

From Our Pastor August 25, 2018

Sabbath Greetings to Everyone!

For more than seven years we've been forced to hitch a ride to space," Vice-President Mike Pence said in a speech this week. "Many Americans don't know we've actually been forced to pay Russia to carry American astronauts to the International Space Station. Today, that cost runs about \$82 million a seat. Those days are about to be over." As reported by CBS news, Mr. Pence urged flight controllers, engineers and astronauts at the Johnson Space Center Thursday to "rededicate" themselves to carrying out the Trump administration's drive to establish a permanent U.S. presence on the moon in the early 2020s before eventual voyages to Mars.

President Trump signed Space Policy Directive 1 last December, calling for NASA to refocus its human space program on returning to the moon. For those of us old enough to remember the excitement of the Apollo lunar landings this brings back some striking memories and possible hope for the future.

NASA is developing a new heavy-lift rocket, the Saturn 5-class Space Launch System, to carry Orion capsules to the moon and beyond and soliciting designs from aerospace contractors for a small space station, or "gateway," that will be built in lunar orbit. It is intended to serve as a base for research and a stepping stone for eventual landings and flights into deep space.

The Constellation program, promoted by the Bush administration in the wake of the 2003 Columbia shuttle disaster, called for completing the International Space Station by the end of the decade and building new rockets and spacecraft to carry astronauts back to the moon by the early 2020s for long-duration stays on the surface. The Obama administration canceled Constellation and instead, NASA was ordered to focus on missions to nearby asteroids while helping develop a commercial infrastructure in low-Earth orbit.

The decision to cancel Constellation, Pence stated, "said to our country and to the entire world that America was no longer serious about human space exploration." Pence added that the Trump administration is moving ahead with plans to establish "a new branch of the military, the United States Space Force, by 2020." It will be "devoted solely to advancing American security in space." The need is real," he said. "China is aggressively weaponizing space. Russia, too, is developing and testing new and dangerous weapons and technologies to counter America's space capabilities. Perhaps the outer space combat depicted in sci-fi movies will be possible in years to come. Let us hope it never comes to that.

The stars, planets, and all of creation were made by the Creator God for His purpose. In Isaiah 45:12 He says, " I have made the earth, and created man upon it: I, even my hands, have stretched out the heavens, and all their host have I commanded." There

are many verses in the Bible attesting to God creating the heavens and the earth for His purpose. What most Bible believers do not comprehend is that the destiny of true Christians is to one day rule all of the creation—including the planets and galaxies.

In speaking about the time after the return of Jesus Christ, Hebrews gives us this incredible promise about the destiny of man: "For He has not put the world to come, of which we speak, in subjection to angels. But one testified in a certain place, saying: "What is man that You are mindful of him, And the son of man that You visit him? For You have made him a little lower than the angels, And You have crowned him with glory and honor. You have made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet" For in that He put all in subjection under him, He left nothing that is not put under him. But now we do not yet see all things put under him." (Hebrews 2:5-9). So not yet, but in a time to come all things will be ruled by beings who were once human.

So the space race is on again, and perhaps men will achieve some new grand things. Compared to the world to come, it will be very small.

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