there are differences as to the exact meaning of the term Shaddai. Some have begun with **shad** as the first concept to be considered; its meaning is "breast, pap, or teat," and it is considered a "precious metaphor" of the God who nourishes, supplies, and satisfies. The root of **shad** (*shadah*), in Semitic usage, is to moisten. This meaning is not the preferred one in the context of which 'El Shaddai appears; nor is **shed** (demon), which some scholars have sought to use because it appears in Deuteronomy 32:17 and Psalm 106:37-note speaking of Israel's idolatry. In addition to the fact that **shed** is spelled differently, the connection between the concept of demon and God as all-powerful is difficult to establish. More acceptable is the suggestion that Shaddai is a composite term of **sha** ("the one who") and **dai** ("is sufficient"). The later Greek versions have adopted this meaning. The most preferred explanation is that Shaddai is derived from the verb **shadad** ("to overpower, to deal violently, or to devastate"). A clear connection between **shadad** and Shaddai is said to be found in Isaiah 13:6 and Joel 1:15. God as 'El Shaddai is presented as the all-powerful One, totally self-sufficient, absolute ruler, and the One who can and does make final disposition. The Septuagint has adapted this meaning; it translates 'El Shaddai as Pantokrator, the "All-Ruler" or "Sovereign One." ([Elwell, W. A., & Comfort, P. W. Tyndale Bible Dictionary. Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House Publishers](#))

BDAG writes that "*God's name is almost equivalent to God's being*" which emphasizes how important it is that we understand the meaning of His names as best we can.

Almighty (3841) (**pantokrator** from **pás** = all + **kratos** = strength or might, especially manifested power, the power to rule or control) is literally the ruler over all or the One Who controls all things and Who has power over everything. The One in total control! Pantokrator thus describes God's sovereign, omnipotent, irresistible power.

Note that Vine gives the derivation of pantokrator as from **pas** = all + **krato** = to hold or to have strength.

Tony Garland writes that "The Almighty" [*ho pantokrator*] is derived from *ho panton kraton* which means the One Who holds all. (Re 1:8-note) **Krateo** which means to hold or cling to is derived from **kratos** and gives the picture of being in the grip of Him in Whose hand are all things. God is the Almighty One, the One Who has His hand in everything and on everything! If believers are in the hands of a God like that (and they are), nothing can pluck them away. **Dear saint, perhaps you need to ponder and assimilate this truth about God, the Almighty, the Pantokrator, in Whose hands you are eternally sustained and secure.**

My times are in thy hand:
I'll always trust in thee;
And, after death, at thy right hand
I shall for ever be.

As discussed below pantokrator is used most often to translate "of hosts" in "LORD of hosts" (Jehovah Sabaoth), but it used frequently in Job to translate the Almighty (Shadday).

Pantokrator is used only of God, indicating that He is omnipotent (omni = all), universally sovereign. The Ruler of all things. The All-Powerful. The Omnipotent (One). Pantokrator is He Who holds sway over all things and the Ruler of all. It speaks of His supremacy over all things.

In light of the fact that 9/10 NT uses of **Pantokrator** are in **The Revelation**, clearly **Pantokrator** is the characteristic title for God in the book which records the consummation of God's victory over sin and the evil one Satan and His awesome control over all the universe and all history. In this final chapter of God's plan of the ages, God brings to consummation His initial covenant promises made and affirmed to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as He revealed Himself to them as El Shaddai some 4000+ years earlier in the book of beginnings, Genesis (see Genesis 17:1; 28:3; 35:9; 48:3; Ex 6:3). Although, **El Shaddai** is not translated (in the Septuagint) with **Pantokrator** in these 6 uses in Genesis or in Exodus 6:3, it is nevertheless notable that the Name El Shaddai by which God first revealed Himself to the patriarchs is related to the same Name, Pantokrator, by which He brings to final fulfillment the covenant promises made to the patriarchs! God is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow. The Names **El Shaddai** and **Pantokrator** undergird the assurance every believer should have that He is able to fulfill every one of His promises, so that "not one word of all the good words which Jehovah spoke has failed" (Joshua 23:14)

Richards adds that...

Pantokrator signifies the unmatched greatness of God, who has power over all humankind and every competing authority (Ep 1:19, 20, 21-see notes Ep 1:19; 20; 21). Occurrences of this word predominate (9 of the 10 uses) in Revelation. **There they pick up the OT theme of God's final, decisive intervention in history, when He acts to destroy this world's kingdoms and to establish His own** (Ed note: Thus fulfilling His covenant promises to the the patriarchs and the Nation of Israel, which is **not** the church but the actual nation that will be composed of 100% believing Jews at the return of the Messiah, when as Paul states "all Israel will be saved" - see note Romans 11:26). As the Almighty, God makes promises to people and commits his own power to see these promises carried out. This God is ever-present, hovering over history and free to act within it, even though his authority may be unacknowledged by those who do his will. Ultimately, he will undertake a great, final intervention. Then every competing power will be visibly crushed, and God's hidden authority will be overwhelmingly visible. When this happens, the irresistible power that makes God almighty will be known and acknowledged by all (cf. Php 2:9, 10, 11-**notes** Php 2:9; 10; 11; Re 19:6-[note](#)). ([Richards, L O: Expository Dictionary of Bible Words: Regency](#)) (Bolding added)

As noted below, the Septuagint (LXX) adopts pantokrator for two Hebrew descriptions of God, Sabaoth (hosts) and Shadday (Shaddai).

NIDNTT writes that...

It is also striking that the LXX renders the divine **Shadday** not only by pantokrator, the Almighty, but also, quite often, by **hikanos**. (Ed note: "the Sufficient One")...The Hebrew consonants were divided into two groups, vocalized to make the relatives **ese** and **day**, and then read as follows: **Yahweh**, "**Who is sufficient** (of Himself)", the Almighty (Ruth 1:20, 21-note; Job 21:15; 31:2; 40:2; Ezek. 1:24). As **Shadday**, Yahweh has not to conform to some external standard or to some ideal (this would have been the same as the Greek concept of moira, fate, to whom even the gods were subject); rather He Himself sets the standard for Himself and hence also for His creation. ([Brown, Colin, Editor. New International Dictionary of NT Theology. 1986. Zondervan](#))

There are far more uses (142) of **pantokrator** in the Septuagint (LXX)

2Sa 5:10; 7:8, 25, 27; 1 Ki. 19:10, 14; 1Chr. 11:9; 17:7, 24; 29:12; Job 5:17; 8:5; 11:7; 15:25; 22:17, 25; 23:16; 27:2, 11, 13; 32:8; 33:4; 34:10, 12; 35:13; 37:22; Je 3:19; 5:14; 15:16; 23:16; 25:27; 31:35; 32:14, 18; 33:11; 44:7; 49:18; 50:34; 51:5, 57; Hos. 12:5; Amos 3:13; 4:13; 5:8, 14, 15, 16, 27; 9:5f, 15; Mic 4:4; Nah. 2:13; 3:5; Hab. 2:13; Zeph 2:10; Hag. 1:2, 5, 7, 9, 14; 2:4, 6, 7, 8, 11, 23; Zec 1:3, 4, 6, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17; 2:8, 9, 11; 3:7, 9, 10; 4:6, 9; 5:4; 6:12, 15; 7:3, 9, 12, 13; 8:1, 2, 3, 6f, 9, 11, 14, 17, 18, 19; 9:14, 15; 10:3; 11:4; 12:4, 5; 13:7; 14:16, 17, 20, 21; Mal. 1:4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 13, 14; 2:2, 4, 7, 8, 12, 16; 3:1, 5, 7, 10, 11, 12, 14, 17; 4:1, 3)

The first use of **pantokrator** translates the last part of the name "the LORD of hosts" (see study **Jehovah Sabaoth, LORD of hosts or of armies**) as for example "**Lord** (kurios) **Almighty** (pantokrator)" in 2Sa 5:10. **Pantokrator** is used far more often to translate "**of hosts**" (tsaba = [06635](#)) (in "LORD of hosts") than "Shadday"

Job 5:17 "Behold, how happy (blessed - Lxx = makarios [word study]) is the man whom God reproves (Lxx = elegcho), so do not despise the discipline of the **Almighty**. (Hebrew = Shadday; Lxx = Pantokrator)

Jeremiah 15:16 (This author's life verse) Thy words were found and I ate them, and Thy words became for me a joy and the delight of my heart; for I have been called by Thy name, O LORD **God of hosts** (Lxx = pantokrator > "O Lord Almighty").

Pantokrator is used 10 times in the NT...

2 Corinthians 6:18 "And I will be a father to you, And you shall be sons and daughters to Me," Says the Lord **Almighty**.

[Revelation 1:8 \(note\)](#) "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is and who was and who is to come, the **Almighty**." (**Comment:** Tony Garland writes that "The Almighty" [ho pantokrator] is derived from *ho panton kraton* which means the One Who holds all and is a reference to God's sovereignty and might as well as His command of powerful forces.)

[Revelation 4:8 \(note\)](#) And the four living creatures, each one of them having six wings, are full of eyes around and within; and day and night they do not cease to say, "Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD God, the **Almighty**, who was and who is and who is to come."

[Revelation 11:17 \(note\)](#) saying, "We give Thee thanks, O Lord God, the **Almighty**, who art and who wast, because Thou hast taken Thy great power and hast begun to reign.

[Revelation 15:3 \(note\)](#) And they sang the song of Moses the bond-servant of God and the song of the Lamb, saying, "Great and marvelous are Thy works, O Lord God, the **Almighty**; Righteous and true are Thy ways, Thou King of the nations.

[Revelation 16:7 \(note\)](#) And I heard the altar saying, "Yes, O Lord God, the **Almighty**, true and righteous are Thy judgments."

[Revelation 16:14 \(note\)](#) for they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the whole world, to gather them together for the war of the great day of God, the **Almighty**.

[Revelation 19:6 \(note\)](#) And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude and as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty peals of thunder, saying, "Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the **Almighty**, reigns.

