

Satanism

(part 1 of 2): What do Satanists believe?



What exactly is Satanism? The Google dictionary defines it as, “The worship of Satan, typically involving a travesty of Christian symbols and practices, such as placing a cross upside down. The website wordnetweb.princeton.edu defines it as belief in and reverence for devils (especially Satan) and thefreedictionary.com adds that it is profound wickedness. Religious Tolerance, the Canadian website dedicated to accurately explaining the full diversity of worldwide religious beliefs states that, “There are probably dozens of different religious belief systems and practices that have been called *Satanism*”.

Thus it becomes almost impossible to estimate just how many Satanists there are in the world. Depending on the definition and what groups comply with each different definition, the total number of Satanists could be anything from several thousand, to millions or even more. In North America estimates range from ten to twenty thousand Satanists from several different belief systems and organisations. According to Statistic Canada, the 1991 census found only 335 Canadians identifying themselves as Satanists. It is also almost impossible to open up dialogue with, or gather statistical evidence from each of these groups claiming to practice some sort of Satanism.

The Church of Satan, founded by Anton LaVey in 1967, generally regard themselves as strong Atheists, Agnostics, or Deists and membership numbers are kept secret. However the Church of Satan is quite open about their beliefs and practices. They describe themselves as, “The first above-ground organization in history openly dedicated to the acceptance of Man’s true nature—that of a carnal beast, living in a cosmos that is indifferent to our existence. To us, Satan is the symbol of pride, liberty and individualism.”^[1]

According to David Shankbone who interviewed the Church’s high priest Peter Gilmour, “LaVey’s teachings are based on individualism, self-indulgence,

and ‘eye for an eye’ morality, with influence from Friedrich Nietzsche and Ayn Rand; while its rituals and magic draw heavily from occultists such as Aleister Crowley.”^[2] His article makes it quite clear that members of the church of Satan do not worship, nor believe in the Devil or a Christian/ Islamic notion of Satan. Their Satan has nothing to do with Hell, demons, pitchforks, sadistic torture, buying people’s souls, demonic possession, performing miracles, human sacrifices, cannibalism, and profoundly evil deeds.^[3]

One definition of Satanism states that, “Satanism is the utter rejection of the spiritual way of theistic religions, and the honest admittance that we are just animals who evolve as any other complex system.” On the other hand, what about the religious Satanism that has become the stuff of nightmares and movie plots? Does it actually exist? The church of Satan states openly that, “Satanism respects and exalts life. Children and animals are the purest expressions of that life force, and as such are held sacred and precious...” Thus, as mentioned above, no human sacrifices. The majority of Satanists simply follow a lifestyle involving the Satanic statements and rules, while avoiding the Satanic sins.

Many authors, almost all conservative Christians, have described alleged satanic rituals. They almost always involve desecration of stolen religious symbols, black masses, inverted crosses or reciting prayers backwards. This is pure fiction that can be traced back to books written during the late Middle Ages and Renaissance periods particularly *The Malleus Maleficarum* (The Witches Hammer). In the 15th and 16th centuries the Catholic Church theorized that Satan worship existed and was a massive threat. This gave rise to the Witch burnings that have come to be termed the burning times or alternatively the female holocaust. Belief about Satanism turned into an imaginary religion that was the opposite of Christianity. These elements continue to surface today in conservative Christian anti-Satanic and anti-Wiccan hate literature.

We have established so far that there is a religion known as Satanism and that most, if not all of the adherents, are hedonist atheists intent upon acting upon their most basic desires. An anonymous writer once said that Satanism was the religion of the American boardroom but for the most part this does not involve any weird or evil practices because most Satanists simply practice a lifestyle that involves indulgence and gratification. A very small number of individuals have drawn on the vast amount of anti-Satanic literature and created their own version of Satanism that does include anti-Christian practices.

Consequently, where does this information leave Muslims? As believers we understand that Satan exists and is actively trying to lead people away from God. He may or may not be involved in the Satanic religion that claims to have no gods or to worship such a manifestation of evil. However, Satan’s work is very obvious in a number of groups or categories of people who do claim to worship him. These groups include psychotic murderers and serial killers who try to use the defence of “the devil made me do it” and abusive

pedophiles who in several cases have used satanic settings in order to make the victim's story unbelievable to the authorities. Evidence in the United Kingdom has uncovered at least three cases where predators pretended to be Satanists in order to better control their victims.

Some musicians pretend to be Satanists in order to gain fame and notoriety and there is also a group known as satanic dabblers. The dabblers are typically rebellious, attention seeking teenagers or young adults that have created their own form of Satanism from usually unreliable and fictional sources. They are often responsible for graffiti, cemetery vandalism and the ritualistic killing of small animals. Both groups may be pretending to be something they are not but they are living life perilously close to dangerous ground. A person who worships or tries to revive the worship of the ancient Egyptian god Seti is also risking their sanity and in some cases their lives.

