



The Incredible Journey

# A KING, A DREAM and YOU

## RESCUE FROM ORION

The Book of  
**DANIEL**

GARY KENT



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## **The Incredible Journey**

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# A KING, A DREAM AND YOU

An amusing story tells of a man who walked the streets of Sydney always snapping his fingers. Someone asked him why he was doing it, and he replied, "To keep the lions away." He was reminded that there hadn't been any lions on the streets of Sydney for a long time, if ever. And to that he answered triumphantly, "Effective, isn't it?"

We smile at the methods used by this deluded character in dealing with his fears and problems. However, it seems that many today are using equally

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questionable methods in dealing with their own problems and fears - all the while kidding themselves that they are effective.

For example, there is our preoccupation with the future. It would seem that ingrained in the human psyche is a fear of the unknown - an intense desire to discover what lies ahead. Today the future is big news and big business. This is demonstrated by the remarkable resurgence that astrology is experiencing in western nations. Horoscopes and other astrological instruction is offered in popular magazines, newspapers, and at newsstands everywhere.

This method of dealing with the problem of uncertainty about the future has made the astrologers, the clairvoyants and the fortunetellers the high priests of our age. But is this the answer to our urge to discover what lies ahead? Or are we

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merely “snapping our fingers” and deluding ourselves that we are effectively dealing with this “lion”?

The astrologers, clairvoyants and fortunetellers have failed to provide reliable answers regarding the future of our planet. There is a better way. This better way is demonstrated clearly in the experience of one of the most famous kings this world has known.

Nebuchadnezzar II, the son of Nabopolassar, was the second ruler of the NeoBabylonian Empire from 605 to 562 BC. The capital of his empire was the city of Babylon, situated about 88 kilometres south of Baghdad, present-day capital of Iraq. Babylon's remains are still visible today. Through ancient history, modern archaeology and the Biblical records, we have available to us volumes of information about this ancient king.

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One night during the second year of his reign, Nebuchadnezzar's sleep was disturbed by his fears about the future. As he looked questioningly into the future he wondered how long his reign would last, and what the future held in store for his empire.

With his mind preoccupied with the future, the king had an unusual dream. When he awoke the next morning, he sensed that the dream had great significance regarding the future. Because of the importance he placed on dreams, Nebuchadnezzar needed to know what the dream meant. But then a peculiar thing happened - the troubled king, as hard as he tried, could not recall his dream.

It so happened that Nebuchadnezzar was deeply religious, believing in astrology and magic and worshipping the chief

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Babylonian god, Marduk, (also known as Bel). Among his advisors were the world's leading astrologers and psychics. These wise men claimed to be able to read minds and foretell the future.

The king snapped his fingers and these futurologists were summoned to the royal court to recall and interpret the dream. The story is there to be read in Daniel's book as part of our Bible. You will find it in the second chapter.

To the assembly of wise men Nebuchadnezzar brings his stern demand. I have had a dream that troubles me and I want to know what it means... so tell me the dream and interpret it for me. Daniel 2:3,6 NIV

This fraternity of astrologers and mystics claimed to have psychic powers and contact with the gods.



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They claimed to be able to read the stars and to foretell the future. Now the king gave them a unique opportunity to reveal their talents and demonstrate their psychic powers. It was up to them to either prove their claims or expose their deceit.

The hesitant gestures, time wasting, and feeble excuses of these so-called wise men soon indicated to the king that they were frauds. Furious at being deceived by their claims, he commanded that all the wise men of Babylon be executed.

Numbered among the learned elite of the empire was a young Hebrew named Daniel, who worshipped the God of heaven - the one true God. He had been captured by Nebuchad-nezzar's army during the Babylonian siege and plunder of Jerusalem in 605 BC, then carried off to Babylon as a war hostage. It was customary

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for Babylonian kings to select the finest young scholars and the most talented captives in order to educate them to serve as advisors in the royal palace.

Although Daniel knew nothing of the events surrounding the king's dream, the soldiers came for him as well, for he was considered a 'wise man'.