[Revelation 19:15 \(note\)](#) And from His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may smite the nations; and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the **Almighty**.

[Revelation 21:22 \(note\)](#) And I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God, the **Almighty**, and the Lamb, are its temple.

GENESIS 17:1 ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS OF HEBREW AND GREEK

NASB translation from Hebrew...

[Genesis 17:1](#) Now when Abram ("exalted father") was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, "**I am God Almighty**; Walk before Me, and be blameless. [17:2](#) "I will establish My covenant between Me and you, And I will multiply you exceedingly."

The **Septuagint (LXX)** does not directly translate **Shaddai** in this passage rendering it in Brenton's English translation...

And Abram was ninety-nine years old, and the Lord appeared to Abram and said to him, I am thy God, be **well-pleasing** (euairesteo = acting in a manner that is pleasing) before me, and be **blameless** (see word study amemptos = irreproachable, faultless, without defect or blemish and thus describes not being able to find fault in someone - used by Paul - see notes Philippians 2:15; 1Thessalonians 3:13 where the same charge is given to NT believers - who also have **Ei Shaddai** as the One Who empowers them to fulfill such a lofty calling!)

COMMENTARY ON GENESIS 17:1

Clarke comments on **Ei Shaddai** in **Genesis 17:1** writing that it means...

I am the Almighty God - I am **God all-sufficient**; from **shadah**, to shed, to pour out. I am that God Who pours out blessings, who gives them richly, abundantly, continually.

Walk before Me - set thyself to walk-be firmly purposed, thoroughly determined to obey, before Me; for My eye is ever on thee, therefore ever consider that God seeth thee. **Who can imagine a stronger incitement to conscientious, persevering obedience?**

Be thou perfect - and thou shalt be perfections, i.e., all together perfect. Be just such as the holy God would

have thee to be, as the Almighty God **can make thee** and live as the all-sufficient God **shall support thee**; for He alone who makes the soul holy can preserve it in holiness. Our blessed Lord appears to have had these words pointedly in view, (Mt 5:48-note): Ye SHALL BE perfect, as your Father who is in heaven is perfect.

John Gill commenting on **El Shaddai** in **Genesis 17:1** writes that...

as the Word of God is, as appears by his creation of all things, his in sustaining of them, his government of the church, his redemption of it, and preservation of his people safe to glory, see (see **note Revelation 1:8**) ; and this epithet is very appropriate here, when the Lord was about to give out a promise of a son to Abram and Sarai, so much stricken in years. Some render it "**all sufficient**", as Jehovah is, sufficient in and of Himself, and for Himself, and stands in no need of any, or of anything from another; and has a **sufficiency** for others, both in a way of providence and grace:

walk before me - not as though Abram had not so walked, or had discontinued his walk before God, but that he would go on to walk **by faith** in a **dependence on Him for everything** he wanted, both with respect to things temporal and spiritual; and to walk in all His commandments and ordinances, that He either had given, or should give him; and all this as in His presence, and under His watchful eye, that sees and observes all things, and before Whom all things are naked and open, as all are to the essential Word of God, (He 4:12, 13- See notes He 4:12; 13)

and be thou perfect upright and sincere in acts of faith, and in duties of religion, and go on to perfection; which though a sinless one is not attainable in this life, is desirable, and is to be had in Christ, though not in ourselves: but here it chiefly denotes an holy and unblamable life and conversation, which though not entirely free from sin, yet without any notorious ones, which bring dishonour to God, and disgrace upon a man's character and profession, see (Genesis 6:9) . This respects not perfection in his body or flesh, as the Targum of Jonathan paraphrases it, through circumcision, by which the Jews fancy Abram became perfect, but was not till circumcised.

Mackintosh comments that in Genesis 17:1...

we have God's remedy for Abraham's failure set before us... This is a most comprehensive verse. It is very evident that Abraham had not been walking before the Almighty God when he adopted Sarah's expedient in reference to Hagar. It is faith alone that can enable a man to walk up and down before an Almighty One. Unbelief will ever be thrusting in something of self, something of circumstances, second causes, and the like, and thus the soul is robbed of the joy and hence, the calm elevation, and holy independence, which flow from leaning upon the arm of One who can do everything. I believe we deeply need to ponder this. God is not such an abiding reality to our souls as He ought to be, or as He would be, were we walking in more simple faith and dependence...

"Walk before me." This is true power. To walk thus, implies our having nothing whatever before our hearts save God Himself. If I am founding my expectation upon men and things, I am not walking before God, but before men and things. It is of the utmost importance to ascertain who or what I have before me as an object. To what am I looking? On whom or what am I leaning, at this moment? Does God entirely fill my future? Have men or circumstances ought to do therein? Is there any space allotted to the creature? The only way in which to get above the world is to walk by faith, because faith so completely fills the scene with God, that there is no room for the creature, no room for the world. If God fills up my entire range of vision, I can see nothing else; and then I am able to say with the Psalmist,

My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from Him. **He only** is my Rock and my Salvation: He is my Defence, I shall not be moved. (Ps 62:5, 6-[note](#))

This word "**only**" is deeply searching. Nature cannot say this. Not that it will, save when under the direct influence of a daring and blasphemous skepticism, formally shut out God altogether; but it, assuredly, Cannot say, "He only."

Now, it is well to see that, as in the matter of salvation, so in all the details of actual life, from day to day, God will not share His glory with the creature. From first to last, it must be "**He only**;" and this, too, in reality. It will not do to have the language of dependence upon God on our lips, while our hearts are really leaning on some creature resource. God will make all this fully manifest; He will test the heart; He will put faith into the furnace. **"Walk before me, and be thou perfect."** Thus it is we reach the proper point. When the soul is enabled, by grace, to get rid of all its fondly-cherished creature expectations, then, and only then, it is prepared to let God act; and when He acts all must be well. He will not leave anything undone. He will perfectly settle everything on

behalf of those who simply put their trust in Him. **When unerring wisdom, omnipotent power, and infinite love combine, the confiding heart may enjoy unruffled repose.** Unless we can find some circumstance too big or too little for "**the Almighty God**" (El Shaddai), we have no proper base on which to found a single anxious thought. This is an amazing truth, and one eminently calculated to put all who believe it into the blessed position in which we find Abraham in this chapter. When God had, in effect, said to him,

"leave all to me and I will settle it for you, beyond your utmost desires and expectations; the seed and the inheritance, and everything pertaining thereto, will be fully and everlastingly settled, according to the covenant of the Almighty God"

— then "Abram fell on his face." Truly blessed attitude! the only proper one for a thoroughly empty, feeble, and unprofitable sinner, to occupy in the presence of the living God, the Creator of heaven and earth, the possessor of all things, **the Almighty God, El Shaddai!** ([C H Mackintosh. Writings on the Pentateuch](#))

Warren Wiersbe comments on El Shaddai in Genesis 17 noting that...

"**El**" is the name of God that speaks of power; but what does "**Shaddai**" mean? Scholars do not agree. Some say it comes from a Hebrew word meaning "to be strong"; others prefer a word meaning "mountain" (Ed note: sadu) or "breast (shad)." Metaphorically, a mountain is a "breast" that rises up from the plain; and certainly a mountain is a symbol of strength. If we combine these several ideas, we might say that "**El Shaddai**" is the name of "the all-powerful and all-sufficient God who can do anything and meet any need."

But why would God reveal this name to Abraham at this time, at the close of thirteen years of silence? Because God was going to tell His friend that Sarah would have a son. The Lord wanted Abraham to know that He is the God who is all-sufficient and all-powerful, and that nothing is too hard for Him. God says "I will" twelve times in Genesis 17 (Ge 17:2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 16, 19, 20, 21); He is about to do the miraculous.

After Abraham's battle with the four kings, God came to him as a warrior and told him He was his "shield." When Abraham wondered about his refusal of Sodom's wealth, God told him He was his "exceedingly great reward" (Ge 15:1). Now when Abraham and Sarah were "as good as dead," God assured them that He was more than sufficient to bring about the miracle birth. God comes to us in the ways we need Him most. (Wiersbe, W. W. Be Obedient. Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books)

Dave Guzik who has written an excellent more modern (yet still conservative) commentary has these thoughts on **Genesis 17:1...**

Undoubtedly, this is another appearance of God in the person of Jesus, who took on a temporary human appearance before His incarnation on earth.

First, God tells Abram whom He is: **I am Almighty God**. By this name El Shaddai, He reveals His Person and character to Abram. However, there is some debate as to what exactly the name El Shaddai means.

Kidner: A traditional analysis of the name is 'God (el) who (sa) is sufficient (day).

Clarke: El Shaddai, I am God all-sufficient; from shadah, to shed, to pour out. I am that God who pours out blessings, who gives them richly, abundantly, continually.

Barnhouse: the Hebrew word shad means "chest" or "breast." It may have in mind the strength of a man's chest (God Almighty) or the comfort and nourishment of a woman's breast (God of Tender Care).

Leupold: Shaddai comes from the root shadad, which means "to display power."

We do know the **Septuagint** translates the word with the Greek **pantokrator** "Almighty," the "One who has His hand on everything."

Then God tells Abram what is expected of him: **walk before Me and be blameless**. We can only do what God expects of us when we know Who He is and know it in a full, personal, real way. The word **blameless** literally means "whole." God wanted all of Abram, wanting a total commitment.

God also reminds Abram He has not forgotten about the covenant. Though it had been some 25 years since the promise was first made, and though it may have seemed to Abram God had forgotten, God didn't forget anything.

The last time we are told the Lord communicated with Abram directly was more than 13 years before. Seemingly, Abram had 13 years of "normal" fellowship with God, waiting for the promise all the time. Surely, at times during those years, Abram felt God had forgotten. Abram was becoming a great man of faith, but you don't make a great man of faith overnight. It takes years of God's work in them, years of almost mundane

trusting in God, interspersed with a few spectacular encounters with the Lord.

