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Dear Associates and Friends,

August 2010

This month I thought it would be useful to look closely at four books by scholars, each approaching the subject of universal salvation from very different perspectives. Although there are many other books that have come available in the last few years, I feel that these four books reveal a trend in scholarly thought that may lead to a triumph of universal salvation becoming a dominant understanding about the destiny of man. The title of my article is "[Modern Recognition of Universal Salvation](#)."

The term "recognition" seems somewhat exaggerated, but the general trend at present and for the future is that universal salvation as taught in the Bible will be increasingly believed in, and accepted, around the world. More and more scholars are coming to recognize the faulty assumptions of eternal damnation (a concept that does not exist in the Bible), while other scholars are afraid of universal salvation becoming accepted. For its part, the Catholic Church may soon begin teaching a quasi-biblical universal salvation from its pulpits. That being said, perhaps a more accurate but less catchy title would be: "Modern Tendencies toward Universal Salvation," but that title is too long.

### *Universal Salvation, NOT Universalism*

Dr. Ernest L. Martin did not teach or believe in universalism. Dr. Martin believed in an understanding of universal reconciliation rooted in the Bible. Universalism is not biblical. Please, never confuse what ASK teaches to be "universalism." In a religious context universalism is usually defined as the teaching that eventually all people will be saved. This will certainly be true so far as it goes. But one does not have to believe in God, Christ, or the Bible to believe in universalism. In fact, many people do not. There are some who believe in universalism but they do not think you must believe in Christ's resurrection to be saved. The Catholic Church is approaching that understanding, as you will read in this month's article.

I know of Christian universalists who believe in the trinity, other universalists who believe in an immortal soul, and there are even secret universalists who are members or pastors of evangelical churches. I know of universalists who are Quakers as well as universalists who are charismatics and even New Age. There are still a few universalists left in the Unitarian-Universalist Church denomination, and some of those claim they are Christians. There are non-Christian universalists.<sup>1</sup>

The promises to Abraham embraced all humanity. The entire world was to be blessed through Abraham:

**"Now the scripture, perceiving before that God is justifying the nations by faith, brings before an evangel to Abraham, that 'In you shall all the nations be blessed.'"**

• **Galatians 3:8, Concordant Version**

Dr. Martin used the phrase "universal reconciliation" to describe the salvation of all mankind, individually and corporately. I prefer the phrase "universal salvation" because "universal reconciliation" often requires additional explanation, while most people understand "universal salvation" immediately because it

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<sup>1</sup> The Bahai faith is universalist in its beliefs. Arising from Islam, its adherents believe it to be the best parts of all religions. They believe that all religions have truth and that all religions provide salvation. Hinduism and Buddhism also have some elements that are universalist in their beliefs although they do not believe in a personal Creator or Christ, but in multiple gods.

is self-explanatory. Then it is necessary for me to tell people that only through Christ can anyone be saved. You cannot be saved through Buddha or Mohammad or Joseph Smith or Sister White. None of them are mediators for you between God and men (1 Timothy 2:5). Only Christ died for your sins, and only He was resurrected from the dead. Of all men only He has been glorified and is alive in heaven at this present moment. All other men are dead in the grave or in the dust. Only Christ will accomplish the salvation of every human being, past, present or future.

A large component of gaining an understanding of universal salvation as it is set forth in the Bible is by learning about the *eons* — what they are, their character and quality, and how and why they were created:

**“By many portions and many modes, of old, God, speaking to the fathers in the prophets, in the last of these days speaks to us in a Son, Whom He appoints enjoyer of the allotment of all, through Whom He also makes the eons.”**

• *Hebrews 1:1–2, Concordant Version*

Yes, the Son of God, Jesus Christ, **“makes the eons.”** The verb “makes” is in the aorist tense in Greek which denotes action that is continuing and ongoing. The eons were created. They were not an outpouring of the mind of man. The Son of God “makes” the eons, and He has put the ability to conceive of time into the heart of man.<sup>2</sup> The eons are an on-going creation, being made and in process at this present moment through the movement of time. The eons had a beginning (1 Corinthians 2:7; 2 Timothy 1:9; Titus 1:2). They will have an end.<sup>3</sup> As strange as it may seem, time is a creation just as are rocks, trees, animals, the heavens, and people.

Universal salvation is not a wish. It is not just a hope. It is a belief firmly rooted in the Word of God. It is a belief firmly rooted in the work of Christ Jesus. Universal salvation is a gift to all mankind from God. It is a manifestation of God’s grace through Christ our Savior:

**“For the saving grace of God made its advent to all humanity, training us that, disowning irreverence and worldly desires, we should be living sanely and justly and devoutly in the current eon, anticipating that happy expectation, even the advent of the glory of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.”**

• *Titus 2:11–13, Concordant Version*

## **Thank You**

Our hope of universal salvation is pleasant to contemplate in today’s present troubled times (in this troubled eon), knowing that God will accomplish His work of the salvation of mankind. ASK actively promotes the knowledge of biblical universal salvation in our writings, on internet radio, and at every appropriate opportunity. ASK is dependent upon God for our continued operations. ASK also relies on your contributions, as God puts it in your heart to help us financially, while we know that many of you wish you could do more. We are also grateful for your prayers, your encouraging words, and for your expressions of love and appreciation for what we do at ASK.

Last month and this month I indulged myself by publishing articles that I have written. I appreciate that opportunity. Next month I intend to again present material by Dr. Martin. Thank you and God bless you for all you do to help ASK.

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<sup>2</sup> Ecclesiastes 3:11, “world” is *eon* in Hebrew:

**“He has made every thing beautiful in his time: also he has set the world [*eon*] in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God makes from the beginning to the end.”**

<sup>3</sup> In Hebrews 9:26 the second occurrence of “world” in the King James Version is actually *eons*, plural, in Greek.