

Elohim

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This article is about the Hebrew word. For other uses, see [Elohim \(disambiguation\)](#).

אלהים

Elohim in Hebrew script. The letters are, right-to-left: [aleph-lamed-he-yud-mem](#).

אֱלֹהִים With vowel marks

Elohim (**Hebrew**: אֱלֹהִים, **romanized**: *ʿĒlōhīm*: [[(?)elo'(h)im]], the plural of אֱלֹהָ (ʿĒlōah), is a Hebrew word meaning "gods" or "godhood". Although the word is grammatically **plural**, in the **Hebrew Bible** it most often takes singular verbal or pronominal **agreement** and refers to a single deity, particularly the **God of Israel**. In other verses it refers to the singular gods of other nations or to **deities** in the plural.

Morphologically, the word is the plural form of the word *eloah* and related to *el*. It is **cognate** to the word *ʾl-h-m* which is found in **Ugaritic**, where it is used as the **pantheon** for **Canaanite gods**, the children of **El**, and conventionally vocalized as "Elohim". Most uses of the term *Elohim* in the later Hebrew text imply a view that is at least **monolatrist** at the time of writing, and such usage (in the singular), as a proper title for Deity, is distinct from generic usage as *elohim*, "gods" (plural, simple noun).

Rabbinic scholar **Maimonides** wrote that *Elohim* "Divinity" and *elohim* "gods" are commonly understood to be **homonyms**.^[1] One modern theory suggests that the notion of **divinity** underwent radical changes in the early period of **Israelite** identity and development of **Ancient Hebrew religion**. In this view, the ambiguity of the term *elohim* is the result of such changes, cast in terms of "vertical translatability", i.e. the re-interpretation of the gods of the earliest recalled period as the **national god** of **monolatry** as it emerged in the 7th to 6th century BCE in the **Kingdom of Judah** and during the **Babylonian captivity**, and further in terms of **monotheism** by the emergence of **Rabbinical Judaism** in the 2nd century CE.^[2] Another theory, building on an idea by Gesenius, argues that even before Hebrew became a distinct language, the plural *elohim* had both a plural meaning of "gods" and an abstract meaning of "godhood" or "divinity", much as the plural of "father", *avot*, can mean either "fathers" or "fatherhood". *Elohim* then came to be used so frequently in reference to specific deities, both male and female, domestic and foreign (for instance, the goddess of the Sidonians in 1 Kings 11:33), that it came to be concretized from meaning "divinity" to meaning "deity", though still occasionally used adjectivally as "divine".^[3]

Grammar and etymology

[[edit](#)]

Further information: [El \(deity\)](#), [Ilah](#), and [Allah](#)

The word *elohim* or *'elohiyim* (ʾēlôhîym[ⓘ]) is a [grammatically plural noun](#) for "gods" or "deities" or various other words in [Biblical Hebrew](#).^{[4][5][6][7][8][9][10]}

In Hebrew, the ending *-im* normally indicates a masculine plural. However, when referring to the Jewish God, *Elohim* is usually understood to be grammatically singular (i.e., it governs a singular verb or adjective).^{[11][12]} In [Modern Hebrew](#), it is often referred to in the singular despite the *-im* ending that denotes plural masculine nouns in Hebrew.^{[13][14]}

It is generally thought that *Elohim* is derived from *eloah*,^{[4][5][6][7][8][9]} the latter being an expanded form of the [Northwest Semitic](#) noun *'il*.^{[15][16]} The related nouns *eloah* (אֱלֹהִים) and *el* (אֵל) are used as proper names or as generics, in which case they are interchangeable with *elohim*.^[16] The term contains an added *heh* as [third radical](#) to the [biconsonantal root](#). Discussions of the [etymology](#) of *elohim* essentially concern this expansion. An exact cognate outside of Hebrew is found in Ugaritic *'lhm*,^[15] the family of EL, the [creator god](#) and chief deity of the [Canaanite pantheon](#), in [Biblical Aramaic](#) *ʿĒlāhā* and later [Syriac](#) *Alaha* ("God"), and in Arabic *ʾilāh* ("god, deity") (or *Allah* as "The [single] God").^[15] "El" (the basis for the extended root *'lh*) is usually derived from a root meaning "to be strong" and/or "to be in front".^[16]