Criswell explains that...The etymology of **Shaddai** is traditionally explained as "sufficient" or "self-sufficient." The Greek translators rendered it by pantokrator, "Almighty." Another explanation is that the term means "one of the mountain," perhaps connoting safety and sufficiency. The "almightiness" of Yahweh gives assurance to Abram that God will make of him a great nation. ([Criswell, W. A. Believer's Study Bible: New King James Version. 1991. Thomas Nelson](#))

Charles Ryrie feels that...Shaddai is derived from a related word that means "mountain," thus picturing God as the overpowering, almighty One, standing on a mountain. ([The Ryrie Study Bible: New American Standard Translation: 1995. Moody Publishers](#))

C I Scofield writes that...

Shaddai is the name of God characteristically used by the patriarchs prior to the giving of the law at Sinai... The name **Jehovah** largely replaces it from Exodus 6 onward, where attention is centered more particularly on Israel as God's covenant people.

El Shaddai is the name of God which sets Him forth primarily as the **strengtheners** and **satisfiers** of His people. It is to be regretted that Shaddai was translated "Almighty." The primary name, El or **Elohim**, sufficiently signifies almightiness. "**All-sufficient**" would far better express the characteristic use of the name in Scripture.

God Almighty El Shaddai not only enriches but makes fruitful. This is nowhere better illustrated than in the first occurrence of the name (Ge 17:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8). To a man ninety-nine years of age, and "as good as dead" (He 11:12-note), He said: "I am God Almighty (El Shaddai)...I will confirm my covenant between me and you and will greatly increase your numbers." The same thing is taught by the use of the name in Ge 28:3, 4.

As bestower of fruitfulness, God Almighty (El Shaddai) chastens His people. For the moral connection of chastening with fruit-bearing, see John 15:2; cp. Ru 1:20, 21(note); He 12:10 (note). Hence, **Almighty** is the characteristic name of God in Job. The hand of **Shaddai** falls upon Job, the best man of his time, **not in judgment** but in **purifying** unto greater fruitfulness (Job 5:17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25). (**Ed note**: See Job 42:5, 6 where Job describes a greater vision of God as a result of the manifold trials)

Jamieson, Fausset and Brown write...

Abram . . . ninety years old and nine--thirteen years after the birth of Ishmael [[Ge 16:16](#)]. During that interval he had enjoyed the comforts of communion with God but had been favored with no special revelation as formerly, probably on account of his hasty and blameable marriage with Hagar.

the Lord appeared--some visible manifestation of the divine presence, probably the Shekinah (**Shekinah**) or radiant glory of overpowering effulgence. (**Ed note**: I agree with Guzik that God Himself appeared in a Theophany and more specifically a Christophany - see related study **Angel of the LORD**)

I am the Almighty God--the name by which He made Himself known to the patriarchs (Ex 6:3), designed to convey the sense of "all-sufficient" (Ps 16:5, 6-note; Ps 73:25-note).

walk . . . and . . . perfect--upright, or sincere (Ps 51:6-note) in heart, speech, and behavior.

[Genesis 17:3. Abram fell on his face](#) -- the attitude of profoundest reverence assumed by Eastern people. It consists in the prostrate body resting on the hands and knees, with the face bent till the forehead touches the ground. It is an expression of conscious humility and profound reverence.

[Genesis 17:4 my covenant is with thee](#) -- Renewed mention is made of it as the foundation of the communication that follows. It is the covenant of grace made with all who believe in the Saviour.

[Genesis 17:5 but thy name shall be Abraham](#) -- In Eastern countries a change of name is an advertisement of some new circumstance in the history, rank, or religion of the individual who bears it. The change is made variously, by the old name being entirely dropped for the new, or by conjoining the new with the old; or sometimes only a few letters are inserted, so that the altered form may express the difference in the owner's state or prospects. It is surprising how soon a new name is known and its import spread through the country. In dealing with Abraham and Sarai, God was pleased to adapt His procedure to the ideas and customs of the country and age. Instead of Abram, "a high father," he was to be called Abraham, "father of a multitude of nations" (Re 2:17-note).

Ed Note: See study of **Name change** as one of the aspects that marked the cutting of covenant in the Old Testament and which spoke of the oneness of covenant or the identification of the covenanting parties (see

also note on name change). We see this aspect of covenant illustrated in the **Marriage Covenant** where the wife traditionally takes the name of her husband.

A B Simpson observes that...

Whenever God called men into a closer relation or sent them on some higher commission, the call was always accompanied with some marked revelation of Himself.

We find Him coming to Abraham at the crisis of his life as El-Shaddai and then commanding Abraham to rise to a higher place in conformity to the new revelation that He had given.

"**I am El-Shaddai**," He says, "walk before me, and be perfect (or upright)."

I am the Almighty, the Absolute, the Infinite, the All-sufficient God. Now live up to the vision you have had, the revelation I have given. Stand straight up to the standard God has given. Live as if you had a God that is all-sufficient.

You have not been living thus. You have not been walking before Me. You have been walking before Sara, before Hagar, before circumstances, before your difficulties and limitations and infirmities. Now lift your vision above all these, look at Me alone and see in Me the God who is enough, and stand upright in uncompromising faith. And so henceforth Abraham "staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform."

The secret of Abraham's faith was his realization of the supernatural God. And so in describing him in the fourth chapter of Romans the apostle says that he measured up to God, "before him whom he believed, even God, who quickens the dead, and calls the things which be not as though they were." (**A. B. Simpson. Present Truths or the Supernatural**)

Matthew Henry comments on **El Shaddai** noting that...

By this name he chose to make himself known to Abram rather than by his name **Jehovah**, Exodus 6:3. He used it to Jacob, Genesis 28:3, 43:14, 48:3. It is the name of God that is mostly used throughout the book of Job, at least in the discourses of that book. After Moses, **Jehovah** is more frequently used, and this, **El-Shaddai**, very rarely; it bespeaks the almighty power of God, either, (1.) As an avenger, from **sdh** He laid waste, so some; and they think God took this title from the destruction of the old world. This is countenanced by Isaiah 13:6, and Joel 1:15.

Or (2.) As a benefactor **s** for **asr** = who, and **dy** = sufficient. He is a God that is enough; or, as our old English translation reads it here very significantly, **I am God All-Sufficient**. Note, The God with Whom we have to do is a God that is enough. [1.] He is enough in Himself; He is Self-sufficient; He has every thing, and He needs not any thing. [2.] He is enough to us, if we be in covenant with Him: we have all in Him, and we have enough in Him, enough to satisfy our most enlarged desires, enough to supply the defect of every thing else, and to secure to us a happiness for our immortal souls

Thomas Brooks commenting on Genesis 17:1 writes that...As God is an immense portion, a large portion, so God is an ALL-SUFFICIENT portion... or as some carry the words "I am God all-sufficient, or self-sufficient." God has self-sufficiency and all-sufficiency in Himself. Some derive the word Shaddai, that is here rendered Almighty or All-sufficient, because God feeds His children with sufficiency of all good things, as the tender mother does the sucking child. (Thomas Brooks. An Ark for All God's Noahs in a Gloomy Stormy Day)

EL SHADDAI APPEARED TO ABRAHAM, ISAAC AND JACOB

Exodus 6:3 and I appeared to **Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob**, as **God Almighty (El Shaddai)**, but by My name, **LORD**, I did not make Myself known to them. (See commentary on Exodus 6:3)

The name **Yahweh** (**Jehovah**, **LORD**) was known to Abraham even before the Name **El Shaddai**, as we note in such passages as Genesis 12:8, 13:4, 15:7 (and to Jacob in Ge 38:13). Clearly in Exodus 6 **Jehovah** does not introduce a **new Name** but a **new revelation** of that holy Name. Remember that the OT (as in the NT), the Names of God were a revelation of some aspect of His character and/or attributes. As noted earlier, BDAG writes that "*God's name is almost equivalent to God's being*". And so in Exodus 6 we see **Jehovah** reveals His

character as the Covenant keeping God, faithful to keep His promises and faithful to redeem Israel from bondage. In other words, God would make Himself known to Israel in actions by which He had not revealed Himself to the patriarchs and which they knew only as promises of the covenant.

If we remember that God's character is infinite, it is not at all surprising that the generation patriarchs might not "know" God in the same way that a later generation could know Him as He chose to reveal Himself to Israel in Moses' day.

The Jewish rabbi Rashi explains that this the text means

"I did not make Myself known, I did not allow My real character to be recognized."

Others feel that the last clause could be viewed as a rhetorical question which is permissible in the Hebrew and which would read "by my name JEHOVAH was I not (also) known to them?" Given the fact that God's Names are a revelation of His character, I favor the former explanation.

Richards agrees writing that...

While the four-letter name YHWH appears in Genesis, its true significance was only revealed in the acts of power by which God intervened in Egypt to free Israel. From this time on, God's people will know not only what God's name is, but what that name means! (The Bible Readers Companion)

The liberals and "higher" critics go so far as to say this verse indicates an error in Scripture which should be totally discounted as an errant comment! (See also related note on Exodus 6:3)

J. A. Motyer argues for the rendering

And I showed myself to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob in the character of El Shaddai, but **in the character expressed by my name Yahweh** I did not make myself known to them. (Bolding added)

Mackay explains that the statement that God did not make Himself known to the patriarchs by the Name Jehovah needs...

to be interpreted in the light of the significance of the word **name**, as that which summed up the character of an individual (see John 17:6NIV and the NIV translators' note there). In the Exodus experience God was giving content to what had been merely a sound before — much closer to the Western use of a name. The NIV footnote presents an alternative translation, "and by My Name the Lord did I not let myself be known to them?" This would be a rhetorical question asked for effect, asserting that the full significance of the name Lord had been revealed to the patriarchs. While this explains the record of the use of Yahweh in Genesis, it does not seem to do justice to the focus on the name in Exodus. Further, it is surprising (though not grammatically impossible) that if the explanation of the clause turns on its being a question, there is no explicit indicator of a question in the original. It is also important to remember that in Exodus the word 'know' is frequently used not of receiving information for the first time, but of experiencing for oneself the reality of the truth being conveyed (see on verse 7 below). (Mackay, J. L. A Commentary on Exodus)

Keil and Delitzsch add that

When the establishment of the covenant commenced, as described in Genesis 15, with the institution of the covenant sign of circumcision and the promise of the birth of Isaac, Jehovah said to Abram, "I am El Shaddai, God Almighty," and from that time forward manifested Himself to Abram and his wife as the Almighty, in the birth of Isaac, which took place apart altogether from the powers of nature, and also in the preservation, guidance, and multiplication of his seed.