Finding himself under sentence of death, Daniel didn't despair. He knew that the God whom he worshipped was able to reveal both the king's dream and its meaning. So, Daniel requested an audience with the king, and promised him that given time, he would return with the desired information.

Permission was granted, and Daniel and his companions spent much of the night in prayer. God did not fail to hear and answer those prayers. *During the night the mystery was revealed to Daniel in*

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*a vision. Then Daniel praised the God of heaven ... Daniel 2:19*

Daniel was back at the palace the next morning, prepared to tell the king all that he wanted to know. Immediately Nebuchadnezzar demanded impatiently, ...Are you able to tell me what I saw in my dream and interpret it? Daniel 2:26

Without hesitation Daniel replied, ...No wise man, enchanter, magician or diviner can explain to the king the mystery he has asked about, but there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries. He has shown King Nebuchadnezzar what will happen in the days to come... Daniel 2:27,28

There is no hint of boasting in Daniel's voice as he proceeds to tell the king details of God's incredible revelation about the dream. He started by pointing out the failure of the astrologers and

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psychics. He told the king that a knowledge of future events is not to be found in astrology or in the mystic arts of the occult, however, ...there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries...Daniel 2:28. Here, for us to note, is the only source of dependable information about the future - the God of heaven.

Daniel then proceeded to outline the entire dream. He reminded the king that in his dream he had seen an enormous metal statue of a man with a head of gold, chest and arms of silver, belly and thighs of bronze, legs of iron, and feet and toes made of a mixture of iron and clay. As the king watched, a rock appeared as though it was cut out of a mountain without a hand being seen. This mysterious rock crashed down on the feet and smashed the image into fine dust, which was blown away by the wind. The next astonishing feature of the stone was that it expanded and grew

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until it filled the whole earth.

The king could hardly contain his excitement as the dream of only a few hours earlier came flooding back into his mind. Hardly able to hold back his excitement he waited expectantly for the interpretation.

Daniel began in sombre tones, This was the dream, and now we will interpret it to the king... You are the head of gold. Daniel 2:36,38. Daniel identified the head of gold as representing Nebuchadnezzar's magnificent kingdom of Babylon. But the interpretation continued. The mind-gripping fact is that by this dream God is not only answering Nebuchadnezzar's questions about the future, but yours and mine as well. We will soon learn that this dream, given by God, speaks in a very dramatic way to each of us. God is here unveiling the future,

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giving history in advance, by tracing the rise and fall of world powers from Nebuchadnezzar's day to the end of the world and the second coming of Christ. The dream reaches right down through history and finds its climax in the days in which we are living. Daniel continued, *After you, another kingdom will rise, inferior to yours...* Daniel 2:39 Courageously he informs the king that his golden kingdom of Babylon is not to last forever, but would one day be overthrown. And so, it turned out, for the world power represented in the dream by the chest and arms of silver defeated the Babylonians in 539 BC. The kingdom of the Medes and Persians dominated the world political scene for two centuries.

Daniel's panorama of the rise and fall of nations continued to unfold. He told of a ...third kingdom, one of bronze, (that would) rule over the whole earth. Daniel

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2:39. The Greeks, under the brilliant leadership of Alexander the Great, defeated the Persians in the battle of Arbella in 331 BC. But there was still more to be heard.

This third kingdom, represented in the king's dream by the belly and thighs of bronze, was to be followed by a fourth kingdom. Daniel declared with absolute confidence, Finally, there will be a fourth kingdom, strong as iron - for iron breaks and smashes everything - and as iron breaks things to pieces, so it will crush and break all others. Daniel 2:40

True to the prophetic dream, in 168 BC the iron monarch of Rome grasped the sceptre of world control. This fourth kingdom, so aptly represented in the dream by the legs of iron, was the most enduring and extensive of the four world empires.

