

Beauties of the Truth

A Forum for the Publication of Scriptural Viewpoints
Thought to be Harmonious with God's Plan of the Ages
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“El Shaddai”

“And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect” (Genesis 17:1).

This Scripture is a beautifully clear and direct statement from God of His omnipotence; so we should strive for perfection before Him, simply because He is our Almighty God.

Many Bible translations obscure our understanding of God's attributes by using generic renderings of God's names. Each of God's names tells us something different about His magnificent character and being. Recognizing this allows us to get better acquainted with God by examining the meanings of some of His many Bible names.

The basic form for the Hebrew name of God is “El.” The word “El” means “might, strength, power.” The primary translations of this root in the scriptures are “god” (for pagan or false gods), and “God” (for the true God of Israel).

Our focus here on God's name “El Shaddai” in no way diminishes Our Heavenly Father's name “Jehovah.” Nor do we suggest that we refer to God as El Shaddai all the time. The idea is to understand Jehovah better by understanding His role as El Shaddai better. We know Jehovah is the “Self Existing One,” “The Eternal One,” and this will always be God's primary name.

JEHOVAH

“Jehovah” is the name that God gave to himself in Exodus 3:13-15. “Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, what is his name? What shall I say unto them? And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM [the self-existing one, Jehovah]: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM [Jehovah] hath sent me unto you. And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, Jehovah God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations.”

“I am Jehovah; this is my name, and my glory will I not give to another” (Isaiah 42:8).

“That men may know that thou whose name alone is Jehovah, art El Elyon, the Most High over all the earth” (Psalms 83:18).

God's name Jehovah is a translation of what is known as the Tetragrammaton. This name is translated in many English language bibles as “The LORD,” in all upper case letters. The Greek word “Tetragrammaton” means “four-letters,” because “Jehovah” comes from four Hebrew letters (yod, he, waw, he, that is, יהוה, or in the right to left Hebrew sequence, יהוה). This is transliterated into English as “JHWH” or “YHWH.”

Some Bible translations **do** render the Tetragrammaton as Jehovah, which is helpful. For example, The American Standard Version, 1901 edition, consistently renders the Tetragrammaton as Jehovah in all 6,823 places where it occurs in the Hebrew Old Testament. In *The Emphatic Diaglott*, the name Jehovah is translated 18 times.¹

GOD ALL-SUFFICIENT

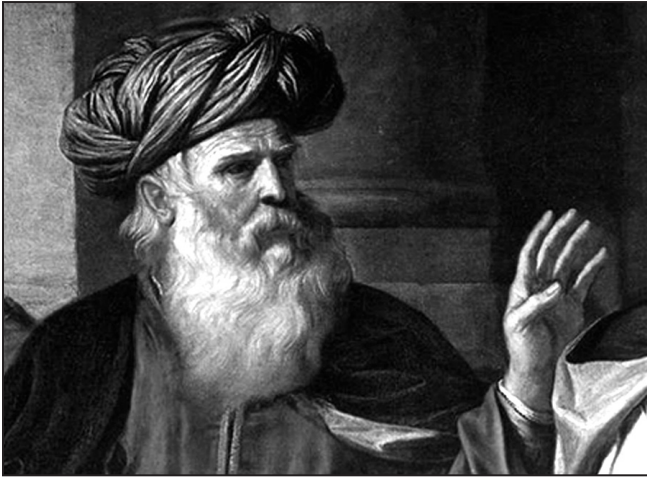
With this background we now discuss our primary theme and answer our primary questions. Jehovah is God's primary name. But what does God's name El Shaddai tell us about our Heavenly Father? What can we learn about God's being and character from this designation? How can we translate that knowledge into a closer walk with God?

Here is Genesis 17:1, substituting the proper names of God. “When Abram was ninety years old and nine,

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Father Abraham

Jehovah appeared to Abram and said unto him, I am El Shaddai; walk before me, and be thou perfect.” This is the first occurrence in the Bible of God’s name, El Shaddai. The question naturally arises: Why does God all of a sudden have a new name in this Bible verse? What does this designation reflect about God?

In Strong’s Concordance, El Shaddai is not found under the English words “God” or “Lord.” Perhaps this is one reason El Shaddai has been obscure. However, this name is found under the English word “Almighty,” Strong’s number 7706. Strong renders the meaning of El Shaddai as simply “Almighty.”