It was in His attribute as **El Shaddai** that God had revealed His nature to the patriarchs; but now He was about to reveal Himself to Israel as **Jehovah**, as the absolute Being working with unbounded freedom in the performance of His promises. For not only had He established His covenant with the fathers (Ex 6:4), but He had also heard the groaning of the children of Israel, and remembered His covenant (Ex 6:5; not only—but also). The divine promise not only commences in Ex 6:2, but concludes at Ex 6:8, with the emphatic

expression, "**I Jehovah**," to show that the work of Israel's redemption resided in the power of the Name **Jehovah**. In Ex 6:4 the covenant promises of Ge 17:7, 8; 26:3; 35:11, 12, are all brought together and in Ex 6:5 we have a repetition of Ex 2:24, with the emphatically repeated "I". On the ground of the erection of His covenant on the one hand, and, what was irreconcilable with that covenant, the bondage of Israel on the other, **Jehovah** was not about to redeem Israel from its sufferings and make it His own nation.

This assurance, which God would carry out by the manifestation of His nature as expressed in the name Jehovah, contained three distinct elements:

(a) the deliverance of Israel from the bondage of Egypt, which, because so utterly different from all outward appearances, is described in three parallel clauses: bringing them out from under the burdens of the Egyptians; saving them from their bondage; and redeeming them with a stretched-out arm and with great judgments;

(b) the adoption of Israel as the nation of God;

(c) the guidance of Israel into the land promised to the fathers (Ex 6:6-8). **a stretched-out arm**, is most appropriately connected with **great judgments**; for God raises, stretches out His arm, when He proceeds in judgment to smite the rebellious. These expressions repeat with greater emphasis the "strong hand" of Ex 6:1, and are frequently connected with it in the rhetorical language of Deuteronomy (e.g., Deut. 4:34; 5:15; 7:19). The "great judgments" were the plagues, the judgments of God, by which Pharaoh was to be compelled to let Israel go. (Keil, C. F., & Delitzsch, F.. Commentary on the Old Testament 1:303-304).

Spurgeon on the importance of the Names of God...

There is something in every **Name of God** which may breed faith in our souls. Whether we know him as Jehovah, Elohim, Shaddai, or Lord, or by whatsoever other name he has been pleased to manifest himself, that title becomes the ground of our confidence, and is the means of fostering faith in his people's minds, when they come to understand its meaning. To a trembling people the Lord enlarges on his wonderful names. I think he also does it to excite our wonder and our gratitude. He that loves us so much is Jehovah: he that can create and destroy; he that is the self-existent God; he, even he, has set his heart upon his people, and loves them and counts them precious in his sight. It is a marvellous thing. The more one thinks of it, the more shall he be overwhelmed with astonishment, that he who is everything should love us who are less than nothing. It is the Holy One who has deigned to choose, and to love unholy men, and to look upon them in grace, and save them from their sins. That you may bow low in loving gratitude, God lets you see who he is. That you may see how great a stoop of condescension he has made, when he loves his unworthy people, and takes them into union with himself, you are made to see how great and glorious is the diving name. ([See Spurgeon's full sermon "Jehovah's Valuation of His People" - Pdf](#))

Spurgeon in Your Available Power alludes to **El Shaddai** writing that...

There are a few things that I would have you remember, and then I will be done. Remember that the Holy Spirit has His ways and methods, and there are some things that He will not do. Remember that He makes no promise to bless compromises. If we make a treaty with error or sin, we do it at our own risk. If we do anything that we are not clear about, if we tamper with truth or holiness, if we are friends of the world, if we make provision for the flesh, if we preach halfheartedly and are allied with those in error, we have no promise that the Holy Spirit will go with us.

The great promise runs in quite another strain:

Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty (**pantokrator**). (2Co 6:17, 18)

Only in that one place in the New Testament, with the exception of the book of Revelation, is God called by the name of "the Lord God Almighty." If you want to know what great things the Lord can do as the Lord God Almighty, be separate from the world and from those who apostatize from the truth.

"El-Shaddai," God all-sufficient, the God who nurtures and provides. We will never know the utmost power of God for supplying all our needs until we have cut connection once for all with everything that is not according to His mind. It was grand of Abraham when he said to the king of Sodom, "I will not take from you"—a Babylonian garment or a wedge of gold? No, no. He said, "I will not take from a thread even to a shoelatchet" (Ge 14:23). That was a clear-cut separation. The man of God will have nothing to do with Sodom or with false doctrine. If you see anything that is evil, cut yourself off from it. Be done with those who are done with truth. Then you will be prepared to receive the promise, and not until then. (**Borrow Spurgeon's [Your Available Power](#)**)

A B Simpson writes...

Beloved, have we learned, as we bow the knee in prayer, that we are talking with Him Who still says to us as to Abraham, "I am **El Shaddai; the Almighty God**"; to Jeremiah, "I am the Lord, the God of all flesh: is there any thing too hard for me?"; to Isaiah, "Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding." (A. B. Simpson. The Life of Prayer)

Lewis Sperry Chafer writes that...

In the Old Testament the title Almighty God (El Shaddai) conveys the truth that God sustains His people. The term indicates more than that God is a God of strength. That He is; but the title includes the impartation of His strength as a child draws succor from the mother's breast. The word **shad** as combined in El Shaddai, means breast, and supports the conceptions of a mother's nourishment imparted to her child. (**Bibliotheca Sacra Volume 94, 1937**)

THE JEWISH MEZUZAH and SHADDAI

The first object seen on entering a Jewish home is the **mezuzah** ([see Wikipedia article](#)) on the door-post. It is a case of metal or wood or plastic with a parchment scroll containing the passage in Deuteronomy 6:4 with others verses in that context. The name **Shaddai** (Almighty) is written on the case. Orthodox Jews on entering and leaving the home put their fingers on the mezuzah (Hebrew = door-post) and then touch their lips. Among the several ceremonial objects of the home are the Talith (based on Deut 22:12) and the Tefillin (from Ex 13:9, 16). We know these were in use in the time of our Lord, for He refers to them specifically in speaking of the Pharisees in Matthew 23:5. (**Bibliotheca Sacra Volume 111:128**)

As an aside, the Hebrew word **Shaddai** is also written on some of the Jewish prayer paraphernalia as described in the **Encyclopedia of Judaism** excerpt...

The man puts on the tallit (prayer shawl) and tefillin (phylacteries) while reciting the blessings for each. Every pious male obtains and maintains these prized and essential objects of piety in accord with the prescriptions of the rabbis and scribes. He wears these objects to show compliance with the prescriptions of the verses of the Torah recited in the shema (Deut. 6:4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11:13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21 and especially Nu 15:37, 39, 40, 41). Each knot on the four fringes of the prayer shawl is tied in accordance with age-old tradition. The phylacteries are crafted of select leather, made into cubical containers to hold the small parchments of biblical paragraphs written by trained scribes. The head-tefillin has to rest on the worshipper's forehead between the eyes, neither too high on the head, nor too low on the face. The leather strap that holds it in place is tied in accordance with known custom. The wearer understands that the knot of leather that sits at the base of his skull is a representation of the letter **yod**, the third letter of **Shaddai**, one of the divine names. On the leather box of the arm-tefillin is inscribed the letter **shin**. (Ed note: the first letter of "Shaddai") The wearer knows that the knot that holds it fast on his left biceps—opposite his heart—is a form of the letter **dalet**. (Ed note: Transliterated as "d", the last letter in the Hebrew name Shaddai, since Hebrew has no vowels) Thus as he recites the prescribed prayers, the Jew is bound head and heart to God, **Shaddai**. He wears these appurtenances each weekday from the time he reaches thirteen, the age of maturity, now commonly called the age of Bar Mitzvah...

The name of God is used in different permutations on amulets (Ed note: charm often inscribed with a magic

incantation or symbol to protect the wearer against evil!), often just **Shaddai** (the Almighty) is found.

Spurgeon has this comment on the **sufficiency** of **Shaddai**...

Another translator reads the passage, "In me thy fruit is enough." Whatever may be the accuracy of the translation, the sentiment itself is most correct. In God there is enough for all his people; and well there may be, since in him there is infinity. "I have enough, my brother," said Esau when he met Jacob: "I have all things," said Jacob in reply. None but the believer can say, "I have all things;" and therefore only he can be sure of having enough. Ishmael had his bottle of water, and went away into the wilderness; but it is written, that Isaac abode by the well: how happy is the soul which hath learned how to live by the well of his faithful God for...

**The water will be spent in the bottle,
but the water will never be spent in the well.**

Christian, remember the All Sufficiency of thy God! Let that ancient name, '**El Shaddai**'-God All-Sufficient, sound like music in thine ear-as some translate it, "The many-breasted God," yielding from Himself the sustenance of all His creatures. **Spurgeon, C. H.**

NAOMI'S LAMENT EL SHADDAI'S SUFFICIENCY

Ruth 1:20 (note) And she (Naomi) said to them (Ruth and Ophrah), "Do not call me **Naomi**, call me **Mara** (Bitter), for the **Almighty** (Hebrew = **Shaddai**; LXX = sufficient) has dealt very bitterly with me. **21** I went out full, but **Jehovah** has brought me back empty. Why do you call me Naomi, since **Jehovah** has witnessed against me and the **Almighty** (Hebrew = **Shaddai**; LXX = sufficient) has afflicted me?" (See similar use of Shaddai by Job in Job 27:2)

In Ruth 1:20-21 **Shaddai** is translated (in both verses) in the Septuagint (LXX) by the Greek phrase "**ho hikanos**", which could be rendered in English as "the Sufficient One". The Greek word **hikanos** (see word study) means sizeable, considerable, competent, ample, adequate, enough, large enough or sufficient.