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The king listened spellbound as Daniel proceeded to open the last section of the dream. At this point the complexion of the dream changed noticeably. Amazingly no fifth world empire emerged from the ruins of the Roman Empire. Rather, Just as you saw the feet and toes were partly of baked clay and partly of iron, so this will be a divided kingdom... so the people will be a mixture and will not remain united any more than iron mixes with clay. Daniel 2:41,43

Daniel stressed, in his interpretation to Nebuchadnezzar, the point of transition - even as iron and clay cannot and will not bind or unite, so the Roman empire would disintegrate into nations which would never be united into a universal empire as Rome once was.



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The mighty Roman empire finally collapsed in AD 476 and was divided among the barbarian tribes. From these, the nations of modern Europe evolved - some strong as iron, some weak as clay; but hopelessly divided.

Numerous military leaders, including Napoleon, the Kaiser and Hitler, have attempted to unify these nations into a single mighty empire again. However, all these attempts have failed just as the prophecy given in the king's dream long ago, predicted, *...so the people will be a mixture and will not remain united, any more than iron mixes with clay.* Daniel 2:43

What about the dream's climax? Daniel attached great significance to the closing features of the dream. It obviously has serious implications for people living in the 21st century. Listen to Daniel's

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words: *In the time of those kings, the God of Heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed....* Daniel 2:44

God is saying that in the days of the kings represented by the feet and toes of the image - the nations of modern Europe - He will set up an eternal kingdom to end all earthly kingdoms. This eternal kingdom, not established by human hands, was represented in the dream by the rock that destroyed the image by striking it on its feet of iron and clay. We can expect the next and final act in the drama of the rise and fall of nations to be the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

Here, in sources such as Daniel's prophecies, is true knowledge and hope concerning the future. This world is in God's hands. He is in control. He orders world events, guiding the world towards its final destiny. There is a plan and it will

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not fail because history demonstrates that, *...The dream is true and the interpretation is trustworthy.* Daniel 2:45

The message is that Jesus Christ is soon to establish His eternal kingdom - a kingdom that has been made possible through Calvary. Now is the time to pray with the thief who accepted Jesus on the cross, *...Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.* Luke 23:42 NIV Why not make the decision of a lifetime right now, to apply for citizenship in Christ's everlasting kingdom by using the same method as that of the thief on the cross?

Let's stop 'snapping our fingers' and turn to the better *...way, and the truth and the life.* John 14:6 NIV

# RESCUE FROM ORION

It was September 23, 1922. The old U.S.S. MISSISSIPPI, with a new name, lay at anchor in the harbor of Mitylene -- an island in the Aegean Sea.

In the gray morning, a young American civilian had come out to the ship in a borrowed rowboat and asked to see the captain. And now, a few hours later, he had just delivered an ultimatum to the Greek government.

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The story had its beginning not many weeks earlier. Asa Jennings, with his wife and family, had been sent by the YMCA to the Turkish city of Smyrna. His assignment -- to study what might be done to smooth relations between the Turks and Armenians and Greeks and Jews of that troubled city.

Things had happened fast. The Allies, you may recall, had given Smyrna to the Greeks as a reward for their participation in the war. The Greek Army had moved into Smyrna and pushed inland toward Ankara. But Ataturk had rallied the Turkish people behind him in a daring drive for independence.

The Greek Army was confident of victory. Its troops were pushing steadily toward the heart of the country -- when suddenly these Greek troops retreated before Ataturk. They burned and pillaged their way back to Smyrna.

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The Greek troops, in their wild retreat, forced their own countrymen, as well as the Armenians, to abandon their homes and flee to the coast. Every road to the sea was choked with refugees.

And then, believe it or not, the Greek soldiers, thinking only of their own safety, simply took ship and sailed away. The refugees were left to make out as best they could.

And then, suddenly -- no one seems to know just how -- Smyrna was in flames. The great mass of refugees was pushed toward the sea, with the fire behind them.

Asa Jennings, while the city was still burning, put his little family aboard an American destroyer. But he stayed behind to see what he could do for the refugees.

Somehow, he had arranged for food to be sent in. But this suffering mass of

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humanity that choked the quay, caught between fire and sea, needed more than food. They needed ships!

