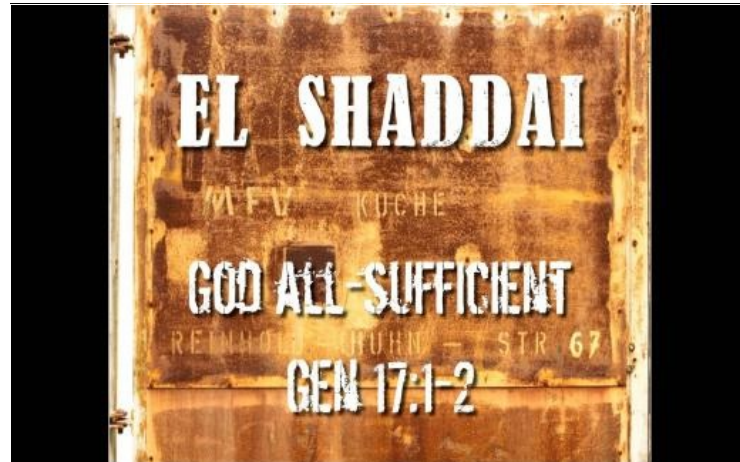


God Almighty



El Shaddai; God All-Sufficient (graphic); from [Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem](#); accessed December 6, 2013.

These studies are designed for believers in Jesus Christ only. If you have exercised faith in Christ, then you are in the right place. If you have not, then you need to heed the words of our Lord, Who said, “For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten [or, uniquely-born] Son, so that every [one] believing [or, trusting] in Him shall not perish, but shall be have eternal life! For God did not send His Son into the world so that He should judge the world, but so that the world shall be saved through Him. The one believing [or, trusting] in Him is not judged, but the one not believing has already been judged, because he has not believed in the Name of the only-begotten [or, uniquely-born] Son of God.” (John 3:16–18). “I am the Way and the Truth and the Life! No one comes to the Father except through [or, by means of] Me!” (John 14:6).

Every study of the Word of God ought to be preceded by a naming of your sins to God. This restores you to fellowship with God (1John 1:8–10). If we acknowledge our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness (1John 1:9). If there are people around, you would name these sins silently. If there is no one around, then it does not matter if you name them silently or whether you speak aloud.

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

What Others Say about El Shaddai

Preface: God introduces Himself to Abram as 'El Shaddai. Here is what this word means and where it is found.

1. Etymology: *God Almighty* here is two words, the first being 'el (אֵל) [pronounced *ale*], a word with four or five entirely different meanings and several sub-usages within those categories of meanings. One usage has to do with strength and might, and in this regard, can refer to any deity; i.e., the God of the Universe or pagan gods (Isa. 43:10 44:10, 15, 17). It is rarely used alone and can refer to *mighty ones* (a reference to *men* or to *angels*—Ex. 31:11 Isa. 9:6 29:1 89:7) as well as to God (Gen. 31:13 35:1, 3). The second word in this title is shadday (שַׁדַּי) [pronounced *shad-dah'-ee*] and it means (*self-*) *sufficient, almighty, many-breasted*¹ and here it would be best translated *All-Sufficient*. At least one author, Gibson, did not believe that we even have

¹ This rendering comes from Thieme and it may find its basis in Gen. 49:25 and the similarity of the words

a definition for this particular term.² When *el* and *shadday* are used together, we have two nouns and what is technically known as antimereia [pronounced *an'-ti-me'-rei-a*]: the use of a noun as another part of speech. When two nouns are placed in regimen, often one of them can be translated as an adjective. The literal translation of this title would be *God—the All-Sufficient* [or, *Omniscient*] *One*, or the idiomatic translation would be *the All-Sufficient God*. Very few translations show any consistency one way or the other when rendering antimereias (although particular antimereias might receive a consistent translation..