THOUGHT - Now take one or more of those meanings of hikanos and "plug them back into" the Name of Naomi's God - "The _____ One"!

Naomi is saying in essence my God is...

"the Sufficient (One)"
"the (One Who is large) Enough"
"the Adequate One"

It is as if by using **Shaddai** (little used outside of Genesis and Job), Naomi is expressing trust in Him even in the midst of her pain. Take those meanings and plug them into the Name of God in Ruth 1:20-21. Naomi is saying my God is "*the Sufficient (One)*", "*the (One Who is large) Enough*", "*the Adequate One*", etc. Would it be that we could all see God as ample, adequate, competent, large enough, sufficient, etc when we are experiencing adversity or in the throes of bitterness.

THOUGHT - Open our eyes LORD to see Thee as Who Thou truly art -- "Large Enough" for any and every trial and affliction we will ever encounter. In Jesus' Mighty Name. Amen

Elsewhere (primarily in Job) the Septuagint translates **Shaddai** with the Greek **Pantokrator** (**pas** = all + **kratos** = strength, dominion) meaning Ruler over all, Omnipotent or Almighty. One explanation of the derivation of **Shaddai** is that the term means "one of the mountain" a picture that might convey the picture of safety and sufficiency. Rabbinic analysis (Babylonian Talmud) holds that **Shaddai** is composed of the **she** ="Who" + **day** ="enough" and so literally "**she-day**" means the "One Who is Sufficient", which would be consistent with how the Septuagint translates "Shaddai" in the Ruth 1:20, 21.

The **Evangelical Commentary of the Bible** observes that the book of Ruth...

The book is striking for the way in which the principal characters exhibit an abiding faith in the Lord of Israel's covenant. They know that he is alive (Ru 3:13-note), and although they might be oppressed by various eventualities in life, they trust him to turn adversity into blessing. The name generally used in Ruth for God is Yahweh, which had been revealed formally to Israel at the time of the exodus, and characterized the almighty

covenant God who promised to bless his chosen people as long as they honored him alone as their true and living God. At a time when her faith was enduring considerable stress, Naomi used the less personal name **Shaddai**, "Almighty" (Ru 1:20, 21), though even here she names Israel's covenant deity as the One Who had directed her life. (Elwell, W. A. Evangelical Commentary on the Bible. Baker Book House)

It is not surprising that the majority of OT uses of **Shaddai** are in Job (31/48 uses)! One observation from **Job** and **Ruth 1:20,21** is that **Suffering** and **Shaddai** are seen together. Perhaps when we are in the darkness then we can see clearly His Sufficiency and His Adequacy, for all our other earthly resources have come to naught. It is certainly true that when we come to the "end of our rope in Moab" and find that Jesus is all we have, we find that Jesus is all we have ever needed and that He is Enough. Eliphaz attempting to comfort for Job, reminded him of "how happy (blessed) is the man whom God reproves (corrects, disciplines). So do not despise the discipline of the **Almighty (Shaddai)**." (Job 5:17) The storms of our life prove the strength of our anchor.

Naomi's use of **Shaddai** (only in **Ruth 1:20-21**) is not by accident, for to know a specific Name of God is to know His character and His attributes inherent in that Name. And so surely Naomi knows **Shaddai** as the God with Whom we have to do, Who allows suffering, but Who is also a God Who is "enough". He is "enough" in Himself. He is self-sufficient. He has everything and He needs nothing. He is "enough" to us if we are in covenant with Him for then we have all in Him, and we have enough in Him, enough to satisfy our deepest desires, enough to supply the defect of everything else in our life and enough to secure to us happiness for our immortal souls. This is the God with Whom Naomi was intimate.

THOUGHTS TO PONDER

- Do you know God intimately as Shaddai?
- Have you come to the point in your personal relationship with God that He is enough?
- Is He sufficient to meet all your needs?
- Can Shaddai be trusted to fulfill the promises of His Word?
- What in your life looks impossible?
- Have you surrendered it fully to the Lord?
- Are you willing to wait upon Him to fulfill His promises?

SHADDAI IN PSALM 91

Psalm 91:1 He who dwells in the shelter (hiding place, secret place) of the Most High (El Elyon) will abide in the shadow of **Shaddai**. **91:2** I will say to the LORD, "My refuge & my fortress. My God, in Whom I trust!"

Spurgeon comments on the phrase "**Shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty**"...

The Omnipotent Lord will shield all those who dwell with Him, they shall remain under His care as guests under the protection of their host. In the most holy place the wings of the cherubim were the most conspicuous objects, and they probably suggested to the psalmist the expression here employed. Those who commune with God are safe with Him, no evil can reach them, for the outstretched wings of His power and love cover them from all harm. This protection is constant -- they abide under it, and it is **all sufficient**, for it is **the shadow of the Almighty**, Whose omnipotence will surely screen them from all attack. No shelter can be imagined at all comparable to the protection of Jehovah's own shadow. The **Almighty** Himself is where His shadow is, and hence those who dwell in His secret place are shielded by Himself. What a shade in the day of noxious heat! What a refuge in the hour of deadly storm! Communion with God is safety. The more closely we cling to our Almighty Father the more confident may we be.

Under the shadow of the Almighty. This is an expression which implies great nearness. We must walk very close to a companion, if we would have his shadow fall on us. Can we imagine any expression more perfect in describing the constant presence of God with His chosen ones, than this -- they shall "abide under His shadow"? ... And it is he who chooses to dwell in the secret place of the most High, who shall "abide under the shadow of the **Almighty**." There is a condition and a promise attached to it. The condition is, that we "dwell in the secret place," -- the promise, that if we do so we "shall abide under the shadow." It is of importance to view it thus. For when we remember the blessing is a promised blessing -- we are led to feel it is a gift -- a thing therefore to be prayed for in faith, as well as sought for by God's appointed means. Ah, the hopes that this awakens! My wandering, wavering, unstable heart, that of itself cannot keep to one course two days together

is to seek its perseverance from God, and not in its own strength. He will hold it to him if it be but seeking for steadfastness. It is not we who cling to Him. It is He Who keeps near to us. - Mary B. M. Duncan.

Warren Wiersbe commenting on **Psalm 91** asks...

I wonder what the safest place in the world is. A bomb shelter? A bank vault? Perhaps a prison surrounded by an army? According to Psalm 91, the safest place in the world is a shadow. "He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the **Almighty**" (Psalm 91:1 [note](#)). "He shall cover you with His feathers, and under His wings you shall take refuge; His truth shall be your shield and buckler" (Psalm 91:4 [note](#)).

What does this mean? The psalmist refers to the Holy of Holies in the tabernacle and the temple. In the Holy of Holies, two cherubim were over the mercy seat, and their wings touched each other. "Under his wings" means at the mercy seat, where the blood was sprinkled, there in the presence of the glory of God. The Holy of Holies was God's throne. It was the place of God's glory. In other words, the safest place in the world is in fellowship with God--not just visiting the Holy Place, as the high priest did once a year, but dwelling in the Holy Place. The psalmist is urging, "Live in the Holy of Holies."

According to Hebrews 10:19, 20, 21, 22 (note), we have an open invitation to come right into the presence of God and dwell in the secret place--under His wings, at the mercy seat. This is where God meets with us, where His glory is revealed, where He gives us His guidance and shows us His will. My shadow is not much protection for anyone. But when it belongs to the Almighty, a shadow is a strong protection. Live in the Holy of Holies, under the shadow of the **Almighty**.

God invites you to fellowship with Him--to live in the Holy of Holies. What an invitation! You may come into the safety of His presence and receive His mercy, guidance and protection. Do you live under God's shadow? (Warren Wiersbe. Prayer, Praise and Promises)

SHADDAI IN PSALM 68

[Psalm 68:14](#) When the **Almighty** (Shaddai) scattered the kings there, It was snowing in Zalmon.

Spurgeon comments on the **Almighty** writing that...

When the **Almighty** scattered kings in it, it was white as snow in Salmon. The victory was due to the **Almighty** arm alone; He scattered the haughty ones who came against His people, and He did it as easily as snow is driven from the bleak sides of Salmon. The word white appears to be imported into the text, and by leaving it out the sense is easy.

A traveller informed the writer that on a raw and gusty day, he saw the side of what he supposed to be Mount Salmon suddenly swept bare by a gust of wind, so that the snow was driven hither and thither into the air like the down of thistles, or the spray of the sea: thus did the Omnipotent one scatter all the potentates that defied Israel. ...Whatever may be the precise meaning, it was intended to portray the glory and completeness of the divine triumph over the greatest foes. In this let all believers rejoice.

El Roi, The God Who Sees

The following comments are modified from **C H Spurgeon's** devotional in **Morning and Evening**...

Hagar had once found deliverance there and Ishmael had drank from the water so graciously revealed by the **God Who lives and sees** the sons of men

Then she called the name of the LORD who spoke to her, "Thou art a**God who sees**" (**El Roi**); for she said, "Have I even remained alive here after seeing Him?" Therefore the well was called **Beer-lahai-roi** ("well of the Living One seeing me"); behold, it is between Kadesh and Bered. (Genesis 16:13,14)

This was a merely casual visit by Hagar and Ishmael, such as worldlings pay to the Lord in times of need,

when it serves their turn. They cry to Him in trouble, but forsake Him in prosperity. We next encounter this well in Genesis 25 Moses recording that...

And it came to pass after the death of Abraham, that God blessed his son Isaac; and Isaac **dwelt** (Hebrew = yashab emphasizes a thoroughly settled state) by the **well** (Heb = beer) **Lahai Roi** (Genesis 25:11 - **Beer-lahai-roi** = "well of the Living One seeing me")

Isaac dwelt there, and made the well of the living and all-seeing God his constant source of supply. The usual tenor of a man's life, the **dwelling** of his soul, is the true test of his state.

