

Heaven is for real
but are near death
experiences?

(2 Corinthians 12+9)

Books Written On This Subject

- "Heaven Is For Real" – (2010)
- "Embraced by the Light" – (1992)
- "90 Minutes In Heaven" – (2004)
- "Saved by the Light" – (1995)
- "23 Minutes in Hell" – (2006)
- "Plato's Republic: The Myth of Er" – (380 B.C.)

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What to Make of Such Claims

- Either they are not telling the truth about having these experiences.
- They are telling the truth about having these experiences.
- Or they are incorrectly interpreting the experiences they are having.

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Are These People Lying?

- I have no reason to believe that those who recount such stories are deliberately lying, by making the whole thing up.
- There's a common set of circumstances that seem to be experienced (e.g. a bright light, a tunnel, an overwhelming feeling of peace or dread, seeing relatives, a life review, etc.).
- The reason I don't think they're lying is because I, myself, have had one of these experiences.

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Are These People Experiencing What They Think They Are Experiencing?

- No, but that answer does not call into question their integrity.
- I'm simply saying that they've had an experience, but have incorrectly interpreted that experience.
- Why would I conclude that?
 - Because the vast majority of these experiences contradict the Bible.

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Are These People Experiencing What They Think They Are Experiencing?

- (Galatians 1:8-9).
 - Do not allow yourself to be more moved by human experiences and testimony than the word of God!
- (John 14:6).
- (John 3:5; Matthew 7:21).

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Doesn't The Bible Record Visions Of The Afterlife?

- Yes
- Stephen (Acts 7:55-60).
- Paul (2 Corinthians 12:1-9).
- John (Revelation 1:9-20).
- But these are "Near Death Experiences," but visions given to prophets who were very much alive.

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Physiological Rather Than Spiritual

- I believe these are physiological events that get interpreted by our own unique backgrounds, philosophies, and values.
- How else would we explain...
 - Christians seeing Jesus.
 - Hindus seeing Yama.
 - Buddhists being reincarnated.
 - Atheists seeing libraries and crossing the river Styx.
 - Muslims seeing a bridge to Jannah.

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Physiological Rather Than Spiritual

- Researchers state that when the heart stops, there is a flurry of electrical activity in the brain (PNAS – Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences).
- It is also believed that the frequently overwhelming sense of peace and love can be accounted for by the release of endorphins do to the stress the body is undergoing.

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Closing Thoughts

- I have no doubts that people do have experiences, however these experiences are physiological rather than spiritual.
- Consider all the people who died and were raised again.
 - (1 Kings 17:17-24; 2 Kings 4:31-37; 2 Kings 13:20-21; Matthew 27:52-53; Luke 7:11-17; Luke 8:49-56; John 11:41-44; Acts 9:36-43; Acts 20:9-12).

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Closing Thoughts

- In not a single case did God see fit to use their testimony of what they saw as a motivation to obey him.
- We have something better than the whimsical testimony of man that cannot be verified. We have the inspired word of God!
- May we be moved by its testimony to obey God so that we will be prepared for the afterlife!

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