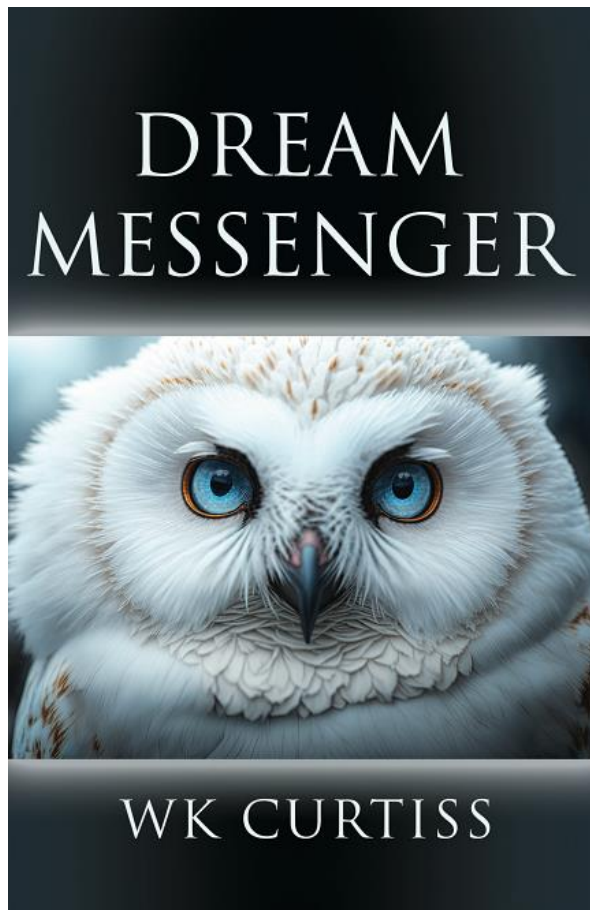




CC's life is suddenly altered after a visit in his dreams by an other-worldly being. He embarks on a journey of prayer and encouragement to help those in need of a miracle. Will his prayers be answered, or will other forces intervene?

Dream Messenger

By WK Curtiss

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DREAM MESSENGER



WK CURTISS

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“Jesus looked at them and said, ‘With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.’”

— Matthew 19:26

Prologue

Tekhelet had been summoned. One might think being summoned to appear before the Creator of the entire universe would cause great concern, maybe even a little angst, but for Tekhelet, it was more than wonderful—it was a dream come true. Not only would he see the Creator again, which was one of the most cherished and desired events in an angel’s life, but he would hear the Creator’s voice—a voice that was unlike any sound known to all created beings in the entire cosmos—a voice that could be both severe and loving at the same time. A voice that could create or destroy.

He had no idea why he had been summoned, and as he made his way to the throne room, he rehearsed in his mind what he would say, and how he would conduct himself. He laughed to himself as he mused about how he went through this every time he was summoned. Of course, he would bow, that was a given, but should he speak first with some honorifics and words of adoration, or should he just bow and wait for the Creator to speak? Still lost in his thoughts, he ascended the crystal steps that led to the throne room doors. As his feet touched each step, light emanated outward from each footfall. He had been so caught up in his thoughts that he didn’t even realize he had made it to the top of the steps, until one of the guardians spoke to him. “Shalom, friend Tekhelet, enter, for you are most welcome, and we receive you with joy and love.”

Tekhelet stopped and gave a small bow to the guardians. He was always awestruck by them. They were much larger than he and his fellow messengers, but size was not the only difference—they were adorned in shimmering armor that seemed to defy reality. The armor was gold and silver, with iridescent hues that undulated as the guardians moved, and was bedecked with jewels of every size and color. Their swords were almost as long as Tekhelet was tall and were held across the doorway of the throne room whenever someone approached. Their eyes were the most intense feature of their angular faces—they were like diamonds of the highest grade that sparkled and reflected silver light like a prism.

