

# The Boy Who Went to Heaven

*By Frank Zimmerman*

*My daughter recently watched a video on YouTube.  
This video is about a boy who died for a short while, went to heaven,  
and then was revived and told what he saw in heaven.  
She asked me what I thought about it. Here is my answer...*

**W**HEN I was a young boy (about 12 years old), I had lost interest in the Roman Catholic church, which was the Christian tradition I was raised in. I think part of the reason was that I heard all the stories in the Bible, about how God used different prophets, and the apostles, and did wonderful things, and it seemed like we lost all that. It seemed that church had become just a tradition, like a special holiday would be. Every week you met with friends and neighbors, but God didn't seem directly involved anymore.

## **New Age and Life after Death**

But I thought there must be more meaning to life, so I started reading books about *New Age*. That's a kind of modern religion. People probably wouldn't call it a religion but more of a philosophy. A philosophy is a teaching that tries to explain why we are here, and what we should be doing to make ourselves better. *New Age* teaching was more exciting, because it taught that there were all sorts of powers within you and around you that you could tap into, in order to make your life better. So, I thought, that sounded better than just kneeling in a church every Sunday.

One common *New Age* teaching was that humans don't really die when their bodies stop working, they just go on living in another invisible world. That also sounded good, because death is the one thing that everyone fears. They fear it because death means the end of everything we know and experience in our bodies.

## **Reader's Digest and Life after Death**

My mother used to get a magazine called *Reader's Digest*, and one month they had an article all about people whose hearts stopped beating for a short while (some minutes), and then were brought back to life in a hospital. The article told about what they experienced when they were dead. Many of them said that they rose out of their bodies, hovered around the room, and then traveled through a tunnel to a place that was full of light. They felt warmth and love. I think some of them might have mentioned meeting someone like God or Jesus, but I don't remember now. That article really excited me, because I thought,

"Here is scientific proof that there is life after death!"

Since I had learned science at school I thought you should "prove everything" before you believe it, and here, I thought was proof: real after-life experiences. How could it be wrong? They actually died, then experienced something, then were able to tell about it when they were revived. I was pretty happy about it at the time, as it gave me a hope that there was something after death.

## **Old Testament Saints in Heaven**

Then, about 10 years later, I started studying the Bible more deeply, and came to realize that this idea was not correct. The Old Testament especially has no reference to people going to heaven after they die. The only people that are mentioned as going to heaven at death are:

### **1. ENOCH**

He was the seventh generation from Adam, and the Bible says:

#### **Genesis 5**

<sup>24</sup> And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him.

This means that God changed his mortal body so that it was immortal, and he could therefore be taken to heaven. No grave

marked his spot of death, and there was no funeral celebration because his body was gone!

### **1 Corinthians 15**

<sup>50</sup> ...flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither does corruption inherit incorruption.

There is no death in heaven, so we need new bodies to live there, bodies that don't die: that's what Enoch got.

### **2. MOSES**

He died before entering the land that the Israelites were promised and was buried. But we are told in another place in the Bible that his body was raised from the dead:

#### **Jude 1**

<sup>9</sup> Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses.

So here we are told that Michael the archangel came down and raised the body of Moses. The devil tried to stop it by arguing that Moses made mistakes and didn't deserve to be raised to heaven, but Moses had repented of his mistakes and so was able to be raised.

We are sure that Moses was in heaven, because he later appears when Jesus was on earth. He appeared on the mount of transfiguration with Elijah. Which brings us to the last person:

### **3. ELIJAH**

He was taken to heaven in a chariot of fire.

#### **2 Kings 2**

<sup>11</sup> And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.

Naturally, he would also need to have a new body, but it was changed in an instant, as he was taken to heaven.

So these are the only three people in the Old Testament (which covers the first 4000 years of earth's history) who were recorded as having been raised to heaven, and it always involved their bodies being changed. There is no mention of people "flying to heaven" outside of their bodies.