Satan, the devil, Lucifer, Seti or whatever he is known by is not a force to be trivialised. He has an agenda and in the next article we will look at how seemingly benign practices can lead a person into committing the most dangerous of major sins. The church of Satan may be little more than an organised group where members can engage in otherwise frowned upon behaviour but how many members do really "deal with the devil"? Those who use the term Satanism to cover their innate depravity may find that Satan has been leading them by the collar down a pathway to destruction.

Footnotes:

[1] (<http://www.churchofsatan.com/home.html>)

[2] (<http://blog.myspace.com/>)

[3] (<http://www.religioustolerance.org/satanis3.htm>)

(part 2 of 2): Dealing with the Devil

In 2004 the Justice Minister of Cyprus warned of the dangers of occultism and neo Satanism in European society. In 2010 six Russian Satanists were jailed for ritual sacrifice when they were found guilty of dismembering and eating several teenage victims. Examples of evil and predatory behaviour abound, yet the majority of humankind, particularly in the West, are prone to dismiss the role Satan plays in these scenarios.

The Satanic Bible written and edited by Anton LaVey is a collection of essays, observations, and rituals. It contains the core principles of the religion of Satanism, and is considered the foundation of its philosophy and dogma. The Nine Satanic statements are little more than excuses for immoral hedonistic behaviour. For example, "Satan represents all of the so-called sins, as they all lead to physical, mental, or emotional gratification." A believer would easily see the deception in such statements. However those who are not

aware of God's love for humankind might be tempted to follow their perverse guidelines. Since the dawn of time God has sent prophets and messengers to reveal His love and show the right way that benefits humankind, however, humankind is prone to fall victim to his own desires and whims. Satan is well aware of this and books such as Anton LaVey's Satanic Bible are welcomed by him.

As we know, these modern Satanists bear little resemblance to the myths created by the Catholic Church, however by following the nine satanic statements, or gathering in groups to affirm admiration for Satan and all he stands for, men and women are leaving themselves open to being completely overcome or over taken by Satan himself. The satanic dabblers mentioned in the previous article are also putting themselves into a precarious position.

Satan (the devil, Lucifer etc) is a jinn, a creature from the unseen. He is full of despair because he has been denied God's Mercy and has therefore vowed not to inhabit the depths of Hell alone; his wish is to take as many human beings with him as he can. God warns us against the enmity of Satan throughout the Quran. Satan is able to deceive, misguide and trick people and is able to make sin look like a gateway to Paradise. Unless a person is careful he or she can be easily misled and therein lays the danger of groups, cults or religions that attach themselves to Satan or Satanism.

The people who take Satan as a friend or supporter will soon learn that he will betray them and lead them to destruction. Next he leaves them altogether; he forsakes them and rejoices in their misfortune. He encourages them to abandon their morals and values, and even encourages crimes such as murder, stealing and pedophilia. People who experiment with satanic worship are particularly vulnerable to his wicked ways; Satan will lead them to the most awful places, physically and emotionally, and then abandon them.

We have discovered that Satanism exists in many forms. The most well-known is the Church of Satan, there are also other splinter groups that engage in some degree of Satanic worship. Believing in or practicing fortune-telling, communicating with the 'dead' and other such practices are the tools of Satan and he delights in their use. They are Satan's clever recruiting tools, designed to lead many into actual Satan worship. Satanic worship is usually labeled very deceptively or even glamorized in block-buster Hollywood movies; one may not realize at times that a certain ritual is indeed a Satanic one!. One should be particularly careful of things that are labelled as "getting back to nature" or as "fun". It might seem like fun to read your horoscope or play with a Ouija Board, but it is also opening a door to the devil, inviting him into our hearts and minds and allowing him to wreak havoc there.

Satanism is really a war, and for the most part Satan is winning because we, the modern people of the 21st century, have all but ceased to believe in his existence, even to the extent of using his name to gain publicity and notoriety. Strangely many of these people take Satan as their supporter or friend. They both knowingly and unknowingly follow in his footsteps and accept his ideas

even though he is their primary enemy who wants nothing less than to destroy them completely in both this life and the next. How irrational it is to take one's fiercest enemy as one's friend. Many of these people are criminally insane or down right evil, others are merely gullible and uneducated without the weapons to defend themselves.

God however has not left us defenseless in this war. He has provided us with much needed information about our greatest enemy. If we read and understand God's warnings we would easily see Satanism as a deceitful trick perpetrated by Satan himself and human beings with little or no sense. From the Quran and the authentic traditions of Prophet Muhammad, may the mercy and blessings of God be upon him, we are able to gain the much needed information about Satan's motives and methods. God has given us this means to protect ourselves, and with it the weapons to resist and fight this ceaseless war waged by Satan and his cohorts. More information can be found in the series of articles on this website entitled *Are we Alone?*