

Foundations of Your Faith

Commentary for January 1, 2012 — Challenging Basic Beliefs

It has been 10 years this month since Dr. Ernest L. Martin died in January 2002. I think Dr. Martin would have been pleased with what ASK has accomplished and what is to be done in the future.

The primary achievement of ASK is that we have flourished. The ASK website has matured and expanded greatly in content with 120 Newsletters, 120+ articles, 240+ Commentaries. GeorgeAnn Hughes has graciously given permission to put up on the ASK website several hundred hours of [Byte Show](#) recordings of Dr. Martin's material and articles I have written.

Changes in the World

World events are changing at what seems to be an ever faster pace. There have been periods of rapid change, and then a period of consolidation by new power brokers. As witnessed with the collapse of the Soviet Union and its empire of puppet states in 1989, major changes on the world stage can occur with amazing speed. Little did we realize that these upheavals would occur around the world in a multitude of nations since the collapse of the Soviet Union that began in 1989. There is every indication that upheavals will continue.¹

Most of the revolutions have occurred in Europe and Asia. In recent years we have seen severe unrest in Iran which was successfully suppressed for a time. North Africa and the Middle East are seeing attempted and successful revolutions by populations that no longer tolerate the status quo in their lives and their societies. The result is that several governments in the region have been changed, with outcomes yet to be seen as the new governments consolidate the support of the people, or in turn fail. Most of these changes and revolutions happened to smaller countries that have minimal economic dealings with the major industrial powers. Others, like the upheavals in Egypt will have major geopolitical and prophetic importance.

Now these changes are occurring in countries within a region of world importance, the oil-rich Middle East. Oil producing countries have not yet been directly affected, so the oil flow has not been diminished unlike the oil embargo of the 1970s. Even countries thought to be stable face a potential break-up into smaller constituent parts. For example, the small European country of Belgium is experiencing severe division among its ethnic groups.²

¹ When changes happened to the Soviet Union and its vassal states, that was important mostly because of the military might in nuclear weapons held by the Soviet Union, opposed by the United States. Many older nuclear weapons and missiles of the United States and Russia were dismantled and destroyed, but both countries still hold many thousands of warheads each.

² See the October 7, 2011 article "[An agreement that will accelerate the breakup of Belgium.](#)" Population breakdown is Fleming 58%, Walloon 31%, the rest are mixed. The languages of Belgium

“With Him [God] are wisdom and might; To Him belong counsel and understanding. Behold,

He tears down, and it cannot be rebuilt;

He imprisons a man, and there can be no release. ...

He makes counselors walk barefoot, And [He] makes fools of judges.

He loosens the bond of kings, And [He] binds their loins with a girdle. ...

He deprives the trusted ones of speech, And takes away the discernment of the elders.

He pours contempt on nobles, And loosens the belt of the strong.

He reveals mysteries from the darkness, And brings the deep darkness into light.

He makes the nations great, then destroys them;

He enlarges the nations, then leads them away.

He deprives of intelligence the chiefs of the earth’s people, And

[He] makes them [the chiefs] wander in a pathless waste. They grope in darkness with no light, And He makes them stagger like a drunken man.”

Job 12:13–14, 17–18, 20–25 (New American Standard Bible)

The last 5 lines beginning with **“He makes the nations great, ...”** seems to describe what is happening in the Middle East nations currently in upheaval ... God is in control of all. Yes, what God does to individuals like Job, to groups like leaders of nations, and to entire nations, He does to show His sovereignty over mankind and to show them as an example to the rest of mankind in history how God has controlled every aspect of the life of man. His goal is the salvation of all through Christ.

Ever Closer to God and Christ

Each day brings us closer to the time when Christ will return, and our suffering and pain (and that of our loved ones) will be finished and we can be with God, Christ, our brethren, loved ones, and all who are saved. Yet, even then we will have to wait for at least another 1,000 years or longer for the rest of mankind to be resurrected to their physical bodies, be educated, accept Christ as their Savior, and be saved along with us.

All mankind will be saved (1 Corinthians 15:22–24; 1 Timothy 4:9–11). All intelligent beings will be reconciled to God, even Satan and his angels (Colossians 1:20; Philippians 2:9–11). If you do not like these statements, then take it up with God. Perhaps you believe what His word says about salvation (and no hell).

If you believe in the pagan, Platonic, and unbiblical doctrine of an immortal soul, you will be disappointed. This is because when you die you cease to exist until the resurrection, not

are also a problem, with Dutch being spoken by 60% of the population with French, 40%. Religious problems also are present with 75% of the population Roman Catholic and 25% being Protestant. Belgium’s population growth rate is 186th out of 230 nations of the world, far below a replacement rate. This means that the population of Belgium is decreasing — rapidly. This negative growth rate means that Belgium’s internal unity is breaking. The country is dying as a nation and perhaps as a people. Yet, Belgium’s birthrate is not the lowest in Europe. Source: [“Belgium,”](#) CIA Database.

before. The Bible makes this clear. You will not exist in the interim. However, God will remember you and bring you back into existence at that moment when God's spirit of man, unique to you, reenters a physical body at the resurrection.³

The doctrine of an everlasting damnation is another "hellish" misunderstanding by the vast majority of Christians. It is up to God to open your minds to want to study to know the truth, to lead you to the truth, and then for you to work to understand it. ASK endeavors to provide that proper understanding of biblical truth to make your learning as easy as possible.

