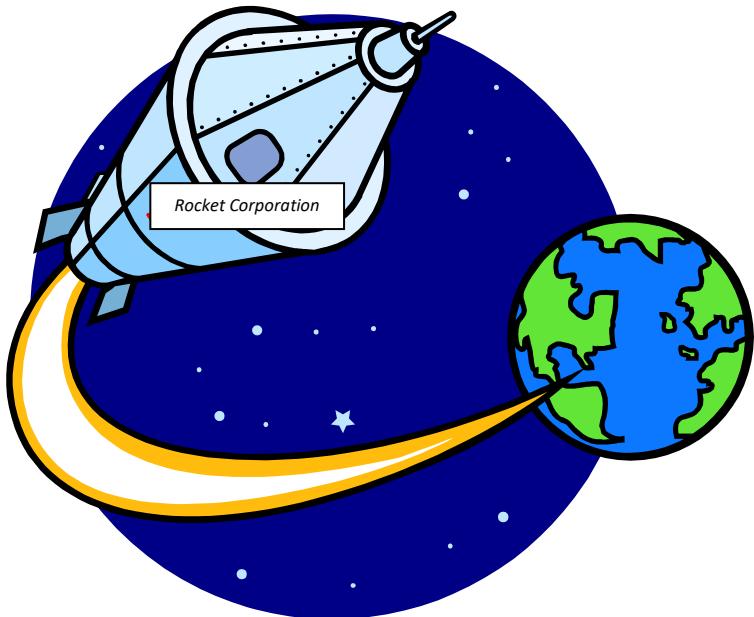


Remnant



“Going where no one has gone before”

*A Christian Science Fiction Short
Story*

Edward R. Blankenship

"And the remnant that... escaped...shall yet again take root...and bear fruit."
2 Kings 19:30

***What if the worst was going to happen?
Would you leave Earth, NEVER to
return?***

It is several years in the future and America is ready to get back into space with the inaugural launch of commercial manned spaceflight. The Pegasus spacecraft has just lifted off from Cape Kennedy for the International Space Station (ISS) with four astronauts and three cosmonauts aboard when word comes that an Earth life extinction event is a little over a year away. With the entire human race at risk, a daring plan is devised to save the Earth. But with the odds being so low that it will actually work, an alternate mission is hatched by a group of corporate billionaires to save a few. One hundred and five brave men, women, and children agree to take humanity's greatest journey and establish a colony where no one has ever gone before.

Their mission is called "Remnant"!



Ed Blankenship grew up wondering if God really exists. He majored in Physics, studied Einstein's Theory of Relativity, and has been an avid amateur astronomer. He saw the last Space Shuttle Launch, STS-135 and vividly remembers seeing live Neil Armstrong's "One small step for (a) man, one giant leap for mankind". His latest interest is in the commercial space industry following their success. That gave him the idea for this book. Ed is also a Believer in God, and shares his life-changing experience with others. He was employed as an Operations Research Analyst for the United States Marine Corps and worked at the Pentagon. He and his wife Janice live in Stafford, Virginia, and have three grown children and ten terrific grandchildren! They go to Mt. Ararat Church.

Remnant

*“Going where no one
has gone before”*

A Christian Science Fiction Story

*Dedicated to
The brave men and women who
risk their lives in space to give us
Earth-bound individuals
something to dream about.*

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

Main Characters:

UN Secretary General – Kathleen Pruitt
President – Fred Johnson
Wayne Duke – NASA Administrator
Saudi Prince Fahib – Original financier of Remnant
Peter Young – CEO of Rocket Corporation
Colonel Bill Edwards – Remnant Commander, Astronaut
Joy Edwards – Colonel Edwards' wife, Registered Nurse
Jake Edwards – The Edwards' oldest son
Hope Edwards – Jake's sister
Caleb Edwards – Hope and Jake's younger brother
Scott Ray – Joy Edwards' brother, Chief Tech of the
Remnant Mission, employee of Rocket Corp.
Ali Ray – Scott's wife, Chef, and Physical Trainer
Lexi Ray – Hope, Jake, and Caleb's cousin
Cece Ray - Hope, Jake, and Caleb's other cousin

Other Characters

Sam Blankenship – Commander, Pegasus Spacecraft
Pegasus Pilot, Bob Gottman
Cosmonaut, Nikita Yenko
Myers Interplanetary Research Facility - Josh Cole
Fred Sanchez, Houston Mission Control
ZNN Evening News, Betsy Bailey (Anchor)

Chapter 1 –

Launch of Pegasus towards the International Space Station (Cape Canaveral)

“3-2-1, blastoff! We have liftoff of Pegasus, America’s first commercial manned flight into space. The first manned American spacecraft to return to flight since the Space Shuttle Atlantis, STS 135 in 2011!” The announcer said.

Inside the capsule four astronauts and three cosmonauts were violently pushed back in their seats as the acceleration (g-force) literally took their breath away.

Houston Mission Control said, “Systems look nominal Pegasus. Pressure is at 99% and steady. All engines are fully operational. Speed is now mach 2 and distance is 50 nautical miles downrange. Altitude is 7 nautical miles.”

Commander Sam Blankenship could hardly breathe, his heart was beating so fast. But he knew he should reply, so he croaked out, “R-o-g-er, a-l-l s-s-y-s-tems n-o-m-i-nal.”

