

Chapter 1

How Many Gods Are There in Heaven?

One of the biggest issues of doctrine these days is how many Gods there are. It's such a big issue, in fact, that it has caused numerous divisions amongst Christian people. The year AD 1914 was a remarkable date in history and religion. That year saw some interesting events, including a natural star shower;*¹ the beginning of the Jehovah Witness Millennium Reign;*² it was the year that Pentecostal organized religion was born in America;*³ the start of World War I;*⁴ the founder of the "*School for the Prophets*," William Sowders, had held his very first church meeting in Columbus, Kentucky;*⁵ Charlie Chaplin (the world's first movie star) appeared in his first silent picture;*⁶ Babe Ruth (the world's first baseball icon) began his professional career;*⁷ and, most importantly, *in this book's considerations*, a major division between the Oneness and Trinitarian beliefs had begun.*⁸ The need for a correct understanding on the Godhead was so severe at that time that individuals were inclined to believe that if you had the doctrine of the Godhead wrong, you were doomed to burn in flames forever and ever!

Well, unfortunately, that same belief still remains in some circles today; and a great misunderstanding of the Godhead has caused some disastrous effects in the lives and hearts of fellow Christians. However (and even though there are many Oneness believers out there – in that Jesus is the one and only God), it is most popular to believe in *three* Gods: whether *Triune* or *Trinitarian* (*either that Three Gods compose, in reality, one Mighty God; or, that there are three separate Gods who are all equal in status with one another – or, even some other variations*). So, on that note, let us observe a few scriptures:

Romans 3:30a

Seeing *it* is one God...

1 Corinthians 8:4c; 8:6a

...and that *there* is none other God but one.

But to us *there is but* one God...

Galatians 3:20b

...but God is one.

Ephesians 4:6

One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

1 Timothy 2:5a

For *there* is one God...

James 2:19

Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.

Observing these scriptures, we can see that there is but *one* God. *But, if that is so, then what do we do with Jesus? Where does He fit in with all of this?* Well, some say that Jesus *is* that one God . . . Digging further into the scriptures, however, we begin to see that there may actually be more than just one God after all.

Genesis 1:26a

And God said, Let **US** make man in **OUR** image, after **OUR** likeness...

By reading this passage, we can see that that one God may, in fact, be more than just one. *Or, is*

that really the case? Are there actually *three* Gods talking to one another in that passage? And, if that's so, then we must say that there is only one God, and that He is actually made up of three Beings; or, we can imply that God was speaking to the *angels* in that scenario; or, *etc.*

But, in concerning such thoughts, it would actually be wise at this point to express the idea (which most Bible Scholars do agree upon) that the Hebrew word for God, in the above passage in Genesis, is always observed in the *plural* rather than the *singular*. But, does that prove there's more than one God? Well, the modern debate would seem to suggest otherwise:

Smith's Bible Dictionary; published in 1863, public domain (see, for instance: <https://www.biblestudytools.com/dictionaries/smiths-bible-dictionary/god.html>):
Throughout the Hebrew Scriptures, two chief names are used for the one true divine Being -- Elohim (as in **Genesis 1:26**), commonly translated God in our version, and Jehovah, translated Lord. Elohim (as in **Genesis 1:26**) is the **plural** of Eloah, (in Arabic, Allah); it is often used in the short form, El, (a word signifying strength, as in El-Shaddai, God Almighty, the name by which God was specially known to the patriarchs) . . . The plural form of Elohim (as in **Genesis 1:26**) has given rise to much discussion. **The fanciful idea that it referred to the trinity of persons in the Godhead hardly finds now a supporter among scholars.** It is either what grammarians call the plural of majesty, or it denotes the fullness of divine strength, the sum of the powers displayed by God.

And, there you have it! It would seem that *Smith's Bible Dictionary* is giving no credit to the idea that this passage, in **Genesis 1:26**, could refer to more than one God. Especially with the discrediting phrase of: "... *hardly finds now a supporter among scholars.*" So, does that end the debate concerning this Genesis passage?

Keil and Delitzsch Commentary on the O.T.; published 1866-1891, public domain (see, for instance: <https://www.studydrive.org/commentaries/eng/kdo/genesis-1.html>)
The plural "We" was regarded by the fathers and earlier theologians almost unanimously as indicative of the Trinity: modern commentators, on the contrary, regard it either as pluralis majestatis; or as an address by God to Himself, the subject and object being identical; or as communicative, an address to the spirits or angels who stand around the Deity and constitute His council.

So, we have some who think the "WE" (or, "US") were angels, some who think it was a single God talking to Himself, and others (*the minority of the groups these days, it would seem*) who say that it was actually more than one God in conversation . . . So, what's the answer?