Perhaps the providential visitation experienced by Hagar struck Isaac's mind, and led him to revere the place; its mystical name endeared it to him; his frequent musings by its brim at eventide made him familiar with the well; his meeting Rebecca there had made his spirit feel at home near the spot; but best of all, the fact that he there enjoyed fellowship with the living God, had made him select that hallowed ground for his dwelling.

Let us learn to live in the presence of the living God Who sees all.

Let us pray the Holy Spirit that this day, and every other day, we may feel, "Thou God seest me."

May the Lord Jehovah be as a well to us, delightful, comforting, unailing, springing up unto eternal life.

The bottle of the creature cracks and dries up, but the well of the Creator never fails. Happy is he who dwells at the well, and so has abundant and constant supplies near at hand. The Lord has been a sure helper to others: His name is Shaddai, God All-sufficient. Our hearts have often had most delightful intercourse with Him. Through Him our soul has found her glorious Husband, the Lord Jesus and in Him this day we live, and move, and have our being. Let us, then, dwell in closest fellowship with Him.

**Glorious Lord, constrain us
that we may never leave Thee,
but dwell by the well of the living God Who Sees.**

GENESIS 17:1-2

C H SPURGEON

In his sermon [Consecration to God—Illustrated by Abraham's Circumcision](#), we read the following comments on Genesis 17:1, 2 by C H Spurgeon...

Recalling your minds to Abram's history, let me remind you that thirteen years had elapsed after the time in which God had said that Abram's faith was counted to him for righteousness (Genesis 15:6), and those thirteen years, so far as we can gather from Scripture, were not at all so full of brave faith and noble deeds as we might have expected them to have been.

THE "BEST OF MEN" ARE BUT MEN AT THE BEST

How sure is the truth that the **best of men** are but **men at the best**, for that very man who had accepted God's promise and had not staggered at it through unbelief, within a few months afterwards, or perhaps a few days, was taken with a fit of unbelief, and at the instigation of his wife, adopted means which were not justifiable, in order that he might obtain the promised heir. He used means which may not be so vicious to him, as they would be in men of modern times, but which were suggested by an unbelieving policy, and were fraught with evil. He takes Hagar to wife. He could not leave it to God to give him the promised seed; he could not leave it with God to fulfill His promise in His own time, but justifies himself in turning aside from the narrow path of faith to accomplish by doubtful methods the end which God Himself had promised and undertaken to accomplish.

How shorn of splendor is Abram seen when we read of him,

"and Abram hearkened unto the voice of Sarai!" (Genesis 16:2)

That business of Hagar is to the patriarch's deep discredit, and reflects no honor at all upon either him or his faith. Look at the consequences of his unbelieving procedure! Misery soon followed. Hagar despises her

mistress; Sarai throws all the blame on her husband; the poor bond-woman is so hardly dealt with that she flees from the household. How much of real cruelty may be meant by the term “dealing hardly,” I cannot tell, but one marvels that such a man as Abram allowed one who had been brought into such a relationship with him, to be heedlessly chased from his house while in a condition requiring care and kindness.

We admire the truthfulness of the Holy Ghost that he has been pleased to record the faults of the saints without extenuating them. Biographies of good men in Scripture are written with unflinching integrity, their evil recorded as well as their good. These faults are not written that we may say, “Abraham did so-and-so, therefore we may do it.” No, brethren, the lives of these good men are warnings to us as well as examples, and we are to judge them as we should judge ourselves, by the laws of right and wrong. Abram did wrong both in taking Hagar to wife and in allowing her to be badly used.

In after years the child of the bond-woman mocked the child of the free-woman, and an expulsion of both mother and child was needful. There was deep sorrow in Abram’s heart, a bitterness not to be told. Polygamy, though tolerated under the Old Testament, was never approved; it was only endured because of the hardness of men’s hearts. It is evil, only evil, and that continually. In the family relationship there can be opened no more abundant and fruitful source of misery to the sons of men than want of chastity to the marriage-bond made with one wife. Disguise that unchastity by what name you will. **All these thirteen years, so far as Scripture informs us, Abram had not a single visit from his God.** We do not find any record of his either doing anything memorable or having so much as a single audience with the Most High.

Learn from this, that if we once forsake the track of simple faith, once cease to walk according to the purity which faith approves, we strew our path with thorns, cause God to withhold the light of His countenance from us, and pierce ourselves through with many sorrows.

But mark, beloved, the exceeding grace of God. The way to recover Abram from his backsliding was that the Lord should appear to him; and, consequently, we read in our text that at ninety-nine years of age Abram was favored with a further visit from the Most High. (Genesis 17:1) This brings to my remembrance the words in the book of Revelation, concerning the church in Laodicea:

Thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth” — a very solemn declaration; but what follows? “Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me

which means just this, that for recovery out of a horrible state of languishing and lukewarmness there is no remedy but the coming of Jesus Christ to the soul in near and dear intercourse. Truly it was so with Abram. The Lord would bring him out of his state of distrust and distance into one of high dignity and sanctity, and he does it by manifesting himself to him, for the Lord talked with Abram.

“Midst darkest shades, if he appear,
My dawning is begun;
He is my soul’s bright morning star,
And he my rising sun.”

Breathe a prayer, my brethren and sisters.

“Lord, reveal thyself to my poor backsliding, languishing spirit. Revive me, O Lord, for one smile from Thee can make my wilderness blossom as the rose.”

On the occasion of this gracious manifestation, God was pleased to do for Abram what I think is to us an admirable and instructive illustration of the consecration of our redeemed spirits entirely to his service. I shall, this morning, as God may help me, first lead you to observe the model of the consecrated life; secondly, the nature of the higher life; and, thirdly, its results...

...For a man to be thoroughly sanctified to the Master’s service, he must first realize the **almightiness** and **all-sufficiency** and **glory of God**. (Ed note: cp meaning of Name El Shaddai) Brethren, the God Whom we serve filleth all things, and hath all power and all riches.

If we think little of Him we shall render little trust to Him, and consequently little obedience, but if we have grand conceptions of the glory of God, we shall learn to confide in Him most thoroughly, we shall receive mercies from Him most plentifully, and we shall be moved to serve Him most consistently.

LOW THOUGHTS

OF GOD

Sin at the bottom of it very frequently has its origin in low thoughts of God.

Take Abram's sin. He could not see how God could make him the father of many nations when Sarai was old and barren. Hence his error with Hagar (Genesis 16:1, 2, 3, 4, 5).

But if he had remembered what God now brings to his recollection, that God is **El Shaddai**, the **all sufficient One**, he would have said,

"No, I will remain true to Sarai, for God can effect his own purposes without my taking tortuous means to accomplish them. He is **all sufficient** in Himself, and not dependent upon creature strength. I will patiently hope, and quietly wait, to see the fulfillment of the Master's promises."

APPLICATION OF THE TRUTH ABOUT EL SHADDAI

Now, as with Abram, so with you, my brethren and sisters. When a man is in business difficulties, if he believes that God is all sufficient to carry him through them, he will not practice any of the common tricks of trade, nor degenerate into that shiftiness which is so usual among commercial men. If a man believes, being poor, that God is sufficient portion for him, he will not grow envious of the rich or discontented with his condition.

The man who feels that God is an all-sufficient portion for his spirit, will not look for pleasure in the pursuits of vanity; he will not go with the giddy multitude after their vain mirth.

"No," saith he, "God hath appeared unto me as God all-sufficient for my comfort and my joy. I am content so long as God is mine. Let others drink of broken cisterns if they will, I dwell by the overflowing fountain, and am perfectly content."

HIS NAMES... WHAT A MINE OF WEALTH & MEANING

O beloved, what glorious names our Lord deservedly wears! Whichever of His names you choose to dwell upon for a moment, what a mine of wealth and meaning it opens up to you!

Here is this name, "**El Shaddai**;" "El," that is, "the strong one," for infinite power dwells in Jehovah. How readily may we who are weak become mighty if we draw upon Him!

And then, "**Shaddai**," that is to say, "the unchangeable, the invincible." What a God we have then, Who knows no variableness, neither shadow of turning, against whom none can stand! "El," strong; "**Shaddai**," unchangeable in His strength; always therefore strong in every time of need, ready to defend His people, and able to preserve them from all their foes.

Come, Christian, with such a God as this why needest thou abase thyself to win the good word of the wicked man? Why gaddest thou abroad to find earthly pleasures where the roses are always mixed with thorns? Why needest thou to put thy confidence in gold and silver, or in the strength of thy body, or in aught that is beneath the moon?

Thou hast **El Shaddai** to be thine. Thy power to be holy will much depend upon thy grasping with all the intensity of thy faith the cheering fact that this God is thy God for ever and ever, thy daily portion, thine all-sufficient consolation. Thou dares not, canst not, wilt not, wander into the ways of sin when thou knowest that such a God is thy Shepherd and Guide.

WALK BEFORE ME

Following up this model of the consecrated life, notice the next words — "**walk before me**." This is the style of life which characterizes true holiness; it is a walking before God.

Ah! Brethren, Abram had walked before Sarai; he had paid undue respect to her views and wishes; he had walked, too, in the sight of his own eyes and the inclinations of his own heart when he was allied to Hagar; but now the Lord gently rebukes him with the exhortation, "Walk before me."

It is remarkable that on the former divine visit to the patriarch, the Lord's message was "Fear not." (Genesis 15:1) He was then, as it were, but a child in spiritual things, and the Lord gave him comfort, for he needed it. He is now grown into a man, and the exhortation is practical and full of activity — "**walk.**"

THE VERY FACE OF GOD

The Christian man is to put out and use the strength and grace which he hath received. The pith of the exhortation lies in the last words, "**Walk before me,**" by which I understand an habitual sense of the presence of God, or doing the right thing and shunning the wrong, out of respect to the will of God; a consideration of God in all actions, public and private.

