

# The Godhead & Divine Plurality in the Bible

What the Bible actually teaches about multiple divine beings - and how LDS theology clarifies it

## PART I: THE BIBLICAL EVIDENCE

### 1. Elohim: God's Plural Name

**Elohim (אֱלֹהִים) = grammatically PLURAL Hebrew noun (ending -im = masculine plural)**  
Used 2,500+ times in Hebrew Bible. Can mean "gods" or "God" depending on context.

**Genesis 1:1:** "In the beginning **Elohim** [plural noun] created [singular verb]"  
→ Plural noun + singular verb = grammatical anomaly

#### Elohim Used for Multiple Beings:

- **Exodus 12:12:** "Against all the **gods [elohim]** of Egypt"
- **Psalm 82:1:** "God [Elohim] judgeth among the **gods [elohim]**"
- **Psalm 86:8:** "Among the **gods [elohim]** there is none like thee"
- **1 Sam 28:13:** "I saw **gods [elohim]** ascending out of the earth"

### 2. Psalm 82: The Divine Council

**Psalm 82:1:** "God standeth in the congregation of the mighty; he judgeth among the **gods.**"

**Psalm 82:6:** "I have said, **Ye are gods;** and all of you are **children of the most High.**"

**What This Means:** A supreme God (Most High) presides over a council of divine beings called "gods" and "sons of the Most High."

**Scholar Michael Heiser (PhD Hebrew Bible):** "The gods of Psalm 82 are members of Yahweh's divine council... These are divine beings, not humans." —*Bulletin for Biblical Research* 18:1 (2008)

### 3. Genesis 1:26 - Plural Pronouns

**Genesis 1:26:** "And God said, **Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.**"

#### Who is "us" and "our"?

Theory	Problem
<b>Trinity</b>	Not formulated until 325 AD; ancient Jews didn't believe it; Gen 1:27 switches to singular "his"
<b>Plural of Majesty</b>	Heiser: "No linguistic basis in Hebrew"; Gen 1:27 switches to "his"
<b>God + Angels</b>	Gen 1:27 says "his image," not "their image" (angels didn't co-create)
<b>LDS: The Godhead</b>	✓ Three separate beings; Gen 1:27 "his" = one enacted it (Father or Christ)

### 4. Other Divine Council Passages

Scripture	Evidence
<b>Job 1:6</b>	"The <b>sons of God</b> came to present themselves before the LORD"
<b>Job 38:7</b>	"All the <b>sons of God</b> shouted for joy"
<b>1 Kings 22:19</b>	"I saw the LORD... and all the <b>host of heaven</b> standing by him"
<b>Deut 32:8-9</b>	"He set the bounds of the people according to the number of the <b>sons of God</b> " (Dead Sea Scrolls)

### 5. Henotheism in Ancient Israel

**Henotheism/Monolatry = Worship one supreme God while acknowledging other divine beings exist**

#### Biblical Evidence Israel Practiced Henotheism:

- **Exodus 15:11:** "Who is like unto thee, O LORD, **among the gods?**"
- **Psalm 86:8:** "**Among the gods** there is none like unto thee, O Lord"
- **Psalm 95:3:** "The LORD is... **a great King above all gods**"
- **Psalm 136:2:** "O give thanks unto the **God of gods**"
- **Deut 10:17:** "The LORD your God is **God of gods**, and Lord of lords"

**Scholarly Consensus (Mark S. Smith, Michael Heiser):** Ancient Israel worshipped Yahweh alone (monolatry) but acknowledged other divine beings in the divine council.

### 6. Jesus Affirms "Ye Are Gods" (John 10)

**John 10:34-36:** "Jesus answered them, *Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken.*"

#### What Jesus Is Doing:

- Quoting Psalm 82:6 ("Ye are gods")
- Affirming it's TRUE ("the scripture cannot be broken")
- Defending His divinity: "If Scripture calls humans 'gods,' why is it blasphemy for me (the actual Son of God) to claim divinity?"

**If humans can't be called "gods," Jesus's argument fails.**

### 7. Becoming "Partakers of the Divine Nature"

Scripture	What It Says
<b>2 Peter 1:4</b>	"That ye might be <b>partakers of the divine nature</b> "
<b>Romans 8:17</b>	" <b>Joint-heirs with Christ</b> " (if Christ inherits all things, so do we)
<b>1 John 3:2</b>	" <b>We shall be like him</b> " (not just holy, but LIKE him)
<b>Rev 3:21</b>	"To him that overcometh will I grant to <b>sit with me in my throne</b> "

### 8. Early Church Fathers Taught Theosis (Deification)

**Irenaeus (130-202 AD):** "He became what we are, that He might bring us to be even what He is Himself." —*Against Heresies*

**Athanasius (296-373 AD):** "He was made man that we might **be made God.**" —*On the Incarnation*

(Athanasius defended Christ's divinity at Council of Nicaea 325 AD)

