

Hebrews 1:2

But in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe. (NIV)

1. The Greek word translated “universe” (or “world” in many translations) is the plural of the Greek word *aion*, and actually means “ages.” There are other Greek words that mean “world,” such as *kosmos* and *oikoumene*, and when the Devil tempted Jesus by showing him all the kingdoms of the “world,” these words are used. This verse is referring to the “ages,” not the “world.” *Vine’s Lexicon* has, “an age, a period of time, marked in the N.T. usage by spiritual or moral characteristics, is sometimes translated ‘world;’ the R.V. margin always has ‘age.’” *Bullinger’s Critical Lexicon* has:

“*Aion* [age], from *ao*, *aemi*, to blow, to breathe. *Aion* denoted originally the life which hastes away in the breathing of our breath, life *as transitory*; then the course of life, time of life, life in its temporal form. Then, the space of a human life, an age, or generation *in respect of duration*. The time lived or to be lived by men, time as moving, historical time as well as eternity. *Aion* always includes a reference to the filling of time”¹

Since most translators are Trinitarian and think that Jesus was the one who made the original heavens and earth, they translate “ages” as “world” in this verse. But the actual word in the Greek text means “ages,” and it should be translated that way.

2. Trinitarians use the verse to try to prove that Jesus Christ created the world as we know it, but the context of the verse shows that this cannot be the correct interpretation. Verses 1 and 2 show that God spoke through Jesus “in these last days,” whereas He had spoken “in the past” in various ways. If indeed it were through Jesus that the physical world was created, then one of the ways that God spoke in the past was through Jesus. But that would contradict the whole point of the verse, which is saying that God spoke in other ways in the past, but “in these last days” is speaking through the Son.

3. Since verses 1 and 2 say that it was “God” who spoke through prophets and through His Son, it is clear that God is the prime mover and thus different from the Son. These verses show that the Son is subordinate to God and, as a “mouthpiece” for God, is compared to the prophets.

4. The fact that God appointed the Son to be “heir” shows that God and the Son are not equal. For the Son to be the “heir” means that there was a time when he was not the owner. The Bible was written using common words that had common and accepted meanings in the language of the time. The doctrine of the Trinity forces these words to take on “mystical” meanings. Yet there is no evidence in Scripture that the writer changed the meaning of these common words. We assert that if the Bible is read using the common meanings of the words in the text, there is simply no way to arrive at the doctrine of the Trinity. The word “heir” is a common one and, because death and inheritance are a part of every culture, it occurs in every language. Any dictionary will

show that an heir is one who inherits, succeeds or receives an estate, rank, title or office of another. By definition, you cannot be an heir if you are already the owner. No one in history ever wrote a will that said, “My heir and the inheritor of my estate is...ME!” If Christ is God, then he cannot be “heir.” The only way he can be an heir is by not being the owner.

That Christ is an “heir” is inconsistent with Trinitarian doctrine, which states that Christ is co-equal and co-eternal with the Father. If Christ were God, then he was part owner all along, and thus is not the “heir” at all. These verses teach that God is the original owner, and will give all things to His heir, Jesus Christ. It is obvious from the wording of these first two verses that the author of Hebrews does not consider Christ to be God.

5. The entire opening section of Hebrews, usually used to show that Christ is God, actually shows just the opposite. More proof of this is in verses 3 and 4. After Christ sat down at the right hand of God, “he became as much superior to the angels” as his name is superior to theirs. “God” has always been superior to the angels. If Christ only *became* superior after his resurrection, then he cannot be the eternal God. It is obvious from this section of Scripture that “the Man” Christ Jesus was given all authority and made Lord and Christ.

6. Since *aionas* means “ages” and not “world,” it is fair to ask in what sense God has made the ages through Jesus. First, it must be understood that the word “made” is extremely flexible. It is the Greek word *poieo*, which, both alone and in combination with other words, is translated more than 100 different ways in the *NIV*, and thus has a wide range of meaning. Some of the ways *poieo* is translated are: accomplish, acted, appointed, are, be, bear, began, been, bring, carry out, cause, committed, consider, do, earned, exercise, formed, gain, give, judge, kept, made, obey, performed, preparing, produce, provide, put into practice, reached, spend, stayed, treated, was, win, work, wrote, and yielded. Although most people read *poieo* in Hebrews 1:2 as referring to the original creation, it does not have to mean that at all. The context dictates that the “ages” being referred to are the ages after Christ’s resurrection. In verse 2, Christ became heir after his resurrection. In verse 3, he then sat at God’s right hand after his resurrection. Verses 5 and 6 also refer to the resurrection. The context makes it clear that God was not speaking through His Son in the past, but that He has spoken “in these last days” through His Son, and “given form to” the ages through him (note #1 on Heb. 1:10 below provides more evidence for this).

Broughton and Southgate, pp. 286-298

Hyndman, pp. 123-127

Norton, pp. 194-196

Racovian Catechism, pp. 93 and 94

Snedeker, pp. 457-459

Endnotes:

1. E. W. Bullinger, *A Critical Lexicon and Concordance*, under “world.”

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