## **The Hope of the Resurrection**

Instead, the Bible clearly taught that when people died, their bodies decayed away, but that God would raise them back to life in the resurrection. The "resurrection" is a time when the dead will be brought back to life, when their bodies are raised from the dead, and the life is put back into it. This was the great hope that the believers looked forward to. I will give you a few examples of the promise of the resurrection:

### **1. ABRAHAM**

About 500 years after the flood, Abraham was given the promise of the land of Canaan (roughly where the nation of Israel is today, in the Middle East). It was also supposed to extend to eventually cover the whole earth. It was promised to him and his son, but he never possessed it during his life. When he died, it was still occupied by other people. In the New Testament, it is taught that Jesus is the "son" of Abraham that the promise referred to, and all those who have faith like Abraham, are also his children, and will inherit the land promised to Abraham.

This land that Abraham was promised included not just the land of the middle east on this earth, but was actually the earth made new, or the "New Earth". Abraham (and his "seed", which are all of those who believe in Christ) was to receive his inheritance after the resurrection of the body.

First the resurrected people would go with Jesus to the city New Jerusalem in heaven, and then after a thousand years the city would come down to this earth, the earth would be purified by fire, and Jesus would make the earth new again. The New Jerusalem would be the capital city of the New Earth. That was the city Abraham looked for.

If Abraham had gone to heaven right when he died, then he would already be in that city. But the Bible clearly states that he has not received that inheritance yet:

### **Hebrews 11**

<sup>8</sup> By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.

<sup>9</sup> By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise:

<sup>10</sup> For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

<sup>39</sup> And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise:

<sup>40</sup> God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.

Here it plainly says that Abraham looked for a heavenly city, the New Jerusalem. He did not receive the promise yet, because “they without us should not be made perfect.” What this means is that we will all receive the inheritance at the same time, in the resurrection day. At that time, the living will be changed, and the dead will be raised. Then together we will go to heaven, to the holy city, and receive the everlasting inheritance.

If Abraham went to heaven when he died, then he would already be in the inheritance. But the Bible says he is not there yet, and will not be there until we all go there together.

## **2. DAVID**

About 1000 years after Abraham, David became king of Israel. This was the same David who was a shepherd, who wrote many of the Psalms, and who slew Goliath. He was given a promise that from his flesh would come a son who was to rule the throne of Israel forever.

He had a son called Solomon, who became a very famous king of Israel, but while Solomon resembled Jesus in many ways, the

promise was actually referring to Jesus, who would come in the flesh from one of David's descendants. It would be over 1000 years before this was fulfilled, but it did happen. Both Joseph and Mary, Jesus' earthly parents came from the line of David.

Another promise to David stated that this "Holy One" who came from David would not be left in the grave, and his body would not "see corruption." This simply meant that he would be raised shortly after death, before the body would decay. This was fulfilled by Jesus, who died on Friday evening, and was raised up (with a new body) on Sunday morning. The apostles mentioned this when they preached before the people:

### **Acts 2**

<sup>29</sup> Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulcher is with us unto this day.

<sup>34</sup> For David is not ascended into the heavens.

Here they clearly say that David is still in the ground, and is "not ascended into the heavens." So David did not go to heaven at his death, but is waiting for the resurrection day.

### **3. JOB**

He was the one who suffered greatly, but was faithful to God. In the middle of his suffering, he wished he had never been born, because the pain and misery were so bad. But he hoped for the resurrection day, and spoke of it like this:

### **Job 19**

<sup>25</sup> For I know that my redeemer lives, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth:

<sup>26</sup> And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God:

<sup>27</sup> Whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me.

Here, Job clearly spoke about his faith in Jesus, the redeemer. He knew that Jesus would come "at the latter day upon the earth." We are living very close to that time now. He also knew that even

if the worms would eat his body, yet God would give him a new one, for he said “in my flesh shall I see God.” There is no talk about going to heaven at death, but rather, he looked forward to the resurrection day that would take place when Jesus returned from heaven to take His people from the earth.

## **Death Compared to Sleep**

There are also some direct statements that say that death is like a sleep, we are unconscious, and cannot think or act. Therefore, we would not be in heaven, walking around and talking:

### **Psalm 146**

<sup>4</sup> His breath goes forth, he returns to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish.

If the day we die “our thoughts perish” then how could we be flying around in heaven?

### **Ecclesiastes 9**

<sup>5</sup> For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten.