Houston Mission Control continued, “Preparing for MECO (Main Engine Cut-Off) in 5 seconds. 5-4-3-2-1- Mark... We verify MECO. Altitude 50 nautical miles, distance down range 250. A few seconds later the announcer also said, “We verify second stage has ignited and is running at 100%.”

More confidently the Commander said, “C-Copy, second stage looks nominal.”

The Commander looked at his fellow crew members. All were looking serious as they waited for the second stage to finish its burn.

Mission Control said, “We are coming up on SECO (Second stage Engine Cut-Off) in 30 seconds Pegasus. Systems all look nominal. Altitude is now 75 nautical miles, and you are 400 miles downrange. Speed is approaching mach 20”.

Pegasus Pilot Bob Gottman then said, “The view is starting to look great up here. It’s really dark outside. And I see some stars too!”

Fellow cosmonaut, Nikita Yenko reaffirmed, “Space looks great wherever you take off from!”

Mission Control then relayed, “Coming up on SECO in 5 seconds on my mark...5, 4, 3, 2, 1, Mark!

Pilot Gottman noticed it right away. So did the Commander. The three cosmonauts all gasped!

Mission Control said, “Pegasus, we don’t copy SECO. Can you confirm?”

The Commander replied, “Negative, Houston, we have NO SECO.”

The Pegasus engines had not shut off...

Chapter 2 –

A New Object is Discovered (Tucson, Arizona, Myers Interplanetary Research Facility)

Josh Cole was aware of the space launch, but he wasn't really all that interested. After all we had already sent people to the Moon, what was the big deal going to the space station? He wanted people to go to the planets and to the stars. That's where our future lie. It's been almost 50 years since Armstrong and Aldrin did it for gosh sake! So he turned the monitor off right after liftoff.

Josh was part of a group searching for new planets and new objects that might possibly be habitable. They did this through a variety of means – seeing distant suns wobble a bit when possible planets orbited around them, and also looking for changes in brightness of a star that might be due to a planet. Plus he was always interested in Mars and some of the Moons of Jupiter as these could eventually be colonized. But that was a long ways off he knew. He also took time out to look for near Earth asteroids and other objects that could possibly come near the Earth. That's what he was doing today, but it was oh, so boring!

But after he had turned off the TV, a blip appeared on Josh's computer screen. It was an object that was pretty far out, just on the edge of the solar system somewhere around the orbit of Pluto. It looked like it was coming in fairly quickly and for some reason his computer had flagged it for his review.

Josh called up a program on his computer to tell him more about this object based on data from various telescopes on Earth and in orbit. In a few minutes the shocking results came back:

Object # WD15634

Diameter – 1,035 kilometers (1/3rd the size of the Moon)

Distance – 5,350,000 kilometers (39.5 Astronomical Units)

Speed – 1,000 kilometers per hour (and expected to increase)

Composition – 95% nickel (or other metallic structure)

Trajectory - 0.0000005 degrees from Earth

Expected Miss Distance from Earth-Moon System - 0000.0 kilometers

Possible Torino Impact Risk – 10 out of 10 (A collision is certain, capable of causing global climatic catastrophe that may threaten the future of civilization as we know it,

whether impacting land or ocean. Such events occur on average once per 100,000 years, or less often.)

Expected Impact – 450 days

Josh was stunned! He definitely had to check this out further.

This object was going to annihilate Earth!

Chapter 3 –

Let's fix it people! (Back to the Launch)

For the next few seconds everyone's pulse shot up significantly. That included those in the Pegasus and those at Mission Control! Their lives shot before their very eyes.

Commander Blankenship thought about his daughter, how he had been a little short with her on the phone the last time they talked. He felt awful about that.

Bob Gottman realized he still hadn't taken his son fishing as he had promised. He hoped he still had another chance to do so.

Fred Sanchez at Mission Control was stunned. This wasn't what he had planned for on this historic flight. He then said to Pegasus, "If we don't get SECO we'll have to abort."

Someone behind him said, "We've never discussed aborting at this speed and altitude."

"What will we do?" said someone else.

Just then, inside Pegasus, the sound changed dramatically, and the thrust level decreased to zero. Pressure on the seven crew members was immediately gone. They started to lift up in their seats. They were weightless!

“Houston, we have SECO.” said the Commander. Whew, what a relief!

“We copy Pegasus! That’s great news. We’ve got a bunch of people down here who almost had a heart attack! We’ll have to recalculate your trajectory to get to the ISS, but we know it’s still possible. Enjoy the sights while we work it all out.”

“OK, Houston. Thanks for your reassurance. We look forward to your help!” Bob answered.

Back at Mission Control, Fred turned and shouted, “All right people, let’s start identifying what needs to be done. This may take a while. We’ve got a spacecraft and a space station that want to get together! And we don’t want an international incident - what with three Russians on board!”

As if on cue, the phone rang and Fred answered, “Who is this? We’re busy here you know... Oh yes, Mr. President, I’m sorry, I didn’t know it was you! Yes Sir, we think we can fix this, it will take some time and some calculations, but we’ve practiced for contingencies like this. Our crew and the Russians are both OK. Don’t

worry, Mr. President! We'll call you when we come up with a solution...Thank you, Sir!"

Back on the Pegasus the crew was busy looking out the windows. "There's South Africa," said one. "There's Antarctica" said another! "Isn't it beautiful?" shouted a third!

"Breathtaking!" said the Commander. "Keep looking, but let's also get our work done. We need to be ready when Mission Control tells us what we'll have to do to get to the station."