Canaanite religion

[[edit](#)]

Further information: [Ancient Canaanite religion](#)

The word *el* (singular) is a standard term for "god" in Aramaic, paleo-Hebrew, and other related Semitic languages including Ugaritic. The Canaanite pantheon of gods was known as *'ilhm*,^[17] the Ugaritic equivalent to *elohim*.^[18] For instance, the Ugaritic [Baal Cycle](#) mentions "seventy sons of [Asherah](#)". Each "son of god" was held to be the originating deity for a particular people ([KTU 2 1.4.VI.46](#)).^[19]

Usage

[[edit](#)]

Main article: [Hebrew grammar](#)

Further information: [Names of God in Judaism](#)

Elohim occurs frequently throughout the Torah. In some cases (e.g., [Exodus 3:4](#), "*Elohim* called unto him out of the midst of the bush ..."), it behaves like a singular noun in Hebrew grammar and is then generally understood to denote the single God of Israel. In other cases, *elohim* acts as an ordinary plural of the word *eloah* and refers to the [polytheistic](#) notion of multiple gods (for example, [Exodus 20:3](#), "You shall have no other gods before me").

The word *Elohim* occurs more than two thousand five hundred times in the Hebrew Bible, with meanings ranging from "gods" in a general sense (as in [Exodus 12:12](#), where it describes "the gods of Egypt"), to specific gods (the frequent references to [Yahweh](#) as the "elohim" of Israel), to [seraphim](#), and other supernatural beings, to the [spirits of the dead](#) brought up at the behest of [King Saul](#) in [1 Samuel 28:13](#), and even to kings and prophets (e.g., [Exodus 4:16](#)).^[16] The phrase *bene elohim*, translated "sons of the Gods", has an exact parallel in [Ugaritic](#) and [Phoenician](#) texts, referring to the council of the gods.^[16]

Elohim occupy the seventh rank of ten in the medieval rabbinic scholar [Maimonides' Jewish angelic hierarchy](#). Maimonides wrote: "I must premise that every Hebrew [now] knows that the term Elohim is a homonym, and denotes God, angels, judges, and the rulers of countries ..."^[11]

With plural verb

[\[edit\]](#)

In the Hebrew Bible, [1 Samuel 28:13](#), *elohim* is used with a plural verb. The [witch of Endor](#) tells [Saul](#) that she saw *elohim* ascending (*olim* עלים, plural verb) out of the earth when she summoned the spirit of the [Prophet Samuel](#) at Saul's request.^[20] The word *elohim*, in this context, can refer to spirits as well as deities.^[21] Some traditional Jewish sources say that the spirits of deceased human beings are being referred to^[citation needed]. The [Babylonian Talmud](#) states: "*olim* indicates that there were two of them. One of them was Samuel, but the other, who was he? – Samuel went and brought [Moses](#) with him."^[22] [Rashi](#) gives this interpretation in his commentary on the verse.^[23] Regarding this, [Sforno](#) states that "every disembodied creature is known as elohim; this includes the soul of human beings known as [the] 'Image of God'."^[24]

In [Genesis 20:13](#), [Abraham](#), before the polytheistic [Philistine](#) king [Abimelech](#), says that "Elohim (translated as 'God') caused (התעור, plural verb) me to wander".^{[25][26][27]} Whereas the Greek [Septuagint](#) (LXX) has a singular verb form (ἐξήγαγε(v), aorist II), most English versions usually translate this as "God caused" (which does not distinguish between a singular and plural verb).^[28] Regarding this, the [Jerusalem Talmud](#) states: "All Names written regarding our father Abraham are holy [i.e., referring to the one God] except one which is profane, *it was when the gods made me err from my father's house*. But some say this one also is holy, [i.e.,] 'were it not for God, they [humans] already would have made me err'."^[29] The same disagreement appears in [Tractate Soferim](#), where [Haninah ben Ahi R. Joshua](#) maintained that the word is "holy".^[30] An alternative view (held by [Onkelos](#), [Bahya ben Asher](#), [Jacob ben Asher](#), [Sforno](#), and Rabbi [Yaakov Tzvi Mecklenburg](#)) is that the word means "gods" and the verse means that Abraham's distaste for the [idolatry](#) of his father [Terah](#) led him to decide to wander far from home.^[31] Others, such as [Chizkuni](#), interpret *elohim* as a reference to wicked rulers like [Amraphel](#) (often equated with [Nimrod](#)).^[32]

