Just some quotes from a few books on NDEs.

Margot Grey was one of the early researchers on this and wrote Return From Death. Interesting how any given person focuses on certain things or ignores other things according to personal beliefs and interests. This is just being uniquely human. It helps to be aware of this as you read any given account of this subject- people experience and interpret things in so many varied ways. And ability to communicate something varies so much from person to person.

Grey notes that the key to the mystery of death is also the one that unlocks the door to life. She says, “Death is a riddle of human existence that has preoccupied mankind down the centuries in an attempt to solve its enigma, so that the apparent finality of death can be unmasked and robbed of its strangeness and terror. For it appears that until we are able to clarify the meaning of death we seem destined never fully to understand the significance of life”. She continues that all religions seem to say that death is not the end of existence but that consciousness continues in a different form after the body is no longer vital.

She herself has had an NDE experience. And I find that sometimes rather than offer too much commentary on your subject, it is more helpful to just let people relate their experiences. In general she notes- the experience of dying is heralded by a feeling of such peace and well-being that most respondents say there are no words to describe it. “The peace and happiness that I felt are impossible to describe...what I can never forget is the absolute feeling of peace and joy...it was a wonderful feeling. In the peace, beauty, joy and above all love, I felt more truly alive than I ever have before...it is beyond description, I was one with pure light and love. I was one with God and at the same time with everything...I felt no pain anymore and was conscious of the most wonderful golden light. A feeling of absolute peace and bliss flooded over me...all pain disappeared...only my essence was felt, time no longer mattered and space was filled with bliss. I was bathed in radiant light...all was fusion. Sounds were of a new order, harmonious”
Others report a heightened but detached mental  process, more acute hearing, and brightly illuminated environment. This is described as being distinctly real...feeling more alive and conscious of everything.

Some quotes from a variety of people- “All the fear and panic seemed to go. I was calm and everything was very bright. I felt peaceful and warm. It was really beautiful”. The light heralds the start of an entirely new dimension of the experience. Brilliant...colours are notable for their vividness and intensity. Many people report feeling enveloped by this light and state that it is warm and uplifting and of ineffable beauty...they felt it was a living light...so bright and all-encompassing. “I found myself in this extremely bright light and felt absolute peace. I feel the light and peace were one. I was there, I’m not afraid of it and its something beautiful. I just can’t explain it....it was beautiful. I had no sense of separate identity. I was in the light and one with it...Its quite unlike anything you could possibly imagine on this earth. The light is brighter than anything you could possibly imagine. There are no words to describe it. I was so happy, its impossible to explain. It was such a feeling of serenity...a wonderful blue light which was enveloping me. It was alive, like a living light. I could hear beautiful music all around me. I felt as if I was going back to somewhere I belonged....surpassing beauty. The colours are out of this world...the sky was a brilliant blue, but the colours were so soft. The green of the trees was brilliant but not harsh. I felt myself bathed in a beautiful warmth...I could not see the sun but was aware of the light and warmth...the feeling of peace and serenity...I was greeted by such warmth and happiness that it was utter bliss. I was in a beautiful landscape, the flowers, trees, the colors were indescribable, not at all like the colours you see here. The peace and joy were overpowering. I felt warm and glowing...The beauty of the landscape is beyond description...I heard the most wonderful music...I felt embraced by such love, its beyond description...in a beautiful landscape, the grass is greener than anything seen on earth, it has a special light or glow. The colours are beyond description, the colors here are so drab by comparison. The light is brighter than anything possible to imagine. There are no words to describe it...there was only this all-pervading beautiful golden light. I felt extremely peaceful. I felt totally lacking in any fear, any concern...I felt at the centre of things, I felt enlightened and cleansed. I could see the point of everything. Everything made sense, even the dark times...I knew there was no need to worry  or be afraid...love is the major impression I still retain. In heaven there is light, peace, music, beauty and joyful activity but above all there is love and within this love I felt more truly alive than I have ever done before...It totally engulfs you, you feel enveloped...The first message I received was ‘relax, everything is beautiful, everything is OK and you have nothing to fear’. I was immediately put at ease...this was the most beautiful feeling I have ever known...absolute pure love. Every feeling, every emotion is just perfect. Everything is absolutely vivid and clear. What the light communicates to you is a feeling of true, pure love. You experience this for the first time ever. You can’t compare it to the love of your wife, or the love of your children or sexual love. Even if all those things were combined you cannot compare it to the feeling you get from this light”.