"That's right Comrades" said Cosmonaut Yenko. "We have a deadline to meet up with the ISS by Saturday, and that's only two days away. Let's get going. Let's show these Yankees what we're made of! The space race is on again! Nothing can stop us now!"

Chapter 4 –

The Evening News (ZNN News Room, New York)

“Good day, this is the Evening News with Betsy Bailey. We have several space stories tonight.”

“First the Pegasus spacecraft has lifted off with four American astronauts and three Russian cosmonauts towards the International Space Station. This is the first commercial manned spaceflight and the first American manned flight since space shuttle Atlantis (STS-135) lifted off in 2011. There was a problem with the second stage engine running longer than expected and Houston Mission Control instructed Pegasus to make corrections to its orbit which Pilot Bob Gottman and Commander Sam Blankenship have now successfully executed. They should be docking with the space station as planned on Saturday. We wish them ‘God’s speed, Pegasus!’”

“On another space story there is a report out of the Myers Interplanetary Research Facility in Tucson that a massive object, one third the size of the Moon is heading towards Earth. Scientists haven’t disclosed all the details yet, but it’s extremely heavy and the speed is increasing. The risk on what is called the Torino Impact Scale is 10 out of 10 which means it looks like it could

be a global catastrophic event. NASA has confirmed that they too are now tracking the object designated W45-JCole after Josh Cole who discovered it earlier today. The only good news is it is 15 months away.”

“This just in...The new Chinese Observatory is also now confirming they are also tracking the JCole object and classify it as a MAJOR THREAT to life on Earth.

If all this is true, ladies and gentlemen, then God help us all!

In other news today, the World Series began with the St. Louis Cardinals...”

Chapter 5 –

Unrest All Over the World

Once the word got out and the initial shock wore off there was chaos all over the globe for the next several weeks.

Stock markets plunged by at least 50% all over the world as investors had no idea where to put their money.

There were riots all over the globe in all cities:

In New York, 3 million people took to the streets demanding the city leaders do something to either divert the object, now called “The Doomsday Rock”, or dig mile deep shelters to house the citizens of New York if somehow the planet stayed in one piece.

In Washington, DC, people also came from all over the country to demand the federal government do something. The United States Army was called out to protect the White House and Congress as security forces and police were quickly overwhelmed by the sheer size and violent nature of the crowd.

In Los Angeles there was massive looting, literally shutting down all stores in the downtown district.

In other countries it was worse.

In Moscow the Kremlin was torn down brick by brick by frustrated mobs.

In England, the suicide rate went up to one person out of every four. Hospitals were overwhelmed and most doctors and nurses quit out of desperation.

The price of fuel kept going up and down dramatically as people filled their cars with gas but then didn't know where to go.

The same thing happened for other goods as stores didn't know whether they should charge a lot for an item assuming it wouldn't be sold for much longer, or whether they should give it away as money wouldn't be worth anything either after the end of the world.

In short, it was sheer panic!

Chapter 6 –

Revival Takes Place Around the Globe

The only thing that seemed to matter to most people was doing those things on their “Bucket List” that they had always wanted to do before they died (and actually “kicked the bucket”)

Travel started picking up to exotic locations, marriages increased, new cars were purchased – whatever people wanted they got, IF they had the money.

The poor just stole it, overwhelming the police and judicial systems.

And people turned to religion in droves.

Many of the world’s religions have no afterlife. These religions were abandoned. Those that do believe in an afterlife were filled to overflowing.

The Christian faith particularly had a huge revival with people wanting to get right with God before they died.

But not everyone did so. Colonel Bill Edwards and his family did not go to church. Bill was an astronaut working for NASA and felt that if there was a God, why would he allow such suffering to happen? Bill Edwards liked his job and was scheduled to go on the next

mission to the space station after Pegasus finished its three month mission there. Because of the impending doom he got very discouraged (like most people) and irritable with his wife Joy, and children (Jake, Caleb, and Hope). As a result, Joy decided to go to church in an attempt to find some answers. She even joined an evening prayer group. At first she just listened as others talked and prayed, but after a week or so she too began praying for God to somehow protect her and her family as the conversation always seemed to turn to the object coming to destroy the Earth.

One day a woman named Liz asked her, “Joy do you know where you will go after you die?”

Joy replied, “I’m not sure. I’ve tried to be a good person, but I get mad at my husband all the time because he doesn’t seem to care. We only have a few months left and I want us to be happy. But he’s discouraged all the time. I’m also getting upset with the kids and even yelled at them yesterday. I’d like to think God would accept me when I die, but I feel like I’m not worthy enough. I don’t know if God would accept me?”

Liz then said, “Well there’s good news Joy. You don’t have to be good enough, God loves and accepts you just the way you are. Think about John 3:16 in the Bible which says, ‘For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.’ You see, heaven is a gift Joy, it’s not something we earn by being good.”

Liz continued, “Another verse in the Bible says, ‘For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast.’”

But Joy said, “But I’ve done things wrong. Getting to the end of the world has definitely shown me I’m really not a good person.”

“Yes you’re right. You’ve done things wrong. We all have. And those things separate us from God. Do you ever feel separated from God, Joy?”

“Yes I do”, Joy said. “Sometimes it’s like my prayers just bounce off the ceiling. What do I do?”

“Well the good news is God’s already done everything. He sent His Son Jesus to die on a cross to take away all the things we’ve done wrong. Think of Romans 5:8 which says, ‘But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.’”