These things Dr. Martin firmly believed and taught, you might call them "the fundamentals" of biblical faith. ASK continues his legacy of study, research, and teaching, by promoting his work as best we can. No one does this except ASK. Perhaps no one else cares, but we do.

Questioning the Fundamentals

Every so often in life we are challenged to reevaluate the basics of our faith. Why do we believe what we do in regard to God, mankind, and our own lives? What is truth with regard to God and Christ? What really happened at creation, the times of the patriarchs, the kingdom of Israel, Jesus and the times of the apostles, and the canonization of the Bible?

Every major topic of Christian thought has been forcefully engaged by Ernest Martin through the work he has produced. It is my understanding that most of what Dr. Martin researched and concluded is true, because it is true to the Word of God. Where I diverge from his research and conclusions, I freely state. We should all feel free to do the same. I may disagree with you, and you may disagree with me and Dr. Martin. God allows us that freedom. The differences will be corrected after the resurrection.

Many Christians believe that the Trinity is a basic belief of Christianity. Have you ever asked a pastor or a teacher if the Trinity is true, and then insist on a biblical answer? If not, why not? Do you not feel free to ask about this "important" matter? How many sermons have you heard that try to prove the Trinity? I am not talking about a mention of the Trinity or how the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit supposedly interact with one another with the triunity (whatever that means). If you examine the evidence, consider the references and their context; you will find that the "evidence" is opinion or supposition by the instructor. In fact, how many discussions have you ever had with Christians about the Trinity? Have those discussions deeply engaged the issue of the proof of the Trinity?

Churchianity assumes the "truth" of the Trinity, just as science assumes the "truth" of evolution. If you believe in God as a Trinity, I challenge you to reexamine what should be one of the most important topics of your life: the nature of the God you worship, the very make up and character of your Creator in whom you have placed your hope of salvation. It is important to know the truth. ASK has a great deal of material on this subject. It is the subject of this month's article by Dr. Martin, "The Antichristian Doctrine of the Trinity." Read

³ We who are resurrected will experience almost immediately a spiritual body being put upon our mortal flesh (which will then dissolve) and a vital spiritual existence, with immortality gifted to us by God (1 Corinthians 15:51-57). We will look upon God and Christ without hindrance.

first the "[January 2012 Newsletter](#)." Dr. Martin points out that the Trinity was not a biblical teaching, but a teaching of philosophy. The apostle Paul has something to say about philosophy and its influence in doctrine (I have quoted this before):

**"Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit [empty seduction],
after the tradition of men,
after the rudiments [elements] of the world, and
NOT after Christ."**

• *Colossians 2:8*

Why Do You Believe What You Believe?

Do you hold to your beliefs simply because they were taught to you when you were young? Or have you as an adult, thought through the reasons for your faith — if any? Perhaps your experiences in life determine what you believe? Do your associates or loved ones determine what you believe? Does tradition command your obedience in religious beliefs? Or perhaps you are wise enough to find out who and what God is through your own human reason? The Bible tells us that experience, tradition, and reason are insufficient ways to learn about God:

"But where shall wisdom be found? and where is the place of understanding? Man knows not the price thereof; neither is it [wisdom] found in the land of the living."

Job 28:12–13

**"Whence then comes wisdom? and where is the place of understanding? Seeing it is hid from the eyes of all living, and kept close from the fowls of the air. Destruction and death say, We have heard the fame thereof with our ears. God understands the way thereof, and he knows the place thereof. For he looks to the ends of the earth, and sees under the whole heaven; ...
And unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding."**

• *Job 28:20–24, 28*

Let me give you a hint. You can learn nothing about God unless He reveals it to you. He does that now through the Holy Scriptures and not through any other source. If you believe you have had an experience of God in your life, a miracle, a dream, or a vision (and you probably have!), if you are not driven to your knees first (and to the Bible a close second), then do not be surprised if you find yourself in a realm of shattered expectations and ego-fed hopes. I have seen it in friends. I saw it in seminary and in churches (when I have attended). I have seen it in people I have met and talked to about God. People are often excited about their experiences. They dwell on them and emotionally feed on them. They feel extra special.

God imparts His mind and His thoughts to us almost exclusively through the Bible, not through special messages or "leadings" of the Spirit. We communicate with Him through prayer. Only when extreme situations arise, sometimes God sends intervention to help us. God always answers our prayers; He does not answer our whims and wishes. Read the Scriptures to learn God's will (1 Timothy 2:4–5). Then ask and expect a positive response because you ask in agreement with His will. — Enjoy Dr. Martin's article.

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