In [Genesis 35:7](#), Jacob builds an altar at [El-Bethel](#) "because there *elohim* revealed himself [plural verb] to [Jacob]". The verb *niglu* ("revealed himself") is plural, even though one would expect the singular.^[33] This is one of several instances where the Bible uses plural verbs with the name *elohim*.^{[34][35]} Some Jewish sources (e.g., [Targum Jonathan](#), [Ibn Ezra](#), add [Chizkuni](#)), seeking to explain the plural language of Genesis 35:7, translate *elohim* here as "angels",^[36] noting that in the story being referenced Jacob experiences a vision of *malakhei elohim* (angels of God) ascending and descending the ladder.^[37] [Radak](#) agrees that this is a reference to angels but also presents the

alternative view that the plural form in the verse is a [majestic plural](#), as seen in other verses such as [Psalms 149:2](#) and [Job 35:10](#).^[38] *Elohim* can be seen used in reference to the [angels](#) in a variety of other cases, such as in [Psalms 8:6](#) and [82:1–6](#).^{[39][40][41]}

With singular verb

[[edit](#)]

Elohim, when meaning the God of Israel, is mostly grammatically singular, and is commonly translated as "God", and capitalised. For example, in [Genesis 1:26](#), it is written: "Then Elohim (translated as God) said (singular verb), 'Let us (plural) make (plural verb) man in our (plural) image, after our (plural) likeness'". In the traditional Jewish understanding of the verse, the plural refers to [God](#) taking [council](#) with His [angels](#) (who He had created by this point) before creating [Adam](#).^[42] It should also be noted that in the following verse of Genesis 1:27: "So God created man in his [own] image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them"; the singular verb אָרָא (bārā'), meaning "He created" is used as it is elsewhere in all the acts of creation featured in Genesis. This shows us that the actual creation of man (and everything else) in Genesis was a singular act by God alone.^{[43][44][45]}

[Wilhelm Gesenius](#) and other Hebrew grammarians traditionally described this as the *pluralis excellentiae* (plural of excellence), which is similar to the *pluralis majestatis* (plural of majesty, or "Royal we").^{[46][a]} Gesenius comments that the singular Hebrew term *Elohim* is to be distinguished from *elohim* used to refer to plural gods, and remarks that:

The supposition that אֱלֹהִים (*elohim*) is to be regarded as merely a remnant of earlier polytheistic views (i.e. as originally only a numerical plural) is at least highly improbable, and, moreover, would not explain the analogous plurals (see below). That the language has entirely rejected the idea of numerical plurality in אֱלֹהִים (whenever it denotes *one* God), is proved especially by its being almost invariably joined with a singular attribute (cf. §132h), e.g. אֱלֹהִים צַדִּיק [Psalms 7:10](#), &c.

Hence אֱלֹהִים may have been used originally not only as a numerical but also as an abstract plural (corresponding to the Latin *numen*, and our *Godhead*), and, like other abstracts of the same kind, have been transferred to a concrete single god (even of the heathen).

To the same class (and probably formed on the analogy of אֱלֹהִים) belong the plurals קְדוּשִׁים (*kadoshim*), meaning *the Most Holy* (only of Yahweh, [Hosea 12:1](#), [Proverbs 9:10](#), [30:3](#) – cf. אֱלֹהִים קְדוּשִׁים *elohiym kadoshim* in [Joshua 24:19](#) and the singular Aramaic עֲלִיּוֹנִין *the Most High*, [Daniel 7:18](#), [7:22](#), [7:25](#)); and probably תְּרָפִים (*teraphim*) (usually taken in the sense of *penates*), the image of a god, used especially for obtaining oracles. Certainly in [1 Samuel 19:13](#), [19:16](#) only *one* image is intended; in most other places a single image *may* be intended; in [Zechariah 10:2](#) alone is it most naturally taken as a numerical plural.

—[Gesenius, Wilhelm](#) (1910). "[124. The Various Uses of the Plural-form](#)". In [Kautzsch, Emil](#) (ed.). *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar. Translated by Cowley, Arthur Ernest* (2nd, revised and enlarged ed.). [Oxford University Press](#). p. 399 – via [Wikisource](#).