“Think of it like this”, Liz said. “We’re here on this Earth and God is in heaven. Jesus Christ, God’s Son is between us to bring us together. He died for me, and He died for you too, Joy! Isn’t that wonderful?”

“Yes, it truly is”, said Joy.

“Does all this make sense,” said Liz?

“Yes, basically,” said Joy. “I believe in God and I think I believe in Jesus. But what do I do?”

Liz said, “Jesus says in the last book in the Bible, ‘Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me.’

“You see Jesus wants to be part of your life, if you’ll let Him in. He’s knocking. Do you want Him to be a part of your life and to save you for all eternity, Joy?”

“Yes I really do. But let me think about it overnight, OK?”

“That’s great”, Liz said. “Let me give you something you can take home and read. Then we can talk tomorrow.”

So Joy went home, but couldn’t sleep. She got up and went downstairs and got out the paper Liz had given her about a relationship with God being a gift. She wanted that so much, and with tears running down her face she prayed, “God, it’s a scary time right now. I just can’t go it alone. I want Jesus to be part of my life. Please save me God!”

After she prayed she fell asleep right there.

Chapter 7 –

World Governments Debate

There was no lack of ideas on how to save the Earth:

- Dig holes and hide.
- Send a nuke to knock the thing out of the sky.
- Move it aside somehow.
- Slow it down.
- Speed it up.

Scientists said that none of these ideas held much promise, but the main problem was that the world's governments couldn't decide what to do. They were paralyzed!

The UN Secretary General, Kathleen Pruitt, gave a speech that summed it up best:

“My fellow Earthlings. We have a grave decision to make – to try to save Earth. Yet unfortunately there are no real good alternatives! So what do we do? And who should make that decision for us? The President of the United States? His country is only 4% of the world's population. What if he picks the wrong plan? Scientists say it could actually make it a worse death for some of us on Earth. Why should the US President have the power to determine our fate? I say we should let every

country have a say! Let everyone have a chance to speak! “

And so the world’s leaders frittered away months just discussing ideas.

Chapter 8 –

Billionaires Come Up with a Bold Plan of a Different Sort

While this was going on, several billionaires decided to “take the bull by the horns” (so to speak) and come up with some plans and move ahead on them, not just talk! Saudi Crown Prince Fahib decided he would take part of his fortune and help finance a plan to save at least some of his people.

He contacted American billionaire Peter Young who built commercial rockets like the Pegasus and asked, “Would you be willing to sell me one of your rockets to take some of my people into orbit when the “Doomsday Rock” hits the Earth?”

Peter replied, “Sure I would love to, but what would they come back to? Nothing! A better idea would be to send them somewhere else.”

“What about the Moon?” Fahib asked.

“That’s no good, people can’t live there long-term. Plus what will happen to the Moon after the Earth is destroyed?” A better place would be Mars. While it wouldn’t be easy, people could live on Mars. But it would take a sizable amount of people to make a

sustainable colony and it would probably cost more than you've got by yourself," Peter said.

"OK, so let's get some others to help out and send more people to Mars," said the Prince!

Peter got off the phone and thought about it. The idea made sense. If Earth was going to die, why not send a few people, a remnant if you will, to Mars to make a home, in order to at least keep the human race alive?

So Peter got on the phone and called other wealthy people he knew to make it happen.

And so the "Remnant Mission" was conceived to save 105 Pioneers by sending them on a voyage to Mars!

Chapter 9 –

Recruiting the Crews and Pioneers for “Remnant”

The word went out all across the world that some rockets would be going to Mars and they wanted volunteers from all over the globe for a one-way mission. It was explained in a flyer and on the internet:

REMNANT PIONEER MISSION

- ❖ Volunteers wanted to go to Mars!
- ❖ Travel for 9 months in a cramped spaceship.
- ❖ Live the rest of your life on Mars.
- ❖ Spacesuits will be required for the Martian surface.
- ❖ No luxuries of any kind expected.
- ❖ Perfect health required.
- ❖ Must have a useable profession.
- ❖ Both families and singles requested.
- ❖ English will be the primary language spoken.
- ❖ Only 105 people will be selected.
- ❖ Train for 6 months prior to leaving for Mars.
- ❖ E-mail name, age, sex, country, occupation, and knowledge of English to:
Apply@RemnantMission.Com
- ❖ All selections are final.

17,250,000 people applied!

The names were separated by countries and then by continents as it was decided that for maximum genetic diversity for the new Martian colony that people from all continents should go. As there were to be only 15 ships to be sent, each holding 7 “Pioneers” each, the allocation worked out to be as follows:

- 6 Asian ships (42 Pioneers)
- 2 European ships (14 Pioneers)
- 2 African ships (14 Pioneers)
- 2 North American ships (14 Pioneers)
- 2 South American ships (14 Pioneers)
- 1 Australian, Oceana, Miscellaneous ship (7 Pioneers)

Fifteen ships with 105 people each from a population of over 8 billion. Not many being saved, but better than none at all!

Chapter 10 –

Answering the Call!

When Colonel Edwards applied for the Remnant Mission he had not talked with his wife or family. But he knew that they were all avid space fans and he also knew the odds of him getting picked was virtually non-existent.

But the person behind the Remnant Mission, Peter Young, wanted at least one NASA astronaut on at least one of the ships. And he also wanted families as much as possible, so Colonel Edwards' chances got significantly better, real quick!