Tekhelet smiled as the guardian who spoke to him lowered his sword and motioned for him to enter. As he made his way inside, he was once again enthralled by the sights, which were beyond description, even for an angel. The brightness was unlike any light in the universe. It was so bright that even angels had to shield their eyes for just a moment until they adapted. Even if he closed his eyes, he could still see the light through his eyelids—he could even feel the light as it touched his body and flooded his innermost being. It surrounded and flowed through him, filling him with joy and wonder. He often wondered how his fellow servants, who were forever in attendance to the Creator, were able to bear such brightness. No matter how many times he tried to put what he saw into words, the words just couldn't contain the beauty and majesty before him. This time was no different—even with all his mental rehearsing, all he could do was fall to his knees before the Creator in awestruck adoration and take in the words that were spoken—words that engulfed his very being and filled him with such joy and gladness that he wished the sound would never stop.

When the words from the Creator stopped, Tekhelet arose and bowed again as he made his way out of the throne room. He had been given a wondrous task that would take him to Earth. He was tasked with guiding a human creature through dreams. The human was also being given a task of great importance, one that would touch many lives in ways that even angels could not imagine.

He had been warned the human would make mistakes and would encounter troubles, but Tekhelet was not permitted to intervene—he could only guide, warn, and encourage since he was not a guardian angel—he was a messenger. Of course, he understood how this worked, as this was not his first such assignment. Like all the others he had been given throughout the millennia, he would give all of his being and effort to see the messages were given clearly. He knew dreams could be tricky, as humans didn't always understand their meaning. Sometimes a human's mind wandered so much it was difficult to keep them on track, but Tekhelet had experience in this matter and was dedicated to seeing this through to completion.

As Tekhelet left the throne room and headed to Archives, his mind raced with thoughts of what he would do and what he would say to this human. He was trying to form a plan of how to accomplish his task so that he could ensure the human would be successful in *his* task. He understood that both tasks were very important and would affect the lives of many humans.

The Beach

It was just after the closing date of the home sale when CC had his first mission dream. He had already moved out and even helped the new family move in. He was thrilled with the new family—a young couple in their early thirties with three children, all under ten years of age.

CC had been living the last few days in an extended stay and was excited about “hitting the road” and seeing the United States. He had planned to leave early the next morning and head toward the west coast, taking his time with many sightseeing stops along the way, but those plans were quickly abandoned. In the morning, as CC was loading up his car, the aura hit. He quickly checked back into the extended stay and curled up in bed, pulling the covers up over his head and assuming the fetal position. Right on schedule, Big Dog arrived, hammering the inside of his head like an icepick-jackhammer combo. CC prayed with tears in his eyes, fighting back the nausea as he eventually fell asleep.

CC had dreams just like everybody does. Sometimes he could recall them vividly, yet other times they were elusive, leaving trails of disconnected and scattered memories like wisps of fog left over after the morning sun had burned most of it away. He and his wife would often share their dreams and laugh about how jumbled and downright nonsensical they were. One of his favorite recurring dreams was one in which he would start out driving a car, then suddenly be on a bicycle, all the while trying to get somewhere—not even sure of where, but

knowing he was late and lost. He and his wife would laugh so hard at the ridiculousness of it all.

The first mission dream was not disconnected or jumbled at all. It played out, almost like a movie or a novel:

* * *

CC was standing on the shore at Myrtle Beach, his family's favorite summer vacation spot. It was a beautiful sunny day. The warm sun was behind him casting long shadows, so he knew it was later in the day. There were people everywhere having the time of their lives. Laughter, shouting, splashing, and talking filled the air as the waves sounded their repeated combing of the sand. Some of the people he recognized, but most he did not.

He noticed a large swing set ahead of him. It was like one you would see in a public park, with swings hanging down almost twenty feet from an overhead horizontal bar supported on both ends by a triangle. There was also a big farm tractor parked nearby which really seemed out of place.