2. The *first* use of the title *God Almighty* is found in Gen. 17:1. We do not know if God uses it first of Himself here or whether it was a title for our Lord just not put into Scripture until now. This designation for our Lord is found 31 times in Job, which is coterminous with this narrative. That is why I italicized *first* because Job very likely predates Abram or the book of Job predates this portion of Scripture. In this verse, God renews His covenant with Abram, both for possession of the land of Canaan and for the multitude of Abram's descendants. Abram is 99 and sexually dead; his wife has been infertile for at least the entirety of their marriage. This is the most apropos place to introduce God as the *All-Sufficient God*. God has several components to His character; He is Omniscient, Omnipotent, Omnipresent, Love, Perfection, Truth, etc. Here, He is presented as Omnipotent, or all-powerful; God with the ability to do anything, to accomplish anything. He is a God Whose strength and abilities transcend the laws of the universe, which universe He Himself created, which universe He holds together with the power of His Word, and which laws He predetermined.
3. However, the actual chronological first use of the term *Almighty* is very likely Job 5:17. The author has already spoken of God using the terms Elohim (Job 1:1) and Yahweh (Job 1:12). *Almighty* is associated with punishment for wrongdoing, of which Eliphaz believed Job to be guilty. *Almighty* is also associated with discipline in Job 6:4 21:20 Ruth 1:20, 21
4. Job associates fear (awe and respect) with God as [the]³ *Almighty* in Job 6:14
5. *Almighty* can be used as just a synonym for *God* in poetical or prose usage as a way to prevent monotony as in Job 8:3, 5 11:7 13:3 15:25 Psalm 68:14 91:1 etc.
6. *Shadday* is associated with service and obedience (which would be related to our reverence of Him (Job 21:15 22:23)
7. Our insignificance is contrasted with His omnipotence with the use of *Almighty* as in Job 22:3
8. We find our defense and protection in the *Almighty* (Job 22:25 29:5)
9. *Almighty* is used with omniscience in Job 24:1 (although I am struggling with the translation of that verse)
10. Job becomes particularly bold at the end of his discourse and demands to speak to the Almighty directly in Job 31:35
11. One aspect of God's omnipotence is His creation of the spirit within us, and *Almighty* is related to this in Job 32:8 (*spark of life* is mistranslated *inspiration* in the KJV) 33:4.
12. Elihu associates the *Almighty* with God's power, justice and righteousness in Job 37:23.
13. Isaac uses the title *God Almighty* in relationship to blessing of Jacob (Gen. 28:3). God uses the same term of Himself in a similar fashion in Gen. 35:11. See also Gen. 48:3 49:25
14. Jacob associates mercy and provision with *God the All-Sufficient One* in Gen. 43:14.

² Davidson's *Introductory Hebrew Grammar~Syntax*, p. 25

³ Proper names and certain appellatives (i.e., a descriptive title), such as divine titles, do not require a definite article to carry the English sense of a definite article

15. One of the difficult verses of Scripture is Ex. 6:3, wherein God is speaking to Moses, saying, "I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob as God Almighty; but by my name Yahweh, I did not make myself known to them." The JEP's quote this verse as one of their *proof* texts that the Pentateuch was assembled from several manuscripts, all written centuries after the events which occurred in the Pentateuch. As we understand *make known* this makes little sense as Abram knew God as Yahweh in Gen. 15:8 17: 18:1; Isaac knew God as Yahweh (Gen. 25:21 26:24, 28–29 27:27); and so did Jacob (Gen. 28:13, 16 49:18). The word *name* in Ex. 6:3 more often means *reputation, character, and essence* rather than our simple way of designating a person; this means that there are aspects of God's character which are tied to His Essence in relationship to His name Yahweh which Moses would become aware of and which Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were not aware. This is likely the very personal nature of God and His specific righteousness (which would be revealed in the Law). Furthermore, the verb *to know* connotes more in Hebrew than it does in English; a more intimate relationship could be implied than one of blessing if you're good and discipline when you're not and a much more specific Law and nation would come to pass, an exclusive, everlasting relationship between God and Israel. See the conclusion below.
16. Ezekiel associates God's voice with *Almighty* in Ezek. 1:24 10:5
17. The day of the Lord is associated with the vengeance of the *Almighty* in Isa. 13:6 and Joel 1:15
18. **Conclusion:** God as the *Almighty* or as the *Omniscient, All-Sufficient One* is a basic understanding of His essence. He is all-powerful exacting justice, so He is therefore to be revered and feared. In this regard, He executes judgement and is associated with discipline. Also, as the Almighty God, He is associated with provision for the needs of those related to Him. It is in this capacity that God blesses and curses. To know God this way is to apprehend His most basic essence without any true detail. We do not see the full extent of His expectations, His justice, His law nor to we have a full comprehension of His personal character of love and mercy.

