

The Urgency of Using El-Saddai and El-Elyon in the Major Prophets

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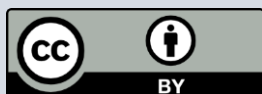
This article is a research project that discusses the urgency of using the names of God *El-Saddai* and *El-Elyon* in the Major Prophets of the Bible.

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Abstract

The prophets of the Old Testament had the primary task of returning the people to His Covenant. They often used the name Yahweh as God's covenant name for Israel, as well as the combined names of God, El-Saddai and El-Elyon. The use of El-Shaddai taught Israel that God remains the greatest Person above all, even though His dwelling place, the Temple, has collapsed. The collapse of the Temple did not cause God to collapse as well. The use of El-Elyon in the Major Prophets conveys that God remains the highest Person, even though His people are captive in Babylon. The greatness of the Babylonian king cannot compare to God's greatness, who will later deliver Israel from Babylonian captivity. These two combined names send an important message to the captive people: God is still the great and high Person, invincible by anything. Therefore, God's people must continue to place their trust only in Him. The exile they experience is temporary if they respond with faith.

Keywords: *El-Shaddai; El-Elyon; Major Prophets*

INTRODUCTION

An introduction to the ministry of the prophets in the Old Testament can provide a deeper understanding of their role in bringing God's word to His people. Indeed, the prophets were not only God's messengers, but also the bearers of important messages to the people of Israel (Block, 1997). Through their ministry, the Israelites were given the necessary instructions to live according to God's will. Prophets were also often sent to remind the people of the consequences of their sins and to call them to repent and return to Yahweh (Peels, 2019). The ministry of the prophets in the Old Testament also demonstrated God's faithfulness to His people even though they often did not listen to the message. The prophets also often announced prophecies about the future of the people of

Israel, both punishments and blessings. Through their ministry, the prophets helped the Israelites to continue to hold on to their faith and obey God. The presence of prophets in the Old Testament is evidence of God's love and care for His people (Lee, 2016).

Indeed, the Prophets were tasked to be the voice of God who continued to remind the people of the right path and avoid sin. Even though they were often ignored, the messages of the prophets still served as guidance and direction for the people of Israel. The prophets were God's instruments used to guide His people towards salvation and repentance. As protectors and guides, the prophets represented God's grace for His people to remain faithful and obedient to Him. With courage and determination, the prophets carried out their duties despite often facing rejection and challenges (Chinitz, 2007). They provided exemplary examples of faithfulness to God and the courage to rebuke people who deviated from His teachings. The messages of the prophets were not only relevant to the people of Israel in their day, but also serve as guidance and inspiration for mankind today. The testimonies and examples of the prophets reflect God's eternal love and justice and remind Israel to always hold fast to faith and obey Him.

Prophets in the Old Testament had a very important role as God's messengers to His people (Thompson, 1999). They were called and sent to deliver God's words to the people who often deviated from His teachings. Faithful and courageous, the prophets carried out their duties with dedication in order to maintain truth and justice among mankind. Through their messages, the prophets not only gave reprimands and warnings, but also provided hope and comfort to people who were experiencing trials and tribulations. With love and firmness, the prophets became examples for mankind in living a life full of challenges and temptations.

When the prophets served, it was not uncommon for them to use the names of God that had been revealed earlier in the Pentateuch to reinforce their message. It is undeniable that the Prophets often used the name Yahweh because this name is actually related to the faithfulness of God who has adopted Israel as His possession (Susila, 2022). One of the prophet's duties was to return the people to the true worship and worship in accordance with the Torah. For this reason, the prophets often used the name Yahweh to remind them of the covenant God who had made His covenant with Israel.

But interestingly, the mention of El-Saddai and El-Elyon is only used in the major prophets. None of the minor prophets mention these names. The writings in the Minor Prophets often only focus on the mention of Yahweh in their writings. Yet when taken to its roots, the use of El-saddai recalls the might of God in the Pentateuch (Burrows, 1940). Whereas El-Elyon refers to the omnipotence of God that cannot be matched by anything (Vida, 1944). Only the great prophets mentioned these two combined names of God in their writings compared to other prophets.

