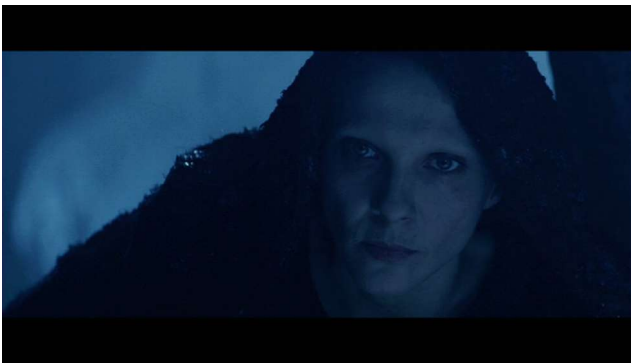


**Anyone who has not yet experienced God's love and salvation through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ is, in a sense, under the power and bondage of Satan. However, with increased religious freedom in many countries, Satanism as a religion has become much more visible in especially the Western World over the last few decades.**

## **Satanism**

Satanism can be broadly defined as the honouring of "evil" or the worshiping and serving of Satan. Ironically, Satanists differ considerably as to exactly who or what they profess to worship as "Satan", and most of them claim that it is not necessarily the "devil" of Christianity, Judaism or Islam.



ABOVE: Satan as depicted in the film "The Passion of the Christ".

### **Three types of Satanism**

To get a clearer picture of this satanic religion, we can distinguish between Mediaeval (Gothic) Satanism, Pop Culture Satanism and Religious Satanism.

#### Mediaeval Satanism

Although man's interaction with Satan can be traced back to the first chapters of Genesis and activities that are viewed as Satanist are perhaps just as old as man himself, the concept of "devil worship" first received considerable attention in Europe during the Middle Ages.

Mediaeval or Gothic Satanism amounts to the worshipping or veneration of the devil (as defined by Christianity) by using very old pagan customs or the desecration of the Roman Catholic Church's rituals. This included rituals such as human sacrifices, breaking of crosses, putting curses on people, the black mass (black communion), and "selling" your soul to the devil in exchange for his assistance.

In reaction to these practices, literally thousands of "devil worshippers" or witches were killed, mainly by burning them alive. Exactly how many of these people were really guilty and how many were unfairly identified by malicious people, is debatable today.

A form of Mediaeval Satanism that is still practised today, is the so-called Gothic Satanism, which concentrates particularly on honouring Satan or the "Dark Lord" through rituals that were popular among witches and wizards during the Middle Ages.

## Pop culture Satanism



ABOVE: Satanism is part of the "image" of some rock-musicians. Whether they truly embrace the demonic or not, young people follow their lead and then often becomes ensnared.

At the end of the twentieth century a form of Satanism developed in many Western countries that was almost a fashion trend or a form of rebellion against the existing Judaist-Christian norms and values of society.

Because young people in particular became involved, it is also called "Adolescent Satanism". It is often accompanied by the wearing of Satanist symbols as jewellery, Satanist tattoos, the wearing of black or dark clothes and the playing of specific types of music (it is important to note that all young people who follow this appearance as a fashion trend are not necessarily involved in Satanism).

Experts often refer to this form of Satanism as "dabbling", as most of the young adherents experiment with it out of curiosity or under group pressure. Although the people involved in Adolescent Satanism do not necessarily regard themselves as Satanists, they sometimes also experiment with Satanist rituals (that might include drug abuse), and this is often the first step to a deeper commitment to religious Satanism.

## Religious Satanism



ABOVE: Occultist Alistair Crowley (1875-1947).

Some researchers maintain that Alistair Crowley (1875-1947) was the "father" of modern Religious Satanism, also called organised Satanism. Although Crowley certainly was deeply involved in some of the vilest forms of the occult and his doctrines and rituals are followed by Satanists today, he never regarded or declared himself a Satanist. For this reason it is generally accepted that Religious Satanism as such was officially founded in the USA on 30 April 1966 with the establishment of the Church of Satan by Anton Szandor LaVey.



ABOVE: Anton Szandor LaVey, founder of the Church of Satan.

Today there are numerous independent Satanist groups or "churches" throughout the world, with the three largest being the Church of Satan, the Temple of Set and the Church of Satanic Liberation. Because these groups do not reveal their membership figures, and smaller groups are not controlled by a central structure, it is difficult to determine exactly how many people participate in organised Satanism.

