

## El Shaddai – My Supplier/ Jehovah Jireh - My Provider (part 8)

My Supplier/My Provider. God as the source of everything we need and (within His will) could want. El Shaddai, properly translated, means “God Almighty, All Sufficient” and is first revealed in this way in **Genesis 17:1** (To Abram when God reveals His whole plan to the patriarch, and changes His name from exalted father to father of many – ie Abram to Abraham). What God is revealing to ‘His friend’ is that He is the source of everything, the one true God of Power and He has need of nothing. Abram (which means exalted father – though at 75 he has not had any children, which was no doubt a source of embarrassment for him) on the other hand is made aware that His God is mighty and is able to change his circumstances – nothing is impossible for Him.

God, as our supplier, determines what will be required for His creation. From the beginning, He set in motion the incredible laws and processes that we as humans are only just discovering. Processes like photosynthesis, which produces oxygen for us to breath. Diverse foods to give us energy and water to hydrate. The work of the sun, providing energy for all living matter. The seasons, the tides, materials for clothing and building, it was all placed into creation for the benefit of man. Any scientist will tell you, that mankind can only make something out of something that already exists. Man can separate elements, he can put them back together in a different way, but he cannot make anything new. Nothing can be made in our universe from anything that doesn’t already exist, something that God hasn’t already created. Only God can speak something into being or create ‘ex nihilo’ (out of nothing). As Solomon wrote ‘There is nothing new under the sun. (**Ecc1 1:9**) It is He that created everything and Him that holds it all together (**Col 1:15-17**).

When we acknowledge God as El Shaddai, we are recognising not only God as Creator, but that He created all of this *for* His pleasure and *for* man. That nothing we have, comes from ourselves and anything we might achieve in this life is meaningless without the supply of God. We can be rich, famous, intelligent, good looking and talented, but without breath, food, shelter and water, none of it will last for more than a few seconds. El Shaddai provides for all mankind. Jesus told His disciples to love and pray for those that persecute them so that we would be called sons of the Father, because (El Shaddai) “...causes the sun to rise on the evil and the good, and send rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. (**Matt 5:45**) What He was explaining is that God as the supplier does not distinguish between the righteousness of man as to whether He gives or not, so neither should we! He *is* El Shaddai, and He supplies the needs of all creation, whether they acknowledge it or not. He can be relied upon to supply our needs in conformity with His will.

Jehovah Jireh (my provider) is slightly different. Jireh translates ‘to foresee and provide’. El Shaddai, though mindful of individual’s circumstances, talks of God who provides freely and in accordance with His will for creation. Jehovah Jireh on the other hand speaks of God who sees and provides for His people in their time of need. If we look at the first time this is name is used we see the story of Abraham and Isaac, and God ‘providing’ a ram in place of his son. (**see Gen 22:10-14**)

The believer therefore, should acknowledge God as the provider of His individual needs, and like Abraham, this is often an act of faith. When we are ‘tested’, we should believe that God will come through. When money is tight, or we are looking for work, when we need transport or accommodation, whatever it is, we should have faith that Jehovah Jireh will come through. Paul tells Timothy that the church should “...put their hope in God, who richly provides...” (**1Tim 6:17b**)

The bible is full of God’s provision for those that seek Him. In a physical sense, He provided an escape for the Israelites from the army of Pharaoh at the Red Sea, Manna and quail in the wilderness and water from the rock. Ravens fed Elijah, an unending supply of oil for the widow, goods for the rebuilding of the temple, food for the multitude and tax money from the mouth of a fish.

In a spiritual sense God has always provided a way to remain in relationship with Him, and to avoid sinning. God’s first act after the fall, was to provide a sacrifice of an animal as an atoning (covering) for man who had found himself naked before God in his disobedience. This of course, is the start of the sacrificial system God provided, so that man might be able to remain in God’s presence. This therefore brings us to Jesus, who was sacrificed once for all (**Heb 10:10**) to provide a way to be forever in relationship with God through faith.

God also provides for us when we are tempted. Paul writes “...when you are tempted, He will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.” (**1Cor 10:13**) And we can have faith that He will do all of this, because we know He is able. As God, Creator, All Mighty and All Sufficient, nothing is impossible for Him. **Psalms 111** says the Lord “...provides food for those that fear Him; provided redemption for his people;” (**verses 5 & 9**)

Here the psalmist sings the truth of God as Jehovah Jireh, providing His people with their physical and Spiritual needs. Jesus, when pondering the people’s concern about their needs asked “...why do you worry...your heavenly Father knows that you need them.” (**Matt 6:28a & 32b**) He sees our need (Jireh – foresee), He knows us intimately. He created us and knows what we as humans require to be healthy and active, and He is lovingly concerned with how we are and what we as

individuals need. Jesus is saying that worry is a waste of precious time and energy that would be better spent seeking His kingdom. That is to say, in prayer and meditation on His word. God wants His children to acknowledge Him as supplier and provider, and to come to Him in faith. It is why He says "...For everyone who asks, receives; he who seeks, finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened. **(Matt 7:7)**

James writes that "You do not have because you do not ask." **(James 4:2b)** He also says, "If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God...But when he asks he must believe and not doubt..." **(James 1:5a & 6a)** James is telling us that God is our supplier of all things, and our faith in Him for all things will, through prayer, bring us that which we lack, not only in a physical sense, but mentally (wisdom) as well a spiritually.

As El Shaddai and as Jehovah Jireh, the Christian can have confidence that nothing is too hard for God! He sees your need now and knows the past and has a plan to secure your future, regardless of the circumstances. We may not always understand God's plan (as I'm sure Abraham didn't as he went off to sacrifice his son), or why we are going through difficult times, but we can be sure that God will come through. He will provide for us physically, monetarily and spiritually. He provides redemption for sin (through faith in Jesus), a way out of sin when tempted (through the power of the Holy Spirit) and gives good gifts to his children **(see Luke 11:13)**.

**Study 8 – questions**

1. Read **Genesis 17:1-6**. Explain what you think 'El Shaddai' was saying to Abram in relation to being his supplier, when He changed his name to Abraham.

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2. Make a list of things in creation that we should give thanks to God for that He has given to us for our supply.

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3. Read **Matthew 5:45**. What does this verse say about the nature of El Shaddai?

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4. How do you see the different names for God as supplier / provider, and their relationship to God's character?

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5. Read **Genesis 22:9-14**. Compare this with **Genesis 3:21 & Hebrews 10:10**. What common thread do you see? Discuss the spiritual provision of Jehovah Jireh.

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6. Have you ever had to be totally reliant on God? Where have you seen Gods provision in your life?

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7. Read **1Corinthians 10:13**. Has there ever been a time when you have been tempted when God has revealed a way out?

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8. We have seen a number of Scriptures that talk about God's willingness to give what we ask/need. What hinders your faith and what helps your faith in God that He will 'come through'?

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9. In what way do you think God wants us to approach Him when we have a need? How important do you think it is to God that we acknowledge Him as our provider?

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10. What has God revealed to you through this study?