Investigations into the names of God, specifically El-saddai and El-Elyon, have been conducted. Bentley has researched 99 names of God used in the Bible (Bentley, 1999). Research on the names of God has also been conducted by Elmer L. Towns, including El-Shaddai and El-Elyon (Towns, 2014). However, no study has attempted to examine how El-Shaddai and El-Elyon were used by the writers of the Major Prophets in the Old Testament.

The main question to be answered in this study is: What message did the writers of the major prophets want to convey in relation to the use of the combined names of God El-Shaddai and El-Elyon?

This research will provide new findings in the form of important theology in the books of the Major Prophets concerning the use of El-Saddai and El-Elyon in their writings. In particular, this will provide a useful contribution to the theological formation of the use of the combined names of God in the Old Testament which has often been associated with its first appearance in the Pentateuch. The researcher has a presumption that the use of these two combined names is very closely related to the condition of God's people who will and are experiencing the Babylonian exile as a result of their sins. It is hoped that this research can contribute to the theology of the prophets concerning the use of these combined names of God.

METHOD

The study used in this research is a biblical exegesis study (Resane, 2018). The exegetical method used is semantic analysis conducted on Hebrew texts. The use of this method will differentiate it from previous studies that tend to conduct systematic analysis of Old Testament texts. This study uses intertextual analysis to trace the use of El-Saddai and El-Elyon in the Major Prophets, comparing them to the context of the Pentateuch and the historical circumstances of the Babylonian exile. The purpose of this method is to extract the meaning of the words El-Saddai and El-Elyon used in the writings of the Major Prophets of the Old Testament, namely the books of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, and Daniel. Each occurrence of the combined names of God will be interpreted by considering the accompanying context. Each meaning of the word based on the context is then mixed to produce the urgency of the use of El-Saddai and El-Elyon specifically in their use in the writings of the Major Prophets of the Old Testament.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this discussion, a biblical exegesis of the verses where the literal usage of El-Saddai and El-Elyon are found in the book of the Major Prophets will be described. A search using bibleworks reveals the results of the use of these words. The use of El-Saddai is found once in the book of the major prophets, namely in Ezekiel 1:24. Whereas the use of El-Elyon is found 13 times in the book of the major prophets, namely in Isaiah 14:14; Lamentations 3:35; 3:38; and Daniel 4:24, 25, 32, 34; 5:18, 21; 7:18, 22, 25, 27. Each of these verses will be interpreted with regard to their respective contexts. The discussion is as follows.

Interestingly, the books of the minor prophets do not include the use of these combined names of Allah in their writings. This raises a complicated question: why were the authors of the minor prophets not interested in using this combined name in their writings? This is likely because the main focus of the authors of the minor prophets was to return the people to God's covenant with Yahweh. Therefore, in the minor prophets the use of the name

Yahweh occurs very often. The writers of the minor prophets reminded Israel that they had a covenant with God and that they must return to Him and abandon all idols.

El-Saddai's Use in Ezekiel 1:24

In the Old Testament there are 17 books of prophets divided into 5 books of the Major Prophets and 12 books of the Minor Prophets. These prophets are often referred to as the writing prophets, i.e. those whose writings are recorded as prophetic books in the Old Testament. Of the five major prophets, there is only one reference to אֱלֹהֵי שַׁדַּי (*El-Saddai*) or the Almighty in the book of Ezekiel.

Ezekiel and his companions faced what was for the Israelites possibly the most frightening challenge to their faith: the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple. Ezekiel the priest, the son of Busi, was probably born around 622 BC. He was taken captive to Babylon in 597 BC along with other famous Jerusalemites. He lived near the “river Kebar” between Babylon and Nippur, and at the age of 30 was called to be a prophet (Ezek 1:1). It is likely that he saw the destruction of Jerusalem firsthand. The subject of Ezekiel's teaching was the disobedience of God's people to their commitment to Yahweh, to which they had pledged themselves (Koch, 2010).

