

Ole Miss FCA Weekly Devotional: 2/1/10

The Power and Passion of the Master Coach, Elliot Johnson



Thought of the Week:

God's Glory is Declared in His Name, El Shaddai, "God Almighty"

Verse of the Week:

When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to him and said, "I am God Almighty [El Shaddai]; walk before Me and be blameless." Genesis 17:1

Athletic success does not nourish or satisfy the deep needs of the human heart. After upsetting Chris Evert Lloyd in a big tournament, Hana Mandlikova was asked how she felt about winning. She responded, "Any big win means that all the suffering, practicing, and traveling are worth it. I feel like I own the world." And how long does that feeling last, she was asked. "About two minutes," was her reply!"

Several names for God are compounded with El (Elohim) to reveal the character and nature of God. El Shaddai is the first. As we have seen, El stands for the omnipotence and transcendence of God, especially in His acts of creation (see Psalm 77:14; Psalm 68:35; Nehemiah 9:32; and Deuteronomy 3:24). Shaddai is a very interesting word, occurring forty-eight times in the Old Testament and translated "Almighty." It probably comes from the Hebrew word "shad," meaning "breast." It signifies one who nourishes his people, who satisfied their needs, and who supplies their necessities of life. Combined with El, Shaddai reveals God to be One who is mighty enough to nourish, satisfy, and supply all of our needs! In Genesis 49:23, it is the Almighty (Shaddai) who blesses us. In Genesis 28:3, Isaac asks God Almighty (El Shaddai) to bless Jacob and to make him fruitful. In Genesis 35:11, God calls Himself by the name El Shaddai and blesses Israel with great promises. Over and over, El Shaddai is associated with blessings and promises (Genesis 48:3-4; Exodus 6:2-4).

Our God attracts people, because He is able to satisfy human needs on a constant basis. He nourishes us with mental and emotional support as well as with physical food. In our loneliness and confusion, He never fails us. He provides us with food every day. An ancient Greek story tells of a baby laid not far from a cliff by a mother who was tending a herd of goats. Unknown to the mother, the infant crawled to the edge of the cliff. Afraid to take a step toward the child for fear he would crawl away and fall to his death, the mother merely uncovered her breast. Attracted to his source of nourishment, the child crawled back to her loving arms!

Sometimes we run from our powerful God. But our tender, nourishing provider attracts us from our dangerous course, and we return to the source of our nourishment. He is all-powerful and He provides for us! The name El Shaddai (God Almighty) reveals both of these parts of His character.

Time Out:

- (1) What at needs do you have that only God can satisfy?
- (2) How has He satisfied those needs?
- (3) What did El Shaddai ask of Abram when He revealed Himself in Genesis 17:1?