

# IMPACT

**I** **M**ust **P**ersonally **A**cknowledge **C**hrist **T**oday  
Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; *in all your ways acknowledge Him* and He shall direct your path.  
Proverbs 3:5-6

**Passage:** Genesis 17:1-2 “When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, ‘I am *Almighty God*; walk before Me and be blameless. And I will make My covenant between Me and you, and will multiply you exceedingly.’”

**Quote:** “God’s work done in God’s way will never lack God’s supply.” Missionary J. Hudson Taylor

**G**od told Abram that He would bless the nations through his descendants. Abram “believed in the LORD, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.”<sup>1</sup> After they had lived in Canaan for ten years, Abram and Sarai still had no children. From Sarai’s perspective, growing older only magnified the impossible—that a woman past childbearing years could conceive. Sarai said to Abram, “See now, the Lord has restrained me from bearing children. Please, go in to my maid; perhaps I shall obtain children by her.” And Abram heeded the voice of Sarai. Then Sarai, Abram’s wife, took Hagar her maid, the Egyptian, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife.” From the world’s viewpoint, “it was a perfectly respectable practice in the other cultures of the ancient Near East. A child born to a slave-girl could be regarded as the wife’s own child, if she had no children of her own.”<sup>2</sup> The child’s name was Ishmael. Sarai’s scheme to help God fulfill His promise to Abram would end up bringing long-term, painful ramifications.

Thirteen years later, God told Abram, “No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you a father of many nations.... Abraham replied, “Oh, that Ishmael might live before You!” Abraham still did not “get it.” God would fulfill His promise in a way that brought glory to himself as Almighty God, El Shaddai! “Then God said: ‘No, Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac; I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his descendants after him.’”<sup>3</sup> When God appeared the next time to Abraham, He repeated that Sarah would have a son, but Sarah laughed in doubt. “The LORD said to Abraham, ‘Why did Sarah laugh, saying, ‘Shall I surely bear a child, since I am old?’ *Is anything too hard for*

The LORD? At the appointed time I will return to you, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son.”<sup>4</sup> God did exactly what He promised!

El Shaddai refers to God as a strong and “bountiful bestower of power, gifts, blessings and fruitfulness for service.”<sup>5</sup> He is able to accomplish every detail of His will in ways that bring glory to His name without violating Who He is. Abraham and Sarah’s sinful efforts revealed their own spiritual weakness. Taking things into their own hands dishonored God. Obedient Christians can embrace the truth that “God will supply all of *their* needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”<sup>6</sup> While His methods may be a mystery to our finite minds, His motive should never be questioned—that in all things, He may be glorified!

*The hymn, God Moves in a Mysterious Way*, by William Cowper illustrates “the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out...!”<sup>7</sup> He is indeed Almighty God!

## El Shaddai, or Almighty God,

“God moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform; He plants His footsteps in the sea and rides upon the storm.

Deep in unfathomable mines of never-failing skill; He treasures up His bright designs, and works His sov’reign will.

Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take; the clouds you so much dread are big with mercy and shall break in blessings on your head.

Judge not the Lord by feeble sense, but trust Him for His grace; behind a frowning providence He hides a smiling face.

His purposes will ripen fast, unfolding ev’ry hour; the bud may have a bitter taste, but sweet will be the flow’r.

Blind unbelief is sure to err, and scan His work in vain; God is His own interpreter, and He will make it plain.”

1 James 2:23 2 *New Bible Commentary* 3 Gen. 17 4 Gen.18 5 Charles Spurgeon 6 Phil.4:19 7 Rom.11:33