Ezekiel mentions אֱלֹהֵי שַׁדַּי (*Saddai*) or the Almighty at the beginning of his book, in chapter 1:24. What is really unique here is that Ezekiel often uses Yahweh, but in this 24th verse, Ezekiel introduces the Almighty. The teaching of the Almighty in this passage is not the central theme. In this passage, it is about “living creatures” (Ezek 1:22). Ezekiel wanted to describe his vision of the “living creatures”. When the living creatures walk, the sound of their wings is like the sound of a roaring waterfall, also like the voice of the Almighty (Ezek 1:24).

The Almighty in this passage only serves as a comparison to the sound of the creatures' wings. It is worth observing why Ezekiel begins his writing by introducing God in this first chapter. Ezekiel does not begin his message of judgment with the sinfulness of Judah, but with the sovereignty of God (Parker, 2014). The historical context of the people in the ancient world associated their gods with specific localities and spheres of authority (1 Kgs 20:23-28). The god was supposed to protect the places of its territory, and if one city defeated another, it meant that the winning god was greater than the losing god (Stevens, 2014). Regarding this historical context, many Jews hold this thought, and it leads to two dangerous conclusions. First, they think that Yahweh is bound to protect Israel. Secondly, if the city of Jerusalem should fall, it means that Yahweh is weak and small.

It is against this background that the Book of Ezekiel begins by introducing Yahweh with all His attributes through Ezekiel's vision. Ezekiel's vision shows them that Yahweh is not too small for Jerusalem to fall and the temple to collapse. He remains a great God, and his greatness is not affected by the fall of Jerusalem (Nielsen, 2008). As the God who traverses the earth, He does not need any house or temple. This is also evident from Solomon's confession that the temple he had built was too small and could not contain Him (1 Kgs 8:27). Yahweh is not a local God who must maintain every earthly house. He is the Lord of all people, and He is also the judge of all, including Jerusalem.

The importance of showing the Great God has a special value for Ezekiel, namely to teach the people that God is still a great God, even though His human dwelling place has collapsed (Greenberg, 1983). From this passage, the spiritual message conveyed by the use of *שַׁדַּי* (*Saddai*) or the Almighty is that the Almighty God is a great God, and His power cannot be compared to anything else. This message seems to repeat what Moses conveyed in his use of this word in the Pentateuch (Kristiawan, 2024). This can be observed from the sight of the Almighty, including the sound of wings like a waterfall and the noise of a great army (Ezek 1:24). This sound can be seen as the sound of thunder from God, hence it is called the voice of God (Psalm 18:13). It was as if Ezekiel had no other words to express the greatness of God or Yahweh.

El-Elyon's Use in Isaiah 14:14

The books of the prophets come from three periods of Israel's history: the period of decline before the fall of the kingdom; the period of exile; and the period of return from exile (Green, 2001). The prophets are divided into two major sections: the Major Prophets and the Minor Prophets. The mention of *ʿēl ʿelyôn* (God Most High) or *ʿelyôn* (the Most High), however, is only found in the Major Prophets, namely in Isaiah, Lamentations and Daniel.

Isaiah was an important prophet for Israel. In fact, Isaiah's existence is representative of all the other books. Isaiah, as the author of this book, was the supreme and unrivaled prophet of the Classical prophet era (Bullock, 2014). He was a well-known prophet along with Amos, Hosea, and Micah in the eighth century BC. Isaiah's ministry took place during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah (1:1).

In Isaiah, the use of *ʿēl ʿelyôn* or the Most High is also found in this book. The mention of the Most High is only mentioned in chapter 14:14. The context of this passage is a mockery of the king of Babylon 14:4. The king of Babylon in this passage describes Satan who wants to possess God's authority and tries to replace Him. Also in Isaiah, we read about five desires of Satan. The first wish is that he wants to ascend to heaven. Not only that, he even wanted to establish his throne. The establishment of this throne in the sky indicates that he wants to be equal to God. The third to the fifth wish is about his desire to replace God (Costa, 2023). He desires to sit on the hills of assembly, to surmount the heights of the clouds, and to equal *עֶלְיוֹן* (*ʿelyôn*) or the Most High.