The answer to this actually lies in the understanding of whom Jesus really is; and, also, understanding who or what the Holy Ghost (*Holy Spirit*) really is. So, let's begin our investigation.

Explanatory Notes for Chapter 1 *How Many Gods Are There in Heaven?*

***1. A natural star shower...**

Brilliant Meteors observed in 1914; by Fiammetta Wilson, <https://academic.oup.com/mnras/article/75/5/449/1035713> (click on PDF provided); but, also see: <https://adsabs.harvard.edu/full/1915MNRAS..75..449M>:

*"During the year 1914 I observed 1,060 meteors in 450 hours of watching, 81 accordance's. The hourly rate may be considered very small, but this is easily accounted for by the fact that observations were very often maintained in spite of strong moonlight and a nearly all-clouded sky. So long as a few stars showed themselves, I considered the prospect sufficiently inviting to watch, and it is remarkable that on many such occasions I was rewarded by the view of one or two specially brilliant meteors. Out of the 1,060 meteors observed, 103 were all above first magnitude, very many bright ... **This is a far higher percentage of fireballs than during any other year I have observed** ... Probably I would have been enabled to record several other brilliant meteors during the latter end of the year, but for the fact that since the war my husband has been unable to help me – consequently, whilst I have been writing down notes recording one meteor, another may have eluded me."*

***2. Beginning of the Jehovah Witness Millennium Reign...**

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eschatology_of_Jehovah's_Witnesses:

"The eschatology of Jehovah's Witnesses is central to their religious beliefs. They believe that Jesus Christ has been ruling in heaven as king since 1914, a date they believe was prophesied in Scripture, and that after that time a period of cleansing occurred, resulting in God's selection of the Bible Students associated with Charles Taze Russell to be his people in 1919. They believe the destruction of those who reject their message and thus willfully refuse to obey God will shortly take place at Armageddon, ensuring that the beginning of the new earthly society will be composed of willing subjects of that kingdom."

<http://www.truthmagazine.com/archives/volume37/GOTO37111.html>

"They still believe Jesus came and was installed king, but invisibly so. Jehovah's Witnesses believe that the kingdom is a real government from heaven, that it will rule over the earth, and that Jesus Christ is its appointed invisible king' (Isa. 9:6,7, KJ). Although it occurred invisibly to our human eyes in the heavens, yet it was in the year 1914."

***3. Pentecostal organized religion was born in America...**

Assembly of God:

<http://ag.org/top/About/History/index.cfm>

"The General Council of the Assemblies of God (USA), one of the largest Pentecostal denominations in the United States, was organized in 1914 by a broad coalition of ministers who desired to work together to fulfill common objectives, such as sending missionaries and providing fellowship and accountability. Formed in the midst of the emerging worldwide Pentecostal revival, the Assemblies of God quickly took root in other countries and formed indigenous national organizations."

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Assemblies_of_God

"The Assemblies originated from the Pentecostal revival of the early 20th century. This revival led to the founding of the Assemblies of God in the United States in 1914."

Oneness Pentecostalism:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oneness_Pentecostalism:

"Most people believe this movement first emerged in America around 1914 as the result of doctrinal disputes within the nascent Pentecostal movement and claims an estimated 24 million adherents today, but elements of church following the Apostolic doctrine predate Protestants and the Roman Catholic Church itself."

***4. Start of World War I...**

<http://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/first-world-war-erupts-in-europe>:

"On August 1, 1914, four days after Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia, two more great European powers—Russia and Germany—declare war on each other; the same day, France orders a general mobilization. The so-called "Great War" that ensued would be one of unprecedented destruction and loss of life, resulting in the deaths of some 20 million soldiers and civilians and the physical devastation of much of the European continent."

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_War_I:

"World War I (WWI or WW1), also known as the First World War or the Great War, was a global war centered in Europe that began on 28 July 1914 and lasted until 11 November 1918. More than 9 million combatants and 7 million civilians died as a result of the war, a casualty rate exacerbated by the belligerents' technological and industrial sophistication, and tactical stalemate. It was one of the deadliest conflicts in history, paving the way for major political changes, including revolutions in many of the nations involved."

***5. The founder of the "School for the Prophets," William Sowders, had held his very first church meeting in Columbus, Kentucky...**

"Brother Sowders held his first meeting in Columbus, Kentucky, in the year 1914." – 'The Break of Day: The Life Story of William Sowders;' written by Oneal Carman in the 1970's; newly typeset, edited, and published in January 2024 by myself (Ted A. Roberts), and is available in both Paperback and Kindle Ebook at Amazon.com.