This is an instance where Strong’s is not as elaborate as we might like. The *Schofield Reference Bible* has some fascinating information on this name. “The etymological signification of El Shaddai is both interesting and touching. God (El) signifies the ‘Strong One.’ The qualifying word Shaddai is formed from the Hebrew word *shad*, the breast ... 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, and satisfied, 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.

“Almighty God (El Shaddai) not only enriches, but also makes fruitful. This is nowhere better illustrated than in the first occurrence of the name in Genesis 17:1. To a man 99 years of age, and ‘as good as dead’ (Hebrews 11:12), He said: ‘I am El Shaddai ... I will ... multiply thee exceedingly.’

“As the Giver of fruitfulness, El Shaddai chastens His people. For the moral connection of chastening with fruit

bearing, see John 15:2, Hebrews 12:10, and Ruth 1:20. Hence, El Shaddai is the characteristic name of God in the Book of 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.”²

Professor Adam Clarke’s amplified rendition of El Shaddai from Genesis 17:1 confirms Schofield’s comments. “I am God all-sufficient; from the Hebrew *Shadah*, to shed, to pour out. I am that God who pours out blessings, who gives them richly, abundantly, continually.”³

We can better understand this beautiful aspect of God’s character when He is referred to as El Shaddai by combining these two named attributes of His Being into our All-Powerful and All-Sufficient God — El Shaddai. He is able to meet our every need and protect us from any danger to our spiritual lives. No circumstance can arise that He is not able to meet and overcome for us. Our faith and trust in El Shaddai can turn any temporal difficulty into a spiritual blessing for our eternal interests.

Our responsibility is to manifest complete faith and trust in Him. Then we can have perfect peace of mind in His all-sufficient grace. We must supply our best effort, which will always be too weak and insufficient to overcome all of our imperfections, but El Shaddai will supply whatever is needed to make up for our shortcomings.

God’s name, El Shaddai, describes not only what God **is**, but also what He **does** for us. It is important to know what God is, but also what God does. El Shaddai sustains us, nourishes us, comforts us, and provides everything we need. This should make us more grateful, more peaceful; and make us feel our complete dependence upon Him. Knowing God as El Shaddai helps us more readily to praise Jehovah, our Heavenly Father, in all the experiences of life.

EXODUS 6:2,3

The name El Shaddai also appears in Exodus 6:2,3. “God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I am Jehovah; And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of El Shaddai [The All Mighty, All Sufficient God], but by my name JEHOVAH [“The Self Existing, Eternal One”] was I not known to them.”

In this Scripture El Shaddai is contrasted with Jehovah. But, is it true that the patriarchs knew God only by the name El Shaddai and not by the name Jehovah? What does this Scripture really mean?

Dr. Adam Clarke wrote this. “ ‘But by my name JEHOVAH was I not known to them.’ This passage has been a sort of *crux criticorum* [a puzzle or stumbling block], and has been variously explained. It is certain that the name Jehovah was in use long before the days of Abraham, see Genesis 2:4, where the words Jehovah Elohim occur, as they do frequently afterwards; and see Genesis 15:2, where Abraham expressly addresses him by

the name Adonai JEHOVAH; and see Genesis 15:7, where God reveals himself to Abraham by this very name: 'And he said unto him, I am JEHOVAH, that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees. ...

"The simple meaning is this, that though from the beginning the name JEHOVAH was known as one of the names of the Supreme Being, yet what it really implied they did not know. El-Shaddai, God All-sufficient, they knew well by the continual provision he made for them, and the constant protection he afforded them: but the name JEHOVAH refers particularly to the accomplishment of promises already made; to giving them a being, and thus bringing them into existence, which could not have been done in the order of his providence sooner than here specified: this name therefore in its power and significance was not known unto them; nor fully known unto their descendants till the deliverance from Egypt and the settlement in the promised land. It is surely possible for a man to bear the name of a certain office or dignity before he fulfills any of its functions. King, mayor, alderman, magistrate, constable, may be borne by the several persons to whom they legally belong, before any of the acts peculiar to those offices are performed. The KING, acknowledged as such on his coronation, is known to be such by his legislative acts; the civil magistrate, by his distribution of justice, and issuing warrants for the apprehending of culprits; and the constable, by executing those warrants. All these were known to have their respective names, but the exercise of their powers alone shows what is implied in being king, magistrate, and constable."⁴

This suggests that the Patriarchs, and even Adam, knew God by both names, Jehovah and El Shaddai. This is confirmed when we read Genesis 4:25,26. "Adam knew his wife again; and she bare a son, and called his name Seth: For God, said she, hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew. And to Seth, to him also there was born a son; and he called his name Enos: then began men to call upon the name of Jehovah." Adam lived 700 years after Seth begat Enos. Thus he would have been one of those that knew Jehovah by name.

The Patriarchs frequently used God's name of El Shaddai. But its usage became infrequent after the Law Covenant was established. El Shaddai is used in the Scriptures 42 times during the time of the Abrahamic Covenant but only six times after the Law Covenant was added. God's name, El Shaddai, is used most often in the Book of Job. Since Job lived in patriarchal times, the Book of Job would have been written before the Book of Exodus. This fits with our view that El Shaddai was primarily a patriarchal name for God.

Why did the patriarchs know God as El Shaddai? Vines Expository Dictionary provides the following explanation. "El Shaddai served as the patriarch's covenant name for God and continued as such until the time of Moses,



The Patriarch Jacob, blessing his grandsons

when a further revelation took place."⁵ This indicates that Exodus 6:3 was the turning point in the Biblical usage of El Shaddai.

Vines continues his explanation: "The Abrahamic Covenant was marked by a degree of closeness between God and the human participants that was distinctive in Hebrew history. El Shaddai revealed Himself as a powerful deity who was able to perform whatever He asserted. But the degree of intimacy between El Shaddai and the patriarchs at various stages shows that the covenant involved God's care and love for this growing family that He had chosen, protected, and prospered. He led the covenant family from place to place, being obviously present with them at all times."⁶

The Patriarchs were close to El Shaddai, our Heavenly Father. They depended on Him for everything in normal life. They were a pastoral people and depended on their crops and herds for food. If there was a drought, or a disease in their herds, they could starve. They did not have unemployment benefits, retirement plans, or Social Security through difficult times. They had El Shaddai and that was all they needed. These patriarchs maintained a closeness to El Shaddai, one that we also should feel to our Heavenly Father. Each of us should feel the closeness of God's Almighty power and His All-Sufficient grace. We should grow day by day in faith and simple trust in His overruling providence.

OTHER SCRIPTURES

As we examine other Scriptures where El Shaddai is used, a more complete picture of God as our All-Sufficient, Covenant-Keeping God appears. When the patriarchs wanted to give the strongest assurance to those that were going on a dangerous mission, they used the divine name El Shaddai.

Genesis 18:1-4 — "Isaac called Jacob, and blessed him, and charged him, and said unto him, Thou shalt not take a

wife of the daughters of Canaan. Arise, go to Padan-aram, to the house of Bethuel thy mother's father; and take thee a wife from thence of the daughters of Laban thy mother's brother. And El Shaddai bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people; And give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee, and to thy seed with thee; that thou mayest inherit the land wherein thou art a stranger, which God gave unto Abraham."



Eliezer, servant of Abraham, served by Rebecca

As Abraham had sent Eliezer to find a covenant wife for Isaac, so Isaac sent Jacob to find a covenant wife — not from the Canaanites, but from Abraham's extended family. The patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, were all under the Abrahamic Covenant, a Covenant of Grace. As consecrated Christians, we also are under a Grace Covenant. Like Jacob, who here typified the New Creation, we have been sent on a journey and blessed by the antitypical Isaac, our Lord Jesus.

So we can repeat this blessing, transferring the thought from the type to the antitype as coming from our Lord Jesus to us: "May El Shaddai bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people; And give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee, and to thy seed with thee; that thou mayest inherit the land wherein thou art a stranger, which God gave unto Abraham."

That helps to reinforce the thought that our Savior assures us that El Shaddai, the Almighty, All sufficient One, will be with us all the way in our dangerous journey through life. He is always near, always sufficient for any contingency. In the Promised Land, the Patriarchs had complete trust in El Shaddai. If we can completely trust Him now, then we can rest in full assurance of faith in our spiritual inheritance in the Promised Land.

Genesis 35:9-12. Here God confirmed His Covenant to Jacob and changed Jacob's name to Israel. "God appeared unto Jacob again, when he came out of Padan-aram, and blessed him. And God said unto him, Thy name is Jacob:

thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but Israel shall be thy name: and he called his name Israel. And God said unto him, 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; And the land which I gave Abraham and Isaac, to thee I will give it, and to thy seed after thee will I give the land."

After this confirmation, Jacob journeyed to Bethlehem. There his wife, Rachel, died giving birth to Benjamin. Then Jacob traveled to Hebron where his father, Isaac, had died. Thus this revelation to Jacob of El Shaddai as his All Mighty, All Sufficient God was a specially needed blessing. It was a reassurance to Jacob to have the covenant confirmed to him, and to know that El Shaddai would be with him throughout his walk.

Genesis 37:35 — This text speaks of the time Joseph had been sold into Egypt, and Jacob was told that Joseph was dead. "All his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted; and he said, For I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning. Thus his father wept for him."

Though Rachel, Isaac, and Joseph — the three people that Jacob loved the most — were gone, and no one on earth could comfort him, El Shaddai comforted Jacob. There was nothing that he and El Shaddai could not handle together.

Genesis 43:14. Later, Judah promised Jacob that he would return to Egypt as surety for Benjamin. But before sending Judah, Jacob asked the blessing of El Shaddai upon him in. "And El Shaddai give you mercy before the man, that he may send away your other brother, and Benjamin. If I be bereaved of my children, I am bereaved."

Genesis 48:3,4. Years later, when Jacob was on his death bed, Joseph brought his sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, to be blessed. "Jacob said unto Joseph, El Shaddai appeared unto me at Luz in the land of Canaan, and blessed me, And said unto me, Behold, I will make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, and I will make of thee a multitude of people; and will give this land to thy seed after thee for an everlasting possession."

Genesis 49:25. Jacob gave a final blessing to each of his sons just before he passed away. "Even by the God of thy father, who shall help thee; and by El 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."

EL SHADDAI IN RUTH

Beginning with the usage of El Shaddai in the Book of Ruth and the Book of Job, we understand an additional aspect of what God does for His people. He wounds to heal. He permits short-term pain for long-term blessings. God's people do not always understand His Grace when they are in the midst of a painful experience. But we must fully trust our All-Powerful, All-Sufficient, God. El

Shaddai only allows experiences that bless us, if we take them in the right way.

In the Book of Ruth, Naomi, her husband Elimelech, and their two sons left Bethlehem-Judah because of a famine and traveled to Moab. Within ten years of entering Moab, Naomi's husband and two sons died. Naomi was downcast and confused. If God was All-Mighty, All-Sufficient, why would he allow her husband and her sons to die so quickly?

To answer this, we have to look at the big picture, the long-term view. El Shaddai takes the long view. Should Elimelech have taken Naomi and his sons and left Bethlehem to go to Moab in the first place? No, since El Shaddai is All-Sufficient, He would have cared for them in the Promised Land. If Elimelech had a stronger faith, he would have kept his family in Judah and waited for El Shaddai to bless his faithfulness.

El Shaddai's general rule is that short-term satisfaction of fleshly desires will not bring long-term happiness. Let us remember that when we make our day-to-day decisions. When we make choices that separate us from God and His people, God often does the best thing He can do for us. He may allow afflictions to come so that we will return to Him.

That is what He did for Naomi. He took away what was keeping her from Him. She would have stayed in Moab if her husband and sons were allowed to live. So El Shaddai took them away; and Naomi gave her daughter-in-laws the choice of staying in Moab or returning to the Promised Land with her. One of the two returned to Moab. But Ruth chose to stay with Naomi. Likely this was at least partly because Ruth respected what Naomi had told her about El Shaddai.

Ruth 1:16,17, contains this beautiful word picture of consecration to El Shaddai in her reply to Naomi. "Entreat me not to leave thee, And to return from following after thee; For whither thou goest, I will go; And where thou lodgest, I will lodge; Thy people shall be my people, And thy God, my God; Where thou diest I will die, and there

will I be buried. The Lord do so to me, and more also, If aught but death part thee and me."

When Naomi and Ruth returned, the people of Bethlehem said, "Is this Naomi?" (Naomi means "loveable," "pleasant" or the "pleasure of Jehovah.") Naomi responded in Ruth 1:20,21. "She said unto them, Call me not Naomi, call me Mara [bitter]: for El Shaddai hath dealt very bitterly with me. I went out full, and Jehovah hath brought me home again empty: why then call ye me Naomi, seeing Jehovah hath testified against me, and El Shaddai hath afflicted me?"

If Naomi had stayed in Moab we never would have heard of Naomi or Ruth. There would not be a Book of Ruth in the Bible. It was the return to El Shaddai that allowed El Shaddai to bless both women so abundantly. One of the guiding principles of this lesson is stated in James 4:8: "Draw near to God and he will draw near to you."

Because Naomi and Ruth returned to the Promised Land, Ruth married Boaz. As King David's grandmother, she became identified through the lineage of Mary with David's greatest Son and Lord, our Lord Jesus. Because Ruth drew near to God in consecration, she received eternal blessings.

EL SHADDAI IN JOB

Since El Shaddai is used 31 times in the Book of Job, we will discuss only the first and last occurrences. The Book of Job is considered Hebrew poetry. The poetry in the Book of Job compares the context of the first phrase with the next phrase, matching thoughts, not necessarily rhyme or meter.

Beginning with Job 5:17,18, we read the words of Eliphaz to Job. "Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth: therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty: For he maketh sore, and bindeth up: he woundeth, and his hands make whole."

In this, as in many of the occurrences in the Book of Job, the All sufficient, El Shaddai is compared with God, El-oah. If we transfer the meaning of the names to the respective poetic comparison phrases, we have the following translation. "Behold, happy is the man whom El-oah [the Majestic God] correcteth: therefore despise not thou the chastening of El Shaddai [the All Sufficient God]: For he maketh sore, and bindeth up: he woundeth, and his hands make whole."

The last use of El Shaddai in Job appears in Job 40:1,2. "Moreover Jehovah [the Eternal One] answered Job, and said, Shall he that contendeth with El Shaddai [the All-Mighty, All-Sufficient One] instruct him? He that reproveth El-oah [the Majestic God], let him answer it."

These verses notably use multiple names for God. If God wanted to have only one descriptive name for Himself, He could have had the Bible written that way. That God has used many different names to describe Himself tells us that one name is not sufficient to describe Him.



Ruth and Naomi

These readings from Job describe God's character and being. God is Eternal. He is Majestic. He is All-Mighty and All-Sufficient. It would be unfortunate to always read these descriptive names generically as "God" or "Lord." As we dig deeper to translate and understand God's names, we see a glory of character that is fitting for our grand Creator and Father.

THE PROPHETS

The prophets also invoked the name El Shaddai — once in Isaiah, twice in Ezekiel. The last Old Testament instance is in Joel.

Isaiah 13:6. Here the doom of Christendom is foretold. "Howl ye; for the day of Jehovah is at hand; it shall come as a destruction from El Shaddai." It is necessary for Christendom to be taken away in preparation for the incoming Kingdom of Christ. El Shaddai. The Almighty God, is All-Sufficient for the task.

Ezekiel 1:24, Ezekiel 10:4,5. Interestingly, the two occurrences of El Shaddai in Ezekiel both compare the sound of the "living creature's" wings and the cherubim's wings to the voice of El Shaddai. "When they went, I heard the noise of their wings, like the noise of great waters, as the voice of El Shaddai, the voice of speech, as the noise of a host" (Ezekiel 1:24).

In the second passage, notice the way Ezekiel uses God's names. They are not used randomly. They emphasize particular aspects of Jehovah's character, or particular actions He performs. "Then the glory of The Eternal One went up from the cherub, and stood over the threshold of the house; and the house was filled with the cloud, and the court was full of the brightness of The Eternal One's glory. And the sound of the cherubim's wings was heard even to the outer court, as the voice of The All-Sufficient One when he speaketh" (Ezekiel 10:4,5).

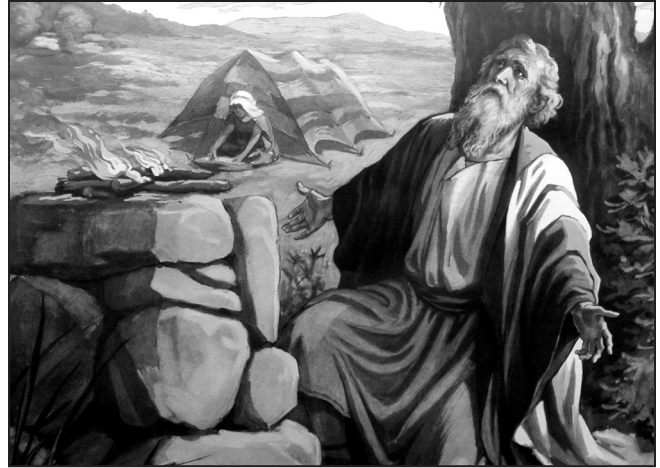
Joel 1:15. "Alas for the day! For the day of Jehovah is at hand, and as a destruction from El Shaddai shall it come." Here God, as the Eternal Jehovah, has marked the time for destruction. But God as El Shaddai will carry out the sentence through His All-Mighty and All-Sufficient power.

The generic translations of God's names make Bible reading more fluid. But taking time to examine the Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek names with their descriptive, amplified meanings helps us understand the breadth of God's being and character, as intended by the Bible writers and by God Himself.

NEW TESTAMENT REFERENCES

In the New Testament, there is a significant change in the way God is referred to. Jesus begins to refer to God as "Our Father" when he gives us the model prayer of Matthew 6:9: "After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name."

Jesus is the first person in Scripture to begin referring to God as "my heavenly Father," and "our and your



Righteous Job

heavenly Father." This is what we would expect, given our knowledge of the Divine Plan of the Ages. Jesus only used these terms in the presence of his disciples; they were not applied to others who were not yet prospective sons.

Jesus was the first son of God, and he gives us the opportunity to also become sons of God. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth" (John 1:14).

Also, 1 John 3:1,2. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." Prior to Jesus, the most that anyone could hope for was to be a dying servant of God. Our Savior's sacrifice changed all that and opened up "the new and living Way."

Revelation 15:3 refers to Jehovah as Almighty. "They sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints."

We also have scriptures that declare the almighty power of our Heavenly Father. Psalm 77:10-15, "I said, This is my infirmity: but I will remember the years of the right hand of the most High [El Elyon, The Supreme God]. I will remember the works of Jehovah [the Eternal One]: surely I will remember thy wonders of old. I will meditate also of all thy work, and talk of thy doings. Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary: who is so great a God as our God? Thou art the God that doest wonders: thou hast declared thy strength among the people. Thou hast with thine arm [our Lord Jesus] redeemed thy people, the sons of Jacob and Joseph."

The last Scripture to examine is Psalm 91:1-3, a powerful text in any translation, but more powerful when the Hebrew names are properly rendered. In these verses

David represents our Lord Jesus addressing his Church. “He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High [El Elyon, The Supreme God] shall abide under the shadow of El Shaddai [the All-Sufficient One]. I will say of Jehovah [the Self-Existing One], He is my refuge and my fortress: my [Elohiym] Supreme God; in him will I trust. Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence.”

Jesus is telling his Church that we, who are in close fellowship with Jehovah, have nothing to fear despite the dangers that surround us because our God will protect us. To emphasize this, and to forcefully describe our Heavenly Father, he invokes four of God’s names — Jehovah, El Elyon, Elohiym, and El Shaddai.

If we abide in the Secret Place of consecration in the antitypical Tabernacle, close to Jehovah, close to El Shaddai, then we have nothing to fear, for our God is Immortal, Supreme, All Mighty, and All-Sufficient. He will cover us and protect us from any evil that could possibly harm our spiritual interests. In Reprint 1560, we have our Pastor’s eloquent description of our All-Sufficient God:

“The Psalmist says, ‘The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works.’ This sweeping statement takes in the utmost bounds of the material universe and also the humblest, as well as the most exalted, sentient being. The whole creation is his care. Jehovah, our God, is the great Emperor of the whole universe, and his wisdom, power, goodness, and benevolence are abundantly equal to all the responsibilities of so exalted an office. The human mind staggers in its efforts to comprehend the mental resources of a being who is able to assume and to bear such responsibility.

“Think for a moment of the memory that never fails; of the judgment that never errs; of the wisdom that plans for eternity without the possibility of failure, and that times that plan with unerring precision for the ages to come; of the power and skill which can harness even every opposing element, animate or inanimate, and make them all work together for the accomplishment of his grand designs; of the tireless vigilance that never ceases, nor seeks relief from the pressing cares of universal dominion—whose eye never sleeps, whose ear is ever open, and who is ever cognizant of all the necessities, and active in all the interests, of his broad domains.”

— Br. Allan Ross

(1) The translation of the Greek word *kurios* in the New Testament as “Jehovah” is not technically correct. However, when the New Testament quotes an Old Testament verse where the Tetragrammaton appears, Benjamin Wilson exercises some liberty by translating the New Testament Greek in accord with the Old Testament Hebrew and thus reproduces the name Jehovah in the translation.

(2) C.I. Schofield, D.D., *The Holy Bible*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1945, page 32.

(3) www.studylight.org/commentaries/acc/view.cgi?bk=0&ch=17

(4) www.studylight.org/commentaries/acc/view.cgi?bk=1&ch=6

(5,6) *Vines Expository Dictionary of OT and NT Words*, page 161.

The Prophecy of Obadiah

(Continued from the May, 2014 issue).

In the May, 2014 issue, the following points were covered respecting Obadiah.

(1) Edom, the subject of Obadiah’s prophecy, represents Christendom. Bozrah, the capital of Edom, represents the religious power of Christendom, Mount Seir the political governments of Christendom, and Teman is suggested to represent a Church State union of Christendom

(2) Revelation 18:8 indicates that some of the former political supporters of Papacy survive to bewail her burning. Ezekiel 35:3-4, 10-13, and 14-15 give evidence consistent with this.

(3) The armies of governments that supported Christendom are referred to as “Warriors of Teman” in Obadiah. Obadiah 10-14 indicates that because of violence done against Israel by Christendom, they will be judged. Following is the continuation of this article.

CAST OFF FOREVER

Edom, or Christendom, will be cast off forever. Why? Because as allies of their brother Jacob, Edom, or Christendom, was supposed to help protect Israel from her enemies. But what do they do instead? When the armies of Israel’s enemy Gog come from the north and attack Israel, we are told that Edom, or Christendom’s army, will stand aloof, that is, they will just stand by and do nothing, actually gloating or rejoicing over Israel being spoiled by the forces of Gog. Just as we noted earlier in Ezekiel, “they handed over the Israelites to the sword,” or as in Psalms 137:7, which also tells of Christendom’s encouraging Gog’s forces to tear down Jerusalem, “Remember O LORD what the Edomites [Christendom] did on the day Jerusalem fell. Tear it down, they cried, tear it down to its foundations.”

Coming back to Obadiah, we note in verses 13 and 14 that after the forces of Gog have done their plundering and leave, Christendom’s army who previously stood aloof watching it all happen will then enter the city of Jerusalem to plunder what still remains. They will lay in wait to capture the Israeli fugitives as they escape from the city. Thus these verses in Obadiah indicate that even though Christendom presently claims to be an ally of Israel, anti-Semitism will gradually grow, to the point where Christendom will be guilty of actually gloating, rejoicing, over Israel’s getting spoiled by the forces of Gog, and will follow after with their own spoiling of what yet remains in Israel at the end of Jacob’s Trouble. Anti-Semitism will have reached its climax.

Jeremiah 30:14 — “All your lovers have forgotten you ... For I have wounded you with the wound of an enemy, With the punishment of a cruel one, because your iniquity is great and your sins are numerous.”

Obadiah 15,16 Rotherham (Day of Jehovah's recompense) — "For, near, is the day of Yahweh, (Jehovah) upon all the nations — Just as thou hast done, shall it be done to thee, Thy dealing, shall come back upon thine own head. For, as ye have drunk on my holy mountain, all the nations shall drink continually, Yea they shall drink and swallow down, and shall be, as though they had not been."

Christendom and Gog of Magog's armies are involved in this final battle with Israel in Obadiah. Why will God's judgment be on all nations? (Two other scriptures also say all nations will be involved in Jacobs Trouble.)

Joel 3:2 NIV — "I will gather all nations and bring them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat (meaning "Jehovah has judged") There I will enter into judgment against them concerning my inheritance, my people Israel, for they scattered my people among the nations and divided up my land."

Zechariah 14:2 — "For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled ... and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city."

Could all nations of earth be literally involved in the final battle with Israel in Jacob's Trouble? The Gesenius Hebrew Lexicon and other scriptures show the word for "battle" can be used to refer to other types of fighting or contending than warfare, like fighting an illness, or fighting to stay alive. An example is Ecclesiastics 8:8 GWV, "No one has the power to prevent the spirit of life from leaving. No one has control over the day of his own death. There is no way to avoid the war [or fight] against death."

TOTAL NATIONS IN THE WORLD AND THE UNITED NATIONS

In the first decade of this century there were 195 recognized independent nations in the world. In 2011 there were 193 member states in the United Nations. The Vatican declined and Taiwan was replaced by China. The Internet Encyclopedia "Wikipedia" notes that "The UN Human Rights Council has adopted more resolutions condemning Israel than it has for all other states combined."

Thus, God may consider all nations as being involved in Jacob's trouble representatively, by being a part of the condemnations against Israel by the United Nations that will probably greatly increase.

Obadiah 17 Rotherham (After the trouble ends) — "But, in Mount Zion, shall be a delivered remnant which shall be holy — and the house of Jacob shall possess their own possessions [or inheritance!] Jacob's Trouble ends with a Holy Remnant coming through the trouble (the same thought as in Isaiah 4:3) and Israel goes on to receive her promised inheritance in the Kingdom.

Isaiah 4:3 NAS — "He who is left in Zion and remains in Jerusalem [after Jacob's Trouble] will be called holy — everyone who is recorded for life in Jerusalem."

Obadiah 18 NAS — This text describes who will bring final punishment on Christendom. "Then the house of Jacob will be a fire and the house of Joseph a flame; But the house of Esau will be as stubble. And they will set them on fire and consume them, So that there will be no survivor of the house of Esau." For the LORD has spoken. (Jacob represents natural Israel, and the house of Joseph pictures spiritual Israel, Jesus and the Church, who will consume Christendom.)

Ezekiel 25:12-14 RSV — Christendom avenged by Israel. "Because Edom acted revengefully against the house of Judah and has grievously offended in taking vengeance upon them, therefore thus says the Lord GOD ... I will lay my vengeance upon Edom by the hand of my people Israel; and they shall do in Edom according to my anger and according to my wrath; and they shall know my vengeance, says the Lord GOD."

Thus the Ancient Worthies will direct Israel's judgment upon Christendom. Zechariah 12:6 KJ — "In that day will I make the governors (Ancient Worthies) of Judah like an hearth of fire among the wood, and like a torch of fire in a sheaf; and they shall devour all the people round about, on the right hand and on the left: and Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place, even in Jerusalem."

Obadiah 19,20 LB — The promised land Israel will inherit after trouble. "Then my people who live in the Negeb shall occupy the hill country of Edom, those living in Judean lowlands shall possess the Philistine plains, and repossess the fields of Ephraim and Samaria. And the people of Benjamin shall possess Gilead. The Israeli exiles shall return and occupy the Phoenician coastal strip as far north as Zarapath. Those exiled in Asia Minor (Sepharad) shall return to their homeland."

Obadiah 21 LB — The outcome and conclusion. "And saviours [Jesus and the Church] shall come up on mount Zion to rule all Edom, and the kingdom shall be the LORD's." After being burned as tares, Christendom will be blest by saviors, that is, Jesus and the Church in the Kingdom.

How marvelous is our Heavenly Father who can weave into countless prophecies the symbols used of what is yet to come. What a joy to find all these symbolic prophecies written by approximately 40 writers of the Bible, over a period of over 1500 years or more, and all are completely harmonious. Each and every prophetic symbol dove-tails perfectly together, like pieces in a jig-saw puzzle. This could only have happened because our God, the all-knowing supreme ruler of the universe, guided and directed each and every one of His prophets what to write. All the prophets meant to help us know where we are in the stream of time, to know what we are to expect, to know the ultimate destiny for us and all mankind, and above all to strengthen our faith as we see prophecies being fulfilled before our very eyes.

— Adapted from a discourse handout by Br. George Tabac