Brethren, I deeply regret when I see Christian men, even in religious societies, in their calculations leaving out the greatest item in the whole calculation — namely, the divine element, the divine power and faithfulness.

Of the most of mankind I may say, without being censorious, that if there were no God their course of action would not be different from what it is, for they do not feel themselves either restrained or constrained by any sense of the divine presence.

"The transgression of the wicked saith within my heart, that there is no fear of God before his eyes." (Psalm 36:1-[note](#))

But this is the mark of the truly sanctified man of God, that he lives in every place as standing in the presence chamber of the divine Majesty; he acts as knowing that the eye which never sleeps is always fixed on him.

His heart's desire is that he may never do the wrong thing, because he has respect to worldly greatness, and may never forget the right thing because he is in evil company, but may reckon that God being everywhere, he is always in company where it would be impudent rebellion to sin.

The saint feels that he must not, dare not, transgress, because he is before the very face of God. This is the model of the sanctified character, for a man to realize what the Lord is, and then to act as in the immediate presence of a holy and jealous God.

BE THOU PERFECT

The next words are, "**and be thou perfect.**" Brethren, does this mean absolute perfection? I shall not controvert the belief of some, that we may be absolutely perfect on earth. Freely do I admit that the model of sanctification is perfection. It were inconsistent with the character of God for Him to give us any other than a perfect command, and a perfect standard. No law but that of absolute perfection could come from a perfect God, and to give us a model that were not absolutely perfect, were to ensure to us superabundant imperfections, and to give us an excuse for them. God sets before his servants no rule of this kind, "Be as good as you can," but this,

"Be you perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." (Mt 5:48-note)

Hath any man ever **attained** to it? Truly we have not, but for all that, every Christian **manaims** at it.

A PERFECT COPY

I would far rather my child had a perfect copy to write by, though he might never write equal to it, than that he should have an imperfect copy set before him, because then he would never make a good writer at all.

Our heavenly Father has given us the perfect image of Christ to be our example, his perfect law to be our rule, and it is for us to aim at this perfection in the power of the Holy Spirit, and, like Abram, to fall upon our faces in shame and confusion of face, when we recollect how far we have come short of it.

Perfection is what we wish for, pant after, and shall at the last obtain. We do not want to have the law toned down to our weakness. Blessed be God, we delight in the perfection of that law. We say with Paul,

"The law is holy, and just, and good, but I am carnal, sold under sin." (Ro 7:12-note)

The will of God is that which we would be conformed unto; and if we who are believers had but one wish, and it could be granted to us at once, it should be this, to make us perfect in every good work to do his will,

working in us that which is well-pleasing in his sight. (Php 2:13NLT-note)

AS TRANSPARENT AS GLASS

However, the word “perfect,” as I have said, bears commonly the meaning of “upright,” or “sincere” — “walk before me, and be thou sincere.” No double dealing must the Christian man have, no playing fast and loose with God or man; no hypocritical professions, or false principles. He must be as transparent as glass; he must be a man in whom there is no guile, a man who has cast aside deceit in every shape, who hates it, and loathes it, and walks before God, who sees all things with absolute sincerity, earnestly desiring in all things, both great and small, to commend himself to the conscience of others as in the sight of the Most High.

Brethren, here is the model of the consecrated life. Do you not long to attain to it? I am sure every soul that is moved by God’s grace will do so. But if your feeling about it is like mine, it will be just that of Abram in the text,

“Abram fell on his face before the Lord.”

For oh, how far short we have come of this! We have not always thought of God as all-sufficient; we have been unbelieving. We have doubted Him here, and doubted Him there.

We have not gone to work in this world as if we believed the promise,

“I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.”

We have not been satisfied to suffer, or to be poor, and we have not been content to do his will without asking questions.

We might often have had addressed to us the rebuke,

“Is the Lord’s hand waxed short? Is his arm shortened at all? Is his ear heavy, that he cannot hear?”

WE DO NOT FEEL THE PRESENCE OF THE LORD AS CHECK

Brethren, we have not always walked before the Lord. If one may speak for the rest, we do not always feel the presence of God as a check to us. There are angry words perhaps at the table; there is wrong-doing in the place of business; there are carelessness, worldliness, pride, and I know not what beside of evil to mar the day’s labor; and when we come back at night we have to confess,

“I have gone astray like a lost sheep, I have forgotten my Shepherd’s presence. I have not always spoken and acted as if I felt that Thou wast always looking upon me.”

Thus it has come to pass that we have not been perfect. I feel ready to laugh, not the laugh of Abram, but that of thorough ridicule, when I hear people talk about their being absolutely perfect. They must be of very different flesh and blood from us, or rather they must be great fools, full of conceit, and utterly ignorant of themselves; for if they did but look at a single action, they would find specks in it; and if they examined but one single day, they would perceive something in which they fell short, if there were nothing in which they had transgressed.

YOUR MODEL... THE LIFE OF CHRIST

You see your model, brethren, study it in the life of Christ, and then press forward to it with the zeal of the apostle who said,

“Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.” (See notes Philippians 3:12; 13; 14)

(Read the full sermon [Consecration to God—Illustrated by Abraham's Circumcision](#))

ON EL SHADDAI

Nathan Stone has the following explanation of El Shaddai in his classic work the [Names of God \(online version\)](#)...

DERIVATION AND MEANING OF THE NAME

Now what does the term God Almighty mean? We might begin by saying what it does not mean, and by ridding ourselves of a common misconception. True, the word almighty does suggest the all-powerful, the mighty, the power to be able to do anything and everything at any time. Certainly there cannot be anything beyond God's power. But this is indicated in the word God in this name, and not so much in the word we translate "almighty." The word for God here is El—El-Shaddai—God Almighty.

In our first study, we discovered that the name **Elohim** is derived primarily from this word el, and that it stood for might, power, omnipotence, transcendence, the name connected especially with Creation. We learned that the word el itself is translated "God" over 200 times in the Bible with that general significance.

"Thou art the El that doest wonders: thou hast made known thy strength among the peoples" (Ps 77:14 [note](#))

He is

the El of Israel who giveth strength and might to the people (Ps 68:35)

And Moses says of Him:

What El is there in the heavens or in the earth who can do according to thy works, and according to thy might? (Deut. 3:24).

It is the word Isaiah uses in the wonderful fortieth chapter of his prophecy of the mighty, incomparable God. It is the word often used to denote God's power to interpose or intervene. So Nehemiah calls upon the great, the mighty, and the terrible El to intervene in behalf of His people (Neh 9:32).

This word el is also translated by such words as "might" and "power," with regard to men. Laban says to Jacob: "It is in the power of my hand to do you hurt" (Ge 31:29). The word for power is el.

In Proverbs 3:27 we read:

Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power [the el] of thine hand to do it.

They practice evil because it is in the power of their hand. (Micah 2:1),

The psalmist speaks of Him as

the El that girdeth me with strength (Ps 18:32 [note](#))

It seems clear, then, with regard to this name God Almighty, or El-Shaddai, that the idea of all might and all power is abundantly expressed in the term God or El. How, then, shall we understand that part of the name called Almighty or Shaddai?

In the first place, it is true that there is some difference of opinion as to the root meaning of this word. The translation of it as "almighty" is due to the influence of that ancient Latin version of the Bible called the Vulgate, which dates back to the fourth century A.D., and was written by Jerome. There are some scholars who simply dismiss the matter by saying its derivation is doubtful. Other modern scholars believe it comes from a root meaning strong, powerful, or to do violence, especially in the sense of one who is so powerful as to be able to set aside or do violence to the laws of nature or the ordinary course of nature. It is true that this is what happened in connection with the revelation of this name to Abraham, for the deadness of their bodies was overcome, and Isaac was born in fulfillment of the promise after their bodies were considered dead. Thus one scholar writes that

Elohim is the God who creates nature so that it is and supports it so that it continues, El-Shaddai the God who compels nature to do what is contrary to itself.

And so another says that as El-Shaddai He reveals Himself by special deeds of power.

It is quite likely that there is some connection between the name Shaddai and the root from which some modern scholars think it is derived, but in view of the circumstances under which it is often used and in view of the translation of another word almost exactly like it, we believe it has another derivation and a more significant meaning than that of special power.

Shaddai itself occurs forty-eight times in the Old Testament and is translated "almighty." The other word so like it, and from which we believe it to be derived, occurs twenty-four times and is translated "breast." As connected with the word breast, the title Shaddai signifies one who nourishes supplies, satisfies. Connected with the word for God, El, it then becomes the "One mighty to nourish, satisfy, supply." Naturally with God the idea would be intensified, and it comes to mean the One who "sheds forth" and "pours" out sustenance and blessing. In this sense, then, God is the all-sufficient, the all-bountiful. For example, Jacob upon his deathbed, blessing his sons and forecasting their future, says in Genesis 49:24, 25, concerning Joseph:

the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob...even by the God [El] of thy father, who shall help thee; and by the Almighty [Shaddai], who shall bless thee with blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lieth under, blessings of the breasts and of the womb."

The distinction and significance of names here is quite striking and obvious. It is God as El who helps, but it is God as Shaddai who abundantly blesses with all manner of blessings, and blessings of the breast.

This derivation as related to God is even more strikingly brought out in two passages in the Book of Isaiah. In Isa 60:15,16, speaking of the restoration of the people Israel in the future, Isaiah says: "Whereas thou halt been forsaken and hated . . . I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations. Thou shalt also suck the milk of the nations, and shalt suck the breast of kings: and [thus] thou shalt know that I Jehovah am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob." Here the idea of bounty under the figure of blessings of the breast is directly associated with God. In Isaiah 66:10, 11, 12, 13, one of the most beautiful passages of Scripture, it is even more directly expressed. In Is 66:10, 11 the prophet calls upon all who love Jerusalem and mourn over her to rejoice and be glad in her redemption and restoration.

That ye may suck and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations; that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory.

