

Selling Water by the River
ONA (From Fenrir No. 6, 100yf)

Question: What is Satanism?

Answer: Satanism is fundamentally a way of living ? a practical philosophy of life. The essence of this way is the belief that we all as individuals can achieve far more than we realize during our lifetime. Most people waste the opportunities that life can, does and can be made to bring. We are gods when we awake.

How do you then understand magick?

Magick is essentially the opening up of areas of consciousness latent within all - a means of changing the individual and the world. The techniques of magick (for example, rituals) are simply means to achieve this. For too long magick has been mis-understood as 'spells, conjurations' and the like, and while such things are magick, they are only a beginning, a mere intimation of what real magick is all about.

You often use the term 'traditional Satanism'. What does this mean?

Traditional Satanism is a term used to describe the sinister path which for centuries was taught on an individual basis from Master(or Mistress) to pupil. To this path belongs the Septenary System, Esoteric Chant, the comprehensive training of novices (including the development of the physical side), the Star Game, and - most importantly - the Internal system of magick (the Grade Rituals etc.). This path is also known as the Seven-Fold Way.

I've heard of La Vey and his 'Satanic Bible'. How does the Seven-Fold Way differ from his Satanism and those who follow his views?

La Vey took what may be described as the popular/media conception of Satanism - the black-robed, Mephistophelean figure - together with the 'pleasure principle' and some simple magic(k), mixed it with the qabala and various historical myths and legends pertaining to the dark side, and served the whole lot up to a gullible audience. The whole thing was pretty pathetic - although it did provide some with a few thrills. There was no substance to either La Vey or his 'Church': no inner path, direction or way. Nothing original.

The Seven-Fold Way, on the contrary, possesses direction, and goes far beyond the external type of magick implicit in both the 'pleasure principle' and ordinary sorcery. It offers the individual the difficult (and sometimes dangerous) path to genuine Adeptship - to self-mastery, self-excellence and ultimately wisdom. It is not a refuge for the neurotic, the weak-willed or the self-deluded, but rather a challenge to the daring.

Those who follow in the foot-steps of La Vey (as a recent 'Temple' does) have added little - they are still trapped by 'role-playing', still fettered by self-delusion (often about their magickal abilities) and still lack not only self-insight but also that spontaneity which is one of the marks of a genuine Adept. They concern themselves still with the awarding of meaningless titles, seek members and the recognition of the 'authorities'. They teach the same historical mish-mash as La Vey and possess an originality quota of zero.

They have failed to understand that the ceremonial, ritualistic and 'theoretical' approach is but the first, small step toward inner progress. Because of this, there can be no organized 'Temple',

no 'authority' within it, no proselytizing and no awarding of grades/initiation or titles. There is only - in the genuine path ? a limited amount of guidance, and the struggle of the individual through experience.

But surely rituals are important e.g. the Black Mass?

Yes - but only in the beginning stages of the Way when the novice/initiate is discovering the hidden (or magickal) forces of nature and themselves, and is daring to walk along the path to Adepthood.

Ceremonial and hermetic rituals are the province of the novice and the 'External Adept' and are pointers to what is beyond.

Which is what?

First, the discovery of the unique Destiny of that individual second the living of that Destiny, and third, for those whose Destiny becomes fulfilled by such living, the crossing of the Abyss. From the Abyss the Master and Mistress is born. All this takes many years.

What then is the purpose of your Order?

To offer our teachings and guidance to those who might be interested. In former times, teachings were kept secret, but there is no need for that now: the opportunity is open to all.

But are you not still secretive?

Yes and no. Those who seek hard enough will find us, and those who are sincere will not be put off by the obstacles placed in their way (sometimes by us). For those who are, there are plenty of other groups around.

What about Initiations?

We do not offer Initiation - candidates achieve Initiation. We do not offer nor award (for money or anything else) Grade Rituals or titles of any kind: these are again achieved by individuals, through their own toil, hardships, terror and joy. We simply guide them toward the self-achievement that, e.g., the Grade Rituals represent. Any other way is simply fraud and self-deception.

Grade Rituals - which signify the different stages of achievement along the Seven-Fold Way - may be likened to running in a race. You either race, or don't; and if you race, you either win (achieve the goal) or do not. You may pretend to yourself that you have raced and run, but in the end you are fooling only yourself.

What, then, are the Grade Rituals?

They are tasks, simple in form, but difficult to complete successfully. For example, the Grade Ritual of Internal Adept simply involves the candidate in living totally alone and isolated for at least three months: without any of our modern 'conveniences'/technology, and without speaking to anyone. Simple to describe - difficult to undertake. The 'ritual' is the (alchemical) change which occurs in the individual by virtue of living so for at least three months. Such primitive isolation creates the Adept, bringing a genuine mastery of magick and a lasting self-insight.