Now, providentially it seemed, the 20 Greek transports that had carried the Greek soldiers away to safety were anchored at Mitylene. Surely Greek ships would be willing to save Greek people. Asa Jennings made his way to Mitylene and to General Frankos, who was in charge of the transports.

General Frankos wanted to help. But he was cautious. He wanted a guarantee of protection. He knew 20 ships would be a prize for the Turks who had no navy. He just couldn't make up his mind.

Finally, in desperation, Asa Jennings left the ship.

It was then, that through the early morning mist, he sighted a familiar-looking outline

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in the harbour. It looked like an American battleship. But there were no American battleships in these waters. He learned that this was the old USS MISSISSIPPI, sold to the Greeks and now called KILKIS. He had a strange feeling that he would find help on that ship. And he had decided now to go over the head of General Frankos. He would make contact directly with the Greek government in Athens.

He told his story to the captain.

He then asked that a code message be sent to Athens, requesting all ships in the waters about Smyrna to be placed at his disposal. It was about four o'clock in the morning.

A message came back, "Who are you?" A natural question. He had been in that part of the world only about a month, and no one had ever heard of him.



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He sent word back, "I am in charge of American relief at Mitylene." He did not explain that he was in charge only by virtue of being the only American there.

Athens outdid General Frankos in caution. The Cabinet would have to decide. The Cabinet was not in session. A later message advised that the Cabinet would meet in the morning. But what protection would be given the ships? Would American destroyers accompany them? Did that mean that American destroyers would protect the ships if the Turks should attempt to take them? And so, it went.

Finally, at four in the afternoon, the American's patience was exhausted. He wired Athens that if he did not receive a favourable reply by six o'clock, he would wire openly, without code -- letting the whole world know that the Greek

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government had refused to rescue its own people from certain death.

It worked. Shortly before six o'clock, a message came through: "ALL SHIPS IN AEGEAN PLACED YOUR COMMAND. REMOVE REFUGEES SMYRNA."

Those 10 words meant life for many thousands. They also meant that a young, unknown American had just been made Admiral of the Greek Navy.

And so, Asa Jennings assumed command. The captains of the 20 ships were asked to be ready to leave for Smyrna by midnight. And then at midnight, he ordered the Greek flag run down, an American flag flown in its place, with a signal that meant "Follow me." He mounted the bridge and ordered full steam ahead.

Picture the scene if you can. As the ships moved toward Smyrna, he could

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see from his station on the bridge the smoking ruins of what had once been the business section of town. Directly in front, gaunt brick and stone skeletons of once fine buildings pushed themselves up from the charred debris.

And at the water's edge, stretching for miles, was what looked like a lifeless black border. Yet he knew that it was a border of living sufferers waiting, hoping, praying -- as they had done every moment for days -- for ships, ships, ships.

As the ships moved closer, and the shore spread out before him, it seemed as if every face on that quay was turned toward them, and every arm outstretched to bring them in. It seemed that the whole shore moved out to grasp them.

The air was filled with the cries of those thousands, cries of such joy that the sound pierced to the very marrow of his

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bones. No need for anyone to tell them what those ships were for. They who had scanned that watery horizon for days looking wistfully for ships, did not have to be told that here was help, that here was life and safety.

Never had he been so thankful, so truly happy, as on that early morning when he realized that at last -- and thank God in time -- he had been able to bring hope, and a new life, to those despairing legions. It was Asa Jennings' son who told this story again and again and again, in such an inspiring way. And every time I read it, I'm inspired!

I can never forget it. And I can never forget the striking parallel that I find in this Book, the Bible.

For here, I find a story of rescue, not from the sea, but from the sky. Involving

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not 300 thousand refugees on a single shore -- but, if they are willing, every man, woman, and child on a shaking, burning, convulsing planet. Pushed to the brink -- the brink of oblivion. And no way out but rescue from the sky!

You will recall that when Jesus, the Son of God, left this planet, He left with His disciples the fantastic promise, I will come again. Read Jesus words of rescue and hope in John 14:1-3 NKJV:

Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.