There are a number of notable exceptions to the rule that *Elohim* is treated as singular when referring to the God of Israel, including [Genesis 20:13](#), [Genesis 35:7](#), [2 Samuel 7:23](#) and [Psalms 58:11](#), and notably the epithet of the "Living God" ([Deuteronomy 5:26](#) etc.), which is constructed

with the plural adjective, *Elohim hayyim* (אלהים חיים) but still takes singular verbs. The treatment of *Elohim* as both singular and plural is, according to Mark Sameth, consistent with a theory put forth by [Guillaume Postel](#) (16th century) and [Michelangelo Lanci \[it\]](#) (19th century) that the God of Israel was understood by the ancient priests to be a singular, dual-gendered deity.^{[48][49][50][51]}

In the Septuagint and [New Testament](#) translations, *Elohim* has the singular ὁ θεός even in these cases, and modern translations follow suit in giving "[God](#)" in the singular. The [Samaritan Torah](#) has edited out some of these exceptions.^[52]

Angels and judges

[\[edit\]](#)



Carved angel's head with Hebrew text "Elohim", from [St.](#)

[George's Church, Dublin](#)

In a few cases in the Greek Septuagint (LXX), Hebrew *elohim* with a plural verb, or with implied plural context, was rendered either *angeloi* ("angels") or *to kriterion tou Theou* ("the judgement of God").^[53] These passages then entered first the Latin [Vulgate](#), then the English [King James Version](#) (KJV) as "angels" and "judges", respectively. From this came the result that [James Strong](#), for example, listed "angels" and "judges" as possible meanings for *elohim* with a plural verb in his [Strong's Concordance](#),^{[4][5]} and the same is true of many other 17th–20th century reference works. Both Gesenius' Hebrew Lexicon and the [Brown–Driver–Briggs](#) Lexicon^[5] list both "angels" and "judges" as possible alternative meanings of *elohim* with plural verbs and adjectives.

Gesenius and [Ernst Wilhelm Hengstenberg](#) have questioned the reliability of the [Septuagint](#) translation in this matter. Gesenius lists the meaning without agreeing with it.^[54] Hengstenberg stated that the Hebrew Bible text never uses *elohim* to refer to "angels", but that the Septuagint translators refused the references to "gods" in the verses they amended to "angels".^[55]

The Greek New Testament (NT) quotes [Psalms 8:4–6](#) in Hebrews 2:6b–8a, where the Greek NT has ἀγγέλους (*angelous*) in vs. 7,^[56] quoting [Psalms 8:5](#) (8:6 in the LXX), which also has ἀγγέλους in

a version of the Greek Septuagint.^[57] In the KJV, *elohim* (Strong's number H430) is translated as "angels" only in Psalm 8:5.^[58]

The KJV translates *elohim* as "judges" in [Exodus 21:6](#); [Exodus 22:8](#); twice in [Exodus 22:9](#)^[59] as "judge" in [1 Samuel 2:25](#), and as "gods" in [Exodus 22:28](#), [Psalm 82:1](#), [Psalm 82:6](#), [Psalm 95:3](#), [Psalm 96:4](#), [Psalm 97:9](#), and [Psalm 138:1](#).

[Angels](#) cited in the [Hebrew Bible](#) and external literature often contain the related noun [ֵל \(Ēl\)](#) in their [theophoric](#) names such as [Michael](#) and [Gabriel](#).

Other plural-singulars in biblical Hebrew

[\[edit\]](#)

The [Hebrew language](#) has several nouns with *-im* (masculine plural) and *-oth* (feminine plural) endings which nevertheless take singular verbs, adjectives and pronouns. For example, *Baalim*,^[60] *Adonim*,^[61] *Behemoth*.^[62] This form is known as the "honorific plural", in which the pluralization is a sign of power or honor.^{[63]^[full citation needed]} A very common singular Hebrew word with plural ending is the word *achoth*, meaning sister, with the irregular plural form *achioth*.^[64]

Alternatively, there are several other frequently used words in the Hebrew language that contain a masculine plural ending but also maintain this form in singular concept. The major examples are: Sky/Heavens ([שמים](#) *shamayim*), Face ([פנים](#) *panim*), Life ([חיים](#) - *chayyim*), Water ([מים](#) *mayim*). Of these four nouns, three appear in the first sentence of Genesis^[65] (along with *elohim*). Three of them also appear in the first sentence of the Eden creation story^[66] (also along with *elohim*). Instead of "honorific plural" these other plural nouns terms represent something which is constantly changing. Water, sky, face, life are "things which are never bound to one form".^[67]

The Divine Council

[\[edit\]](#)

Main article: [Divine Council](#)

God standeth in the congregation of the mighty; he judgeth among the gods. ...