Sitting on one of the swings, barely swinging as his feet dragged along the ground, was a man with brown, white-speckled hair. He was dressed in blue jean coveralls, work boots, and a straw hat—an attire which seemed very odd for the beach. The man waved at CC, motioning for him to join him—he appeared to know CC. He seemed friendly enough even though CC didn't recognize him, and CC never wanted to miss an opportunity to network for the Lord, so he walked over. When he was about five feet from the man, he stopped as he noticed the man had the most intense blue eyes he had ever seen! They were so bright and intense that CC thought to himself, I bet they glow in the dark!

As CC stared, the man smiled and patted the swing next to him, so CC complied, and the two men sat in silence for a few moments, gently swinging back and forth, watching the people on the beach, and listening to the happy sounds of families at play. The reverie was broken when the man with bright blue eyes spoke, "Friend CC, have you seen the news about the man who was severely injured in a tractor accident at his home today?"

"Yes," CC replied, as he really thought he had—at least it sounded familiar. It seemed it had been one of those "Breaking News" stories.

"Friend CC, would you do something that could help this man and his family?"

"Sure, but what can I do?"

"Friend CC, go to the Ever Hope Community Hospital. The man and his wife will be in room 976, in the ICU. His name is Chuck Branickson, and his wife, Celia, will be with him. She is pregnant with their first son."

CC asked, "What should I—wait a second. Am I dreaming?"

"Of course," replied the man matter-of-factly. "How does that change what you're being asked to do?"

"Oh," said CC, a bit ashamed. "I'll be more than happy to go. What am I supposed to do when I get there?"

"Friend CC, that is excellent. Give Celia some words of encouragement. Tell her to go outside and take a break—she really does need a respite. While she is gone, pray for her husband. Place your hand on his head or hold his hand as you pray. The prayer need not be anything extravagant or eloquent—just a simple prayer for healing. His wife, family, and the church have been praying nonstop since this

morning. Please let Celia know that all those prayers have not been wasted."

"But what if the hospital won't let me in to see him, or his wife doesn't want me there because she doesn't know me?" inquired CC.

"Friend CC, no one will interfere, and she will be most glad of your visit. Will you do this?"

"I sure will." As soon as CC agreed to the mission, the dream switched scenes. He found he was suddenly pulling into the hospital parking garage. He parked his car, walked to the employee entrance, and as he started to pull on the door, it flew open, and a heavy-set man barreled into him knocking him against the wall. At the same time, something fell from the man's clothes. The man never stopped. CC noticed an ID badge on the ground, picked it up, and called out for the man, but there was no answer, so he put the ID badge in his pocket. He then tried the door again and it was unlocked. Just inside the door was a short hallway with two doors. He took the ID badge and hung it on the door handle of the door with the words "Employees Only." He then turned to the door with a stairwell symbol and found that door was also unlocked. He ascended the steps to the ninth floor and exited through another unlocked door into a hallway. He came to a set of double doors that were labeled "ICU," "Authorized Personnel Only," and another sign that said, "Push Buzzer for Entrance," along with several other instructional signs. Without CC doing anything, the doors suddenly swung open. CC walked past a nurses' station occupied by three nurses so engrossed in their work that they didn't even look up.

His dream then took him into room 976, where he conversed with a pregnant woman who sat beside a hospital bed occupied by a man that appeared to be in grave condition. She was glad of his visit, just as promised, and even left to take a break for few minutes, leaving

CC alone with the patient. CC prayed a short prayer over the man, then left. He retraced his steps back to his car, then started driving back to the hotel.

* * *

CC was startled out of his dream by several voices he didn't recognize. He threw off his covers, and was jumping out of bed, when he realized the TV was on. He didn't know how that was possible, as he didn't remember turning it on, but what was even more amazing was a news broadcast concerning a man who had been pinned by a tractor and was fighting for his life at Ever Hope Community Hospital.

Forgetting the TV, CC started rummaging frantically through his duffle bag until he found the green, leather-bound journal that he had given as a present to his wife to use as her prayer journal. When he found this journal in a used bookstore, he thought he had won the lottery. It came complete with a leather cover and several hard cover books with blank pages—no lines or printing of any kind, just blank pages for writing.

