

The word El means "God," or "The Strong One." Abraham might be weak, but God was strong. Men might be moved by the power of circumstance and the iniquitous forces of life. But God never. He is the Strong One. But what good does that do us? Suppose God is strong while we are so weak? To sit in our weakness, misery, and failure, and look at His strength only aggravates our lost condition. God is strong no doubt about that but what about our poor weakness and need? Then God spoke to Abraham. He said the glorious and wonderful words that like a rainbow of glory bridge the chasm between helpless man and omnipotent God. He said, "I am. El Shaddai ... "

The word Shad is the Hebrew for "breast." It is used invariably throughout the Old Testament for the breast of a woman. It is the place from which baby lips derive the food that gives them strength. There is no sweeter picture on earth than that of a little child in its mother's arms. There is no symphony more beautiful than her baby's laugh. It is part of that mother's life; flesh of her flesh and bone of her bone. The life of the mother flows into the babe. Her strength, love, solicitude, and care all flow into the life and body of the sweet little bundle that is a part of her. Thus an eternal God wrapped up an infinite truth in the vocabulary of earth and gave it as a gift to Abraham and to you and to me.

What God meant was Draw from Me, Abraham. I am your strength. I am your sustenance. I am El, the Strong One, but I am also Shaddai, the Nourisher, and the Life Giver. There is no need for you to falter, Abraham, no need to tremble and shake in your faith. Draw for your weakness from the fountain of my strength, even as a babe draws from his mother's breast the milk of life. No need to stumble over unbelief, Abraham, but "walk before me and be thou Perfect," thus saith the Lord.

That is the lesson. God is the source, the unfailing source, of the supply that is more than sufficient for all our need; of grace to cover all our sin; love that pardons all our iniquity, stripes that are sufficient for all our healing; strength for all our weakness. We believe that; but herein we have failed. We believe that God gives it, but we have not learned how to receive it. The mother gives the milk to her babe, but the little one must receive it. The infusion of the divine strength and nature is dependent upon two things: your knowledge that God is willing to give, and your learning how to receive. As unfailing as the law of the seedtime and the harvest; as irrevocable as the marching of the days and nights in their order is the great truth that God is always ready to meet your every need, if only you are ready to receive.

Praise His Name, He is still El Shaddai! Does not Paul admonish us to become "partakers of the divine nature?" Has God Himself not told us, "My grace is sufficient for thee"? Back of all our vain glorying, our miserable spiritual pride and abhorrent self-righteousness is the God who loves us and gave Himself for us, and who longs for us to learn the lesson of drawing from Him all that we need for every moment of every passing day.

WHO?

Back yonder we see Elijah sitting in defeat and spiritual disgrace. He has quit. He of the lion heart has been beaten on the battlefield of the soul; and that after he had faced an army! Then something happens. We watch him as he goes for forty days and nights without food, unto Horeb, the mount of God. In whose strength did he go? Who told David to advance in his natural weakness against the giant Goliath of Gath? Who guided the stone which sped unerringly on its way? Who gave his arm the strength, and his heart the courage? Who pushed down the walls of Jericho; and Who slew the host of Sennacherib when the Syrian came down like a wolf on the fold?

Who delivered Israel, and Who led them in the exodus? Who opened the prison doors for Peter and Who pulled back the curtains of glory for Stephen, and gave him grace to pray for his murderers? Who dried the tears of Martha and poured oil into the broken heart of Mary?

Who was it saved our guilty souls, when we knelt at the foot of the cross? Who turned our darkness into day? Who stands by our sides at this moment, ready and willing to give grace and glory? Who has strength for our weakness healing for our sickness power for our trials freedom for our slavery and grace sufficient for every need? Who can it be, but Jesus?

El Shaddai still speaks to the hearts of men and, of a truth, we can still sing, "Strength for thy labor the Lord will provide." Reader, draw upon His Life. Take the grace He so freely and gladly imparts. He is more than sufficient for your need, and it is possible to walk before Him and be perfect, not in self, but in Christ. I know whereof I speak.

It has been my privilege to be called by my Lord to preach His gospel over the earth. The greatest joy of my life is to win souls, as He leads me and gives me strength for the task. Many of the campaigns run from eight to ten weeks, and sometimes the body gets very weary. One night I was sitting in an office in a corner of the tabernacle, feeling tired and at the end of my endurance. Out in the auditorium a great crowd was waiting for the service to begin, and through the thin boards I could hear the murmur of people at prayer. Then the door opened. A minister stood there and said, "Brother Price, there are about five hundred people here tonight who expect to be anointed in the name of the Lord for healing."

Five hundred and I did not have the strength I needed to preach. Then there was that multitude to meet in the name of my Lord. In my heart I felt for a moment like running away. Then I wondered if I could dismiss the sick and tell them to come back some other night. I looked through a crack in the wall, and there I saw the poor sufferers waiting for a poor human like me to come and tell them of Jesus. Suddenly my nerves seemed to go to pieces. I dropped to my knees on the floor and wept. "Oh, Jesus," I cried, "I can't. I have not the strength. I am so weary and tired. I want to, Lord, but I am not equal to this task."

Then I heard that still, small voice in the depths of my heart. "You have no strength ... Why not take mine?" For a moment I thought, could this be real? Why not? Did not the Lord give His strength to people in the olden days? Why not now. "Thank you, Lord," I said as I waited for what He would do. Then I felt a warm glow come over this body of mine. I walked out on the platform. Many times I preach from notes, but not that night. There was no weariness, no fatigue; nothing but the conscious knowledge of His strength.