I have said, Ye [are] gods; and all of you [are] children of the most High.

But ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes.

—*Psalm 82:1, 6–7 (AV)*

Marti Steussy, in *Chalice Introduction to the Old Testament*, discusses: "The first verse of Psalm 82: 'Elohim has taken his place in the divine council.' Here *elohim* has a singular verb and clearly refers to God. But in verse 6 of the Psalm, God says to the other members of the council, 'You [plural] are *elohim*.' Here *elohim* has to mean gods."^[68]

Mark Smith, referring to this same Psalm, states in *God in Translation*: "This psalm presents a scene of the gods meeting together in divine council ... Elohim stands in the council of El. Among the *elohim* he pronounces judgment: ..." ^[69]

In *Hulsean Lectures for...*, H. M. Stephenson discussed Jesus' argument in [John 10:34-36](#) [9](#) concerning [Psalm 82:6-7](#). (In answer to the charge of blasphemy Jesus replied:) "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; Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?" – "Now what is the force of this quotation 'I said ye are gods.' It is from the Asaph Psalm which begins 'Elohim hath taken His place in the mighty assembly. In the midst of the Elohim He is judging.'" ^[70]

Sons of God

[\[edit\]](#)

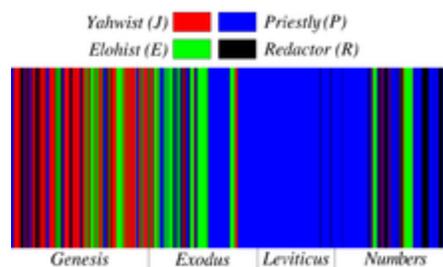
Main article: [Sons of God](#)

The Hebrew word for "son" is *ben*; plural is *bānim* (with the [construct state](#) form being "benei"). The Hebrew term *benei elohim* ("sons of God" or "sons of the gods") in [Genesis 6:2](#) ^[71] compares to the use of "sons of gods" (Ugaritic: *b'n il*) sons of [El](#) in [Ugaritic mythology](#). ^[72] [Karel van der Toorn](#) states that gods can be referred to collectively as *bene elim*, *bene elyon*, or *bene elohim*. ^[16]

Elohist

[\[edit\]](#)

Main article: [Elohist](#)



[Friedman](#)'s distribution of materials by source of the first four books of the Hebrew Bible, including a [redactor](#) (black), according to the [documentary hypothesis](#). ^{[73][74]}

The Hebrew Bible uses various names for the God of Israel. ^{[75]:102} According to the [documentary hypothesis](#), these variations are the products of different [source texts](#) and narratives that constitute the [composition of the Torah](#): *Elohim* is the name of God used in the [Elohist](#) (E) and [Priestly](#) (P) sources, while *Yahweh* is the name of God used in the [Jahwist](#) (J) source. ^{[73][74][75][76][77]} [Form criticism](#) postulates the differences of names may be the result of geographical origins; the P and E sources coming from the North and J from the South. ^{[75]:102} ^[76] There may be a theological point, that God did not reveal his name, *Yahweh*, before the time of [Moses](#), though [Hans Heinrich Schmid](#) showed that the Jahwist was aware of the prophetic books from the 7th and 8th centuries BCE. ^[78]

The Jahwist source presents Yahweh [anthropomorphically](#): for example, walking through the [Garden of Eden](#) looking for Adam and Eve. The Elohist source often presents Elohim as more distant and frequently involves [angels](#), as in the Elohist version of the tale of [Jacob's Ladder](#), in which there is a ladder to the clouds, with angels climbing up and down, with Elohim at the top. In

the Jahwist version of the tale, Yahweh is simply stationed in the sky, above the clouds without the ladder or angels. Likewise, the Elohist source describes [Jacob wrestling with an angel](#).