The next morning Bill Edwards' boss called him and five other astronauts into the conference room and closed the door. He said, "Ladies and gentlemen, we've been asked to supply at least one astronaut and their family for the Remnant Mission. Not only would you represent North America on this mission, but you would help insure that there is a qualified astronaut on Mars should it ever be possible to come back to Earth. Plus, as you know the chances of the rest of us having much of a future here on Earth isn't too great right now, so this may be the best chance on (or off) this rock called Earth! I've learned that you've all applied, which is

great, but you probably all thought there was no chance that you would go. Well, right now each of you has a 1 in 6 chance of going! So I'd like each of you, after work, to go back home, and talk this opportunity over with your families."

Bill left thinking - Wow, was this ever going to be a different conversation! And was he ever going to be right!

Chapter 11 –

Going to Mars?

At the same time Bill was talking to his boss, Joy Edwards was talking to Liz and told her that she had prayed to God and had asked Jesus into her life. Joy said, “I definitely feel different! I’m more at peace, not as worried about the future, and I want to learn even more about God. Where can I get a Bible that makes sense to me?”

Liz replied, “I’ll get you one and bring it tonight. I’ll show you how you can spend a few minutes each day talking with God. I think you’ll enjoy it. It sure perks up my day!”

That night Joy went to her prayer group before Bill came home. During the prayer group, Joy told everyone about her prayer. They were all excited and happy about it. Then during the prayer time she prayed that God would do something big, in and through her life. Little did she know how quickly that prayer would be answered.

After the group she came home and Bill was there waiting to talk. The kids were still up and Joy was surprised when Bill said, “Hey guys, let’s talk for a

moment. Daddy wants to tell you something important.”

They all sat down and Joy wondered what was going on.

Bill said, “You have all heard that there is a big rock coming towards Earth and could hurt some people.”

Jake, their oldest said, “Dad, I’ve heard it’s going to be really bad!”

Hope started to cry and said, “I don’t want to talk about it any more.”

Caleb, their youngest, sat real quietly. Joy hugged him.

Before Joy could say anything, Bill continued, “Well you may also have heard that there’s a mission of 105 people going to Mars. NASA wants to send at least one of our astronauts along and they’ve given me the opportunity to go. If I go, they’d like all of you to go with me.”

Joy was so stunned she couldn’t even speak!

Jake said right away, “That’s cool! How long will it be, Dad?”

“6 months of training and 9 months to go to Mars.”

“And how long would we stay before coming back?” asked Jake.

Bill took a deep breath and looked around. Everyone was looking right at him.

Then Bill said as clear as he could make it, “We would not come back. First, we have no guarantee that the Earth will be here. And second, there isn’t enough equipment or money or even the time to prepare for a round trip mission. There’s only enough for a one way trip.”

The whole room was so quiet you could literally hear a pin drop. Even Caleb was totally quiet.

Hope said, “So where would we live?”

“On Mars, probably in a cave,” her Dad said.

Joy then got her courage and said something that totally surprised both herself and her husband. She said, “Bill, I know we need to think about this for a day or so, but I think this could be what we should do. You are an astronaut after all, and it makes sense that you should go. And by all of us going it would ensure our whole family is safe. Even though life would be hard, we wouldn’t be alone. God and a hundred other people would be with us! So let’s pray about it and see how we all feel about it tomorrow.”

Bill was now stunned. He’d never heard his wife talk like this. She seemed more confident and at peace than he’d ever seen before. He couldn’t believe it. She might actually want to go to Mars!

But before he could say anything else Jake said, “I want to go to Mars Dad!”

Caleb said, “Me too, Daddy!”

And Hope asked, “Could cousins Lexi and Cece go too?”

Bill said, stroking his chin, “We’ll see Hope. We’ll just see.”

Chapter 12 –

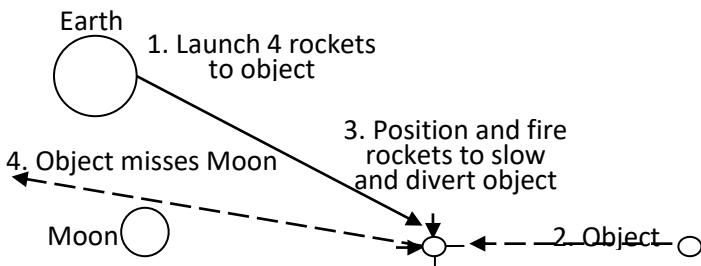
Finally, A Government Plan to Save Earth

After much debate the UN finally decided to let the United States and its scientists come up with a plan to try to save Earth and then go ahead and implement it. By now, six months had passed and the path of the “Doomsday Rock” was much more determined. It was spinning around its axis once every six hours and the speed towards the Earth and the Moon was definitely increasing. It would most certainly hit the Moon in such a way that the Moon would then fall in towards the Earth and destroy both bodies. All life on Earth was expected to be lost.

So a plan was devised that would send four of the new Space Launch System (SLS) rockets towards the object. They would then approach from four different sides and land on it and then drill into it and attach. Each one would be 90 degrees around the object separated from the next one. The plan was that as the Doomsday Rock rotated as it approached Earth, that the rockets on the “north” and “west” side would fire in an attempt to slow it down and slightly change its course. The rockets would take turns firing as each moved onto the object’s north and west side as it rotated. The hope is they

would slow it down enough to use Earth's gravity, and drive its path away from the Moon such that it would pass between the Moon and the Earth. There would still be disruption to satellites, and the ISS would have to be abandoned, but if it worked (and that was a BIG IF), then the world MIGHT be saved. So NASA was given the go-ahead to prepare for the mission called "Operation Rescue Earth" or just "Rescue Mission" for short. It would be ready to launch in 6 months, just after Remnant, and just before the big rock came.

