

## Names of God: *Elohim*

### What's in a Name?

- A name is not merely what we call someone to identify them
- Names connote meaning, relationships, & levels of intimacy
  - Examples include:
    - Name changes: Jacob → Israel
    - Relational names: Father, mother, etc.
    - Nicknames & Pet names
- Some people believe that all religions are talking about the same God while using different names
  - This is against everything the Bible teaches us
  - If God did not care what we called Him, idolatry would not be a sin (Ex 20:2-3; 23:13; Deut 4:7; 8:19)
- There are several names that God says we should call Him that reflect:
  - His character
  - Our relationship with Him
  - His intimacy with us

### *Elohim*

- *Elohim* is actually a plural noun
  - It can refer to foreign/false gods (Ex 12:12)
  - However, when it is used to refer to the God of Israel, it always uses singular verbs, adjectives, nouns and pronouns
    - This is called a plural of majesty
      - Much like the royal “we” (Ps 46:1)

### *El Shaddai*

- The simple form *El* is often coupled with other words to describe the character of God like in *El Shaddai*
  - The patriarchs referred to God with this title (Gen 17:1; 28:3; 35:11; 43:14; 48:3)
  - The shortened form *Shaddai* is used 30 times in Job, the oldest book of the Bible
    - It is often found in poetry (Gen 49:25; Num 24:4; Ps 68:15; 91:1; Isa 13:6; Joel 1:15)
- The meaning of *Shaddai* is possibly related to the Akkadian word for “mountain,” implying strength & permanence
  - The LXX translates it as *pantokratōr* (all-mighty)
  - “God Almighty”
- Thus, calling God *El Shaddai* is a declaration of His strength & unchanging nature

### *Elohim* & *El Shaddai* in the New Testament

- Jesus & the New Testament authors do not use these names for God directly because they are writing/speaking a different language
  - However, they use their Greek equivalents
- *Elohim* → *Theos* → God
  - The plural essence is reflected in the Trinity

- *El Shaddai* → *Theos ho pantokrator*
  - Used exclusively in Revelation to portray God as the unchanging conqueror (Rev 1:8; 4:8; 11:17; 15:3; 16:7, 14; 19:6, 15; 21:22)

### **So What?**

- Though the world around us is uncertain, chaotic, and changing
  - *El Shaddai* is powerful, majestic, and unchanging!
- Do we trust Him?

**Mediation Verse:** *Psalm 89:8*