What a promise! Here was the hope of seeing their Lord again. Nothing in this

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world could have meant more to them.

Let's take another look at the disciples -- on the day they watched Jesus depart from their midst. Let's look at Acts 1:9-11. The disciples went out with Jesus on the mountain. And as Jesus ascended into heaven, they strained their necks and their eyes watching that ascent. Man steps off a mountain and goes down. God steps off a mountain and goes up.

*Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, who also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven."*

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Just as He went -- He will return. Riding the cloud -- far in the distance. Then nearer and nearer and still nearer. His disciples -- this time thousands of them -- staring into the heavens. Straining their eyes for the first glimpse of their returning Lord.

I never tire of the way the apostle Paul describes it in 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18, describing this glorious scene:

*For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus, we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words.*

News. Good news. Encouraging news. Comforting news. This isn't death. This

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is resurrection. This isn't destruction. This is survival. This isn't panic. This is rescue. Like the ships moving in to Smyrna. It's a way off this planet. And it's in time. Just in time!

This isn't gloom. This isn't doom. This isn't something to spoil your plans. This isn't something to fear -- or dread -- or wish you could postpone. That is, unless you don't want to be rescued. And who wouldn't want to be rescued in an hour like that?

Who would have chosen to turn back to the smoking ruins of Smyrna -- with ships in sight? And who would want to turn back to this smoking, shaking, convulsing planet with rescue on the way?

You see, by the time our Lord returns, this planet won't be such a comfortable place, such a desirable place to be, as it



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is now. And we are beginning to understand how that could be.

Disasters by land and sea and air seem to be increasing daily. Floods that drive thousands from their homes. Tornadoes -- as many as 175 worldwide, in a three-day period.

And earthquakes. In one city, people so feared an earthquake that they went to bed one night fully clothed and beside an open door. And their fears were not ungrounded. For that very night at 12:28 am, the city of Managua, Nicaragua, died! Earthquakes. And you know what's predicted for the future. You know what the scientists say. And this is not surprising. Jesus said in Matthew 24:7,8:

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*... And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of sorrows.*

Of course, not all our disasters are natural disasters. Many of our troubles are man-made. But this, too, is no surprise. For Jesus said of our day, in that very same chapter, in Matthew 24:12:

*And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold.*

Could anyone describe it more accurately? Sin rampant everywhere.

For the last 25 years, hijackings have become commonplace. They've become a fact of life in some parts of the world. And terrorism has exploded. Mass killings are more and more common. Think of the Oklahoma City bombing. Think of the barracks in Saudi Arabia, the American troops. Think of the

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Olympic game bombings. Think of the World Trade Centre bombing.

Innocent people killed because they just happen to be in the way when deranged men, drugged men, disgruntled men are on the rampage.

The earthquakes, the pestilences, the terrorism, the rise in crime and violence of our society, the wars and lawlessness are omens of a greater time of trouble to come.

The scenes of conflict and violence that we see today are yet a grim rehearsal of scenes that are yet to transpire before the fateful moment when God sends rescue from the skies.

The prophet Daniel writes of the end times. He describes our day in Daniel 12:1. Daniel looks down the stream of time. He looks over the Millenniums and

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he pinpoints this age; this generation and he says:

*. . . And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, even to that time. And at that time your people shall be delivered...*

A time of trouble such as we've never imagined. But deliverance will come.

That's the good news.

The bad news is that when the Son of God descends the blazing skies, some will be ready, and some will not be. Some will want Him to come, and some will not. That's the tragedy of rebellion.

The Book of Revelation describes how some will react when they see their Lord approaching. Revelation 6: 15-17, I believe, are some of the saddest verses in all the Bible. The Bible describes a group

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of people that are not joyously happy for Christ to come. They're not looking up into the sky, longing for Him to rescue them. In fact, their reactions are quite the opposite.