It was described on the evening news like this, "If it works it will be like making the object travel like a curve ball leaving a pitcher's hand!" And then they showed this diagram with the object coming in from the right:



The announcer then said, "4 rockets will blast off from Earth and go to the object which is coming for the Moon. They will be bolted to the object and then alternating, each will be fired in turn to slow the object down and make it go between the Moon and Earth."

Then they ended the newscast saying, "There is an expected 15% chance of success, which is an 85%

chance of failure. But ladies and gentlemen, there now at least a chance for saving the Earth!"

Chapter 13 –

Training of the Remnant Pioneers

After talking with his family and thinking about it for several days the Edwards family decided to go to Mars. But Bill had one stipulation; that his wife's brother's family (Scott and Ali Ray and their kids) all go along. While this wasn't strictly by the books, it made sense as Scott Ray was the Chief Technician at Rocket Corp. and knew more about the rockets that would take them to Mars than anyone. And Ali was a world famous chef which meant she knew a lot about food preparation. She was also a Physical Trainer. Plus their daughters (Lexi and Cece) could now be with the Edwards' kids on Mars too. Cool!

During the six month training the Edwards, the Rays, and all other families selected were at Rocket Corp. headquarters for training. They studied and practiced about how to pilot their ships and found out what specific role each person would play during the 9 month trip and then initially on the surface of Mars. They also discussed how to live in a cramped spaceship, and finally got an exhaustive course on how to live on Mars. Teams of NASA astronauts and scientists were there with them during the entire 6 months. One other NASA

astronaut and her husband was also going on the mission to Mars. They had no children at this time.

A summary of their mission was given at the beginning of the 6 months by Peter Young.

“Our plan is that once you leave Earth orbit, each capsule with 7 Pioneers aboard will dock with its own third stage rocket and then pull a tether (or cable) out from the third stage until there is 170 meters of tether showing. Then you will fire thrusters on both the capsule and the third stage in alternate directions to start both the capsule and third stage rotating about each other which will create artificial gravity for you. It won’t be Earth gravity, but Martian gravity, which is less than that on Earth - 40% of Earth’s gravity. So you’ll be able to move around easier on the trip, but not totally bump into one another. And you’ll get used to the gravity you’ll have on Mars. We’ll practice moving in this type of gravity before you leave here so you’ll be comfortable in it when you have to actually experience it.”

Peter then continued, “There will be a cargo section attached to each capsule with supplies for your trip, and the third stage will also help supply power to your ship via the tether. When you get near Mars, you’ll stop your rotation, disconnect and retract the tether and park the third stage in orbit around Mars for possible future use. Then each ship will fire its thrusters and land on Mars. The spot we have picked for you was

determined for us a few years ago. The European Space Agency found that there is an ice patch in a crater in what is called “Vastitas Borealis” in the northern hemisphere of Mars. We’ll just call it “VB” for short!”

One of the kids then said, “That’s ‘VB’ for V-e-r-y Boring...”

Everyone laughed, which certainly helped relax the group a bit.

Then Peter said, “Thanks, we needed that!”

He continued, “Once on Mars you’ll find there’s also been some other cargo ships that were sent ahead of you with other supplies. After all ships have landed, some of you will leave the ships and find a cave near VB. Once you find one and explore it somewhat, more of you would leave the ships wearing space suits and then using materials we sent ahead, build a door to that cave, add some inner walls, and then pressurize it with air, so that you can live there. After bringing in supplies, you can then all leave the ships and go into your new Martian base camp which will be your first home there.”

“Once that’s done,” he continued, “you’ll send some people out using a rover that we’re also sending, to go to the ice patch and carve out some chunks of ice to bring back to the camp to melt for water. Assuming the Earth is still here, we will keep in touch with you, but know that there is at least a 3 minute delay when Earth

and Mars are closest together and 21 minutes when both planets are on the opposite sides of the sun. So live communication is out, but sending recorded messages back and forth would be a good way to communicate. In fact we wanted to suggest that some of you video virtually all of your experience on Mars as it would probably be the best reality show ever if Earth is still around!" Most people laughed.

Chapter 14 –

Launch of Remnant-1 through 15

The day that the Remnant Mission launches began was a clear one. Coming out for the launch of Remnant-1 was the entire extended families of the Edwards and the Rays who were together on this historic first flight. Scott Ray (with permission of course) had modified the interior of Remnant-1 to allow for two more seats so his whole family could travel with his sister Joy and the rest of the Edwards. That way all the kids could play together for the 9 month trip. They were really looking forward to that!

Coming to see them off were Butch and Janice Ray, Buddy and Paulette Edwards, Janelle and Tobias Ratheim, Jim, Donna, Raymond, and Margie Monroe, and finally Kymry, Brad, Eric, Austin, and Nancy Terry. It was like “old home week” as they used to say!

Grandma Janice naturally had a hard time seeing them all leave but wished each of them, “God’s speed!” as she gave them a hug. Then Remnant-1 blasted off.