The classical documentary hypothesis, first developed in the late 19th century among [biblical scholars](#) and [textual critics](#), holds that the Jahwist portions of the [Torah](#) were composed in the 10th-9th century BCE^{[75]:102} and the Elohist portions in the 9th-8th century BCE,^{[75]:102 [76]} i.e. during the early period of the [Kingdom of Judah](#). This, however, is not universally accepted as [later literary scholarship](#) seems to show evidence of a later "Elohist redaction" ([post-exilic](#)) during the 5th century BCE which sometimes makes it difficult to determine whether a given passage is "Elohist" in origin, or the result of a later editor.^[citation needed]

Latter Day Saint movement

[\[edit\]](#)

Main article: [God in Mormonism](#)

Further information: [Beliefs and practices of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints](#)

In the [Latter Day Saint movement](#) and [Mormonism](#), *Elohim* refers to [God the Father](#).^{[79][80]} Elohim is the father of Jesus in both the physical and the spiritual realms, whose name before birth is said to be [Jehovah](#).^{[79][80][81]}

In the belief system held by the Christian churches that adhere to the Latter Day Saint movement and most [Mormon denominations](#), including [the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints](#) (LDS Church), the term *God* refers to Elohim (the Eternal Father),^{[79][80]} whereas [Godhead](#) means a council of three distinct gods: Elohim (God the Father), [Jehovah](#) (the Son of God, Jesus Christ),^{[79][80]} and the [Holy Ghost](#), in a [non-trinitarian conception of the Godhead](#).^{[79][80]} In Mormonism, the three persons are considered to be physically separate beings, or personages, but united in will and purpose; this conception differs significantly from [mainline Christian trinitarianism](#).^{[79][80][82]} As such, the term *Godhead* differs from how it is used in mainstream Christianity.^{[79][80]} This description of God represents the [orthodoxy](#) of the LDS Church, established early in the 19th century.^[79]

The [Book of Abraham](#), a [sacred text](#) accepted by some branches of the Latter Day Saint movement, contains a paraphrase of the first chapter of Genesis which explicitly translates *Elohim* as "the Gods" multiple times; this is suggested by Mormon [apostle James E. Talmage](#) to indicate a "plurality of excellence or intensity, rather than distinctively of number,"^[83] in contrast to his contemporary apostle [Orson F. Whitney](#)'s explanation that, while to "the modern Jew [Elohim] means the plural of majesty, not of number...to the Latter-day Saint it signifies both."^[84]

Raëlism

[\[edit\]](#)

Main article: [Raëlian beliefs and practices](#)

The [new religious movement](#) and [UFO religion International Raëlian Movement](#), founded by the French journalist [Claude Vorilhon](#) (who later became known as "Raël") in 1974,^[85] claims that the

Hebrew word *Elohim* from the Book of Genesis actually means “those who came from the sky” and refers to a species of [extraterrestrial aliens](#).^[86]

Gnosticism

[\[edit\]](#)

In the [Gnostic](#) text known as the [Secret Book of John](#), Elohim is another name for [Abel](#), whose parents are [Eve](#) and [Yaldabaoth](#). He rules over the elements of water and earth, alongside [Cain](#), who is seen as [Yahweh](#) ruling over the elements of fire and wind.^[87] However, the 2nd century Gnostic teacher [Justin](#) proposed a cosmological model with three original divinities. The first is a transcendental being called the Good, the second is Elohim, appearing here as an intermediate male figure, and the third is an [Earth-mother](#) called [Eden](#). The world along with the first humans are created from the love between Elohim and Eden, but when Elohim learns about the existence of the Good above him and ascends trying to reach it, he causes evil to enter the universe.^[88]

See also

[\[edit\]](#)

- [Anunnaki](#)
- [Henotheism § Canaanite religion and Yahwism](#)
- [Elyon](#)
- [Genesis creation narrative](#)
- [Monolatry § In ancient Israel](#)
- [Names of God](#)
- [Theophory in the Bible](#)
- [Allahumma](#)

Notes

[\[edit\]](#)

1. [^] According to Rabbi [Joseph Hertz](#), the word's use in [Genesis 1:1](#) "indicates that God comprehends and unifies all the forces of eternity and infinity".^[47]

References

[\[edit\]](#)

1. [^] [Jump up to:^a ^b Moses Maimonides. *Guide for the Perplexed* \(1904 translation by Friedländer\). Starting from the beginning of chapter 2.](#)
2. [^] [Smith 2010](#), p. 19.
3. [^] [Burnett 2001](#).