## General doctrines

When most people think of Satanism, they often see images of demons, animal and human sacrifices and bizarre sexual practices. Undoubtedly many Satanist groups are involved in such activities. However, others declare that they "respect all life" and oppose only the existing status quo and "herd mentality" of society. The following are a few basic principles in which virtually all Satanists believe:

- Satan is acknowledged and honoured as a deity or archetype.
- Every person is his own redeemer and fully responsible for his or her own life.
- You must satisfy your carnal urges and desires and in particular test the "seven deadly sins" of Christianity (pride, anger, jealousy, gluttony, laziness and greed).
- The power and authority of the individual Satanist are emphasised, rather than a god or goddess.
- Satanists who believe that Satan is a living being or deity do not worship and follow him like, for example, the Christians worship God.
- Uniqueness and creativity are encouraged.
- Many Satanist practices, rituals, rules of behaviour and beliefs are in direct conflict or even the direct opposite of those of Christianity. However, most Satanists do not regard their religion as the opposite or "reverse" of the Christian doctrine (see "Black Mass" below).
- The "Sign of Baphomet" is generally regarded as the emblem and most important symbol.



ABOVE: A Circle with pentagram and candles where Satanic rituals are performed.

## Black Mass

The Black Mass is a Satanist ritual that ridicules the Roman-Catholic Mass or communion. It probably originated in the Middle Ages, when many rituals carried out by witches and wizards were aimed at "desecrating" rituals of the Christian church.

The Black Mass is held to honour Satan, and the rituals that are carried out are mainly the opposite of those that occur during the Catholic Mass. Participants will, for example, invert a cross, use dirty water or urine to "bless" someone, use moldy bread or onions to replace the communion bread, recite the Mass in reverse order in the local language (opposite of the customary Latin Mass); use a naked woman as "altar", make animal sacrifices and carry out a variety of bizarre sexual deeds.

Some modern Satanist groups admit that they regularly carry out forms of the Black Mass, while other rejects it. Gothic Satanists in particular still regard the Black Mass as one of their most important rituals.

## Attitude towards Christianity

Most Satanist groups and organisations regard other faiths and religions as false and deceitful. It is interesting that although they do not regard themselves as the "opposite" of Christianity, they are particularly outspoken against Christians, Christian doctrines and Christian values.

Ironically, they claim that Christianity prevents them from living "in freedom". This is clearly part of Satan's deception as Satanists are actually living in fear and bondage, and it is only Jesus Christ who can offer them true freedom!

Satanists often blame Christians for "restricting" laws such as, among other things, the illegality of marriages between people of the same sex (in most countries), the illegality of prostitution and abortion (in some countries), and what they call the general society's "narrow moral value system".



ABOVE: Note the upside-down cross on the wall in this Satanist "den".

Some groups, like the 600 Club, even have a "blacklist" containing the names of Christians and Christian organisations that are regarded as "the enemy". Members are encouraged to protest

against these organisations and their activities, and to promote a society where everyone sets his own values and make his own decisions.

Again, it is noteworthy that Satanists do not show the same animosity towards any other religion or its members. Clearly, the evil power behind them is threatened only by the ultimate power of the One True God and the redemptive work of His only begotten Son – Jesus Christ.

## **Satanism in Africa**

Although the occult is practised in various forms throughout Africa, Religious Satanism has never been able to get a real hold in most countries on this continent.

The reason for this probably has a bearing on allegations that some Satanist groups advocate racism, that the groups have never made any real efforts to recruit members in Africa, or that most people in Africa are relatively dedicated to their respective religions. The most probable reason is, however, that most people in Africa have a negative image of Satanism, as an open "veneration of evil", and that most governments of African countries do not permit official registration of Satanist churches.

### Groups in South Africa

In South Africa there are several active Satanist groups, but none are officially registered in the country. The Satanic Bible of Anton LaVey is used as manual by most of them, and their activities correspond with those of the Satanist groups in America and Europe.

Some of the best-known Satanist groups in South Africa are the Brotherhood of Ram, the Order of Darkness, the Sons of Satan and the Scorpions. There are also several smaller branches of these groups and of foreign groups that are active in the country, like groups of Gothic Satanists.

Satanism as such is not illegal in South Africa, but some activities that are related to Black Magic are against the law. Animal and even human sacrifices, damage to property, grave desecration and murders or suicides that were allegedly Satanist inspired from time to time cause headlines in the media. However, because there are no Satanist groups registered in the country, these crimes cannot be attributed to Religious Satanism.