*And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, and said to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?"*

But there's another picture, a much more joyous picture. It's not a picture of men and women running and crying for the rocks to fall on them. It's not a picture of men and women rebelling against God. It's a picture of joy and happiness and gladness. It's found in Isaiah: 25:9:

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And it will be said in that day: 'Behold, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us. This is the Lord; we have waited for Him; we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation.'

Picture it, if you can. Like the ships at Smyrna. A vast mass of humanity pushed to the edge of a smoking, ruined, convulsing world. Caught between the fires of time and the realities of eternity. Desperate for a way off this planet.

Scanning the skies for the first hint that rescue is on the way. Staring into space. Straining our eyes for the first glimpse of our Lord as He emerges from the corridors of Orion and rides the cloud closer and closer to earth.

Every face is turned toward the sky. Every eye filled with tears of irrepressible joy. Every voice shouting His welcome. Every arm outstretched to bring Him in. As if

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the earth itself reached out to grasp its Creator.

No need to tell us why He's come. We who have scanned the heavens wistfully for days, while a planet burns behind us, don't have to be told that here is rescue from the skies. We've waited for our Lord. And now at last He's here!

What an hour to be alive!

Whilst we cannot listen to the music of the song *The Midnight Cry*, the words powerfully describe the scene:

“I hear the sound of a mighty rushing  
wind,  
And it's closer now than it's ever been.  
I can almost hear the trumpet,  
As Gabriel sounds the call,  
And at the midnight cry we'll be going  
home.

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When Jesus steps out on a cloud to call  
God's children,  
The dead in Christ shall rise to meet Him  
in the air.

And then those that remain shall be  
quickly changed,  
We'll be changed in a moment,  
At the midnight cry,  
When Jesus comes again.  
I look around me,  
I see prophecies fulfilled everyday  
The signs of the times,  
They're appearing everywhere.  
I can almost hear the Father,  
As He says, "Son, go get my children."  
At the midnight cry  
The Bride of Christ will rise.

When Jesus steps out on a cloud to call  
God's children,  
The dead in Christ shall rise to meet Him  
in the air.



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And then those that remain will be quickly  
changed,  
At the midnight cry,  
When Jesus comes again.

And then those that remain will be quickly  
changed,  
At the midnight cry  
When Jesus comes again.

*Chuck Day and Greg Day*

The greatest joy of the Christian's heart,  
the greatest desire of the Christian's heart,  
the greatest longing of the Christian's heart  
is the coming of Jesus. Let that longing fill  
your heart today.

The King is indeed coming. He's really  
coming, friend. Over 1500 times in the  
Bible, it describes the Second Coming  
of Christ. For every prophecy in the Old  
Testament on the first coming of Jesus,  
there are eight on the Second Coming.

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The Second Coming of Christ is mentioned once in every 25 verses in the New Testament. It's the most wonderful event in human history and it's drawing close.

The coming of Jesus is the joy of my life, friend. What if Jesus were not coming again? What would you tell somebody dying of cancer? What would you tell somebody who's just lost a child in an auto accident? What would you tell somebody who's terminally ill in the hospital? That there would be little hope, that the grave was the end, that death was a dark hole in the ground, a long night without a morning.

But the good news is, the joyous news is that Jesus is really, certainly, definitely, surely coming again. And that joy gives a new sparkle to our eyes. It puts a smile on our face, it puts a joy in our heart.

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Our world is in a real mess: terrorism, millions of refugees, global warming, earthquakes, hurricanes, floods, escalating crime, lawlessness, a shaky global economy and a volatile stock market. Our whole world is on edge! Millions are asking, "What on earth will happen next? Is there any hope for the future? What does the future hold for me?"

A KING, A DREAM AND YOU reveals to us the next and final act in the drama of the rise and fall of nations. The booklet shows us the true knowledge and hope concerning the future.

The good news is that God has a plan for the future! Will you be ready for it? Will you chose to be rescued?



**Pastor Gary Kent is the Speaker for The Incredible Journey ministry. He has produced and presented numerous documentaries on subjects including the Bible, Bible prophecy, world events and natural health. His passion is to share the good news of Jesus' imminent return.**



**The Incredible Journey**

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