4. ^ [Jump up to:](#)^{a b c} [Strong, James](#) (1890). "[H430 - 'elohiym'](#)". [Strong's Concordance. Blue Letter Bible](#). Retrieved 1 August 2020. **אֱלֹהִים** 'ēlôhîym, el-o-heem; plural of H433 (אֱלֹהָּ ׀lôah); gods in the ordinary sense; but specifically used (in the plural thus, especially with the article) of the supreme God; occasionally applied by way of deference to magistrates; and sometimes as a superlative:—angels, X exceeding, God (gods) (-dess, -ly), X (very) great, judges, X mighty.
5. ^ [Jump up to:](#)^{a b c d} "[Strong's Hebrew: 430. אֱלֹהִים \(elohim\) -- God \(Strong's Concordance; Englishman's Concordance; NAS Exhaustive Concordance; Brown-Driver-Briggs definition; Strong's Exhaustive Concordance definition; Forms and Transliterations\)](#)". [Biblehub.com](#). 2020. Retrieved 1 August 2020.
6. ^ [Jump up to:](#)^{a b} "[Elohim - Hebrew god'](#)". [Encyclopædia Britannica. Edinburgh: Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc.](#) 20 July 1998. Retrieved 1 August 2020. **Elohim**, singular **Eloah**, (Hebrew: God), the God of Israel in the Old Testament. The term Elohim—though sometimes used for other deities, such as the [Moabite](#) god [Chemosh](#), the [Sidonian](#) goddess [Astarte](#), and also for other majestic beings such as angels, kings, judges (the Old Testament [shofetim](#)), and the [Messiah](#)—is usually employed in the Old Testament for the one and only God of Israel, whose personal name was revealed to [Moses](#) as [YHWH](#), or [Yahweh](#) (q.v.). When referring to Yahweh, elohim very often is accompanied by the article ha-, to mean, in combination, "the God," and sometimes with a further identification [Elohim hayyim](#), meaning "the living God."
Though Elohim is plural in form, it is understood in the singular sense. Thus, in [Genesis](#) the words, "In the beginning God (Elohim) created the heavens and the earth," Elohim is monotheistic in connotation, though its grammatical structure seems polytheistic. The Israelites probably borrowed the Canaanite plural noun Elohim and made it singular in meaning in their cultic practices and theological reflections.
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17. [^ Pardee 1999](#), p. 285 "The term expressing the simple notion of 'gods' in these texts is *ilm...*".
18. [^ Van der Toorn 1999](#), pp. 352–353, 360–364.
19. [^ Day 2003](#), p. 23.
20. [^ Brian B. Schmidt, "Israel's beneficent dead: ancestor cult and necromancy in ancient Israelite Religion and Tradition", *Forschungen zum Alten Testament*, N. 11 \(Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr Siebeck, 1994\), p. 217: "In spite of the fact that the MT plural noun 'elohim of v.13 is followed by a plural participle 'olim, a search for the antecedent to the singular pronominal suffix on mah-to'ro in v.14 what does he/it look like? has led interpreters to view the 'elohim ... 'olim as a designation for the dead Samuel, 'a god ascending'. The same term 'elohim ... He, therefore, urgently requests verification of Samuel's identity, mah-to'ro, 'what does he/it look like?' The ... 32:1, 'elohim occurs with a plural finite verb and denotes multiple gods in this instance: 'elohim "'seryel'ku l fydhenenu, 'the gods who will go before us'. Thus, the two occurrences of 'elohim in 1 Sam 28:13,15 – the first complemented by a plural ... 28:13 manifests a complex textual history, then the 'elohim of v. 13 might represent not the deified dead, but those gods known to be summoned – some from the \[netherworld\]\(#\) – to assist in the retrieval of the ghost.373 ..."](#)
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28. [^ LXX: ἐξήγαγέν με ὁ θεὸς ἐκ τοῦ οἴκου τοῦ πατρὸς; \[KJV\]\(#\): "when God caused me to wander from my father's house".](#)

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