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## **Left-Hand and Right-Hand Paths**

Some of those involved with the occult distinguishes between the so-called Left-Hand Path, also called Black Magic, and the Right-Hand Path, which is also called White Magic.

Satanists all follow and practise the so-called Left-Hand Path, which mainly focuses on objectives that the Satanist regards as to his or her personal benefit. This amounts to an approach of "let My Will be done", where the practitioner openly tries to benefit himself, even if it is at the expense of a "weaker" person. The objectives can be so divergent as trying to win someone's love, improving the participant's memory, gaining power over a person or situation, financial profit, curing of a disease or harming an enemy or hostile group and even "destroying" them.

Black Magic itself includes a variety of rituals that can comprise a combination of gestures, chanting, repetitive phrases, visualisation, meditation, burning of incense and candles, sex, and among some groups, also self-mutilation and sacrifices. "Tools" or aids can also include a variety of objects like swords and daggers, the inverted pentagram, slogans painted on walls, skulls, a magic wand, masks and capes.

Satanists accept that these rituals and their consequences can be dangerous to the practitioner, and that many people in society do not understand them and that they might find them revolting.

Satanists further believe that people and groups practising the Right-Hand Path (White Magic) are hypocrites who deceive themselves and others, as the two "paths" are actually exactly the same. They believe that they all use the same forces, and that White Magic's distinction between "good" and "evil" is inherited from the Jewish-Christian value system.

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## **Symbols of Satanism**

In a sense, symbols related to all the occultist groups and beliefs can be regarded as symbols of Satanism (and vice versa). Not only because the occult is in essence Satanic, but also because Satanists often borrow from other occultist groups, other religions and sometimes even from Christianity itself (although the symbols are then commonly perverted to depict an anti-Christian meaning).

Here are just a few of the more common symbols used by Satanists:

All-seeing eye of Horus - This eye depicts knowledge and insight into the hidden. The eye is also depicted as the "third eye" on a forehead (relating to intuition or inner vision).



Hexagram: A geometric representation of two overlapping triangles. Originally a Judaist symbol known as the Star of David, but also used by Satanists, sometimes combined with the satanic goatshead (Mendes).

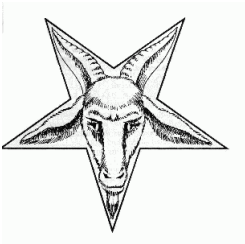


Peace sign – For Satanists this sign, also known as the "broken cross" or crowfoot, depicts the upside-down broken cross of Jesus Christ.



Pentagram: A five-pointed star drawn in a continuous line. Satanists use the inverted pentagram with two points pointing upwards and one pointing downwards.

Sign of Baphomet: An inverted pentagram with the head of a goat (Mendes) inside a double circle with the word "leviatan" (monster) in Hebrew written inside.



Triangle with three circles - Three circles that are intertwined to form three sixes, which depict the cosmic holistic approach as well as the unity between man's body, mind and soul/spirit.

Three sixes (666) – The Biblical "number of the Beast", or Satan. Satan is the enemy of God and his name means "adversary", "arch-enemy of the Good" (Hebrew: sâpân) or "Accuser" (Greek: Satanas).

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## **Glossary**

Archetype (of Satan): Ancient image or "collective unconsciousness" comprising inherited ideas of the race and culture with regard to, for example, the being and person of Satan.

Black Magic: See Left-Hand Path.



Levitation: Event where people, animals or objects lift from the ground and float without any visible help.

Lucifer: Morning star, bright light or bearer of light (Hebrew "hêylêl"). Another name for Satan.

Magick: see The Science and Art of Magick.

Satan: The focus of veneration by Satanists. Means "Opponent", "Arch-enemy of the good" (Hebrew "sâtân") or "Accuser" (Greek "Satanas"). See Lucifer.

Satanic Bible: The Satanist bible that was written by Anton LaVey, founder of the Church of Satan, and containing among other things "11 Rules of Satanism" and the "9 Statements of Satanism".

Self-mutilation: Individuals cut or burn words or symbols on their bodies. In extreme cases a limb, like a pinkie, can be cut off during a ritual as sacrifice to Satan.

Note: The meanings that are given here refer to words that are used in Satanism context. Some of these words also have different meanings in other contexts.

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