This new journal only had a few entries as his wife had died shortly after making them. CC had held on to it all these years, as it meant so much—he could read her handwriting and almost feel her with him. Her perfume even lingered a few years after her death. He would hold the journal and run his fingers over her words, almost hearing her voice speaking to them.

When he found the journal, he began to write down all he could remember from the dream. Amazingly, he remembered all the details, which for him was quite a feat.

CC never questioned the validity of the dream. He somehow knew it had been real, as real as dreams can be, and that he actually

had been given a task of great importance. His task wasn't to stand on a street corner proclaiming, "REPENT, FOR THE DAY OF THE LORD IS NIGH," or to stop a speeding train like a superhero. His task was simply to comfort and encourage someone who was hurting and to pray for them. Some might see this task as unimportant, but CC knew that prayer was a lifeline direct to God Almighty!

CC looked at the clock and was stunned to see 1:15 a.m. He had slept for over thirteen hours! He felt an urgency about the mission and didn't believe it could wait until visiting hours, so he got ready and left for the hospital. As he drove towards the hospital, he prayed for God's guidance and strength to complete the mission he had been given.

A Mysterious Visitor

After CC had awakened from the dream and gotten dressed, he made his way to Ever Hope Community Hospital and parked his car near the employee entrance. As revealed in the dream, the employee entrance door was unlocked. As he pulled on the door to enter, it suddenly flew open toward him and a rather large man barreled into him, almost knocking him to the ground. The man grunted a muffled, “Watch it,” and continued on his hurried pace without even checking to see if CC was okay. CC shook his head and started to open the door when he noticed an ID badge on the ground. He picked it up, and realizing it belonged to the large man that had just bumped into him, he looked around the corner, but the man was gone.

He put the badge in his pocket and continued inside. CC found he was in a short hallway with a couple of doors. The door to the left was marked as “Stairwell SF2,” as in the dream, while the door to the right was marked “Employee’s Only.” He walked up to the stairwell door and paused. Taking the ID badge out of his pocket, he waved it over the access control reader and heard the door lock click. He then ascended the steps to the ninth floor where he was met by another door. Using the ID badge, he gained entry and found he was in a short hallway with double doors marked “ICU” just a few feet away. As in the dream, there were several warning and instructional signs. CC looked through one of the round windows, and could see a nurses’ station just a few feet away. It was occupied by three nurses who appeared to be very busy.

CC paused and felt a twinge of fear building. He remembered what had happened in the dream, but this was real life—it was no longer a dream. He whispered a short prayer for courage and then waved the ID badge across the access control reader. The LED turned green, and the doors slowly opened. CC stood in the open doorway for a moment to see what the nurses would do. They never looked up—as though they hadn't heard a sound—so CC continued to room 976, which was just a short distance from the nurses' station.

CC walked into room 976 of Ever Hope Community Hospital in Snellville, Georgia. He didn't personally know the man who lay in the hospital bed hooked up to IVs, wires, tubes, oxygen and various monitors, but he recognized him and his wife from the dream he had had just a short time ago.

Chuck Branickson was only twenty-three, but he lay here barely clinging to life. He was missing his entire left arm and leg and his right leg below the knee. The tractor had thrown him when the ground gave way as the rear wheels sunk deep into the hidden sink hole that had formed when an old drainpipe leaked, allowing water to erode a channel that was hidden under a few feet of dirt. The tractor's rear wheels had sunk so deep that the front wheels were nearly straight up in the air. Chuck had fallen backwards with such force that he flipped over from head to toe and landed feet first into the pipe. If that weren't bad enough, the tractor fell back against him, crushing his legs and arm against the jagged, rusty edges of the corrugated pipe.

Fortunately, his wife Celia had been helping to clear the area for a playground for their expected child. Had she not been right there and had her cell phone on hand, Chuck most likely would have bled out. Chuck had been Life Flighted to the trauma center where teams of medical heroes worked tirelessly to save his life. In the end, his life was

spared, but try as they might, the injured limbs were just too damaged to be saved.