In faith I assured the sufferers that all would be reached that night. When the midnight hour came, I was still laying these unworthy hands of mine upon human heads, in the name of the Lord Jesus. The power of the Lord was present to heal them, because the Lord Himself was there. Then came the last one. I prayed; pronounced the benediction; and went home. As I was about to retire, I became conscious again of a great weariness. But I was not too tired to drop on my knees and thank Him for what He had done that night. He was still El Shaddai. I knew that He had imparted His strength to meet my weakness. He will meet your weakness too. He will meet your every need, and no good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly.

One great requisite for the reception of the strength that He can give is that you feel your need of that strength. Our trust in Him is personal confidence; and when we come on the basis of His merit, He gives to us His faith. We do not look at Jesus, but unto Him. So many follow Him afar off. They look at Him; but are not near enough to look unto Him. They lag behind while they dissect creeds, handle dogmas, contend with others about interpretations, and lose thereby the sweetness of His presence.

Two men once came to me with a controversial question, and asked for my opinion regarding it. I listened to their statements; and when they had finished, I had to acknowledge that I did not know the answer. So I said, "Brethren, the important thing is not what you believe, but in whom you believe." You will perhaps at first be inclined to disagree with that statement on the ground that what you believe is of tremendous importance. Yet, when at last you reach the portals of "home," you will not tell the angels that you climbed to heaven on the rungs of the ladder of creed, but you will testify that you are at home because of the One who died for you on the Cross of Calvary.

WHICH WOULD YOU BE?

Have you then learned the lesson of drawing on Jesus for the needs of your life? Have you found the sweetness of abiding in the Lord? Have you come to the realization that after all you are a miserable failure? Have you come to the place of the consciousness of your great need, and your pitiful lack of strength with which to overcome? Would you not rather be in the shoes of the Publican on the temple steps than in the shoes worn by the Pharisee who felt so strong in his righteousness and so proud of his deeds? Only as we decrease can Jesus increase. That means to decrease in our self-life, in our self-esteem, and in our self-confidence.

The house which was built on the sand felt proud of itself, until the wind began to blow and the tempest to rage. The house that was built on the rock cared not for the tempest, angry winds or waves; and when the lashing gales began to scourge it, it was able, having done all, to stand in the evil day. The strength was not in the house, but in the *rock*. It was not the house that gave the rock its strength, but it was the rock which gave strength to the house.

Christ can be your all in all, not only in the picture that is framed in the border of a beautiful theology, but also in practice and reality every moment in every day of the passing years. He invites you to prove Him. He admonishes you to test Him. Why be empty when you can be full to overflowing? Why be hungry when you can be fed? Why wander like a lost child on the desert wastes of life, crying because you know not the way of your tomorrows? Better by far it is to put your hand in His and hear the whisper of His voice divine, "Follow me; I'll guide thee home."

Then the thing, undreamed of in any Arabian Nights of fiction, becomes real in Christ. The desert turns into a trail of flowers; and the heart throbs pull at the bell ropes of heaven until the music of the skies is heard again by mortal ears. The rocky hills are but the paths which lead upward to a transfiguration trusting place, together with the saints; as we love Him, who leads and guides us, more and more with every step of the way.

Oh, Soul of Mine, boast not now--nor in eternity--of your accomplishments in thought and deed. The star of feeble service seems dim indeed in the light which streams from the Cross. The labor of our human hands is forgotten as we look through our tears at the hands that were wounded on the Tree. The titles and degrees we bear in pride will hang their heads in shame, when they behold the inscription at the head of the Cross. The things we have done will seem so small in comparison with the things which He has done. How wonderful His leadership! How marvelous His grace! How far beyond the reach of the mind which has not been illumined by the power of the Holy Spirit is the truth that here and now He is willing to impart more than sufficient to meet our every need. He will do it now. He is still El Shaddai, the God Who is Enough.

At a recent camp meeting an elderly lady listened to the truth set forth on this printed page. She was so very sick! Over and over again she had been anointed; over and over again to no avail. At the end of the service I saw her sitting quietly, but the expression on her face told me of the conflict within. Suddenly she clasped her hands in prayer and said so appealingly, "Oh Jesus, I have tried so long with this poor faith of mine. Please give me some of yours." He did!

That is the secret of Christian victory. That is the secret of overcoming. Laying your burdens at His feet to leave them there and never again carry them around like an old worn out garment is the confidence the Lord desires that we enjoy. That is the messiah of the God Who is Enough. Enough for whom? Why, for you, of course. Enough for when? For now, of course. That is the provision of El Shaddai! Then as you march daily along the trail of time to the portals of eternity, you will be conscious of heaven on earth. As you draw nearer and nearer to the day when you can tell the angels you are coming, the songs of grace and glory will resound throughout the country of the homeward trail His presence His strength His power His love His faith His grace and you will find yourself singing as onward and upward you go—

"All the way my Saviour leads me,
Cheers each winding path I tread,
Gives me grace for every trial,
Feeds me on the Living Bread.
"When my spirit cloth'd immortal
Wings its flight to realms of day,
This my song through endless ages,
Jesus led me all the way."

Oh, the wonders of El Shaddai, the God Who Is Enough!