Satan has declared five things he desires, and his highest desire is to be like God and sit in God's place. Satan desires all things, but his greatest desire is to be like God (Kwakkel, 2019). Therefore, Satan called God the Most High God, a position he wanted for himself. Seeing this, God did the opposite of what Satan wanted. He will be brought down to the realm of the dead, which is the lowest place (14:15). Regarding this, Bullock says that in captivating language the prophet paints the tyrant king descending to Sheol just like other tyrants, even the rulers of Jerusalem. A king who was so selfish that he was ambitious to oppose God was brought down to the lowest place in Sheol. It amazed even the inhabitants of Sheol that a tyrant on earth would be so degraded to the realm of the dead (Bullock, 2014).

The author of the text also gives additional emphasis that Satan will be relegated to the deepest place in the grave. There is a sharp contrast between Satan's desire and God's will. Satan wanted to be equal to the Most High, but the Most High brought Satan down to the lowest place (Wyatt, 2009). The spiritual message of the use of *עֶלְיוֹן* (*`elyôn*) or the Most High in this passage is that God is the one who is higher than Satan or any other king, and His position cannot be defeated by anything. Although Satan desires His throne, the Most High God cannot be replaced by anything. By His omnipotence, He made Satan to be in the realm of the dead. Satan was humbled by God because of his desire to be equal to God.

El-Elyon's Use in Lamentations 3:35 and 3:38

The mention of *עֶלְיוֹן* (*`elyôn*) or the Most High in the Book of Lamentations is mentioned twice, in chapter 3:35 and 3:38. In this book, there are no direct words from God, but the writer's words about God are found in this book. The book recounts the writer's anguish over the destruction of Jerusalem which had been destroyed by the Babylonians and the people were banished by God as recorded in 1:3 and 2:8-9 (Miller, 2002). All the inhabitants of Jerusalem were humiliated in tribulation and in want (5:1-18). God's calamities and the pain of suffering are the main themes in this book (3:1-20).

The book was written by the prophet Jeremiah who directly saw the destruction of Jerusalem (Weeks, 2009). Both Jewish tradition and early church historians support this view. It is well attested by J. Sidlow Baxter below that the entire Book of Lamentations breathes the soul-vibrations and heart-cries of the Prophet Jeremiah. No other person could have produced such a work. Jewish tradition says that Lamentations was written by the prophet Jeremiah. This is confirmed by Yoshepus and also confirmed by the Massore group, the preservers of the ancient manuscripts of the Hebrew Bible. The similarities between Jeremiah and Lamentations cannot be mentioned here. They are decisive evidence that the prophet Jeremiah himself wrote this book (Baxter, 2004). The fact that this book was written by Jeremiah is significant as he witnessed the destruction of Jerusalem firsthand. This experience led him to write a short book full of poignant verses.

The use of *עֶלְיוֹן* (*`elyôn*) or the Most High in the book is found in the 3rd chapter. It can be said that the 3rd chapter is the pivot of the book of Lamentations (Kotze, 2020). This chapter expresses the certainty of the sorrow felt by the prophet. A heart full of sorrow is likened to the heart of his people, just as the heart of his people becomes his own affliction. The background to the writing in chapter three is his own tribulation. However, in the midst of these afflictions, he sees God as the person of *עֶלְיוֹן* (*`elyôn*) or the Most High. It is necessary to explore the meaning of the use of the Most High, which comes out of Jeremiah's own mouth as the author of the book.

The use of *עֶלְיוֹן* (*`elyôn*) or the Most High appears in chapter 3:35. This passage contains a rhetorical question from the author. He assumes that *עֶלְיוֹן* (*`elyôn*) or the Most High is the one who sees and cares about the injustices in the world. He is a just person, so the injustice that occurs disturbs His heart (Roberts, 2013). The rhetorical question in verse 36

indicates that *עֲלִיּוֹן* (*`elyôn*) or the Most High cares about injustice. This provides comfort to those who are patient, where they are feeling the injustice.