An issue of no small importance, related to this study, is the use of these titles of God as it relates to the authorship of the various books in the Bible. I enter into this subject with some fear and trepidation because other scholars with great previous predispositions have also entered into this same realm and have come up with some theories and conclusions which are totally fallacious (the JEP proponents). However, we note that in Job, we have the continued use of the title *Almighty* (as well as Elohim and Yahweh) with a frequency not found anywhere else in the pages of Scripture. This would indicate that (1) the author of the book of Job was not an author of any other book of the Bible and/or (2) the time frame during which *Job* was written the *Almighty* was one of the most common titles for God (I believe that it is used by all those who speak in the book of Job). The title *God Almighty* is found 5 times at the end of Genesis and then **only** in two more passages (Ex. 6:3—which is a direct quote from God; and Ezek. 10:5). Again this would indicate that (1) the author(s) of the book of the last portion of *Genesis* was not an author of any other book of the Bible and/or (2) the time frame during which that portion of God's Word was written was a time during which the title *God Almighty* (or, God the All-Sufficient One) was in common usage which ended with Ex. 6:3.

Here is how others have dealt with this topic:

What Others Say about El Shaddai

Scripture	Text/Commentary
Barnes	שׁדַּי shaday, Shaddai, "Irresistible, able to destroy, and by inference to make, Almighty." שׁדַּד shâdad "be strong, destroy." This name is found six times in Genesis, and thirty-one times in Job.

What Others Say about El Shaddai

Scripture	Text/Commentary
John Calvin	<p>אֱלֹהֵי שָׁדַי, (El Shaddai,) a title of Jehovah, apparently of plural form, Gesenius calls it the plural of majesty. It seems chiefly intended to convey the notion of Omnipotence. Some render the words, 'God all sufficient; 'but the original root of שָׁדַי conveys the notion, rather of overwhelming, than of sustaining power. The word is therefore better rendered, as in our version, Almighty. It corresponds with the Greek παντοκράτωρ, and with the Latin Omnipotens. — Ed</p>
Adam Clarke	<p>I am the Almighty God - אֱנִי אֱלֹהֵי שָׁדַי ani El shaddai, I am God all-sufficient; from שָׁדַי shadah, to shed, to pour out. I am that God who pours out blessings, who gives them richly, abundantly, continually.</p>
John Gill	<p>and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; 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 Rev_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" (c), 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</p>
Guzik	<p>I am Almighty God: First, God told Abram who He is. By this name El Shaddai, He revealed His Person and character to Abram. However, there is some debate as to what exactly the name El Shaddai means.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Kidner: "A traditional analysis of the name is 'God (el) who (sa) is sufficient (day)." ii. 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." iii. 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). iv. Leupold: Shaddai comes from the root shadad, which means "to display power." v. We do know the Septuagint translates the word with the Greek pantokrator "Almighty," the "One who has His hand on everything."
ISBE	<p>Shadday In the patriarchal literature, and in Job particularly, where it is put into the mouths of the patriarchs, this name appears sometimes in the compound אֱלֹהֵי שָׁדַי, 'Él shadday, sometimes alone. While its root meaning also is uncertain, the suggested derivation from שָׁדַד, shâdhadh, "to destroy," "to terrify," seems most probable, signifying the God who is manifested by the terribleness of His mighty acts. "The Storm God," from שָׁדַח, shâdhâ', "to pour out," has been suggested, but is improbable; and even more so the fanciful ש, she, and י, day, meaning "who is sufficient." Its use in patriarchal days marks an advance over looser Semitic conceptions to the stricter monotheistic idea of almightiness, and is in accord with the early consciousness of Deity in race or individual as a God of awe, or even terror. Its monotheistic character is in harmony with its use in the Abrahamic times, and is further corroborated by its parallel in Septuagint and New Testament, παντοκράτωρ, pantokratôr, "all-powerful."</p>
Jamieson, Fausset and Brown	<p>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" (Psalm 16:5-6; Psalm 73:25).</p>