It is the intention of the Order to publish all the Grade Rituals in the next issue of 'Fenrir'.

Returning now to the popular conception of Satanism, what about sacrifices, the blackmailing of members, sexual crimes and so on?

Satanism is all about ? in its beginnings - waking conscious (or liberating) our dark or shadow nature. In the past, certain experiences were often undergone in order to achieve this, and some of those experiences were often frowned on by 'conventional' society. Some might have been 'illegal' at the time as well. But gradually (at least in traditional Satanism) a way was found to 'short-circuit' these evolutionary experiences which enhanced the consciousness and thus wisdom of those undergoing them - if they survived, of course. Thus was Internal Magick evolved. This enabled the experiencing of the dark side, and its integration, as well as made possible what was beyond.

This system had been gradually refined and enhanced, and while it avoids the quicksand of criminality it is still not lacking in danger or difficulty. It offers, in short, the distilled essence of thousands of years of evolutionary understanding-and makes possible the next stage of our evolution as a species: Homo Galactica.

You stress the development of the physical side. Why?

Because traditional Satanism aims to develop the whole individual - mind, body and character. We give our novices difficult physical goals to achieve (such as running 20 miles in under 2 1/2 hours - fitter individuals are naturally given more difficult tasks) because the striving for such goals, and their achievement, develops qualities necessary in any Adept. They are tests of determination and character, and sort the serious out from the pathetic. The striving also creates a physical joy, increasing the vitality of the person.

I met someone recently who claimed to be a 'Master'. I had my doubts about him. Is there some way of identifying a genuine Master?

The answer should be obvious. A Master is someone who has passed beyond the Abyss, the stage beyond an Adept. In consequence he will be somewhat detached: intense and serious, but also natural, spontaneous and quite cheerful (almost playful, sometimes). But perhaps most of all, he will not take himself too seriously, and he will certainly not play a 'role' or fulfill the expectations of novices (e.g. by dressing up, cultivating a 'demonic' stare and answering questions mysteriously). He will possess that illusive quality - natural charisma.

What about wealth - and power? Surely all Satanic Masters possess these?

Some do, some do not. The sign of a Master is neither wealth nor power, but achievement - of wisdom, skill in esoteric arts, and original creation (e.g. the extending of human knowledge, artistic creativity). The Destiny of each Master is different, as is the life-style which reflects that Destiny. For example, out of the four Masters who exist in the West at this moment in time, one lives a somewhat isolated existence with hardly any material possessions, while another lives in relative luxury and splendour. The former concerns himself primarily with aeonic magick, while the latter teaches a few pupils.

Genuine Masters do not conform to someone else's expectations or ideas: they are individual, and unique.

Do you worship a being called Satan?

Genuine Satanists do not worship anything - not even themselves. Fundamental to Satanism, is a desire to overcome, to accept challenges and to seek to know and understand. A genuine Satanist would rather die ? laughing and defiant - than submit to anyone or anything. Most people waste their lives and die old and miserable: the Satanist revels in life and adventure, and knows the right time to die, for challenges never end. This way of living is hard, and this way of dying breeds fear among the feeble multitude who prefer comfort and security to the ecstasy of living on the edge like gods.

As to Satan - each Initiate discovers the reality for themselves. All that need be said is that there are external forces beyond the psyche. of an individual: in genuine Satanist magick there is identity with these darker external forces, not a fear of them and certainly not a submission. This, of course, is somewhat dangerous ? but the strong survive, and the weak perish. Good riddance to the weak.

So, fundamentally, you would say that Satanism is the way you live your life?

Yes, as I indicated at the beginning. Magick ? of whatever type - enhances your life, and is a way to knowledge and increased vitality. Magickal acts are important in the beginning, but most important of all is our attitude to life and our ways of living. This is why we despise the Nazarene philosophy - the Satanist is proud, strong, defiant, while a Nazarene is afraid of living, afraid of dying and mentally sick: weighed down by guilt and envy. The meek espouse peace because they know the strong would destroy them - so they infect the strong with the disease of 'pacifism', with guilt because they are strong

But surely that particular philosophy - of, as you call it, the 'Nazarene' -is dying out today.

As an organized religion it might be - but over the past two hundred or so years this poisonous philosophy has sprouted various political and pseudo-political forms, and it is these forms which are eroding our vitality. There have been a few attempts to cut out the cancer - but they have unfortunately failed, and the cancer grows and spreads.

What, then, can you do?

Why should we do anything? Most people are stupid and deserve their fate. We offer an alternative - those who have if only in a small way the Promethean spirit will be drawn to us and thus have the opportunity to master their own Destiny. It is up to each and every individual: we can point the way, but they must make the effort to walk along it.

- Order of Nine Angles -