Another interesting book on this subject is Rene Jorgensen’s The Light Behind God (what religion can learn from near death experiences). Jorgensen dedicates his book to “all the innocent who have suffered at the hands of an angry God”. It is his response to one man’s “misuse of his near death experience to support religious fundamentalism”. He wants people to know there is no such thing as an angry God and we should truly love our neighbour.

He adds his own unique perspective to this subject and brings in unique accounts from a variety of people. He says the NDEs are described as more than real, or hyper-real. Again most describe the Light. He quotes John here- in him was life, and the life was the light of men, the light shines in darkness...it is the true light that enlightens every man who comes into the world. The Tibetan book of the Dead speaks of this light, “It is the subtlest light that illuminates the profoundest reality of the universe...it is an inconceivable light, beyond the duality of bright and dark...the clear light is the ultimate nature of reality>

Jorgensen argues that NDEs may have been that which shaped our very ideas of heaven. He also notes the radical changes in people after an NDE- becoming more compassionate, tolerant, joyful, forgiving and helping toward others.

He spends much of another chapter describing the reality of this experience- that it is more real than anything in this world...”beyond anything that can be experienced in this world...the experience is more real than real...(it) is another dimension that is of a higher or bigger reality outside our limited spectrum of reality”. Many say the sensation of reality was so much stronger than in this dimension, many saying it was a thousand times stronger or beyond description...”beyond my ability to describe...cannot be put into words...my experience is real...anyone who is sane can tell the difference between a vivid dream and an experience. Having the experience itself is the convincing factor and that cannot be expressed in words...”

He adds, “NDErs suggest that this world is ultimately a dream”. One says, “it is the most real experience I’ve ever had. It is more real than waking up from a dream here on earth”. When asked to quantify the reality of this experience in relation to earthly consciousness, one person responded, “How can anyone quantify a particular number without anything to compare it to?” Jorgensen notes this is central, there is nothing to compare the NDE to in this dimension and this is why people refer to God as the realm of God is the only way to explain what they have experienced.

Jorgensen then spends some time noting how the NDE undermines conventional views of deity. It does not support traditional understanding of God. NDErs note that organized religion often seems to confined or limited for what they have experienced. The being of light is understood as an experience of God in a very broad sense. “NDErs will have an experience of God in a sense that is spiritually neutral and bigger than any human conceptual understanding”. People use their religious background to explain this but even that is too limited.

“What these people experience is something beyond a conventional understanding of God. As one person said, “I know that light was of God. It was of or from God. I didn’t think the light itself was necessarily God, although it could be. I don’t know. But I know that that light is a part of God...or a part of what God emits”.

“The Light in the NDE also holds an experience or sensation of overwhelming love. This is usually the core of the experience and the love that the light, or God, emits is so profound and beyond human comprehension that NDErs cannot find the words to describe it...its a kind of love that can’t even be explained. It is so hard to explain what being unconditionally loved is...or what it feels like. But it feels like....it feels like the safest, most exalted feeling....ahhh...well, you see its ineffable, you run out of words when you try to explain it. But there is no other source that something like that could come from, except some power...and that power is love. Now I call it God”

And one last one, “The presence, all powerful being, was wonderful, kind and loving. It wasn’t like a father or mother, there was no sense of disappointment or expectation that I had to be someone that I wasn’t ...Complete love and kindness, totally accepted...this incredible loving light and I was just in awe of it because there wasn’t anything outside of it. That light contained the universe. It contained all the phenomena and all the non-phenomena. There wasn’t anything that wasn’t that light...It was absolute compassion and understanding and respect for who we are. We are absolutely respected and loved beyond human understanding. We are cherished to the core”. And so much more, but I’ve got to finish the book.