

# El Shaddai: God Almighty, the Sufficient One

אֱלֹהֵי שַׁדַּי

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**Text:** Gen. 17:1; Psa. 91:1-2<sup>1</sup>

**Date:** March 23, 7pm

**Series:** Drawing Near to God through His Name

**Introduction:** The Name “El Shaddai” is found in the Old Testament 48 times in our Bible. It means “The Almighty God”, or the One Who is entirely sufficient.

## Meaning

There is debate about the origin of the Name.

- Some believe “Shaddai” comes from an Akkadian word *Šadu*, meaning “mountain,” suggesting strength and power, so El Shaddai would be: “God who is like the mountains”. Like the mountains, God is unchanging and strong. It is translated as “God Almighty” in the Septuagint.
- Others believe “Shaddai” comes from a word that refers to a mother’s breast and that it refers to provision and nourishment. “Shad” is translated this way in Exo. 29:26 and Lam. 4:3).
- It is very likely a play on both words. El Shaddai is the Powerful God who sustains the universe and who loves to nourish, provide for, and satisfy His children.

His Name El Shaddai gives us several insights into Who He is.

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## Outline

- (1.) El Shaddai is the God who is **mighty** in sustaining and maintaining His creation.  
We need to have confidence in God’s *power*.
  - (2.) El Shaddai is the God who **merciful** in blessing and nourishing His children.  
We need to have confidence in God’s *provision*.
  - (3.) El Shaddai is the God who is **mindful** to guide and protect His children.  
We need to have confidence in God’s *plan*.
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<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture is from the *English Standard Version* of the Bible.

The first place we hear the Name El Shaddai, is **Genesis 17**. There we find a man in great need. He's been given a promise by God that his elderly wife is going to have a baby. She's 89 now, and no baby. Is God powerful enough to do this. This is where God reveals Himself to be the "Almighty" to Abraham. He is able to do anything.

I. We ought to have confidence in God's **power** (Gen. 17:1-2; 18-19).

**Principle:** El Shaddai is the God who is **mighty** in sustaining and maintaining His creation

As I said, the first place we hear the Name El Shaddai, is **Genesis 17:1-2**, "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, 2 that I may make my covenant between me and you, and may multiply you greatly."

God sustains the universe. He is the Almighty. He makes some very hefty promises to His beloved child Abraham.

### **Context**

Abraham was 99 years old. Sarah was 89. God made a promise to them that they would have a son, and he's about to reiterate it in this chapter. What was Abraham's response? **Verses 18-19**, "And Abraham said to God, "Oh that Ishmael might live before you!" 19 God said, "No, but Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac. I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his offspring after him."

Like Abraham, we are so quick to doubt God's promises.

We need to remember what God said to Jeremiah in **Jeremiah 32:27**, "Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh. Is anything too hard for me?"

God is completely sufficient for us!

- He is able to do whatever He pleases.
- He is able to fulfill all His promises.
- He is able to accomplish all His decrees.
- And He is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think.
- Nothing is too hard for our God

Remember I told you that one of the possible meanings of El Shaddai is "God who is like the mountains"—all powerful? Consider David's meditation in Psalm 121, "I lift up my eyes to the hills. From where does my help come? 2 My help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth. 3 He will not let your foot be moved; he who keeps you will not slumber. 4 Behold, he who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep. 5 The LORD is your keeper; the LORD is your shade on your right hand. 6 The sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night. 7 The LORD will keep you from all evil; he will keep your life. 8 The LORD will keep your going out and your coming in from this time forth and forevermore."

**Application:** God has infinite power. He is our help. He sustains the universe. He sustains you every day. He is more than enough for what we face each day.

**Prayer:** El Shaddai, I want to faithfully follow You, believing You are enough for me.

II. El Shaddai is the God who *merciful* in blessing and nourishing His children.

**Principle:** We ought to have confidence in God's **provision**.

Remember one of the meanings of the name El Shaddai refers to the nourishment of a mother for her child.

We see this with name El Shaddai in **Psalm 91:1**, "He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty."

### **Context**

God promised Abraham and Sarah a baby. Did it seem impossible? Yes. Did God provide? Absolutely.

### **Context**

**Verses 18-19**, "And Abraham said to God, "Oh that Ishmael might live before you!"  
19 God said, "No, but Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac. I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his offspring after him."

"...God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:19).

### **Implications of the name El Shaddai**

- The Name "El Shaddai" is found in the Old Testament 48 times in our Bible, and interestingly 31 of them are in **Job**. No wonder God revealed himself to Job and doubled his possessions. God provided for Job's needs. His so-called "friends" kept telling him there was no help for Him in God, but Job just keeps calling God 'more than enough'. You can't do that in the face of such adversity unless you really believe it. ***Do you believe God is "more than enough"*** Is God more than you need?
- God is powerful enough to provide His people with blessings. Not only is He powerful enough to do so; He wants to bless His people!
  - **Psalm 84:11**, "For the LORD God is a sun and shield; the LORD bestows favor and honor. No good thing does he withhold from those who walk uprightly."

- We should never doubt God's desire to help us as His children. **Romans 8:32**, "He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?"

### **Examples of God's goodness and provision**

- God provided manna in the wilderness
- He who caused a pair of shoes to walk thousands of miles for forty years and remain new, and caused a coat to last all that time without the least wear, can clothe you. He who caused an ax to swim can keep you afloat. The name of our God is El Shaddai, God All-Sufficient!

**Prayer:** El Shaddai, I am trusting you to meet all my needs.

III. El Shaddai is the God who is *mindful* to guide and protect His children.

**Principle:** We ought to have confidence in God's *plan*.

No matter how rough life is, now power in heaven and earth can thwart El Shaddai's plan for us as long as we are in Christ.

### **Context**

What was God's plan for Abraham?

**Genesis 17:4-6**, "Behold, my covenant is with you, and you shall be the father of a multitude of nations. 5 No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham, for I have made you the father of a multitude of nations. 6 I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make you into nations, and kings shall come from you."

Then we read in **verses 7-14** of the sign of the covenant – *circumcision*.

### **Listen to God's promise and then consider: What was Abraham's response?**

**Verses 15-20**, "And God said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. 16 I will bless her, and moreover, I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall become nations; kings of peoples shall come from her." 17 Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed and said to himself, "Shall a child be born to a man who is a hundred years old? Shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?" 18 And Abraham said to God, "Oh that Ishmael might live before you!" 19 God said, "No, but Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac. I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his offspring after him. 20 As for Ishmael, I have heard you".

**Psalms 37:4-5**, "Delight yourself in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart. 5 Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him, and he will bring it to pass".

Is El Shaddai able to fulfill his power and plan for Abraham and provide for all His needs?

He's also able to direct your life and provide for and protect you.

**Prayer:** El Shaddai, I trust that your plan is perfect for my life.

**Conclusion:** So how should you pray, using God's Name, El Shaddai?

I think we have a beautiful prayer in **Ephesians 3:20-21**, "Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, 21 to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen."