

The All-Sufficiency of El Shaddai

by Aeron Morgan

The sermon emphasizes the all-sufficiency of God, El Shaddai, and how we can experience His power and provision in our lives through faith and trust in Him.

Duration: 48:09

Scripture: Psalm 91:1-2

Topics: "Character Of God"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of preaching that magnifies the greatness and supremacy of God. He argues that people are starving for the greatness of God and that preaching that lacks this focus will not touch the hidden cry of the soul. The preacher also highlights the need for individuals to know themselves and God, as this is the purpose of all teaching and preaching. He references the story of Abram and how God's revelation of His all-mightiness transformed the situation and strengthened Abram's faith. The preacher concludes by emphasizing the significance of knowing God as El Shaddai, the all-sufficient one, and how this knowledge can lead to an abounding life.

Transcript

Amen. Turn to Psalm 91, please, and the first two verses, as we continue our theme on the infinite majesty of God. Earlier this morning we looked at something of God's transcendence in the name El Elyon, the Most High.

These two verses then, He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High, El Elyon, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty, El Shaddai. I will say of the Lord, that is Jehovah, He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, the name there is Elohim, my God, in Him will I trust. I was interested in reading a book by Andrew Jukes, who wrote a number of books and very, very profitable books too, some 125 years or so ago.

I wasn't around then, by the way. And he posed a question that is so relevant to today's church, and a question that he himself answers, and which we need to reflect upon, because I deem it to be crucial. He said this, and I quote, what is the meaning of all the teaching and preaching, which by our Lord's command is continued day by day, both in the church and in the world? It means that there is something we do not know, which is very important, that we should know, and which we are all slow to learn.

What is it? Only two things, we do not know ourselves and we do not know God. All teaching and preaching are to make us know ourselves and God. Interesting words.

And as we have already sort of explained, you cannot know God, apart from His self-revelation that's found here in the scriptures. Neither can you know yourself, apart from this word. As Jeremiah said, the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, who can know it? And then Jeremiah says, it is God speaking through him, I, the Lord, search the heart.

He knows us through and through of Christ. It says that he is one who has eyes as a flame of fire. In other words, it's magnifying his omniscience, the fact that he sees and knows all things.

And it's divine omniscience alone that discerns what man is at the very core of his being. And we dare not opionate here. Sadly, in an effort to render the gospel more palatable, the good news of Jesus Christ is very largely depleted of its true biblical revelation.

How are men going to be saved if they do not know the truth of the gospel that exposes the reality of the human heart as utterly depraved? Man is not basically good. That is why he is capable of the most heinous of crimes. If, as Andrew Jukes wrote, all teaching and preaching are to make us know ourselves and God, why are not preachers and teachers giving themselves to this sacred, this essential task? In the main, friends, this is not the burden of the messages we hear in our pulpits in these days, these troublesome times, when the people need a more God-entranced preaching.

Preaching that magnifies the supremacy of God, to see God for who he is. And if our people, and if you and I this morning are to survive the demonic onslaughts that are ravaging our society, that we might rise up strong in faith, faith in God, then we need to behold something of the whole panorama of his excellencies. I like the writings also today of a modern writer, John Piper, who says, and I quote, people are starving for the greatness of God.

He says, preaching that does not have the aroma of God's greatness may entertain for a season, but it will not touch the hidden cry of the soul, show me thy glory. In these two verses we have a glimpse of some of the glory of God, as we mentioned in our first session, that the four names of God here, the four principal names that have to do with God as to his inmost nature, we have looked at El Elyon, the Most High, the one who is transcendent, the one who is supreme. And now let's look at the second of these names, those who dwell in the secret place of the Most High, El Elyon, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty, El Shaddai.

Now, as we have intimated the word El in the Hebrew, it means power or might, and it portrays God to us as the strong and the mighty one, and how comforting and how reassuring it is this morning to know that our God is Almighty. David the Psalmist, Psalm 62 and verse 11, he says, God has spoken once, twice have I heard this, that power, that is implied absolute power, almighty power, majestic power, it belongs unto God. And our God this morning is a God of incomparable strength, of such power that none can successfully contend with.

And since God is sovereign, then he must possess all and limitless power in order for him to effectually reign and rule in the universe. It means that for our God nothing is impossible, nothing is too hard, there is no situation that is too difficult for him, there is no situation that's beyond his ability to adequately deal with. He is El Shaddai, he is the Almighty, and there's something that perhaps we need to understand about God's almightiness.

First of all, what it is not. Now, it may be surprising for me to say this, but I will explain it. It's not in God this almightiness is not an ability to do anything and everything.

Oh, now you're beginning to wonder, but I thought that is it, God can do anything and he can do everything. That needs to be qualified because there are some things that God cannot do. He cannot intend evil, he cannot lie, he can't deny his word.

Does that limit his almightiness? Would God be more almighty if he could lie? No, lying, deceit, falsehood is not a strength, it's a weakness. So then what is almightiness? It is the power to carry out the will to the uttermost, the will of a divine nature, a nature that is consistently and necessarily holy and just and righteous. So whatever God does is always right.

He cannot do what is wrong. Again we come back to that lovely meditation in our morning prayer meeting on the fact that God is righteous. We need to understand that and we need to mention too that this word almightiness derives from a Hebrew root that means to interpose, it means to intervene.

The name of the promised Christ is Emmanuel, meaning God is with us, with us is God. Truly he is the interposer who came to save us and this helps us to see power in God as not meaning something that's brutal, something that is vicious. Power in God friends is not aggressive and violent, it's all goodness, it's all goodness and he delights to step into situations to intervene on our behalf when it seems we are going to be overwhelmed, when it seems as though we are going to go under, we are going to be defeated.

That situation and I don't know it but God knows it, that situation that you are confronted with that seems beyond the wisdom and the ability that you have to cope with. It seems that things have gone out of control. El Shaddai the Almighty is ready to come to your aid.

This all-sufficient one El Shaddai is ready to intervene, to interpose, to resolve the situation and to vindicate for you, praise the Lord. The word Shaddai means to pour or to shed force. It derives from a word Shad, meaning the breast and in a symbolic way then God is revealed in the character of the breasted one, that is one who has the power to nourish and to sustain his people from his own inmost self and the picture immediately comes to us, just think of the mother.

When you mother had a little baby and we've got a little few little babies on camp when those babies were born, mum didn't say to the husband listen go to the fish and chips shop and get some fish and chips for the baby. He didn't say listen put a good steak on let's build up our baby. No you didn't.

The first thing you do as a mother with a baby is to hold that baby to your breast and it seems as though the mother is omnipotent, that she is totally sufficient and so for quite a period of time and it differs with mothers these days, some they breastfeed their child for many many months, others hardly and they are soon on the bottle. But when nothing and no one else can satisfy that hungry and that infant child that's crying, mother can. Now let's be careful here not to allow any idea to suggest a female god, all this crazy stuff, our mother and father which aren't in heaven.

Yeah, some Anglicans in the north of England have rewritten the scriptures to imply that God is not male, he is male and female. So our father and mother which aren't in heaven, how crazy can you be? So we cannot think of God in terms of being female, the idea here has nothing to do with gender, it has to do with God's absolute completeness, that is his all-sufficiency represented in a figure that helps our understanding. The all-sufficient, El Shaddai, come back to Genesis with me for a moment, in chapter 49,

Genesis chapter 49, we read from verse 22 to 25, Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well whose branches run over the wall, the archers have sorely grieved him and shot at him and hated him, but his bow abode in strength and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the El Shaddai of Jacob, the mighty God of Jacob, from thence is the shepherd the stone of Israel, even by the God of thy father who shall help thee and by the almighty El Shaddai who shall bless thee with blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lie under, blessings of the breasts and of the womb, a God who blesses, the all-sufficient God who blesses us with whatever it is we have need of, the sufficient one.

Now bear with me here because here's some interesting data from the scriptures, it's worthy of note that the of the 48 references to El Shaddai in scripture, 31 of them are in the book of Job, significant, the book of Job and eight times in the book of the revelation, that is the last book in the bible and I think that that is significant for in the life of God's child and God's servant when the enemy is at work to undermine your faith and to bring you down as with Job, El Shaddai is always present with you to defend you and to support you and to bring you through in glorious triumph, praise the Lord, especially when you come to the last book of the bible there in revelation with the great issues of God's kingdom in view, the revolt of nations, the presence and the evil activity of the devil who has been cast down to the earth and the antichrist commanding the attention and the admiration of the whole world. It is El Shaddai who manifests himself in his all-sufficiency to put down all rule, all authority to establish his kingdom over all, so he interposes in a world lacking justice and lacking righteousness, a world in total opposition to God and he demonstrates that he is the absolute and the complete sovereign, praise the Lord, a God of incredible ability. I will not digress, I'd love to just there especially with some of the modern teachings concerning the second coming of Christ and the coming kingdom of Christ.

Friends, the kingdom is not established by the church, it is Christ who is going to bring it in when he comes revealed here in this earth, when he sits upon the throne of his father David. At the moment he's on his father's throne, but one day he is going to sit upon his own throne on the earth and judge the 12 tribes of Israel, what a day when he will be revealed. It comes from the church first of course, hallelujah.

Now the disclosure of God then in this marvellous character as El Shaddai, it first came to Abraham and you will find it in chapter 17, if you'll turn back to Genesis 17 and the first six verses, may I read that when Abraham was 90 years old, the Lord appeared to Abraham and said unto him, I am the almighty God, I am El Shaddai, walk before me and be thou perfect. Let me pause there a moment, what if God simply had said, Abraham walk before me and be perfect, oh my word, impossible. But he prefaces his command with really a promise, Abraham I am your El Shaddai, your all sufficient one, walk before me and be perfect.

Ah, God you're going to be with me to be my sufficiency, to walk before you and to be perfect. Oh praise the Lord. Wonderful isn't it? And I, that is El Shaddai will make my covenant between me and you and I will multiply you exceedingly.

Abraham fell on his face and God talked with him saying, as for me behold my covenant is with you and you will be a father of many nations, neither shall your name anymore be called Abraham but your name shall be Abraham. For a father of many nations have I made you and I will make you exceedingly fruitful and I will make nations of you and kings shall come out of you. Who will do all this? El Shaddai, the all sufficient one.

You see how God presents himself to Abraham and he does so to us as the one who is enough, a God of bountiful grace, a God who is never weary of pouring forth his mercies upon his people. His mercies are

from everlasting to everlasting upon those who fear him and God here in Genesis 17 is assuring Abraham that he can fulfill all that he has spoken by way of promise and covenant. Now at first it was not easy for Abraham to receive this because he could not see past his old age and see it as dead womb.

Wow, can make of you many nations, a father of many nations. So he had already taken Hagar when he was 86 years of age and she bore a son to him, Ishmael. Oh my word, not a problem since that day.

Once you try to help God out friends you can be sure you'll make a mess of things. But Ishmael was not the child of faith, he was not the child of promise, he was not the heir in whom the nations of the world would be blessed. That's why the Arab world they are claiming and they marching in the cities of our capital cities of our world with great banners, Islam will dominate the world.

No, no they won't, they won't dominate the world and I confronted some Muslims in Cardiff in Wales when I was there on a visit just two months or a month before 9-11 and there they were with this great banner, Islam will dominate the world and something rose up inside of me and I went over to them I said listen, Islam will not dominate the world, that is sovereignly reserved for one whose name is Jesus Christ. Oh no it won't, we don't believe the Bible. I said well I'm telling you that is what the Bible teaches and that is what is going to happen.

He will rule the world. So now Abraham is 13 years older, he is 99 but God comes to him with this revelation of his all-mightiness. Abraham is assured that God's all-sufficiency is able to do what was impossible.

He's a God who who gives life to the dead and upon this revelation the whole situation turned. As Paul mentions in Romans 4 verse 20 and 21, Abraham staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief but was strong in faith giving glory to God and being fully persuaded that what he, that is El Shaddai, had promised he was able to perform. El Shaddai makes the difference, a name that's revealing a significant quality about our Lord's nature, his character toward us.

Friends this morning or this afternoon now nearly, all the all-mightiness we shall ever require to do what God has demanded of us is found in his own provision as our El Shaddai and here is the secret of an abounding life of fruitfulness and there are those who serve the Lord among us of ministries that are powerful and effective. Here's the secret of this overcoming life that brings honour to God, it's drawing our strength, drawing all that we need from El Shaddai. It's by his all-sufficiency that we are able to walk in step with him and in harmony with his holy will and whilst friends this morning we do not deny our own personal weakness, our own personal inherent insufficiency and inefficiency, something sometimes even our own disappointing failure and we have to admit the times when we have lacked strong faith but oh we look away from our weakness to El Shaddai.

My brothers, my sisters this morning, draw from him all that you need today to nourish you, to sustain your spiritual life, to enable you to to grow up, to mature in your fellowship with him, to increase in your knowledge, your understanding of him, keep him in focus all the time and see him working on your behalf because one thing is sure, he will never abandon you and just an observation before moving on to the next name and conclude with that this morning. In Genesis 17 there and verse 5 where Abram's name is changed, it says neither shall your name anymore be called Abram but your name shall be called Abraham for a father of many nations have I made you and God adds this syllable Hebrew syllable he which is the chief letter of his own name Jehovah or Yahweh, a sound that can only be uttered by an out-breathing Jehovah and we see El Shaddai imparting to Abram something of his own nature for the

accomplishing of his sovereign will. Abram come here, no longer Abram, Abram.

Does that remind you of something? In the upper room after the resurrection and Jesus has his disciples and they're about to go into that world, no longer having the presence of Jesus with them that is in the flesh because he's going back to heaven, it says he breathed on them. Amen. Hallelujah.

Now don't you go around to people. It won't work. That's right.

Psychologically they may fall over but listen it is only Jesus who gives the Holy Spirit. That's right. Man cannot impart the Holy Spirit.

That's right. He shall baptise you with the Holy Spirit and with fire and thank God this morning as Abram's immediate response is one of obedience and the surrender of himself in everything by the outward act of circumcision. So let us this morning behold him receive from him the fullness of his spirit as he imparts his spirit to us and let's separate ourselves from the world and live by his grace and by his power to do his will.

If friends this morning we would know God's pouring out into us then of course it's not now the circumcision in the flesh it's the circumcision in the heart in which we live and serve in obedience to him and so we empty ourselves of all self-will and self-confidence and we trust ourselves entirely to his grace and to his power and oh with his almightiness when that comes to us in our helplessness we are made sufficient to fulfill all his will and he is glorified. He that dwells in the secret place of El Elyon shall abide under the shadow of El Shaddai. I want to abide there.

You know there's nothing closer than your shadow is there? Go out there in the sun you see the as close as close as that there's a lovely old song it's been with me for a couple of days close to thee close to thee close to thee close to thee all along life's pilgrim journey let me walk so close dwelling in the shadow of the almighty drawing from El Shaddai all that we need to fulfill his will what a God we have. Can I briefly touch now on the second verse where it says I will say of the Lord that is Jehovah he is my refuge and my fortress what a name Jehovah it's one that the Jews felt that they should never pronounce it and so they substituted another name it's the name Adonai for Jehovah when they were reading the scriptures.

This name Jehovah is formed of two tenses of the Hebrew word Havah meaning to be so literally Jehovah is one who is what he is remember when Moses said to him listen um you've called me to bring your people out from Egypt well they're in Egypt with many many gods that all have their names what shall I tell them considering the one who has sent me the name of the God who has sent me he says I am that I am it's the self-existent one the one who is the source of all life it's in this name that we have the revelation of God in in the full expression of his being as the just one as the true one it's the name by which he enters into those covenant relationships with Israel they were the people whom he chose as a nation to be separated unto him so that he might work through them and so he is

seen choosing and caring for and and guiding his people and the first mention of this name Jehovah as I referred to earlier this morning is in Genesis and it's in chapter 2 and verse 4 where it's linked with Elohim Jehovah Elohim and it's repeated in that way right throughout the chapter when you come into Genesis chapter 3 the only departure from this is found in the expression of of the serpent to Eve and twice Satan the serpent refers to Elohim not to Jehovah to Elohim and Eve mentions it once it's as though Satan would blind man's eyes to all the other righteous elements of God's nature except Elohim who is the loving and faithful God we will look at that later in God the faithful God and that's the the it was purposefully mentioned by Satan who is the master of lies and deception he

was using it for a particular end to blind Eve to the just nature of God if you partake of the fruit of that you will die oh no says Satan he won't die no Elohim won't permit that Elohim he's too loving he's too kind he's too good for that it's a delusion friends of the devil that man can act in any manner pleasing to himself because Elohim can only ultimately succor the one in salvation it's all right God's a good God God's a loving God and Paul had to address this as he expounded on the truth of the grace of God and he talked in Romans chapter 5 at the end there of being brought out from under the reign of sin to come under the reign of grace and there were those who said oh well you know God is a God of grace so it doesn't matter just what we do because the more we sin the more grace

will be made manifest and immediately Paul says shall we continue in sin that grace may abound no way God forbid how can we who died to sin that is when Christ died live any longer therein the question this morning is simply shall we persist in a sinful manner living with the idea that that by sinning the grace of God then will be magnified see man is tempted to forget that Jehovah is the just and the righteous and the truthful God and whilst he is certainly a God of love and mercy he is a God of truth and justice he is the righteous one so when we think of the nature of God love in God that is love in Elohim is love in virtue of relationship but love in God that is Jehovah is love in harmony with righteousness in Jehovah the judicial side of God is revealed so when you go on into chapter

4 of Genesis you see now God having to deal with Cain and in his dealings with Cain it's always Jehovah Jehovah Jehovah it's not Elohim now it's Jehovah the just one who is dealing with this man who has slain his brother Jehovah in the evaluation of the offering that he brought it's Jehovah in the judgment of his sin of murder it's Jehovah and this is consistent friends with the whole character the whole revelation of God's redeeming character because his love market his love is never seen at the expense of justice right and neither thank God is his justice seen at the expense of love that's why Calvary is an incredible revelation of God the nature of God in his justice in his wrath poured out upon his only begotten son in your stead and mine and his love he did it that he might redeem us

from all iniquity praise the Lord so with Jehovah justice is inflexible it's it's exact there is perfect and unchanging rightness this absolute truth this unwavering holiness this total sovereignty this pure indignation there is appropriate wrath and yet there is infinite goodness and love and unbounded mercy there's immeasurable grace and kindness that flows from the heart of God see we've got to get to know God for who he is not a lopsided view that magnifies some of his attributes above and over against others God cannot be faulted in anything that he is or that he does the integrity of God friends is beyond question let me read you just a few verses out from Jeremiah chapter 10 I haven't the time to read the 16 verses but verses six and seven and then verse 10 for as much as there is

none like you oh Jehovah you are great and your name is great in might who would not fear you oh king of nations for fear belongs to you that is it is due to you for as much as men as among all the wise men of the nations and in all their kingdoms there is not none like unto you but Jehovah is the true God he is the living God and an everlasting king at his wrath the earth shall tremble and the nation shall not be able to abide his indignation now let me tell you friends in in the view of such a revelation of God we can be glad that this God is our God that this God is for us as we read in Romans chapter 8 if God be for us then who can be against us this one who is just and true and yet who is loving and forgiving praise his wonderful name psalm 85 in verse 10 mercy and truth are met

together righteousness and peace have kissed each other one could go on to quote from Romans chapter 3 where Paul brings these marvelous attributes together of God's justice and God's grace so that God is

just and yet he is the justifier of those who believe in Jesus oh this name Jehovah what a name this is what a challenge it conveys to us that evokes a practical response to its revelation if El Elyon in his transcendent glory causes us to mind our finiteness and our feebleness our smallness our humility because he transcends all and if El Shaddai in his all-mightiness and his all-sufficiency makes us mindful of our personal weakness and our utter dependence upon him then Jehovah causes us to examine our moral standing and our righteous state before him we want to shadow out something of

his own integrity of heart and truthfulness are we a people of integrity are we a people of truthfulness are we people who are worthy of trust does what we profess match with what we really are is there a consistency about our walk and our profession our talk before men and God do we portray ourselves in any light that is not genuine hear me friends we may not be wealthy or of high profile but thank God we will walk uprightly and in the true fear of the Lord we may not possess personality and charm but we will be honest followers of Christ that are marked by integrity we may well be short on giftings for public service but we are going to ensure that our lives are real and faithful and conscientious to bring glory to the Lord yeah sometimes we we have to confess our lack of wisdom our

lack of understanding but there will be no lack of justice and sincerity and trust in God for his promised wisdom we looked at we may feel this morning that we do not have much personal worth don't go to a psychologist or to preachers who will tell you listen that's all nonsense you must think highly of yourself see who you are and what you can do you can do it we can of course we can in ourselves friends we can't and that's that's no weakness to admit that we can't but we are genuine and we are open before the Lord we're not putting on some false pretense and we're just trusting him who pours in his strength and makes us what we should be Jehovah who cannot but bow in in adoring worship before this one the great I am whose dealings with you and me will ever be just they'll ever be true

and yet they'll be full of compassion we'll find him friends to be slow to anger and plenteous in redemption what does the psalmist say my God in whom I will trust the Lord he says who is my refuge and my fortress you can trust him today he's true he's faithful he's just he's a wonderful and a mighty God

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