

For we walk by faith, not by sight

The most recent in a long train of books about visions of the heavenly realm in near death experiences, which achieved number one status on the NYT non-fiction books best seller list, has now been made into a movie, which will open soon in theaters around the country.

What makes this book somewhat different, is it is the account of the vision of a three year, ten month old boy (who is now 12), who is the son of a pastor of a Christian church who wholeheartedly endorses his son's vision.

I don't doubt the veracity of any of these visions. I don't think those who experience them, including this boy, are making them up. What I doubt is that God has anything to do with these experiences, or that they reflect or portray what heaven will actually look like, and what will be going on there.

I hold to this position because of what the title of this article says, which is a quote of a Bible verse (KJB), from the apostle Paul's second letter to the Corinthians, chapter five, verse seven. The subject matter of this section of the chapter in which this parenthetical verse appears is—wouldn't you know—heaven.

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What I believe the verse is saying is that true believers in a heavenly realm do not believe in it because they have seen it; they believe in it, i.e., have faith in its existence, because of what is revealed about it in Holy Writ.

At least two other passages of Scripture corroborate this:

Heb 11:1
Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

Rom 10:17
So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

“The faithful” believe in heaven, not because they have had some sort of vision of it, but because of what Scripture says about it. In that chapter of 2 Corinthians mentioned above, it says this:

2 Cor 5:1-6
For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

2 For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven:

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3 If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked.

4 For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.

5 Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit.

6 Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord:

The “house which is from heaven” that the passage says believers will be “clothed upon with,” is metaphorical language depicting the heavenly, immortal body that will replace the earthly, mortal one we exist in during our earthly sojourn. This is born out in Paul's letter to the Philippians:

Phil 3:20-21
For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:

21 Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

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