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Out of Body experiences

Are out of Body experiences legitimate?**(II Corinthians 12: 1 – 4.)**

Intro: Every so often we hear and or read about people who have described some form of out of body experiences. Many times, they state that they saw a bright light, and or they saw an angel, and some that they saw Jesus and experienced a serene and peacefulness. So, the question is, are such reports following a near death experience or having been revived after death, legitimate claims? Short answer, yes, it is possible for an individual to have an out of body experience, which begs the next question, how can we be sure?

I. The Bible is always the best gauge.

- A. There are a lot of things in this world that people claim have happened to them in the spiritual realm and the question is always about the _____ of such claims.
- B. I continue to state that the Bible is always the best _____ in all matters of life and faith, and we have to spend some time researching these matters.
- C. This several things,
 1. Seek out all passages of Scripture _____ to the subject.
 2. This means using a sound _____ to look up the various words as we go.
 3. This also means getting a handle on the _____ as well as the words.
 4. In every case, the Bible is the final authority regardless of _____ the external subject may appear to be.
- D. The short answer to OBE or out of body experience, is that one has to pay close attention to the account that one is giving because _____ biblical factors need to be considered.
 1. Was this person _____ and did the OBE result in the person coming to a _____ knowledge of Christ if they weren't saved prior to their claim of an OBE.
 2. If the account of the OBE entails nothing more than _____ to have seen Christ and the claim of how great and peaceful heaven is without impacting their lives with a personal message from Christ concerning what He expects of and from them.
 3. I have seldom, if ever heard how this experience has changed their understanding of the need, if they are unsaved, to get saved.
- E. In the Scriptures, we have to understand there were visions and dreams that God _____ to address certain individuals with specific information.
 1. Daniel is one of those individuals who had visions and dreams from God.
Daniel. Chapters 2, 7, 8, 9, 10 – 12. Result – Daniel _____ more fervently.

2. **Isaiah 6:1 – 6**, Isaiah had a vision that changed his _____ of himself and gave him a life changing experience that resulted in a greater and fuller surrendered life.
3. There were others who had visions:
 - a. The purpose of visions was to _____ God's plans and purposes – **Gen. 15:1-6**.
 - b. Certainly this was the situation with Daniel whether it was God revealing to Daniel King Nebuchadnezzar's dream about God's plan & purposes for the king.
 - c. God revealing His plans and purposes for _____ nations and Israel's future.

F. Then we have **II Corinthians 12:1 – 4**.

1. The Apostle Paul is not _____ about how one perceives his experience. **12:2 & 3**.
2. This may well have been the account in **Acts 14:19 & 20, and II Cor. 11:25**.
3. To me, we see the wisdom of God directing Paul to not make an extraordinary event to the point that others would either _____ such an experience, or that others would make more of it than God intended.
4. This experience for Paul was _____ to Paul in that God had a purpose and a plan for Paul
 - a. As we read through this account, it was both an encouragement and most importantly, _____. (**Verses 4 & 6**)
 - b. This is the only mention of the experience and not something he would continue boast of, or make the topic of conversations.
 - c. Which leads me to believe that as Paul uses or mentions this experience for a _____ into the remainder of his discourse about,
 - (1). Paul was convinced that if God would remove the thorn, what that may have been, that Paul could be more _____.
 - (2). God showed Paul, if I can bring you to life from the dead, then I can work through your perceived _____, **verses 7 – 10**.
5. For me, such an experience is meant to be a _____ experience for a personal purpose in which God has a personal message at the deepest level. Not an experience to be taken lightly or casually, and not meant to be boasted of, but to be humbled.
6. In Daniel's situation, his visions or the ability to interpret visions was God's way of laying out His _____ and future for the nations and also Israel's future. And rather than finding any occasion to boast, he was at times terrified and troubled by what he saw.
7. What ever Paul saw or heard in his OBE, he shared with no one – **verse 4**. Paul did not write a book or go on a book tour or speaking engagements about his experience.
8. It did however, _____ him in the remainder of the ministry God had for him as we read in **II Corinthians 11:25 – 33**.