The New Testament also refers to death as a “sleep.” Jesus said that the little girl he raised from the dead was sleeping:

### **Matthew 9**

<sup>24</sup> He said unto them, Give place: for the maid is not dead, but sleeps. And they laughed Him to scorn.

<sup>25</sup> But when the people were put forth, He went in, and took her by the hand, and the maid arose.

Jesus referred to Lazarus, who had died, as “sleeping”:

### **John 11**

<sup>11</sup> These things said he: and after that he saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleeps; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep.

<sup>12</sup> Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well.

<sup>13</sup> Howbeit Jesus spake of his death: but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep.

<sup>14</sup> Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead.

Paul referred to the people who were in the graves and would be resurrected when Jesus returned, as “sleeping in Jesus”:

#### **1 Thessalonians 4**

<sup>14</sup> For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him.

<sup>16</sup> For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

<sup>17</sup> Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

### **Warnings Against the Spirit World**

God also warned the Israelites not to deal with people who communicated with the “spirit world.” They were called wizards or witches in those days, and were supposed to be able to talk to the spirits of dead people. King Saul disobeyed God and tried to get a witch to bring up the spirit of Samuel the prophet. She did bring up a spirit that looked and talked like Samuel, but we know it was not Samuel, for if Samuel was truly alive and in heaven, he would never come down at the demand of a witch.

God forbade His people to deal with those who spoke with the dead because He knew that they would not actually be talking with dead people, but with evil angels pretending to be those dead people. After all, the evil angels have watched the people when they were alive, and know all the things they did, and how their voices sound, and so forth. So it is easy for them to imitate those dead ones, and tell all sorts of details about their lives.

### **New Testament Evidences**

Then in the New Testament there are also some experiences and statements that indicate that we do not go immediately and consciously to heaven at death.



For example, Jesus died on the cross on Friday evening, and his body was put in the tomb during the Sabbath. If there was such a thing as a “spirit” being that lived on after our bodies died, then Jesus should certainly have been in heaven. But when his body was raised on Sunday morning, and Mary wanted to hold on to Him, he told her not to, because He had not risen to His Father yet.

### **John 20**

<sup>17</sup> Jesus said unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father.

So even Jesus did not go to heaven when he died, but slept in the grave until He was resurrected.

This means that the dead are not floating around after their death, and therefore the little boy in the YouTube video could not have gone to heaven. He would have to wait until the resurrection. Therefore what he experienced was a delusion, or a dream. It was just a trick in his head. It was not real.

### **The Word of God vs. Miracles**

Another reason why we know it was not from God is because God wants us to believe in Him and His promises based on the fact that we love His character, and trust Him. He wants us to live by His word, and follow it very carefully. When Adam and Eve sinned, they did so by not believing God, and not following His word. So in order for us to get back into paradise, we need to learn to believe God, and trust His word above what our feelings tell us. This is called “faith” and we cannot work it up ourselves, God will give it to us as we ask for it, and while we read His word.

We are warned in the Bible that Satan will use miracles in the last days before Jesus returns, to trick people into doing things that are against God’s word.

## **Revelation 16**

<sup>14</sup> For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.

## **Revelation 13**

<sup>13</sup> And he does great wonders, so that he makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men,

<sup>14</sup> And deceives them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do.

When Elijah had the test on Mount Carmel against the priests of Baal, fire came down from heaven to consume his sacrifice, as a sign that God was with him. Here in the book of *Revelation*, we are told that Satan will work through false prophets to do similar miracles as are recorded in the Bible. They will imitate even the miracles of Jesus. And we can be sure that they will also use “spirits of the dead” who are pretending to be in heaven, in order to teach things that are contrary to the commandments of the Bible.

Therefore, our safety is always in the word of God. That is how Jesus lived: He always did what the Bible said, and loved to do His Father’s will. When Satan came to tempt Him in the wilderness, Satan came pretending to be an angel of light. How did Jesus detect Satan? Not by outward appearance, but by the word of God.