If God is so just that He cannot endure the mistreatment of captives, the rape of courts, or the shrewd acts of commerce, then every suffering person can be encouraged to be patient. This verse is a comfort to those who expect justice from the *עֲלִיּוֹן* (*`elyôn*) or the Most High. From this, the spiritual message that the text wants to convey is that *עֲלִיּוֹן* (*`elyôn*) or the Most High is a person who is always concerned about the injustices that occur in this world (Gericke, 2012). He will defend the rights of the righteous where they have seen and felt injustice.

The next use of *עֲלִיּוֹן* (*`elyôn*) or the Most High is found in chapter 3:38. In this passage it is rhetorically stated that “does not out of the mouth of *עֲלִיּוֹן* (*`elyôn*) or the Most High come forth that which is bad and that which is good?” The phrase “what is bad” when viewed in context, does not refer to evil. The bad in this passage means all the hardships that were pressing on the souls of His people, where they had seen the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple. Then, *עֲלִיּוֹן* (*`elyôn*) or the Most High can use adversity to accomplish good. Nothing can happen without the knowledge of *עֲלִיּוֹן* (*`elyôn*) or the Most High. Everything is in His control, whether it is good or bad.

Therefore, Jeremiah advised the people not to lament the suffering they were experiencing (Burns, 1973). Jeremiah wanted God's people to look at themselves, and confess all the offenses they had committed (Schwebel, 2014). Genuine repentance is desired by God for the lives of His people (v. 40). In this passage, the spiritual message of using *עֲלִיּוֹן* (*`elyôn*) or the Most High is that God is the one who governs the lives of His people, whether it is good or bad as a form of His discipline. Everything that happens in human life is with the permission of the Most High God.

El-Elyon's Use in Daniel Chapters 4, 5, and 7.

The use of *עֲלִיּוֹן* (*`elyôn*) or the Most High is also strongly felt in the book of Daniel. The book of this great prophet is closely associated with detailed prophecies and visions of the future (Wegner, 2020). The name Daniel as the author of this book means “God is my judge.” If this name is connected to the book, then the title Daniel can mean the book of judgment or the book of kingdoms. The purpose of the book of Daniel was to prove how God's providence was still evident for His people in Babylonian captivity (Kristiawan, 2016).

The content of this book is full of miraculous and amazing things. These can be seen in the events recounted or the visions described by Daniel himself in his book. In this regard, Walvoord argues that the book written by Daniel, a Jewish exile who was taken from Jerusalem to Babylon in 605 BC, not only records Daniel's own experiences of enlightenment, but also the extraordinary prophecies given to him by God, which provide a chronology, both of the times of the Gentiles, and the future of Israel, up to the second coming of Christ (Walvoord, 2003). The book also contains miracles performed by God. This is to show that God's hand is

still powerful to do miraculous things even though Jerusalem has been razed to the ground and the temple has been destroyed.

Daniel gives a large portion regarding the mention of God's name. The use of God's attributes as *עֲלִיּוֹן* (*`elyôn*) or the Most High" receives considerable attention from him. There is an indication that as great as the Babylonian kingdom of this world is, the Most High is higher than it. There are at least 3 chapters that mention the existence of *עֲלִיּוֹן* (*`elyôn*) or the Most High. This can be observed in chapters 4, 5, and 7. Every mention of *עֲלִיּוֹן* (*`elyôn*) or the Most High by Daniel, must have a certain purpose and a certain message. The following are the spiritual messages of the use of *עֲלִיּוֹן* (*`elyôn*) or the Most High in the book of Daniel.

The use of *עֲלִיּוֹן* (*`elyôn*) or the Most High is found in chapter 4:24, 25, 32, 34. The narrative is about king Nebuchadnezzar's dream, which the Chaldeans could not interpret (v. 7). Only Daniel could interpret the dream for the king (v. 8). Nebuchadnezzar referred to Daniel as a person "full of the spirit of the holy gods". This probably meant the king's recognition of the power within Daniel. And then Daniel told the king the meaning of the dream (v. 19).