The Remnant flights took off from 8 different locations around the globe: Cape Canaveral, Kennedy Space Center, Vandenburg AFB, Wallops Island, the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Russia, Jiuquan in China, Edwards AFB,

and the Mojave Spaceport. It took eight weeks for all 20 ships to leave Earth (15 Remnant + 5 Supply ships), leaving at the rate of about one every couple days.

Sixteen flights were virtually flawless, but there were problems with 4 flights.

The second supply flight blew up on liftoff. Fortunately there was no crew aboard. But there wasn't time for a replacement for that supply ship. So the other four supply flights had to be sufficient. They were launched successfully.

Of the Remnant Pioneer flights Remnant-7 had trouble docking with its third stage and so it had to travel without artificial gravity. Rehabilitation will be required for these 7 Pioneers on Mars. Ali Ray (Physical Trainer) and Joy Edwards (Registered Nurse) prepared a plan to help them once they learned of their situation.

Remnant -10 had an early problem with life support but fortunately that was fixed through communications with Scott Ray as he was able to talk them through the necessary trouble-shooting procedures quickly. It turned out it was just a switch that had been flipped inadvertently by a child while playing.

On Remnant -13 the second stage cut off prematurely on takeoff, but they were able to get to a lower Earth orbit. They then burned the third stage longer than normal to get them on their way to Mars.

For all the other ships the most exciting parts of the takeoff was firing the third stage which took them out of Earth orbit and into the 9 month journey to Mars, along with the docking with the spent third stage and extending the tether for rotation to make artificial gravity. All the kids liked that part! Too bad Remnant 7 missed having those things be fun too.

Chapter 15 –

Message to Earth

In the first few days going away from Earth it was breathtaking to look back onto Earth and see it in its entirety hanging in space just like you see in pictures taken by the early Apollo astronauts. In Remnant-1 Joy asked her husband if she could provide a little show for Earth and say something from the Bible like they did on Apollo 8? Bill said that would be fine with him!

Bill was still communicating with Houston Mission Control and it was being broadcast all over Earth when he asked if Joy could beam back some live video and read a passage from the Bible for the residents of Earth?

They also said that was fine as people needed something encouraging, and so Joy held the camera to the window and it showed the Earth with its marbled looking white clouds, blue oceans, and green and brown land masses. All that in the pitch blackness of space. As this image was shown she then said, “The book of Job in the Bible, chapter 26 says, “God stretches the northern sky over empty space and hangs the Earth upon nothing.””

And all the people on Earth saw the Earth literally hanging upon nothing, just like Job 26 said.

Then she panned out some so the viewers on Earth could see the Earth-Moon system together in space, and it was obvious that the Moon was much harder to see, as surprisingly it is not nearly as reflective as the Earth. While showing this she read again from Job 26: “He covers the face of the Moon.”

And people saw that the Moon sure looked covered (veiled) like the Bible said.

Finally she panned out even further showing at the edge of the frame the glare of the sun with the Earth and Moon now looking much smaller in the middle of the frame. A few bright stars (or other planets) were now also visible. With that on the screen she read again from Job 26, “He set the boundary between day and night. His Spirit made the heavens beautiful. These are just the beginning of all that He does, merely a whisper of His power.”

And everyone watching felt a shiver going over them as they saw all this and heard these words written almost 3,000 years ago and realized that it read just like it really was!

After reading this, Joy turned the camera inside the spacecraft and showed viewers the cramped quarters, and the others waving, and then she said, “Well, we have to sign off now, but I want to bring this thought

before the people of Earth. No matter what religion you are, or even if you are not religious at all, I think we all agree that the planet Earth is a very special place to live. It's so beautiful you can't help but think that it sure looks like it must have been created by someone who knew what they were doing. And so I leave you with this one last thought for you to consider. That the God who did create all this, who had that kind of power, that God will now watch out and protect all of us in the coming days ahead!"

Then Bill came into view and said to the viewers, "So to all of you on Spaceship Earth from all of us in Remnants-1 through 15 we wish you all, 'God's Speed Earth!'"

That was the last transmission received by Earth from Remnant.

Meanwhile, the launch of the 4 SLS rockets to WD-JCole went smoothly and NASA scientists were able to remotely drill into the object on all four sides, allowing the rockets to alternate thrusting to attempt to steer the Doomsday Rock away from hitting either the Earth or the Moon. But again the odds of success were deemed very low. As one of the NASA news announcers said in an interview later, "God help us all!"

And the world waited...

And so did the Remnant Pioneers...

To be continued -

Coming soon:

Book 2 – Remnant: On to Mars

Book 3 – Remnant: Decision Point

Book 4 - Remnant: Mars Base 2

Pamphlet given to Joy Edwards

*Are You Firmly Rooted in
Life?*



*Able to Withstand Life's
Storms?*

We all have difficult times that come into our lives!

Things like Demanding Work, a Stressful Marriage, Rebellious Teens, Health Issues, Money Problems, Time Management, etc. You may have experienced some of these.

What is the secret to coping? Some try drinking or drugs – things that numb the mind and make them go away for a few minutes or hours. Others try getting another partner, but the new partner eventually causes stress too! Others go heavily into debt, but that raises its own problems. What's a person to do?

What can you build your life on to withstand the storms of life?

Jesus said 2,000 years ago that we need to build our house (our life if you will) upon the rock, not upon sand. He said that if you build your life on the rock, then when the rain and the storms and the winds of life come and beat down, you will not fall because you are on a solid foundation – a rock!

That rock is Jesus Christ. (See Matthew 7:24-27)

Being Firmly Rooted in Christ!