The problem with the boy who supposedly went to heaven and came back is that it causes us to put faith in miracles and not the word. Even though at the beginning, he may seem to say only things that are in the Bible, yet later on, what if someone supposedly comes back from heaven, or communicates “from the dead” saying that things in the Bible have changed, and we don’t need to obey them anymore? No, this would be just what Satan wants.

God has warned us of it, and we must instead study His word, and learn to know Jesus very closely. Not every spirit, or miracle is a true one from God.

## Isaiah 8

<sup>19</sup> And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits [this is speaking about those who communicate with the dead], and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead?

<sup>20</sup> To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.

In these verses God tells us not to consult the dead. He tells us to go to His word (the law and the testimony). He indicates that the so-called spirits of the dead people will teach things that are against His word.

## Greek Philosophy

The idea that people go to heaven when they die is something that was introduced into the church through Greek philosophy. The Greek philosophers lived a few hundred years before Jesus was born in Bethlehem. They tried to study into the meaning of life, and thought they were so wise, that they shouldn't actually die. They invented an idea called the "immortal soul." The idea began to be accepted even among the Jews when Jesus was on the earth. But it was taught much more strongly a few hundred years later, when many church leaders started studying the Greek philosophers. And since then, this idea has become very deeply embedded in many church teachings. But it is not correct.

The Bible clearly teaches that sin brings death. It never uses the term "immortal soul." The only times it speaks of "immortality" is when it speaks of God, or when it talks about the resurrection of the body. Jesus told us to look for the hope of the resurrection. Until that time, the dead are just "sleeping," which means they are unconscious, and have no thoughts or ability to do anything.

Some of those stories I read about in the *Readers Digest* were about people who didn't even believe that Jesus was their Saviour, and that He could clean them from their sins. Yet in their "after-death" experience, they went to heaven anyway. So these

experiences denied the truth of the Bible that sin leads to death. Should we believe their experiences, or the Bible? We should believe the Bible, and just realize that these experiences are a deception, a trick. Maybe these people who had them felt something, but it was not what they thought.

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*After this discussion, my daughter still wondered how it was that the boy in the YouTube story would know details about things that happened before he was born, or when he was too young to know. Here is my further answer...*

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Now the boy in the *YouTube* story, how was it that he would know details about things he never saw? Well there are others who know these details.

### **The Work of Evil Angels**

The spiritual world does not suffer death like we do. They are all watching our history as it unfolds. This includes good angels and evil angels. So both good angels and evil angels know exactly what happened to the boys grandpa, and his mom's baby that died. They know what they did, how they talked, how they dressed, what things they liked. So it is certainly possible for evil angels to imitate dead relatives.

This was the case when Saul went to the witch to talk to the dead prophet Samuel. It looked like Samuel, talked like Samuel, it even spoke truth! But it was not Samuel because he was in the grave. Even if Samuel had gone to heaven, he would not come down from heaven at the call of a witch, since God condemned that practice (of trying to communicate with the dead).

So here was an evil angel imitating a dead person, and it was an exact copy of the real person. So evil angels could have copied the boy's dead relatives, and told him all sorts of things that happened, since they were around when these dead relatives lived.

## The Hope of the Resurrection

The problem with this story is that it supports the idea that we have an “immortal soul” and that we either go to heaven or straight to hell when we die. But the Bible points us to the resurrection day as the time when the righteous dead will receive new bodies:

### 1 Corinthians 15

<sup>35</sup> But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?

<sup>50</sup> Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither does corruption inherit incorruption.

<sup>51</sup> Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,

<sup>52</sup> In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

<sup>53</sup> For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

<sup>54</sup> So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

<sup>55</sup> O death, where is your sting? O grave, where is your victory?

So, according to these verses, when is the victory over death and the grave? At the moment we die, or at the resurrection? Clearly, at the resurrection. But if we went to heaven straight at death, then that time would be the victory over the grave. But the Bible says it is at the resurrection. But when is the resurrection?

### John 5

<sup>26</sup> For as the Father has life in himself; so has He given to the Son to have life in himself;

<sup>27</sup> And has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of man.

<sup>28</sup> Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice,

<sup>29</sup> And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.

Notice it says that “all that are in the graves shall hear His voice.” It doesn’t say they are in heaven, it says they are in the graves. It also makes clear that the resurrection will take place when Jesus comes to execute judgment. He will speak, and the dead will be raised. But when is that?