What Others Say about El Shaddai

Scripture	Text/Commentary
Keil and Delitzsch	<p>Here Jehovah describes Himself as El Shaddai, God the Mighty One. יְדֵשׁ: from דָּשׁ to be strong, with the substantive termination ai, like יָגַח the festal, יְשִׁישִׁי the old man, יָנִיס the thorn-grown, etc. This name is not to be regarded as identical with Elohim, that is to say, with God as Creator and Preserver of the world, although in simple narrative Elohim is used for El Shaddai, which is only employed in the more elevated and solemn style of writing. It belonged to the sphere of salvation, forming one element in the manifestation of Jehovah, and describing Jehovah, the covenant God, as possessing the power to realize His promises, even when the order of nature presented no prospect of their fulfilment, and the powers of nature were insufficient to secure it. The name which Jehovah thus gave to Himself was to be a pledge, that in spite of "his own body now dead," and "the deadness of Sarah's womb" (Rom. 4:19), God could and would give him the promised innumerable posterity.</p>
The NET Bible	<p>The name אֱלֹהֵי שַׁדַּי ('el shadday, "El Shaddai") has often been translated "God Almighty," primarily because Jerome translated it omnipotens ("all powerful") in the Latin Vulgate. There has been much debate over the meaning of the name. For discussion see W. F. Albright, "The Names Shaddai and Abram," JBL 54 (1935): 173–210; R. Gordis, "The Biblical Root sdy–sd," JTS 41 (1940): 34–43; and especially T. N. D. Mettinger, In Search of God, 69–72. Shaddai/El Shaddai is the sovereign king of the world who grants, blesses, and judges. In the Book of Genesis he blesses the patriarchs with fertility and promises numerous descendants. Outside Genesis he both blesses/protects and takes away life/happiness. The patriarchs knew God primarily as El Shaddai (Ex. 6:3). While the origin and meaning of this name are uncertain (see discussion below) its significance is clear. The name is used in contexts where God appears as the source of fertility and life. In Gen. 17:1–8 he appeared to Abram, introduced himself as El Shaddai, and announced his intention to make the patriarch fruitful. In the role of El Shaddai God repeated these words (now elevated to the status of a decree) to Jacob (Gen. 35:11). Earlier Isaac had pronounced a blessing on Jacob in which he asked El Shaddai to make Jacob fruitful (Gen. 28:3). Jacob later prayed that his sons would be treated with mercy when they returned to Egypt with Benjamin (Gen. 43:14). The fertility theme is not as apparent here, though one must remember that Jacob viewed Benjamin as the sole remaining son of the favored and once–barren Rachel (see Gen. 29:31; Gen. 30:22–24; Gen. 35:16–18). It is quite natural that he would appeal to El Shaddai to preserve Benjamin's life, for it was El Shaddai's miraculous power which made it possible for Rachel to give him sons in the first place. In Gen. 48:3 Jacob, prior to blessing Joseph's sons, told him how El Shaddai appeared to him at Bethel (see Genesis 28) and promised to make him fruitful. When blessing Joseph on his deathbed Jacob referred to Shaddai (we should probably read "El Shaddai," along with a few Hebrew MSS, the Samaritan Pentateuch, the Septuagint (LXX), and Syriac) as the one who provides abundant blessings, including "blessings of the breast and womb" (Gen. 49:25).</p>
The NET Bible continued	<p>(The direct association of the name with "breasts" suggests the name might mean "the one of the breast" [i.e., the one who gives fertility], but the juxtaposition is probably better explained as wordplay. Note the wordplay involving the name and the root שַׁדַּד, shadad, "destroy") in Isa. 13:6 and in Joe. 1:15.) Outside Genesis the name Shaddai (minus the element "El" ["God"]) is normally used when God is viewed as the sovereign king who blesses/protects or curses/brings judgment.</p>

