

El Shaddai or just **Shaddai** is one of the names of the God of Israel.
El Shaddai is conventionally translated into English as God – the El part and Almighty – the Shaddai part. There is some dubiety about what it originally meant. El Shaddai occurs 7 times in the Old Testament. And it is first found in Genesis 17:1. “When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to him and said, “I am God Almighty^[a]; walk before me faithfully and be blameless.” Shaddai, in relation to God occurs a few more times than 7. A quick look at the concordances and they tell you that the book of Job has the most mentions of El Shaddai.

If we accept that El means God, then the Shaddai part is the Almighty aspect. However, some think it originally meant “the thunderer.” This was taken from some other Semitic cultures and maybe should not be a surprise to us when these other peoples identified specific gods with weather patterns. When we consider what the Bible says about the Creator, it makes sense to see a name that might have originally meant “the thunderer” chosen to describe His might, as thunder is certainly a force that suggests power.

In my go to book for the Hebrew and Greek Translations of words, Young’s Analytical Concordance, the word Shaddai has two potential meanings, they are “sufficient” and “almighty”.

However, R.C. Sproule says this: A better foundational meaning of *El Shaddai* may be “the over-powerer,” which emphasizes God’s power to achieve all His purposes (Ex. 15:6; Matt. 19:26). Qualifying His power in this way is important, as the Bible never suggests God can do everything and anything.

He cannot do anything that would violate who He is; for example, He cannot tempt anyone with evil (James 1:13). Nevertheless, the Lord's strength is perfect and cannot be increased or diminished (v16–17). Ultimately, it is impossible for anyone or anything to keep Him from accomplishing His sovereign decrees (Ps. 115:3).

Now we can appreciate the idea of Almighty, when it comes to God because we read about His acts being mighty.

Exodus 14:31 suggests that:

“And when the Israelites saw the mighty hand of the Lord displayed against the Egyptians, the people feared the Lord and put their trust in him and in Moses his servant.”

Exodus 32:11 says:

“But Moses sought the favour of the Lord his God.

“Lord,” he said, “why should your anger burn against your people, whom you brought out of Egypt with great power and a mighty hand?”

Deuteronomy 3:2 tells us:

“Sovereign Lord, you have begun to show to your servant your greatness and your strong hand.

For what god is there in heaven or on earth who can do the deeds and mighty works you do?”

Nehemiah 1:10, on the returning people from the captivity of Babylon:

“They are your servants and your people, whom you redeemed by your great strength and your mighty hand.”

Ezekiel 20:33-34

“As surely as I live, declares the Sovereign Lord, I will reign over you with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm and with outpoured wrath.

³⁴ I will bring you from the nations and gather you from the countries where you have been scattered – with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm and with outpoured wrath.”

In Luke 1:51 we read:

“He has performed mighty deeds with his arm; he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts.”

So, it is not just an Old Testament
But on into the New Testament
The idea that God is almighty is kept and cannot
Be lost to sight.

We get the impression that God is almighty
By the very essence of creation having taken place.
And as much as we like science to
encourage us in our understanding of things,
we are still left with the fact that
creating something out of nothing has
not been achieved since that original creating act.
He is the Maker of all things in the universe –
Including human beings.
It is not just our belief,
It is one of the key principles of the Bible.

John 1:3 says:

“Through him all things were made;
without Him nothing was made that has been made.”
All things were created through the
Power of the Lord Almighty and for Him.

Is there an idea of Him being Almighty
Just by the fact that He is eternal?
His being beyond our capabilities and
He is eternal adds to that idea.
The everlasting one,
Heaven’s King, without peer,
And therefore, answerable to no one!
Does that give Him some aspect of being Almighty?
Finite as we are, we struggle to come to
Terms with the simple things He has done,
Never mind the things that surprise us
As we read the scriptures.
I do not think that I will be contradicted
When I say that God does great and awesome things,
Miracles amongst them!
There is nothing that is too hard Him,
And He unquestionably has unlimited power.