Celia Branickson was standing by her husband's bedside, rubbing her six-month baby bump. She was getting stiff from sitting and stood to stretch when CC walked in. At first, she assumed he was just another nurse since her husband was not allowed visitors—plus, it was after three o'clock in the morning. She thought it strange that he was in regular clothes, but quickly dismissed her misgivings when she saw the ID badge. So many doctors and nurses came and went that he seemed to be just another medical person in the steady stream of professionals that had come and gone in the last thirteen hours. She was surprised someone was checking in so early, as it hadn't been that long since the last check, but considering her husband's grave condition, that was okay. She was grateful that he was being well attended.

CC made eye contact with Celia and smiled. She returned a half smile, sat back down, and looking at her husband, resumed praying for a miracle just as she had been doing for the last few hours. She was startled when CC spoke. Most of the time the nurses and doctors would simply come in, check the monitors, shake their heads, and leave.

"He seems to be in good shape. Thank God his life was spared," CC said in a soothing voice.

"Good shape" was a trigger for Celia. She jumped up and started gesticulating furiously. "How can any of this be good? His life was spared, but what about his arm and legs? He needs both arms and legs to make a living. We might lose everything. I should sue the tractor company. There should have been some kind of safety harness."

Her anger at the whole situation exploded, and she couldn't control upon whom it was unleashed. CC was the nearest target. She wanted her husband back. She wanted their livelihood protected. How dare anyone say that anything about this situation was good!

CC didn't get mad. He simply looked at Celia with sincere compassion. It seemed to flow from his body, and as she looked at him, all her anger melted away. She inhaled sharply, stifling a hysterical cry that threatened to push out of her throat. "I—I—I'm so sorry," she muttered, barely able to speak. She was ashamed of her outburst, so she bowed her head and took her husband's hand in hers, all the while holding back the sobs that were bubbling up like lava in a volcano but not quite breaking out.

CC walked to the side of the bed where Celia stood, holding her husband's remaining hand. In a quiet voice that was gentle yet weighty, he said, "You should go downstairs to the first floor. They have vending machines. Get yourself a cup of hot cocoa or coffee and go outside—get some fresh air. You've been here for hours praying and crying."

Celia looked at CC for just a moment. At first, she thought he was insane to suggest such a thing. But suddenly, a calmness came over her, and she said, "I know you're right, but I hate to leave him. He might wake up, and I want to be here if he does."

CC gently pulled her hand away from her husband's and gave a gentle squeeze. He smiled as he made eye contact. Somehow this made Celia feel a reassurance that he was not only right, but that everything he had just said made perfect sense. Besides, she could use a break, even if only for a few minutes.

She clasped CC's hands with both of hers and returned a gentle squeeze. For some unknown reason, she suddenly pulled CC into a tight

hug. She then turned, kissed her husband on the forehead, and started to leave the room. As she reached the door, she turned back. CC met her eyes and spoke, "Don't ever think that your prayers are a waste of time. Every single one counts."

Celia smiled, turned, and continued out the door. She paused at the nurses' station, nodding and smiling at Betty, one of the nurses on duty who was standing by the desk, and told them she was taking a short break. She continued on to the elevators. She didn't feel the need to rush. Honestly, for the first time since the accident, she felt a calmness pour over her. She actually smiled and started to hum a tune.

CC was alone with Chuck and was ready to complete his first mission. The only sound was the heart monitor's rhythmic beeping and Chuck exhaling through the oxygen mask. CC moved closer to the bed, and leaning over the heavily sedated man, he clasped Chuck's hand and lay his other hand on Chuck's head. He closed his eyes, smiled, and prayed a simple prayer: "Most Holy Father, I believe you have sent me to Chuck and Celia so that your boundless mercy and power can be displayed. Please, Father, heal Chuck so that he can complete whatever work you have in store for him and his family. In Jesus name, Amen." Chuck stirred just a little, then fell back into the drug-induced sleep.

CC pulled his hands away and smiled. He didn't know what was going to happen because the dream didn't reveal that part, but he believed it would be wonderful. The dream had sent him here. His mission was complete, and it was time to leave.