***6. Charlie Chaplin appeared in his first silent picture...**

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charlie_Chaplin

"Chaplin became a worldwide icon through his screen persona "the Tramp" and is considered one of the most important figures of the film industry ... Chaplin was scouted for the film industry, and began appearing in 1914 for Keystone Studios. He soon developed the Tramp persona and formed a large fan base ... In 1998, the film critic Andrew Sarris called Chaplin 'arguably the single most important artist produced by the cinema, certainly its most extraordinary performer and probably still its most universal icon.'"

***7. Babe Ruth began his professional career...**

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Babe_Ruth:

"Ruth is regarded as one of the greatest sports heroes in American culture and is considered by many to be the greatest baseball player of all time ... In early 1914, Ruth signed a professional baseball contract with Jack Dunn, who owned and managed the minor-league Baltimore Orioles, an International League team ... Ruth made his first appearance as a professional ballplayer in an inter-squad game on March 7, 1914. He played shortstop and pitched the last two innings of a 15–9 victory. In his second at-bat, Ruth hit a long home run to right field; the blast was locally reported to be longer than a legendary shot hit by Jim Thorpe in Fayetteville."

***8. Division between the Oneness and Trinitarian beliefs...**

<http://www.letusreason.org/Onenes21.htm>:

"By the spring of 1914, Ewart accepted the "new found truth" became one of its leading advocates. Ewart reached the conclusion that the singular "name" in Matthew 28:19 was Jesus Christ. He came to believe that the one true God who had revealed himself as Father, in the Son, and as the Holy Spirit was none other than Jesus Christ. To support this view, he pointed to Colossians 2:9, which states that in Jesus dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily ... Ewart explained his discovery to other Pentecostal ministers,

some of whom rejected his teaching, but others enthusiastically embraced it. On April 15, 1914, Ewart rebaptized Glenn A. Cook, his assistant and a veteran evangelist of the Azusa Street Mission, in the name of Jesus Christ, and Cook rebaptized Ewart. This would set in motion an issue that would divide the Pentecostal movement between the Trinitarians and the Jesus Name only, or Oneness, believers. After Ewart and Cook were rebaptized, they began to rebaptize thousands of Pentecostals with the shorter, new found formula "in Jesus name." Claiming those baptized with Mt.28 were not valid, it must be "in the name of Jesus" (only). Anyone baptized in the threefold name of "Father, Son, and Holy Spirit", must renounce that baptism and be rebaptized with the right words said over them, before they can be regarded as biblically baptised."

<http://classroom.synonym.com/difference-between-assembly-god-pentecostal-6407.html>

"The Pentecostal movement began in 1901 when students at Bethel Bible College in Topeka, Kansas came to the conclusion that speaking in unknown languages under the power of the Holy Spirit -- called speaking in tongues -- was the initial sign that a believer had been filled with, or baptized in, the Holy Spirit. The Pentecostal movement, which was initially non-denominational, has since become one of the largest groups within Christianity. Today, more than 700 denominations identify with the Pentecostal movement. The largest of these is the Assemblies of God, which formed in 1914."

Excerpt from *The Break of Day: The Life Story of William Sowders* by Oneal Carman:

"Many of the early 20th century Pentecostal groups were shattered as a result of the friction and fury generated by the Godhead issue."

Excerpt from: www.gospelassemblyfree.com/facts/sowders.htm

William Sowders: A Man Called Out, Author and date unknown.

PENTECOSTAL CHURCHES ORGANIZE:

"It was at this time that papers began circulating, calling all the preachers to Hot Springs, Arkansas. The purpose was to establish a unified doctrine and establish an organization for those that had been a part of a loose-knit association. They had "come out" only to go "back in." Revelation 18:4 ... While Brother Sowders was praying about going to the meeting, one brother in particular was very vocal in urging him to go. He stated that he was going and urged Brother Sowders to accompany him. One night, after much prayer over this matter, Brother Sowders tells us of a dream he had from the Lord as an answer to his prayer. In his dream Brother Sowders saw himself in the hayloft of a large barn. Hearing a noise he looked down, and there in the muck and mire of the dirt floor of the barn he saw this particular brother walking around in the mire with the beasts (animals) of the barnyard. He awakened and said, 'Lord, what does this mean?' The Lord said to him, 'Brother is going with the Beast.' Revelation 17:3. That settled it for Brother Sowders ... When the General Council met in Hot Springs, Arkansas in April of 1914, Brother Sowders did not attend their meeting."

1 Corinthians 1:10-13

Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and *that* there be no divisions among you; but *that* ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them *which are of the house* of Chloe, that there are contentions among you. Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?

For more extraordinary events that had happened in 1914, see:

<http://www.historyorb.com/events/date/1914>, and <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1914>.