

Appendix X

Exegetical Analysis of Mark 12:29

In Deuteronomy 6:4, the most accurate translation of the Hebrew is: “Our one God [*Elohim*] is the Lord [*Yhwh-Jehovah*], the Lord [*Yhwh-Jehovah*].” This unique Hebrew clause is a *verbless* clause with split or double predicate nominatives, *Yhwh, Yhwh* (Lord, Lord). The subject is *Elohim* (God), Who is *`ehad*, or “one.” However, *Elohim* is a plural noun designating more than one person. Thus, the double predicate nominatives, *Yhwh, Yhwh* (Lord, Lord), answer the implied question, “How many are in the plural noun *Elohim* [God]?” Thus, this passage reveals that there are *two* “Lords” within *Elohim*. The two individuals—Lord, Lord—in the God Family are “one” in essence or existence, as well as purpose. (See Appendix W, “The Two Jehovahs of the Old Testament,” for a more detailed explanation.)

In the Greek *Septuagint* (*LXX*), the passage reads: “Κυριος ο Θεος ημων Κυριος εις εστι. ” Mark 12:29 is an exact quotation from the *LXX*, and most English versions traditionally translate the clause as “*The Lord our God is one Lord.*” As we will see, this clause in New Testament Greek is nearly identical to the underlying Hebrew of Deuteronomy 6:4 which has double predicates that are equative to God. An exegetical analysis of the Greek syntax of Mark 12:29 also shows two predicate nominatives, *Kurios, Kurios* (Lord, Lord), which are likewise equative to God.

The Predicate Nominative in New Testament Greek: “The predicate nominative (PN) is *approximately* the same as the subject (S) and is joined to it by an equative verb, whether stated or implied. The usage is very common” (Wallace, *Greek Grammar—an Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament*, p. 40). We will examine the meaning of two kinds of semantic relationships that PNs convey: 1) The **convertible proposition**, which indicates an identical exchange between the subject and the PN, and 2) The **qualitative proposition** which is the equality of essence or existence that the PN has in relation to the subject (Ibid., p. 41).

The **convertible proposition** of a PN is most clearly seen in the following: “Jesus [subject] is [verb] the son of God [PN].” This definite *convertible* proposition equally means, “Jesus is the Son of God,” or “The Son of God is Jesus.”

The **qualitative proposition** of a PN is best demonstrated in John 1:1: “In *the* beginning was the Word, and the **Word was with God**, and the **Word was God.**” This statement reveals two Who are God, or **θεος**. Wallace writes, “The *idea* of a qualitative **θεος** here is that the Word had all the attributes and qualities that ‘the God’ [ο θεος] had [Whom the Word was with]. In other words, He shared the *essence* of the Father, though they differed in person. *The construction the evangelist chose to express this idea was the most concise way he could have stated that the Word was God and yet was distinct from the Father*” (Ibid., p. 269). The Greek word order of this clause reads, “(God) **θεος** [preverbal PN], (was) ην [verb], (the Word) ο λογος [subject].” In this case, the PN *God* does not have a definite article and comes before the verb *was*, followed by the subject, *the Word*, which has a definite article. Thus, *the Word* is the subject and *God* is a PN of a qualitative proposition expressing the fact that **the Word was God**, but **separate from God** the Father, Whom the Word was with—and that **the Word had all the qualities and essence of God**.

When we carefully analyze the syntax of Mark 12:29, we find that there is *one* subject and *two* PNs—one preverbal and the other postverbal—that appear to be a combination of a convertible proposition and a qualitative proposition sharing the same verb.

The Greek phrase of Mark 12:29 reads: **Κυριος ο θεος ημων Κυριος εις εστιν**. A literal translation of this phrase is:

“**Κυριος-Lord**” is a preverbal PN without a definite article.

“**ο θεος-the God**” is the subject, with the definite article “the.”

“**ημων-our**” modifies God and answers the implied question, “Whose God is He?”

“**Κυριος-Lord**” is a postverbal PN without a definite article.

“**εις-one**” the number “one,” but not necessarily restricted to a single person. Jesus also said, “I and My Father are **one**” (John 10:30), thus making Himself equal to God, as already shown in John 1:1.

“**εστιν-is**” is the shared verb between the subject and the two PNs.

Exegetical Analysis of Mark 12:39

As can be seen, the word order of the Greek is entirely different than what we would expect in English. However, regardless of the word order in the Greek, the meaning of the words is expressed internally. Thus, both the preverbal PN *Lord* and the postverbal PN *Lord* **show two separate individuals** who are *Lord*. Also, both PNs are **definite propositions** because the two Who are *Lord* are equative with God, sharing the same verb “*is*.” In both cases, therefore, “*The Lord is God*” and “*God is the Lord*.” Yet, at the same time, both are **qualitative propositions** in that each “*Lord*” has the same essence and qualities of God, verifying what John wrote in John 1:1.

Therefore, as the Greek syntax shows, Mark 12:29 can be translated as Deuteronomy 6:4: “Our one God is *the Lord, the Lord*.” Since this verse is the only direct New Testament quotation of Deuteronomy 6:4, it should be translated accordingly in order to enhance the unity between the Hebrew word *Elohim* (God) and the Greek word *Theos* (God).

Additional Evidence of Two Who Are Called “Lord” as Well as “God”: The New Testament reveals that there are two beings Who are each called “God” and “Lord.” Throughout the New Testament the Father is always called God. Additionally, Jesus called God the Father “Lord of heaven and earth” (Matt. 11:25). So Jesus is a “Lord” and the Father is a “Lord,” confirming the statement, “Our one God is *the Lord, the Lord*” (Mark 12:29). Likewise, the apostle Paul wrote that Jesus was God manifested in the flesh (I Tim. 3:16), and called Him our “**Savior and great God, Jesus Christ**” (Titus 2:13). In nearly all of his epistles, Paul writes a salutation and blessing after this manner: “Grace and peace *be* to you from **God Our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ**” (Eph. 2:2). Clearly, the New Testament teaches that the **Father is God** and that **Jesus is God**.

As one studies the biblical evidence of the true nature of God—with the understanding of the *two* Who are “God” and also “Lord”—one will realize that the Godhead cannot be a trinity, and that the Bible does not teach an exclusive monotheism. Rather, the Scriptures teach the *duality* of God—the Father and the Son. Thus, based on the Greek syntax, the most accurate translation of Mark 12:29 should read, “Our one God is *the Lord, the Lord*.”