CC made his way past the nurses' station. Once again, none of the three nurses on duty seemed to notice him. They all had their backs to him and their faces buried in paperwork—even Betty who was standing by the counter of the nurses' station didn't seem to notice him—it was almost like he was invisible. He continued his way to sub

level two, retracing the same path as when he had entered. He used the ID badge at each door that had an access control reader.

When he reached sub-floor two, he stopped to consider the ID badge. He knew he wouldn't take it with him, as that would be stealing, but he wasn't sure what he should do. He finally decided to hang the badge on the handle of the "Employee Only" door in hopes that the owner would realize it had been dropped, and return to get it.

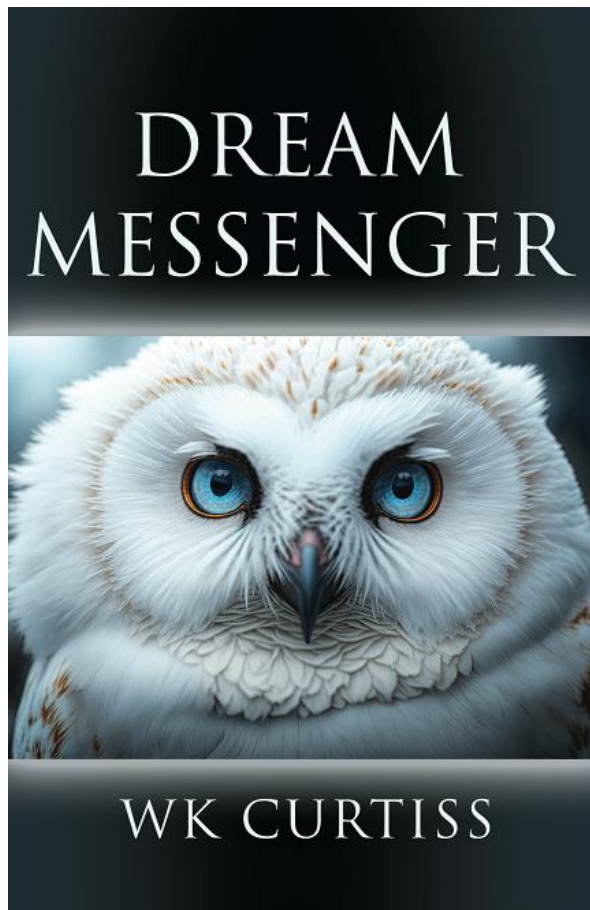
CC then turned toward the exit door and noticed the camera perched above it—the camera was pointing right at him. He looked into the camera and felt a momentary twinge of fear in his gut. Had he been recorded? Would he now be exposed? He didn't remember seeing a camera in his dream. However, as suddenly as the fear came, it left, and a calmness filled his mind. He smiled and left the building. When the exit door clicked, he turned back and pulled it just to make sure it was secure. It was definitely locked. No one would enter that way without a badge to key in. Maybe he should have hung the ID badge on the outside of this door, but it was too late to go back.

CC walked to the parking lot, got into his car, and made the thirty-five-minute drive to the hotel. As far as he knew, he had accomplished the given mission. He was at peace.

It was 4:30 in the morning when he arrived at the hotel. Even though he had slept so long just a few short hours ago, sleep was calling his name! As he lay in bed praying, he wondered what would be the outcome of this mission.

About the Author

WK Curtiss migrated south from Pennsylvania and eventually ended up in Georgia where he lives with his wife of forty-three years. He has always loved writing, especially fiction and started at an early age. When he isn't writing he is gardening or spending time with his grandchildren. After retiring from a long career in Police Communications, he decided it was time to bring some of his story ideas to life to be shared with others. Dream Messenger is his first Christian Fiction to be published and hopefully many more will follow.



CC's life is suddenly altered after a visit in his dreams by an other-worldly being. He embarks on a journey of prayer and encouragement to help those in need of a miracle. Will his prayers be answered, or will other forces intervene?

Dream Messenger

By WK Curtiss

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