### **1 Corinthians 15**

<sup>52</sup> In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

So here we have another clue. The trumpet will sound. But when will this happen?

### **1 Thessalonians 4**

<sup>13</sup> But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that you sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.

<sup>14</sup> For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him.

<sup>15</sup> For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not go before them which are asleep.

<sup>16</sup> For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

<sup>17</sup> Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

<sup>18</sup> Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

So here it is very plain. Death is called a “sleep,” and it is at the “coming of the Lord” or what we call “Jesus’ second coming,” when He returns to the earth visibly, that the resurrection shall take place. This will not be a secret thing, for He “will descend

from heaven with a shout” and “with the voice of the archangel” (Gabriel), and “with the trump of God.”

In another place it says, “every eye shall see Him” (*Revelation* 1:7). It is at that point that we will all go together, those who were raised from the dead, and those who were still alive but whose bodies were changed to immortal flesh, we will all go together with Christ, meeting Him in the clouds, and traveling on to the New Jerusalem in heaven.

#### **1 Thessalonians 4**

<sup>17</sup> ...so shall we ever be with the Lord.

This is what the Bible plainly teaches. What the little boy saw was not what the Bible teaches, therefore it is not from God. He is deceived, and his parents are deceived, because they believe that souls are immortal and go to heaven at death. Therefore Satan can use this error to trick them.

#### **A Prayer of Unbelief**

There were two more things in the story that were not right. First of all, the father complained to God when he thought his son was dead. He prayed something like this,

“Oh God, if you are a God of love, how could you let this happen to me?”

This showed that he had no real faith, and this kind of prayer cannot be answered, because,

#### **Hebrews 11**

<sup>6</sup> ...without faith, it is impossible to please Him.

Jesus often couldn't heal people because of their lack of faith. Faith means trusting that no matter what happens to us, God is allowing it for our best good. Faith is trusting God, believing that He loves us; and knows best what is for our good.

Yet in the story, the boy said he had to go back to earth, because Jesus wanted to answer the father's prayer. But Jesus cannot answer prayers of unbelief. So it is teaching an error about God.

Let's look at this in the light of what Jesus taught. There was a time when Jesus was on the earth and a father came to Jesus wanting Him to heal the father's sick son. Here's how it is recorded:

#### **John 4**

<sup>47</sup> ...he went unto Him, and besought Him that He would come down, and heal his son: for he was at the point of death.

<sup>48</sup> Then said Jesus unto him, Except you see signs and wonders, you will not believe.

<sup>49</sup> The nobleman said unto Him, Sir, come down ere my child die.

<sup>50</sup> Jesus said unto him, Go your way; your son lives. And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way.

Now if you read the story without thinking too much, it sounds like the first request and the second request of the father are about the same.

- He asks for Jesus to heal his son.
- Jesus says, "no, you don't have faith."
- So he asks again.
- Then Jesus says the son is healed.

But if we think about it a bit, there must have been a change in the father, otherwise Jesus wouldn't have been able to answer the request.

When the father first came, he doubted if Jesus could heal, but he thought he would ask anyway, as he had few other options.

Jesus told him that he was waiting to see the miracle before he believed. But Jesus couldn't work that way. Faith is like opening a door to God to allow Him to come in. The father's door was closed. So Jesus could not heal.



The father realized that his “closed door” might cost the life of his son. But he also realized that Jesus had just read his thoughts, something that only an inspired person could do. This made him believe that Jesus must be sent from God, and he was then convinced that Jesus did indeed have the power to do this miracle.

So his second request was with conviction, that Jesus was his only hope.

“Come down ere my child die,”

–or in other words,

“You are my only hope, You can heal him. I believe it.”

Jesus saw the change of faith within the man and immediately granted the request. The father did not doubt it, which proved that he did indeed have real faith. He still had a long journey back to home, but did not rush. And when he got there, he asked what time the son was healed, and was not surprised to find out that his son was healed the very moment Jesus spoke the words.

