

Does Genesis 1:26 suggest the Trinity, or a majestic address to the angelic hosts of heaven?

Gen 1:1 In the beginning God (plural *elohim*) created the heavens and the earth.

Gen 1:26 Then God said, "Let Us (plural pronoun) make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

The four primary interpretations of the words “us” and “our” in Genesis 1.26 are as follows: (1) most Jews have interpreted them as God’s communication to a special group of angels who gather around God’s heavenly throne and constitute his royal court or council; (2) early Christian writers understood God the Father to be speaking to the other two members of the Trinity; (3) many commentators have regarded these words as a plural of majesty, which allows for Trinitarian belief but does not necessitate it; (4) God addresses himself.

the NIV Study Bible provides a number of Bible sources from the Jewish scriptures to support its position that “God speaks as the Creator-king, announcing His crowning work to the members of His heavenly court.” The verses cited are: Genesis 3:22, 11:7, Isaiah 6:8, I Kings 22:19-23, Job 15:8, and Jeremiah 23:18. These verses convey to the attentive Bible reader that the heavenly abode of the Creator is filled with the ministering angels who attend the Almighty and to whom He repeatedly refers when using the plural pronoun “Us.”

This view (the NIV Study Bible, the Ryrie Bible) omits the Trinity from the Old Testament.

Is This True?

“The ‘Us’ in Genesis 1.26 cannot be the supposed other two members of the Trinity because it says God made man in his image. If God is a Trinity of Persons, then man, being made in God’s image, would have to be tri-personal as well.”

Jesus is in the water.
The Holy Spirit is in the dove.
The Father speaks from heaven.
Three persons in one.

Luk 3:21 Now when all the people were baptized, Jesus was also baptized, and while He was praying, heaven was opened, (22) and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in bodily form like a dove, and a voice came out of heaven, "You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased."

Joh 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. (2) He was in the beginning with God. (3) All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.

Col 1:15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. (16) For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities--all things have been created through Him and for Him. (17) He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. (18) He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything. (19) For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him,

Gen 3:22 Then the LORD God said,
"Behold, the man has become like
one of Us, knowing good and evil;
and now, he might stretch out his
hand, and take also from the tree of
life, and eat, and live forever"-- (23)
therefore the LORD God sent him
out from the garden of Eden, to
cultivate the ground from which he
was taken.

Gen 11:6 The LORD said, "Behold, they are one people, and they all have the same language. And this is what they began to do, and now nothing which they purpose to do will be impossible for them. (7) "Come, let Us go down and there confuse their language, so that they will not understand one another's speech." (8) So the LORD scattered them abroad from there over the face of the whole earth; and they stopped building the city.

Is this the work of the Father, Son
and Holy Ghost or the work of the
Father and a bunch of angels?

There is no question that the Lord
has majestic attendants – the
angels, the seraphim and the
cherubim.

Luk 2:13 And suddenly there appeared with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, (14) "Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased." (15) When the angels had gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds began saying to one another, "Let us go straight to Bethlehem then, and see this thing that has happened which the Lord has made known to us."

There are seraphim who have wings.

Isa 6:6 Then one of the seraphim flew to me with a burning coal in his hand, which he had taken from the altar with tongs. (7) He touched my mouth with it and said, "Behold, this has touched your lips; and your iniquity is taken away and your sin is forgiven." (8) Then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?" Then I said, "Here am I. Send me!"

There are cherubim who have wings

Exo 25:20 "The cherubim shall have their wings spread upward, covering the mercy seat with their wings and facing one another; the faces of the cherubim are to be turned toward the mercy seat.

1Ki 22:19 Micaiah said, "Therefore, hear the word of the LORD. I saw the LORD sitting on His throne, and all the host of heaven standing by Him on His right and on His left. (20) "The LORD said, 'Who will entice Ahab to go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead?'

And one said this while another said that. (21)

"Then a spirit came forward and stood before the LORD and said, 'I will entice him.' (22) "The LORD said to him, 'How?' And he said, 'I will go out and be a deceiving spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.'

Then He said, 'You are to entice him and also prevail. Go and do so.'

Job 15:1 Then Eliphaz the Temanite responded ... (7) "Were you the first man to be born, Or were you brought forth before the hills? (8) "Do you hear the secret counsel of God, And limit wisdom to yourself?"

Jer 23:18 "But who has stood in
the council of the LORD, That he
should see and hear His word?
Who has given heed to His word
and listened?

The psalmist tells of “the assembly of the holy ones,” describing Yahweh as “a God greatly feared in the council of the holy ones, and awesome above all those who are around Him” (Ps 89.5, 7)

Psa 89:5 The heavens will praise Your wonders, O LORD; Your faithfulness also in the assembly of the holy ones. (6) For who in the skies is comparable to the LORD? Who among the sons of the mighty is like the LORD, (7) A God greatly feared in the council of the holy ones, And awesome above all those who are around Him?

It is because of these beliefs by the Jews that the writer to the Hebrews clarifies Jesus' position with that of the angels.

Heb 1:13 But to which of the angels has He ever said, "SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND, UNTIL I MAKE YOUR ENEMIES A FOOTSTOOL FOR YOUR FEET"?

Heb 1:6 And when He again brings the firstborn into the world, He says, "AND LET ALL THE ANGELS OF GOD WORSHIP HIM."

(7) And of the angels He says, "WHO MAKES HIS ANGELS WINDS, AND HIS MINISTERS A FLAME OF FIRE." (8) But of the Son He says, "YOUR THRONE, O GOD, IS FOREVER AND EVER, AND THE RIGHTEOUS SCEPTER IS THE SCEPTER OF HIS KINGDOM."

Clearly, the Jews were mystified as to the nature of the plural *elohim* in Gen 1.1 and it is not fully explained until Jesus comes in the flesh, showing the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit to be one.

Joh 17:20 "I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; (21) that they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me. (22) "The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, just as We are one; (23) I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You have loved Me.