In Isa 66:12 he continues:

For thus saith Jehovah, Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the nations like a flowing stream: then shall ye suck....

and in Is 66:13:

as one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem.

The point is that the word translated "breast" in these passages is the Hebrew shad from which is derived Shaddai, the name of God translated "almighty" in our Bibles.

In that ancient version of the Bible we call the Septuagint, translated by Jewish scholars from the Hebrew into Greek more than 250 years B.C., this name Shaddai is rendered a number of times by a Greek word hikanos which can be translated "as self-sufficient." The ancient rabbis also said that the word Shaddai was made up of two particles which, put together, meant "sufficient" or "self-sufficient".

Such a conception of a god or deity was not uncommon to, the ancients. The idols of the ancient heathen are sometimes termed sheddinn in the Bible. It is no doubt because they were regarded as the great agents of nature or the heavens, in giving rain, in causing the earth to send forth its springs, to yield its increase, its fruits to maintain and to nourish life. There were many-breasted idols worshiped among the heathen. One historian points out that "the whole body of the Egyptian goddess Isis was clustered over with breasts because all things are sustained or nourished by the earth or nature." The same was true of the idol of the Ephesian goddess Diana in Acts 19, for Diana (aka = Artemis - Ac 19:24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 34, 35) signified nature and the world with all its products. Ancient inscriptions on some of these idols of Diana read: "All-various nature, mother of all things." It is interesting to observe here that the common Hebrew word for field (sadeh)—that is, a cultivated field—is simply another form of the word Shaddai. It is the field as cultivated earth which nourishes and sustains life.

Thus in this name God is seen to be the power or shedder-forth of blessings, the all-sufficient and the all-bountiful One. Of course, the idea of One who is all powerful and all mighty is implied in this; for only an all-powerful One could be all sufficient and all bountiful. He is almighty because He is able to carry out His purposes and plans to their fullest and most glorious and triumphant completion. He is able to triumph over every obstacle and over all opposition; that is, He is sufficient for all these things. He is able, we are told, to subdue all things to Himself. But the word able applied to God refers more than an the ine else to what He wants to be and to do for man. So He is able to save to the uttermost. And He is able to do exceedingly

abundantly above all that we can ask or think. From all this it is felt that the name El-Shaddai or God Almighty is much better understood as that El who is all sufficient and all bountiful, the source of all blessing and fullness and fruitfulness. This leads us to our next consideration.

THE USE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE NAME

Let us look again for a moment at the circumstances under which this name was first revealed. To a man who apparently had some measure of understanding about the one true God and who gave some promise of faith; who left a settled and assured abode, comfortable circumstances, and family and friends to go on a long hazardous journey he knew not whither, God made certain promises: the promise of a land, a large posterity, and a spiritual mission. He was fairly well advanced in years when the promise was first made. For many years his faith stood the test of waiting while God repeatedly assured him of the promise. When it appeared, however, that soon it would be too late, humanly speaking, for such a promise to be fulfilled, he took matters into his own hands, and Ishmael was born of Hagar, of the will of man, of the will of the flesh and not of God.

God allowed thirteen years more to pass, till it was no longer possible according to the flesh that the child of promise should be born. Then when God appears to him again to repeat the promise of a seed Abraham can only think in terms of Ishmael and begs that he might be allowed to live and the promise made sure in him. Yet he laughs with a mixture of both doubt and hope within that it may yet be true. Perhaps faith predominates as he says in heart: "Shall a child be born to him that is a hundred years old? And shall Sarah that is ninety years old, bear?" (Ge 17:17). It was to this faith in God's promise that Paul refers in Romans 4:19-21 that Abraham "staggered not at the promise of God," and did not consider his own body as good as dead or Sarah's, and was fully persuaded that what God promised He was able to perform. And the Epistle to the Hebrews refers to Sarah's faith, who received strength to give birth when past age (He 11:11-note). It is then that God reveals Himself to Abraham as El-Shaddai, mighty in sufficiency and dispensing of His bounty. He is, first of all, sufficient to revive the deadness of the human body in order to show His great power and bounty.

It was a staggering promise by the time it was finally repeated, but they did not stagger at it. It is by this new name, in this connection, that God now reveals Himself as the Mighty Promiser and Giver of gifts. Abraham and Sarah had to learn that what God promises only God can give, that the promise was not to be made sure by the works of the flesh. So the bodies of both of them must die first to make them realize that it was all of God. Jacob had to be made lame and halt before he could finally reenter the land of promise, lest he should claim it as acquired by his own hand and cunning, and boast of his own sufficiency. So, too, God's salvation in Christ is His gift to us and not to be earned by anything we may do—"not of works lest any man should boast."

Thus this name also taught Abraham his own insufficiency, the futility of relying upon his own efforts and the folly of impatiently running ahead of God. Numberless Christian people have been guilty of just this, often to their sorrow and loss. The birth of Ishmael proved to be a sore trial, not only in Abraham's household, but to Abraham's descendants, both physical and spiritual, all through the ages. God as El-Shaddai is sufficient for all things. Man's meddling only mars His working. It is significant that with the revelation of this name Abraham is enjoined to "walk before me, and be thou perfect." Instead of perfect, the word complete or wholehearted would much better express what is meant. The point is that Abraham's faith had been marred by the fleshly and self-sufficient expedient to which he had resorted. The mighty all-sufficient One demands and deserves our complete faith—a wholehearted faith.

Then this name introduces God to us as the all-bountiful in the fullness and fruitfulness He imparts to all who trust Him and wait patiently upon Him. This is most clearly set forth and illustrated in the first few occasions of the use of this name. As God Almighty or El-Shaddai, God changes the name Abram, which means "exalted father," to Abraham, which means "father of a multitude," many nations. "I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee" (Ge 17:6). In blessing Jacob, Isaac says (Ge 28:3): "El-Shaddai bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people." In Genesis 35:11, God Himself says to Jacob: "I am El-Shaddai: be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins:" Jacob upon his deathbed repeats the promise of a great posterity made in the name of El-Shaddai (Ge 48:3,4), and in that name pronounces the same blessing upon Joseph, the blessings of Heaven and earth and of the breasts and of the womb (Ge 49:25).

It is the name used by Balaam, who, being hired to curse Israel, was compelled to turn it into a blessing. It is the "vision of the Almighty" (Nu 24:4, 16) which makes him see Israel a goodly people, spread out, with its seed in many waters, and as final victor over all its enemies through that Star of Jacob and the Scepter of

Israel, its Messiah. Certainly this significance of the name may be gathered from the Book of Job, where it occurs thirty-one out of the forty-eight times it appears in the Old Testament, for the end of Job was even more blessed and abundantly fruitful than his beginning.

It is in this connection that another aspect of the name El-Shaddai, as the One who fills and makes fruitful, appears. We have already seen that to experience God's sufficiency one must realize one's own insufficiency. To experience God's fullness one must empty self. It is not easy to empty self. It was never easy to do that. The less empty of self we are, the less of blessing God can pour into us; the more of pride and self-sufficiency, the less fruit we can bear. Sometimes only chastening can make us realize this. Thus it is that the name Almighty God or El-Shaddai is used in connection with judging, chastening, purging. Is it not significant that it is in connection with the loss of her home, her husband and her two sons, the fruit of her womb, that Naomi says: "The Almighty [Shaddai] hath dealt very bitterly with me"? "I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me home again empty . . . the Almighty [again Shaddai] hath afflicted me" (Ru 1:20, 21-note). And as in the case of Naomi is it not also true of Job that even this "perfect and upright" man was made more upright or whole through sufferings; that he was purged, through chastening, of some imperfections which hindered his fullest blessing and fruitfulness; that this chastening emptied him so completely of self that he could be "filled with all the fullness of God"? (Ep 3:19-note). He understood this in the day when he said: "But now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes" (Job 42:5, 6). Then he received power with God to intercede for his friends, and he was filled with double blessings. The same El-Shaddai of the Old Testament is the One who in the New chastens whom He loves that, being exercised thereby, they may yield the peaceable fruit of holiness or righteousness. He is the same One who has chosen us to bring forth fruit, much fruit, and that this fruit should remain (Jn 15:16). As the all-sufficient One He says, "Without me ye can do nothing" (John 15:5). As the all-abounding One who makes us fruitful with His gifts, He finds it necessary to purge us that we may bring forth more fruit (Jn 15:2).

In the Book of Revelation the name Almighty appears in connection with the pouring out of judgments. Of the Lord God Almighty it is said, "True and righteous are thy judgments" (Re 16:7-note). We read of "the war of the great day of God, the Almighty" (Re 16:14-note), and Re 19:15-note speaks of "the fierceness of the wrath of God the Almighty." May it not be that this is simply the opposite aspect of that name which signifies the pouring forth of blessings! Of the new heavens and new earth in Revelation 21 we are told that the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple (Re 21:22-note), and its glory and light (Re 21:23-note). But the Lamb which was the last word and full manifestation of God's outpouring of love and life upon man is the Lamb slain—rejected and slain of man. It is from the wrath of the Lamb that men hide. It is the Lamb, too, who opens the seals and pours out judgment. If man will not receive fullness of love and life from God, he must receive judgment. For He who poured out His blood that men might have life and have it more abundantly must pour out the judgment of sin and death upon all who will not receive it.

But even here the ultimate purpose is of love and mercy. The judgment of some is to turn to the mercy of many, that He may see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied, that ten thousand times ten thousand may gather about the throne and sing the song of the all-bountiful, all-merciful God and of the Lamb.

So we see that the name Almighty God speaks to us of the inexhaustible stores of His bounty, of the riches and fulness of His grace in self-sacrificing love pouring itself out for others. It tells us that from God comes every good and perfect gift, that He never wearies of pouring His mercies and blessings upon His people. But we must not forget that His strength is made perfect in our weakness; His sufficiency is most manifest in our insufficiency; His fullness in our emptiness, that being filled, from us may flow rivers of living water to a thirsty and needy humanity. (Stone, Nathan: [Names of God - online version](#))