So what convinced the father to believe in Christ? Was it the miracle of the healing? No, because the father believed before the miracle. And this is the important part of the lesson:

1. Faith comes first, and is always based on the word of God.
2. Then comes the blessings, or the miracles.

This is the way God works, because His kingdom is a kingdom of non-violence and love. He cannot win the love of His creatures just by making big displays of power. They must believe in His goodness, and then He can work for them without forcing himself on their minds. As I said, faith is like opening the door to God. He will not break the door down, we must open it.

So now, apply this story to the video on YouTube. Did the father exercise faith in God? No, he doubted God and complained to Him. But then, supposedly, we are told that Jesus worked this miracle to convince the father to believe. But this is not the way

God works. He doesn't want us to serve Him because of miracles; He wants us to serve Him because we love and trust Him. This love and trust is not formed by miracles, but by the conviction as we read His word, that He is righteous, holy, and just in everything He does. When we are convinced of that, then we will not complain when things don't go the way we think they should.

### **God's Kingdom Does Not Come by Outward Show**

Now here is the other problem. Jesus told a parable once about a "rich man and Lazarus" (*Luke 16:19-31*). This is a parable that seems to imply that there is immediate "life after death" but we know Jesus was just taking a common story of the time, and putting some principles of truth into it. The story goes like this (I will tell it mostly in my own words):

There was a rich man who lived well and feasted. At the foot of his table was a poor man, Lazarus. This man had to eat the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table. Then they both died. Lazarus went into Abraham's bosom, the rich man went into flames. He was miserable, and asked for Lazarus to be sent back to his father's house to warn them about the place of torment. Abraham said,

"No, they have Moses and the prophets, let them hear that word."

The rich man replied,

"Oh no, if one comes from the dead, they will repent."

Abraham replies,

"No, if they will not listen to Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead."

We know this is not a literal story, because Abraham has not risen from the dead yet, so how could Lazarus be in "Abraham's bosom"?

But the lesson from the story is what Jesus wanted us to understand. And that lesson is that the word of God (here called “Moses and the prophets”) is what God gives us in this life, to teach us of Himself and to cause us to repent from sin. And then the story plainly says that if we don’t believe His word and change our lives to be in harmony with it, then sending one from the dead will not persuade us either.

Yet in the story on *YouTube*, that is exactly what they have Jesus doing. Supposedly he sends the boy back from the dead to convince the family and the world, that there is a place called heaven and there is a reward. So it is exactly opposite to what Jesus taught in the parable. Jesus said,

“No they won’t be convinced if someone comes back,”

—and the *YouTube* story says,

“Jesus sent the boy back to convince us.”

Just the opposite!

But there is more than enough evidence about heaven and the reward of living a godly life right in the word of God. We just have to read the Bible, and when we see the goodness and reasonableness of it’s teachings, then submit to them.

- Why doesn’t Jesus just use miracles?
- Why doesn’t he just send angels down from heaven to prove to us that it is all real?

Because the kingdom of heaven is not about making big outward shows. It is the love of truth and righteousness in the heart. By nature we are born with a hatred and distrust of God. He cannot reach the innermost part of man with outward show. This only makes temporary changes, based on fear or awe. But it does not cause people to give up their sin and selfishness.

This also helps us understand why the worldly nations will never reach world peace. They try to make peace by having wars

and killing people, or by buying their support with money. But this never reaches the heart. In the hearts of men there is still greed, selfishness, suspicion, distrust, and fear. So when one war finishes, then a few years later, another one starts again. So they try to get peace by making bigger and bigger bombs and weapons, so to try and control others. But it doesn't work.

After some time, if the poor nations have no happiness anymore (because they have no food, or are treated like slaves), then they don't care how many bombs you drop on them...they will fight anyway because there is nothing left to live for. So world peace will never be reached because true peace does not come with outward show. It is accomplished when man's heart is surrendered to God, and this comes when the still small voice of the Spirit of God speaks to us through His word, convincing us that we need Him. Then when we have trust in God, we will not fear our neighbor, nor oppress them.

It is only because people do not study and cherish the word of God that they are easily fooled by these modern "miracles." You are still young, so of course you don't know the word of God so well. But you will learn as you grow, and if you make it your guide, you will be able to tell when Jesus is speaking through a message, and when He is not.