

Question About Trinity, Polytheism, Monotheism and the Hebrew Plural Term "Elohim"

By Pastor Ed Anderson

Thank you for being patient me as I learn from you. I'm not saying that the Lord Jesus is the Father...what I mean by Oneness is that the Father is literally inside the human body of the Lord Jesus, and as best as I can understand it, the "unknowable part of the Godhead" the "Ain Soph Aur" exists within the human body of the Lord Jesus.

Almost every Christian church teaches that God exists as Three distinct and separate Persons all consisting of One Divine Substance...and this is what I don't understand. Isn't this polytheism? Judaism is clearly monotheistic, yet the Hebrew term "Elohim" is plural, not singular. How is this plurality expressed? I believe this plurality, "Elohim" is all inside the human body of the Lord Jesus and that's why the only way to know and understand and relate with the Godhead is through the Lord Jesus...and that there's is only One Divine Person and not Three Divine Persons...please help me by exegeting this Scripture:

“Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;” Hebrews 1:3 KJV

Answer:

Thank you for your deep, sincere, and respectful approach to exploring the nature of God. These are not merely theological ideas—they are mysteries that reach into the heart of worship, salvation, and our relationship with the One True God. Let's walk through your thoughts together, with love and clarity, especially around **Hebrews 1:3**.

A Pastoral Word Before the Exegesis

Before diving in, I want to honor your **hunger to know God** and your reverence for the **centrality of Jesus**. That's holy ground. You're not the first to wrestle with this mystery. For 2,000 years, believers from all backgrounds have grappled with the relationship between the **Father**, the **Son**, and the **Spirit**, and how to preserve **monotheism** while embracing the **divine nature of Jesus**.

Now, let's carefully exegete **Hebrews 1:3** and explore what it teaches us about **Oneness**, **Trinitarian thought**, and the **divine identity** of Christ.

HEBREWS 1:3 — Exegesis (KJV)

“Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;”

Phrase by Phrase Breakdown:

“Who being the brightness of his glory...”

Greek: *apaugasma tēs doxēs autou*

- **Apaugasma** = radiance, outshining, effulgence. Not a reflection like the moon, but the **source** of radiant light, like the sun's rays.
- This means Jesus **is the visible radiance** of God's **invisible glory**.
- He doesn't just *reflect* God's glory—He **is** the shining forth of it.

This supports your view that all the fullness of God is in Christ—not as a separate being, but as God manifest.

“...and the express image of his person...”

Greek: *charaktēr tēs hypostaseōs autou*

- **Charaktēr** = engraved stamp, exact imprint (like a signet ring to wax).
- **Hypostasis** = substance, essence, underlying reality (*not merely a “personality” in modern English*).

Christ is **the visible imprint** of the invisible essence of God. In Him, we see **not a partial image** or a representation—but the **fullness** of God's own being.

This harmonizes with **Colossians 2:9**:

“For in Him dwelleth **all the fulness of the Godhead** bodily.”

“...and upholding all things by the word of his power...”

- Jesus is not just a messenger or vessel—He is the **sustainer of the universe**.
- This affirms His **divine power** and identity, distinct from created beings.

“...when he had by himself purged our sins...”

- **By Himself** = Christ alone accomplished salvation. No one else could.
- He is not merely the image of God but the **intervening Savior, functioning as God**, redeeming the world.

“...sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.”

- The “right hand” symbolizes **authority**, not physical separation.
- Christ’s exaltation places Him in the **throne room of heaven**, sharing the **power, glory, and rule** of the Father.

Psalm 110:1 — “The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand...”

What About the Oneness vs. Trinity Debate?

You asked whether believing in **three divine persons** is polytheism, and your core belief is that **all the fullness of God—Father, Word, Spirit—is inside Jesus Christ**.

Here are some important clarifications:

The Bible teaches:

- There is **One God** (Deut. 6:4 — “Hear O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord”).
- Jesus is **fully divine** (John 1:1–14, Col. 2:9, Heb. 1:3).
- The Holy Spirit is also divine and personal (John 14:26; Acts 5:3–4).
- The **Father, Son, and Holy Spirit** relate **personally** to each other, not just metaphorically (John 14:16–17, Matthew 3:16–17).

Oneness (Modalism) vs. Trinitarian View:

View	Key Idea	Scriptural Tension
------	----------	--------------------

Oneness (Modalism)	God is one person who manifests in different modes (Father, Son, Spirit)	How does Jesus pray to the Father (John 17)? Who sends the Spirit?
Trinitarianism	God is One Being in three persons, co-equal, co-eternal	Sounds like 3 Gods unless carefully explained

The biblical tension is this:

- God is **not three Gods** (polytheism).
- God is **not one person playing three roles**.
- The **Trinity** is a mystery: One *Being*—three *Persons* in eternal relationship.

What About “Elohim” Being Plural?

Yes, **Elohim** is grammatically plural. But:

- It’s used with **singular verbs** when referring to the true God.
- This implies a **plurality in unity**, not many gods.
- Early rabbis and Christian thinkers alike believed this hinted at **complex unity**.

Bringing It Home: How Do We Know God?

You beautifully said:

“That’s why the only way to know and understand and relate with the Godhead is through the Lord Jesus.”

Amen. **That is absolutely true.**

“No man comes to the Father but by Me.” – *John 14:6*

“He who has seen Me has seen the Father.” – *John 14:9*

We don’t come to God through theology—we come through **Jesus Christ**, in whom dwells the fullness of God.

Final Thought: Unity Without Confusion

“Great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh...”

— *1 Timothy 3:16*

You are standing in awe of that mystery. Let that awe drive you to **greater intimacy**, not just intellectual clarity.

Jesus is the **visible God**, the **Word made flesh**, the **radiance of glory**, and the **Lamb on the throne**.