Daniel interpreted that the great and strong tree within the king referred to Nebuchadnezzar himself (v. 22). The greatness of the king was described by Daniel as "his greatness reaching to the heavens, and his dominion to the ends of the earth". This shows how powerful king Nebuchadnezzar was. This is a style of hyperbole, where Daniel wants to flatter the king. However, in the midst of all his splendor, King Nebuchadnezzar would be defeated by another kingdom. This is still a prophecy for king Nebuchadnezzar.

What is interesting in this section is that Daniel said that the meaning of the dream was actually a decision from *עֲלִיּוֹן* (*`elyôn*) or the Most High (v. 24). In that sense, everything Daniel said was a prophecy of the God he worshiped, not the gods of the Babylonians. The spiritual message of this passage is that *עֲלִיּוֹן* (*`elyôn*) or the Most High is a person who is sovereign over all human life. *עֲלִיּוֹן* (*`elyôn*) or the Most High is the Person who has the right to regulate the life of king Nebuchadnezzar. He has the right to administer discipline for the injustices committed by the earthly king (v. 27). There is still a chance for the king to repent and he will enjoy a longer salvation. There is no indication that this promise of discipline would be revoked if he repented.

The use of *עֲלִיּוֹן* (*`elyôn*) or the Most High is also found in the 25th verse. This section is still included in Daniel's words to King Nebuchadnezzar. Daniel said that *עֲלִיּוֹן* (*`elyôn*) or the Most High has power over the kingdom of men and gives it to whomever He wills." This gives an indication that *עֲלִיּוֹן* (*`elyôn*) or the Most High is God who controls the lives of all people. Baldwin said that basically Nebuchadnezzar's government was under the government of God (Baldwin, 2003). This strengthens the assumption that God is free to raise or lower the king from his throne. God is the one who has control over the lives of all humans, including King Nebuchadnezzar. The theme of *עֲלִיּוֹן* (*`elyôn*) or the Most High's control over Nebuchadnezzar's life is also repeated in verse 32. In this section, *עֲלִיּוֹן* (*`elyôn*) or the Most High is a person who has power over human life and has full control in determining the king

of a kingdom on this earth. The next mention is in verse 34. This section contains Nebuchadnezzar's praise for God's power over his life. *עֶלְיֹן* (*`elyôn*) or the Most High is referred to as "the Eternally Living One." This praise is based on God's power, where His power is eternal and hereditary.

King Nebuchadnezzar reached his climax in recognizing the power of the King in heaven (Irwin, 1984). This is very much in line with the king's confession in verse 3, where he recognized God's kingdom as an eternal kingdom. The recognition of the power of *עֶלְיֹן* (*`elyôn*) or the Most High continues in chapter 5, where *עֶלְיֹן* (*`elyôn*) or the Most High is a person who has authority over human life. The next use of *עֶלְיֹן* (*`elyôn*) or Most High is found in chapter 7:18, 22, 25, 27. This section contains Daniel's Eschatological visions of the future of the world. Daniel says that "the saints of *עֶלְיֹן* (*`elyôn*) or Most High shall receive the kingdom." The use of the phrase "saints" deserves special attention here.

The saints in this section do not simply refer to the Jews as distinguished from the Gentiles, but are the redeemed, the true believers, who will become a kingdom of priests and a holy nation (Exodus 19:6). They are not the ones who establish the kingdom, but they receive it as a trust from the Son of Man, to whom the kingdom is actually given. From this, the saints are meant to be believers. Poole adds that Jesus Christ is their King, and will reign with them. This kingdom will be an eternal kingdom, because Christ's kingdom is the ultimate kingdom, and there will be no other kingdom after it (Poole, 1968). Regarding eternal kingdom and power, it is explained in the text (v. 25). According to the author, the saints referred to here are people who have been redeemed. This does not only refer to the nation of Israel as God's people, but refers to all of His people (Jews and Gentiles) who He has redeemed.

