

I Was in Hell: Pastor Says Jesus Saved Him After Near-Death Ordeal

In 1998, Steve Kang, a former Buddhist, lay dying in a California hospital after a suicide attempt. But while his body remained on the operating table, he says his spirit was dragged into a realm of eternal torment—a place he now knows is called hell.

In an exclusive interview with the Daily Mail, Kang recalled, “It’s not a place you want to go. I wouldn’t wish it on my worst enemies—not Kim Jong-il, not Hitler. It’s a place of unimaginable suffering.”

The nightmare began after years of battling addiction and spiritual darkness. Kang said he believed an evil spirit had been pushing him to end his life. One day, he gave in—inflicting knife wounds to his neck and stomach. While surgeons worked to save him, Kang said his soul entered another world.

“There was no light, no plants, not even a blade of grass,” he said. “The ground was jagged, and cliffs of a sickly purplish-red hue jutted out everywhere. When you looked up, there was no sky—just an oppressive, moonless darkness, like the blackest night you can imagine.”

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He described the realm as a lifeless wasteland—full of people, yet utterly void of hope.

“There were so many people, just standing there, chained together,” Kang said. “But there was no connection, no ability

to speak or comfort one another. It was like we were all isolated in our own suffering.”

The emotional pain, he said, was even more severe than the physical surroundings.

“It was like every negative emotion I’d ever felt was magnified a thousand times,” he said. “The fear of condemnation, the anxiety—it was suffocating. There was no escape, no reprieve.”

Over the chained masses, demonic figures stood watch.

“They were massive, three to five stories tall, wearing dark, flowing capes,” Kang said. “Their presence was menacing, and I knew instinctively they were in charge of this place. They just stood there, watching us suffer.”

Scientific studies have noted similar descriptions among near-death experiencers. Research from NYU’s Grossman School of Medicine found that many survivors report entering a distinct realm accompanied by a review of their life’s actions. The experiences are often “vivid and coherent,” leading some researchers to suggest that a dying brain may access “new dimensions of reality.”

For Kang, time seemed to stretch endlessly. While medical records confirmed he was unconscious for eight hours, he said he perceived it as around 20 minutes. That perception aligns with 2017 findings from psychologist Marc Wittmann, who theorized that NDEs can distort the brain’s sense of time.

Kang believes he would have remained trapped in that realm—if not for divine intervention.

"I was in so much pain, and I thought it would never end," he said. "But something—Someone—was watching over me, pulling me out of that place."

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When he finally awoke, everything had changed. He left behind not only his addiction but also his past as a Buddhist monk—and committed his life to following Jesus Christ.

"I don't want anyone to go through what I did," Kang said. "If my story can save even one person, it's worth telling."

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Now serving as an evangelical pastor, Kang openly shares his testimony to offer hope. He doesn't present his experience to frighten people but to point them toward redemption. He says the darkness was real—but so was the deliverance.

Kang's story is a powerful testament to the saving grace of Jesus Christ—who has the power to rescue a lost soul from the depths of hell and offer eternal hope to anyone who calls on His name.

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