

## THE NAMES OF THE FATHER

### Part VII

#### Psalm 23

Introduction: Perusing through the Scriptures and imbibing on whom the Father is and how we can better relate to Him greatly enhances our potential for spiritual growth. The Scriptures unambiguously teach us that knowing the truth will exponentially bring us spiritual emancipation. John 8:32; Hebrews 4:12. Biblical faith in the truth can only be exercised when we have knowledge of our Heavenly Father and His benevolent promises. Hebrews 11:6.

#### I. The names of the Father

- A. *El Shaddai* is the one strong enough to help and sensitive enough to care. God is not only sensitive to my cry, but also strong enough to supply the answer to my problem.
1. When Abraham was 99 years old, he needed reassurance of what God had promised – that his descendants would become a great nation, that he would inherit the promise land, and that from him all the nations would be blessed.
  2. Abraham had not sought these promises. The Lord appeared to Abraham and had given him these promises when he was 75 years old. Now, in their old age, Abraham and his wife Sarah were past the age to bear children.
  3. God was not only sensitive to Abraham's need, but also strong enough to do something about it. The Lord appeared to him and said; "I am the Almighty God..." (*El Shaddai*). Genesis 17:1.
  4. This is the first time the word *Almighty* is used in the Bible. It is a compound name consisting of *El*, a shortened form of *Elohim*, the Strong Creator, and *Shaddai*, the Hebrew word for Almighty. The Hebrew word for *shad* means breast. This reminds us that God tenderly provides for us. God does not come to Abraham as Creator alone, but as one who can supply Abraham's need as a woman satisfies the need of a child at her breast. Here we see two divine qualities implied in the name *El Shaddai*. The word Almighty would be better translated, "All Sufficient" One or one who is "more than enough." How can we communicate both strength and tenderness? It is a picture of denim (toughness) and lace, a delicate fabric (tenderness). God is strong enough to supply our needs but also tender enough to take us into His arms when we are hurting.
  5. When the term *Almighty* was first used, God wanted to communicate a new side of His nature to Abraham. For 24 years, Abraham had obeyed God and dwelt in the Promised Land. This new name was given to reveal a new aspect of how the God he had been serving works.
  6. God had not only revealed to Abraham a new name, "*Almighty God*," but he also gave Abraham a new promise. "I will make My covenant between Me and thee..." Genesis 17:2. When God promises His blessings to us, we must claim them by faith and then act on them. Notice what Abraham did in Genesis 17:3.
  7. Notice what God says about Sarai. Verses 15-16.
- B. Abraham passed his knowledge of *El Shaddai* on to Isaac, the son of promise. When Isaac was old, he sent his own son, Jacob, to the land of his ancestors to get a wife. Genesis 28:3. Remember, the term "*God Almighty*" means *El Shaddai*. When Jacob grew to be an old man, he in turn blessed his own son Joseph in the name of "*the Almighty*." Genesis 49:25.
1. The name "*Almighty*" occurs 48 times in the Old Testament. Of these occurrences, 31 are in the book of Job. Job lost all his earthly possessions, including his family and his health. However, in 5:7 of his book he acknowledges God's toughness and his tenderness.
  2. We learn from the book of Job that the tender, caring Almighty God also has a stern aspect to His personality. Even though a mother loves her children, she will correct and spank if necessary, because she loves them. While a mother will place soothing ointment on a burn, she will spank when a child plays with fire.

Conclusion: You can see how we can become better acquainted with God as we learn about His names.