What Others Say about El Shaddai

Scripture	Text/Commentary
The NET Bible continued	The name appears in the introduction to two of Balaam's oracles (Num. 24:4; Num. 24:16) of blessing upon Israel. Naomi employs the name when accusing the Lord of treating her bitterly by taking the lives of her husband and sons (Rth. 1:20–21). In Psalm 68:14; Isa. 13:6; and Joe. 1:15 Shaddai judges his enemies through warfare, while Psalm 91:1 depicts him as the protector of his people. (In Eze. 1:24 and Num. 10:5 the sound of the cherubs' wings is compared to Shaddai's powerful voice. The reference may be to the mighty divine warrior's battle cry which accompanies his angry judgment.)
The NET Bible continued	Finally, the name occurs 31 times in the Book of Job. Job and his "friends" assume that Shaddai is the sovereign king of the world (Gen. 11:7; Gen. 37:23; a) who is the source of life (Gen. 33:4 (i.e., Genesis 33:4b)) and is responsible for maintaining justice (Gen. 8:3; Gen. 34:10–12; Gen. 37:23 (i.e., Genesis 37:23b)). He provides abundant blessings, including children (Gen. 22:17–18; Gen. 29:4–6), but he can also discipline, punish, and destroy (Gen. 5:17; Gen. 6:4; Gen. 21:20; Gen. 23:16). It is not surprising to see the name so often in this book, where the theme of God's justice is primary and even called into question (Gen. 24:1; Gen. 27:2). The most likely proposal is that the name means "God, the one of the mountain" (an Akkadian cognate means "mountain," to which the Hebrew שַׁדַּי, shad, "breast" is probably related). For a discussion of proposed derivations see T. N. D. Mettinger, In Search of God, 70–71. The name may originally have depicted God as the sovereign judge who, in Canaanite style, ruled from a sacred mountain. Isa. 14:13 and Ezek. 28:14; Ezek. 28:16 associate such a mountain with God, while Psalm 48:2 refers to Zion as "Zaphon," the Canaanite Olympus from which the high god El ruled. (In Isaiah 14 the Canaanite god El may be in view. Note that Isaiah pictures pagan kings as taunting the king of Babylon, suggesting that pagan mythology may provide the background for the language and imagery.)
Scofield	"Almighty God" (Hebrew, El Shaddai) (1) The etymological signification of Almighty God (El Shaddai) is both interesting and touching. God (El) signifies the "Strong One" (See Scofield) – (Gen. 1:1). The qualifying word Shaddai is formed from the Hebrew word "shad," the breast, invariably used in Scripture for a woman's breast; for example (Gen. 49:25 Job. 3:12 Psalm 22:9); Song of (Son. 1:13 Son. 4:5); Song of (Son. 7:3 Son. 7:7 Son. 7:8 Son. 8:1 Son. 8:8 Son. 8:10 Isa. 28:9 Eze. 16:7). Shaddai therefore means primarily "the breasted." God is "Shaddai," because He is the Nourisher, the Strength-giver, and so, in a secondary sense, the Satisfier, who pours himself into believing lives. As a fretful, unsatisfied babe is not only strengthened and nourished from the mother's breast, but also is quieted, rested, satisfied, so El Shaddai is that name of God which sets Him forth as the Strength-giver and Satisfier of His people. It is on every account to be regretted that "Shaddai" was translated "Almighty." The primary name El or Elohim sufficiently signifies almightiness. "All-sufficient" would far better express both the Hebrew meaning and the characteristic use of the name in Scripture.
Scofield continued	(2) Almighty God (El Shaddai) not only enriches, but makes fruitful. This is nowhere better illustrated than in the first occurrence of the name (Gen. 17:1–8). To a man ninety-nine years of age, and "as good as dead" (Heb. 11:12). He said: "I am the Almighty God El Shaddai . . . I will . . . multiply thee exceedingly." To the same purport is the use of the name in (Gen. 28:3 Gen. 28:4).

What Others Say about El Shaddai

Scripture	Text/Commentary
Scofield continued	(3) As Giver of fruitfulness, Almighty God (El Shaddai) chastens His people. For the moral connection of chastening with fruit bearing, see (John 15:2 Heb. 12:10 Ruth 1:20). Hence, Almighty is the characteristic name of God in Job, occurring thirty-one times in that book. The hand of El Shaddai falls upon Job, the best man of his time, not in judgment, but in purifying unto greater fruitfulness (Job. 5:17–25).
John Wesley	That Abram and Sarai being so far stricken in age, God's power in this matter might be the more magnified. The Lord appeared unto Abram – In some visible display of God's immediate glorious presence with him. And said, I am the Almighty God – By this name he chose to make himself known to Abram, rather than by his name Jehovah, Ex. 6:3. He used it to Jacob, Gen. 35:11. They called him by this name, Gen. 28:5, Gen. 43:14, Gen. 48:3.
John Wesley continued	It is the name of God that is mostly used throughout the book of Job, at least 30 times in the discourses of that book, in which Jehovah is used but once. After Moses, Jehovah is more frequently used, and this very rarely. I am El – Shaddai. It speaks the almighty power of God, either As an avenger, from wrv he destroyed, or laid waste; so some: and they think God took this title from the destruction of the old world: Or, As a benefactor, v for rva who, and yr it sufficeth. Our old English translation reads it here, very significantly, I am God All – sufficient. The God with whom we have to do, is self – sufficient; he hath every thing, and he needs not any thing. And 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 us happiness for our immortal souls.

The quotes from Barnes, Calvin, Clarke, Gill, Guzik, Keil and Delitzsch; Jamieson, Fausset and Brown; the NET Bible; Scofield, and Wesley all come from the e-sword commentaries, Gen. 17:1.

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