**Augustine (354-430 AD):** "If we have been made sons of God, we have also **been made gods.**" —*On the Psalms*

**Theosis was mainstream Christianity for 1,000+ years. LDS didn't invent it—we restored it.**

## PART II: THE LDS CLARIFICATION

### The Godhead: Three Separate Beings, One in Purpose

Member	Identity	Role
<b>God the Father (Elohim)</b>	Supreme God, Father of spirits	We worship Him; source of all
<b>Jesus Christ (Jehovah)</b>	Son of God, separate from Father	Creator, Savior, Mediator
<b>Holy Ghost</b>	Personage of spirit	Testifies, comforts, reveals

#### One Godhead (unity of purpose), Three Beings (separate persons)

#### Biblical Evidence for Separate Beings

**Acts 7:55-56 (Stephen's Vision):** "He... **saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God.**"

→ Stephen sees TWO separate beings (not one)

**John 17:5 (Jesus Prays):** "Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which **I had with thee before the world was.**"

→ Jesus had glory WITH the Father (not as the Father) before creation

**John 17:21 ("One" = Unity, Not Substance):** Jesus prays disciples will be "one" as He and Father are "one."

→ Does this mean disciples become one substance? No—it means unity of purpose.

→ Therefore "I and my Father are one" (John 10:30) = unity, not Trinity

#### Why the Trinity Is Unbiblical

- **Not in the Bible:** Word "Trinity" never appears; formulated 325 AD (Nicaea)
- **Contradicts plain meaning:** Jesus prays to Father (John 17); Stephen sees two beings (Acts 7:55-56)
- **Greek philosophy:** Uses Platonic terms (substance, essence) foreign to Hebrew Bible

#### Humans Can Become Like God

**We are God's literal children (Acts 17:28-29, Rom 8:16, Heb 12:9)**  
**Children grow to become like their parents → We can become like our Heavenly Father**

#### This Doesn't Mean We Replace God or Become Independent Gods

##### It Means:

- We can receive "all that the Father has" (D&C 84:38)
- We can be exalted to dwell with God forever
- We can become like Christ in glory, knowledge, divine attributes
- We remain subject to the Father (1 Cor 15:28)

#### Answering Objections

**Objection: "Isaiah 44:6 says 'beside me there is no God'"**

**Response:** Context = condemning idol worship (Isa 44:9-10). "No God beside me" = no other SUPREME God. Doesn't contradict divine council or humans becoming partakers of divine nature.

**Objection: "Psalm 82 refers to human judges"**

**Response:** (1) Psalm 82:6 calls them "children of the Most High" (humans aren't called this); (2) Psalm 82:7 says "ye shall die LIKE men" (implies they're NOT men by nature); (3) Michael Heiser: "These are divine beings, not humans"

**Objection: "Becoming like God is Satanic (Gen 3:5)"**

**Response:** Satan's lie was the METHOD (disobedience), not the GOAL. The Bible affirms the goal (2 Pet 1:4, 1 John 3:2, Rom 8:17). God's way = obedience, Christ's atonement. Satan's way = rebellion.

**Objection: "We're adopted children, not literal offspring"**

**Response:** (1) "Adoption" = legal restoration of inheritance, not change of nature (like Prodigal Son); (2) Acts 17:28-29 uses biological language: "we are his **offspring**"; (3) Heb 12:9 parallels mortal fathers with "Father of spirits"; (4) **Dog analogy:** If I adopt a dog, it becomes my legal dependent but doesn't become human. Adoption changes legal status, not nature. But we become "partakers of divine nature" (2 Pet 1:4) - because we're His literal children with divine potential.

## THE BOTTOM LINE

**The Bible teaches divine plurality:**

- **Elohim is plural (2,500+ uses)**
- **Psalm 82:** God presides over council of gods
- **Genesis 1:26:** "Let us make man"
- **John 10:34:** Jesus affirms "Ye are gods"
- **2 Peter 1:4:** "Partakers of divine nature"
- **Early church fathers:** Taught theosis/deification

Issue	Traditional Christianity	LDS Position
<b>Nature of God</b>	One substance, three persons (Trinity)	Three separate beings, one Godhead
<b>Elohim plural</b>	"Plural of majesty" (no biblical basis)	Refers to plurality of divine beings
<b>Genesis 1:26 "us"</b>	Trinity or angels (contradicts Gen 1:27 "his")	Godhead (Father, Son, Holy Ghost)
<b>Psalms 82</b>	"Gods" = human judges (ignores "die like men")	Divine council; humans can become gods
<b>2 Peter 1:4</b>	"Divine nature" = holiness only	Literal partakers; becoming like God

Issue	Traditional Christianity	LDS Position
<b>John 10:34</b>	Jesus being ironic/sarcastic	Jesus affirms "Ye are gods" literally
<b>Human destiny</b>	Eternal worship; never like God	Joint-heirs with Christ; eternal progression

**LDS theology clarifies what the Bible teaches: The Godhead consists of three separate divine beings. Humans are God's children with divine potential through Christ's atonement.**