The spiritual message of the use of *עֶלְיֹן* (*`elyôn*) or the Most High in this passage is that God is a person who has saints (Poythress, 1976). This is very emphasized by the text, where the saints are His (v. 22). The saints are also His people (v. 27). This is a comfort to all believers in all places and times, that believers truly belong to the Almighty.

Contribution of the Use of El-Saddai and El-Elyon in the Books of the Major Prophets to the Development of Old Testament Theology

In the Old Testament, both El-Saddai and El-Elyon are well-known compound names for God. The Old Testament emphasizes that the use of El-Saddai is often used to describe God's power and sovereignty over all creation. The first use of this compound name is in the Book of Genesis when God appeared to Abraham and promised to make him the father of many nations. El-Saddai is also associated with God's providence and blessing, as seen in the story of Job where he restored Job's fortunes after his suffering. The title El-Saddai highlights God's ability to fulfill His promises and provide for His people in times of need. Overall, El-Saddai represents God's all-powerful and all-sufficient nature, emphasizing His ability to protect, provide, and fulfill His promises to His people. The compound name also serves as a reminder of God's faithfulness and sovereignty, providing comfort and assurance to believers who face challenges and trials. Through the title El-Saddai, God's love and care for His creation

are made evident, showing that He is always there to guide and support His people through all circumstances.

In the Old Testament, the compound name El-Elyon is often used to refer to the highest Being, God himself. This compound name emphasizes God's supreme authority and sovereignty, especially over all creation. Like El-Saddai, El-Elyon highlights God's power and majesty, indicating that He is above all other gods and rulers. The use of these two titles in the Old Testament reveals God's multifaceted nature and His ability to meet all of His people's needs, from protection and provision to guidance and support. Together, El-Saddai and El-Elyon describe an all-powerful and all-loving God who deserves our respect and trust.

An examination of these compound names for God in the Major Prophets provides a new paradigm for who God really is. The writings of the major prophets are set in the context of the prophets' warnings about the exile that awaited them and how the people should behave during their Babylonian exile. In their warnings, the writers emphasize these two compound names for God, El-Shaddai and El-Elyon. The use of El-Shaddai indicates how God is still the Almighty even though the Temple has fallen due to the Babylonian invasion. There is no correlation between the fall of the Temple and God's omnipotence. God's omnipotence is not determined by the existence of His Temple on earth.

The only reason why the Temple fell was because of the people's disobedience which resulted in their judgment. Regarding the use of El-Elyon, the writings of the great prophets also provide an important emphasis. God's people at that time were in Babylonian captivity. In their view, the King of Babylon was the most powerful person at that time who could destroy God's people and all of their existence. However, the prophets strongly rejected this opinion. God is still the Supreme Being even though the people are in Babylonian captivity. No matter how great the king of Babylon is, he is still God's instrument used to discipline His people. The time will come when the king of Babylon will face the hand of the Most High God. God's supreme position can never be disturbed by human greatness. The king of Babylon was merely an instrument in God's hands and never replaced Him.

CONCLUSION

The authors of the major prophets had a high interest in the use of the combined names of God, namely El-Shaddai and El-Elyon in their writings. The use of El-Shaddai taught Israel that God was still the greatest Person above all even though His human dwelling place, the Temple, had collapsed. The collapse of this building did not necessarily cause God to collapse as well. The use of El-Elyon in the major prophets conveys the important message that God is still the highest Person even though His people are being held captive in Babylon. The greatness of the king of Babylon is not comparable to the greatness of God who will later bring Israel out of the Babylonian exile.

Thus, the use of these two combined names of God provides an important urgency for the people who are being exiled: God is still the great and high Person and is invincible by anything. Therefore, the people of God must continue to place their faith in God alone. The

exile they are experiencing is only temporary if responded to with faith. Trust in El-Saddai and El-Elyon must continue to grow when they experience oppression during the exile.

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