In Habakkuk 3:1-16 we find something of
the amazement of Habakkuk at what God is able to do.
They may just be words to us as we
Read them from the page.
But I wonder what Habakkuk’s demeanour was
When he went down for dinner that night or

When he met the men of his community
After he had been in his prayer room
Praying what he did,
And with the words of v4-16 and
The calamity that they seem to entail.
Habakkuk, is able to of the Lord Almighty's
mighty character and works.
He remembers how God has an anger over sin,
and that Almighty God is sovereign over all nations
not just Israel.
When God speaks through His prophets
They speak His words with power.
People and nations would listen and turn to the Lord,
others resisted God.
Not much changes really, for it is still true today,
Some hear and some do not.
Although I wonder who the prophets
to the nations are today.
That is another subject.

As I have suggested it is possible to
interpret shaddai as "sufficient."
We get the idea of God is the "All-sufficient One."
Again, that is not too difficult for us to imagine.
The idea works for me to,
because the Almighty is the God who is enough!
He is more than sufficient to meet any need.
He has power and provision.
His great compassion,
He sustains, nourishes and protects me.
He takes my weakness and gives me strength.
He takes my inadequate resources and
In His sufficiency uses them for
His great and powerful purposes.
2 Corinthians 12:9 remind us that God is
Our all sufficient one:
"But he said to me, "My grace is **sufficient** for you,
for my power is made perfect in weakness."
Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly
about my weaknesses,
so that Christ's power may rest on me."

One final thought on what it means

Comes from when the Old Testament was
Translated into Greek.
It is called the Septuagint translation,
And in reading Psalm 91:1,
"Shaddai" is translated as "the God of heaven".^[27]
In my NIV it reads:
"Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High
will rest in the shadow of the Almighty."
Dwelling in the shadow of the most high
Is a reference to the Temple,
And people who dwell in its shadow are
Actually, dwelling in the presence and
Influence of God Almighty.

I do like the New King James Version
Whose words put it like this:
"He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High
Shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty."
The implications for me are that it speaks of
Intimacy and connection.
It is kind of a re-affirmation of how
The Almighty God wants to relate to us
And for us to relate to Him.

Also found in the following places:

Genesis 28:3,

"May God Almighty^[a] bless you and make you fruitful and increase your numbers until you
become a community of peoples."

This is about Isaac invoking of God's name

To bring blessing to Jacob as he leaves to find a wife.

35:11,

"And God said to him, "I am God Almighty^[a]; be fruitful and increase in number. A nation and
a community of nations will come from you, and kings will be among your descendants."

The promise of God to Jacob,
who is now to be called Israel.

48:3

Jacob said to Joseph, "**God Almighty** appeared to me at Luz in the land of Canaan, and there
he blessed me..."

Exodus 6:3

"I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob
as **God Almighty**, but by my name the Lord
I did not make myself fully known to them."

God speaking to Moses as He reveals Himself to be the LORD,
Which He did not do to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

In Job 40:1-2 we read:

“The Lord said to Job:

2 “Will the one who contends with the Almighty correct him?

Let him who accuses God answer him!”

Amos 5:27

Therefore, I will send you into exile beyond Damascus,”
says the Lord, whose name is **God Almighty.**”

Yet another possible meaning of *El Shaddai* is “The God of the Mountain.” Some Messianic teachers say *shaddai* comes from the Akkadian word *shaddu*, meaning “mountain.” God lives in heaven, but He also inhabited a mountain top—Mount Sinai. It was on this mountain Moses met with God and received the Ten Commandments.

It might be argued God’s presence on that mountain reminded the Israelites of His power and provision. The God of the Mountain was the same God who mightily led His people from Egypt and appeared to them as a cloud by day and a fire at night. He is the God who expected obedience to His commands, and swiftly and powerfully took action against those who rebelled and ignored His will.