

THE GODHEAD

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The word “God” in the Old Testament comes from the Hebrew word “*el*” meaning “the Almighty (but also used of any deity).”¹ Brown-Driver-Briggs define *el* as “God, the one true God, Jehovah (Yahweh).”² The word occurring most often in the Old Testament for “God” is *elohim* for “the supreme God (plural).”³ Brown-Driver-Briggs have “the one true God.”⁴ Two additional closely associated words translated into English as “God” are *Yehovah* meaning “the self-existent or eternal Jehovah”⁵ and *Yehovih* meaning “the existing One.”⁶ Aramaic, a kindred language to the Hebrew in which the Old Testament originally was written, is the language of the text in Daniel 2:4-7:28. The Aramaic word for “God” is *elahn*. The word “God” in the New Testament comes from the Greek word “*theos*” meaning “God, ‘the only and true God’.”⁷ *Theos* is the word found most often in the New Testament for “God.” Another word “*kurios*” often referring to God is translated “Lord.” *Adonay* is the word in the Old Testament for “Lord.” In all, the word “God” appears in the KJV 4443 times.⁸

The word “God” implies the Godhead and may refer to the Father, the Son, or the Holy Spirit or to them collectively. For example, the word “*elohim*,” meaning “the supreme God” is plural. In Genesis 1:26-27, a conversation concerning creation took place within the Godhead, “And God said, Let *us* make man in *our* image, after *our* likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them” (emphasis added). The Hebrew word for “God” in this passage is *elohim*.

In the New Testament the word “Godhead” appears three times. Each time it draws attention to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The fact that these three persons are meant by the term “Godhead” is seen in Matthew 28:19 where the Great Commission as stated there is to baptize believers into the names of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit thereby making obedient believers members of the family of God, which is the church of the living God (Eph. 3:15; I Tim. 3:15; cf. also Acts 2:38, 47). The three are found mentioned collectively in other passages such as II Corinthians 13:14, “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen.” The Greek words “*theion*” and “*theotetos*” are translated “Godhead” in the KJV and ASV where once “*theotetos*” is translated “divinity” (Rom. 1:20). At Mars’ Hill

Paul reasoned, “Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the *Godhead* is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device” (Acts 17:29, emphasis added). The nature and power of the Godhead has been made manifest to the world so that there stands no excuse for not submitting to the authority of God, so argued Paul to the Romans, “For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and *Godhead* [divinity, ASV]; so that they are without excuse” (Rom. 1:20, emphasis added). The last reference to the Godhead as such is also from the pen of Paul, “For in him [Jesus Christ] dwelleth all the fulness of the *Godhead* bodily” (Col. 2:9, emphasis added).

Across twenty long centuries the Bible has demonstrated its claim to be the word of the living God (II Tim. 3:16-17). The Bible is the unique source of authoritative information on the one true God of the universe. The apostle John wrote, “Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world” (I John 4:1).

ENDNOTES

¹*Biblesoft's New Exhaustive Strong's Numbers and Concordance with Expanded Greek-Hebrew Dictionary*, Copyright © 1994 by Biblesoft and International Bible Translators, Inc.

²*Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew Lexicon*, copyright © 1993.

³*Strong's*.

⁴*Brown-Driver-Briggs*.

⁵*Strong's*.

⁶*Brown-Driver-Briggs*.

⁷*Thayer's Greek Lexicon*, electronic database, copyright © 2000 by Biblesoft.

⁸*Strong's*.