

The Hebrew word most often used for *God* is *Elohim* which is a plural noun, thus denoting the plurality in the Godhead. Also God [*Elohim*] used plural first-person pronouns as in Genesis 1:26, “*Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness.*”

Response: It is true that in a few verses the first-person plural pronoun is used, but in the vast majority of verses the first-person singular pronoun is used, even though its antecedent is plural! This is a significant grammatical anomaly. To whom might God be talking at Genesis 1:26? Let’s note what two trinitarian commentators have to say about this verse. The Wycliffe Bible Commentary says:

26. Let us make man. The supreme moment of creation arrived as God created man. The narrative presents God as calling on the heavenly court, or the other two members of the Trinity, to center all attention on this event. Some commentators, however, interpret the plural as a ‘plural of majesty,’ indicating dignity and greatness. The plural form of the word for God, *Elohim*, can be explained in somewhat the same way. The LORD is represented as giving unusual deliberation to a matter fraught with much significance. [Emphasis added.]

F.F. Bruce’s International Bible Commentary says:

...there is an act of God to which He draws attention: Let us make man (26). Leupold still argues for the traditional Christian view that the plural refers to the Trinity. This should not be completely rejected, but in its setting it does not carry conviction. The rabbinic interpretation that God is speaking to the angels is more attractive, for man’s creation affects them (Ps. 8:5; 1 C. 6:3), cf. Job 38:7. But there is no suggestion of angelic cooperation. Probably the plural is intended above all to draw attention to the importance and solemnity of God’s decision. [Emphasis added.]

Of course, these trinitarian commentators do not reject the trinitarian view of this pronoun usage. But they do show alternative views, and the trinitarian view is presented as secondary, or even tertiary.

Notice that after saying, “*Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness,*” verse 27 says, “*So God created man in His [not ‘Their’] own image, in the image of God He [not ‘They’] created him; male and female He [not ‘They’] created them.*” Notice, too, that Isaiah 45:5 reads, “*I am Yahweh, and there is none else, there is no God* [*Elohim* (plural noun)] *besides Me* [singular pronoun].” This is one verse where the use of a plural pronoun should be expected [i.e., *there is no God besides Us*] if such were meant to have theological ramifications.

Recall the comment quoted above from the Wycliffe Bible Commentary,

Some commentators, however, interpret the plural as a ‘plural of majesty,’ indicating dignity and greatness. The plural form of the word for God, *Elohim*, can be explained in somewhat the same way.

Therefore, *Elohim*, the Hebrew plural for *God*, is used because the word expresses dignity and majesty. Aaron called the molten calf he made *elohim* attaching dignity and majesty to it, thereby exciting reverence in the minds of its worshipers. For the same reason, the Philistines called their idol Dagon *elohim*. Each of the idols Chemosh, Milcom, Baalzebub, and Nizroch is called *elohim*, though each is singular. Those idol worshipers expressed their particular idol in the plural, because of its supposed dignity, majesty, and excellence. (Exodus 32:4,8; Judges 16:23, 24) Genesis 24:9, 10 refers to Abraham as *adonim*, the plural form of the Hebrew word for *lord* or *master*; and Potiphar

is called Joseph's *adonim*. In all these places the plural is used for the singular to express dominion, dignity, and greatness. -- Genesis 39:20