

A photograph of Mark Koch, a man with short brown hair, wearing a white button-down shirt and light-colored trousers. He is sitting on a wooden director's chair on a sandy beach. The background shows the ocean and a clear sky. The text "LOST IN SPACE" is written in a bold, sans-serif font at the top, and "Saved By Grace:" is written in a large, elegant cursive font below it.

LOST IN SPACE

Saved By Grace:

THE MARK KOCH STORY

They say you should never trust a man without a battle scar—or a leader without a limp—because you know they've never survived real trials. But when they have...

By Lisa A. Rice

It was April 1998, and Hollywood Producer Mark Koch had arrived. He had exceeded his dream-of-all-dreams—to produce a film—and now he had not one, but two major blockbuster movies that basically hit theatres at the same time. Marquees throughout the world simultaneously beckoned moviegoers to enjoy “Lost in Space”

and “Black Dog,” both box office hits. “Lost in Space” would quickly edge out the \$200 million production “Titanic” and break records for the highest April Opening ever.

Millions of dollars were rolling into the Koch house, as were the accolades of the movie industry. And to top it all off, through the outreach of some good

friends, Mark had just gotten saved! Now he was a man who had it all... a beautiful wife, great kids, money enough for a lifetime and eternal salvation from God. It was time for this ultimate product of the American Dream to enjoy his “happily-ever-after-ville...” right?

Then why was Mark so depressed? Why did he feel like his ominous movie

UGLY ROOF STAINS REMOVED

title, “Lost in Space?” He had done everything on his life’s list—and more—but all he felt was emptiness.

The Valley of Humiliation

Unbeknownst to him, the new Christian convert was soon to learn a few of the less popular, less pleasurable ways of God: that you have to go down to go up... that God’s ultimate dreams may look different than ours... and that “rich and famous” is not always what it’s cracked up to be. These are the Sunday school classes that no one signs up for. They are lessons learned only in the valley of humiliation.

Within six months of his meteoric rise to fame, God allowed Mark to endure a devastating storm of bogus lawsuits and inherited family troubles that would level him for years. Things got so bad—personally and professionally—that he decided to leave Hollywood and work on his life and marriage. The hot Hollywood producer was now fully in survival-mode.

“I took a lot of time off,” says Mark. “And I swore I’d never get back into movies. During that season God stripped me of everything materialistic. I lost my money, my prestige and everything but my marriage—which is a miracle in itself.”

But Mark testifies that God was always there for him—even in the darkest, deepest valley. “I prayed the Prayer of Jabez every day,” recalls Mark, “and I cried out to God as I rolled

quarters to feed my kids.”

Just when he had fully waved the white flag of surrender, God picked up his beloved, beleaguered servant and prompted him to start a ministry. Through Prelude Worldwide Ministries, Mark set out to spread God’s message through the mass media. But even in this venture, God let Mark come to the end of himself before he rebuilt him again.

“We did an outreach with Oliver



North, Kim Alexis and Jennifer O’Neal,” says Mark, “but right before we opened there was a terrible newspaper article that came out with the headline, ‘Lost in Space Producer Launches Jesus Road Show.’ It dug up all the dirt on the past lawsuit fiasco, and almost no one showed up at the outreach. I was devastated.”

The Joy of Restoration

Again, at the bottom of his emotional and financial pit, God came through dramatically. *The Rich and Helen DeVos Foundation* granted Prelude a gift to underwrite their vision

and ministry, and in one day, Mark was back in business.

Shortly after that, Mark helped Mel Gibson and Paul Lauer with “The Passion,” handling all advance ticket sales for the blockbuster movie. “God was bringing me back,” says Mark, “and giving me the movie bug again.” Within months, Mark was partnering with Peter Guber’s company, Mandalay Integrated Media Entertainment, to form Mandalay-Prelude Faith-Based Films.

As of this month, the partnership is in various stages of production on several movies, including “Rabbi Paul,” about the life of Paul, “The Third Miracle,” about the 1959 Little League underdog Champions and his favorite project of all, “The Heart of a Man,” the story of the slave-trader-turned-abolitionist John Newton, who wrote “Amazing Grace.”

“I said I’d never do it,” says Mark, smiling, “but here I am—back in film full-time. And God has restored everything. I have so much to give back to Him and so little time.”

Battle-scarred, but not battle-weary, surely Producer Mark Koch has quite the filmmaking adventure ahead.

To find out more about Mark Koch and his upcoming projects, please visit him at the following web sites:
www.americanfilmfund.org, and
www.preludeworldwide.com.