But how do we build our house upon Jesus and get firmly rooted in Him? Is it hard to do that? Wouldn't it be nice if it was easy, like getting a gift? Well it is! God wants to give us a gift, the G-I-F-T of Salvation. You see the Christian life is the most rewarding experience possible, because it is a relationship with a person, the person of Jesus Christ. Biblical Christianity is God reaching down to us, caring for us, and accepting us just the way we are. It's a G-I-F-T, not something we earn.

G - God Loves Us and Has a Wonderful Plan

Some people say God couldn't possibly be concerned about them. But look at 1 Peter 5:7 and John 3:16. They say God does love us and has a wonderful plan for us – eternal life.

1 Peter 5:7 - Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.

John 3:16 - God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

I – I Sin (Do Things Wrong) - We all Do in Fact

But there is a problem. The Bible says all people have something in common. Instead of the life God intended, we mess it up, and there is an awful result. Look at Romans 3:23 and Romans 5:12. Our sin

separates us from God. Some people think the way to win favor with God is to be a good person and do good works. But look at what the Bible says in Ephesians 2:8, 9. We simply can't earn our way to heaven!

Romans 3:23 - for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Romans 5:12 - Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned--

Ephesians 2:8, 9 - It is by grace you have been saved, through faith--not from yourselves, it is the gift of God--not by works, so that no one can boast

F – Forgiveness is through Christ

With people in such a helpless situation, God didn't just leave us hanging. He sent Jesus for us. See Romans 5:8. To those who say there are many ways to heaven, the Bible differs. John 14:6 says there is only one way. Jesus paid the penalty for us.

Romans 5:8 - But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

John 14:6 - Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

- **Do you believe in Christ?**

T – Trust in Jesus

In John 6:29 Jesus says we must believe in Him to have the abundant life God intends. In Revelation 3:20 Jesus gives the promise he will come into our life if we ask. He wants to be part of everyone's life.

John 6:29 - Jesus answered, "The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent."

Revelation 3:20 - Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me.

- **Is Jesus in your life? Would you like to ask Him in? You can invite Him in by praying: "Lord Jesus, I know I have done things wrong and I am sorry. I ask that you help me to turn from those things. I ask Jesus to come into my heart and life and save me."**

What's Next?

Once you ask Jesus to come into your life you are now saved. The angels in heaven rejoice over that decision (Luke 15:7, 10)! You also should feel happier and sense that something good has happened. But don't base your salvation solely on feelings. Feelings are great but they change. So what should you base your salvation? On the Bible. His Word never changes! He also gives you promises that will help you in the tough times. So get a modern translation of the Bible or New

Testament and begin reading it daily. I suggest you start in Matthew or John in the New Testament. Take God at His Word. The Bible gives us many promises:

1. **Once you've asked Him into your life He is there!**
Revelation 3:20 – Jesus says, “Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me.” (He promises He came into you.)
2. **If you have Jesus in your life you have eternal life.**
1 John 5:11,12 – God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.
3. **With Christ in you, He makes you into a new person.**
2 Corinthians 5:17 - Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!
4. **Once you have Christ, you are on solid rock.**
Isaiah 33:6 - He (God) will be the stability of your times. So trust Him!

So What Else Should You Do?

Find a good church where Christ is preached, be baptized, and attend regularly. Join a small group where you can study the Bible together and develop Christian friendships. **And don't go it alone!** It is helpful to have someone help you grow in your knowledge of God. Jesus helped the 12 disciples after all! This could be in a small group or one on one. Would you like help growing? Which of these resources interest you?

- Investigations – Finding out if God is Real (8 chapters)** This book helps you learn more about God and will answer some of your questions. Contains an explanation of Biblical Christianity and challenges you to make your own spiritual quest reading the Bible.
- Reflections – Spending Time with God (7 lesson study)** Explains how Jesus wants to meet with you daily through His Word and prayer. This is called the Quiet Time (QT). Lessons about salvation, prayer and the Bible, confession, and why we should spend time with God and an overview of the Bible.
- Finances – More than Making Ends Meet (7 lesson study)** Explains Biblical principles on finances and provides guidance/projects on budgeting, saving, giving, and retirement. Also the daily Quiet Time.
- Marriage & Family–Living/Leaving a Legacy (7 lessons)** Explains principles on marriage and raising a family from the Bible with helps/advice on dates, communication, sex, and other areas.

For resources (including book 2 of this series)

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One Final Word

I remember going out with my parents when I was 11 years old to see the Echo-1 satellite in the night sky. I also remember watching Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin walk (or “hop”) on the Moon one late night at age 20. Then I’ve seen, with my daughter and her kids last summer, the Space Shuttle take off. And now I’m watching a commercial company do a very respectable job of putting cargo into space for the ISS. One of their videos of landing a crew on Mars gave me the idea for this book.

But at a meeting of my oldest grandson with one of the astronauts that had gone to the Moon, my grandson boldly said, “I want to be the first man on Mars!” The astronaut then asked, “Would you be willing to stay there”? That was different. To go, knowing you’ll die there. That’s real commitment!

One person has already done that for all of us. Jesus, over 2,000 years ago left his home to come to our planet for each of us. When he left heaven he knew he would die a cruel death. Yet he did it anyway. Why, because he loved you and me!

I know some of you reading this will think that’s superstition, but others will believe. **I knew it was true once I asked Him into my heart and got into His Word, the Bible.** He changes lives. I hope you’ll do the same so He can change yours too.