**Books of the Satanic Bible:**

The Satanic Bible + early writings of **LaVey**

Dedication:

Long since removed from contemporary printings of the book, the first edition of The Satanic Bible contained an extensive dedication to the thinkers who influenced LaVey.

The primary dedication of the book was made to Bernadino Nogara (misprinted as "Logara"), Karl Haushofer, Rasputin, Sir Basil Zaharoff, Alessandro Cagliostro, Barnabas Saul (Dr. John Dee's first Scryer), Ragnar Redbeard, William Mortensen, Hans Brick, Max Reinhardt, the American Sociologist Orrin Klapp, Fritz Lang, Friedrich Nietzsche, W. C. Fields, P. T. Barnum, Hans Poelzig, Reginald Marsh, Wilhelm Reich and Mark Twain.

The secondary dedication included Howard Hughes, Marcello Truzzi, Marilyn Monroe, William Lindsay Gresham, Hugo Zacchini,[1] Jayne Mansfield, Fredrick Goerner, Nathaniel West, Horatio Alger, Robert E. Howard, George Orwell, H. P. Lovecraft, Tuesday Weld, H.G. Wells, Harry Houdini, Togare (LaVey's pet lion) and The Nine Unknown Men.

The Satanic Bible, after the introductions by other authors, is divided into four books: the Book of Satan, the Book of Lucifer, the Book of Belial, and finally the Book of Leviathan. LaVey seems to have taken this hierarchy from The Book of the Sacred Magic of Abramelin the Mage, in which these four demons serve as the chiefs of Hell. Each book approaches a different aspect of Satanism, and serves a unique purpose within the structure of The Satanic Bible.

 The Book of Satan

The Book of Satan: The Infernal Diatribe introduces Satanism in dramatic fashion: through the stolen verse of Ragnar Redbeard in Might is Right[1]. Anton LaVey plagiarised the verse directly; he chose segments from different sections of Might is Right, and made slight changes to the verse to amend what he perceived as errors in logic or consistency with Might is Right. As Anton LaVey stated in his introduction to later editions of Might is Right, he found both considerable inspiration in that book, but also glaring errors that made it, taken part by part, incompatible with his Satanic philosophy; it was instead the whole of the message that he found appealing, and the passages selected and changes made to best capture what he found appealing in Might is Right. The Book of Satan was also recited by LaVey in ritual ceremonies, in part or in whole, and his recording of The Satanic Mass includes a full recitation of The Book of Satan.

The Book of Satan is symbolically associated with the element of Fire.

The Book of Lucifer: The Enlightenment

The Book of Lucifer: The Enlightenment directly follows The Book of Satan. After the indignant intonation of The Book of Satan, The Book of Lucifer seeks to logically expound the philosophy and dogma of Satanism. The Book of Lucifer is divided into twelve essays, each of them a vital component of LaVey's architecture of Satanism. The following are brief synopses of each of these essays:

I. - Wanted! - God - Dead or Alive

This short essay provides an essentially atheistic approach to Satanism, and indicts Judeo-Christian religion and prayer as hypocritical and unrealistic. Further, it clarifies the Satanic approach to the question of God:

...the Satanist simply accepts the definition which suits him best. Man has always created his gods, rather than his gods creating him. To the Satanist "God"...is seen as the balancing force in nature, and not as being concerned with suffering.[2]

The passage from which this is taken, when viewed as a whole, suggests that "God" is a human concept, a means of explaining that which men have been unable to explain either through ignorance or through philosophical inability to grasp the nature of reality. This passage also opens up the common Satanic maxim, "I am my own god", a statement of self-aggrandizement, viewed as a positive trait by Satanists.

II. The God you Save May be Yourself

Follows up on the concept of "I am my own god" with a full explanation of the Satanic egocentric view of the world. This short essay states that as all gods are of human creation, worshipping an external god is to worship another human by proxy; therefore, the sensible, Satanic approach is to create your own god, namely yourself, and to "worship" this god. The result, of course, is to view oneself as the most important of all beings, and to adopt an unapologetically self-centered view of the world and course of action.

III. Some Evidence of the New Satanic Age

This essay is longer than the previous essays; following the first two that denounce traditional religion as hypocritical and self-hating, this one offers Satanism as an alternative and opposite, a religion suited to human needs.

It begins by suggesting that the Seven Deadly Sins are in fact all instinctual to human nature and not sinful at all. It states that they are all unavoidable urges of mankind, carefully selected by Christianity to ensure that all men will inevitably sin, as no one can avoid engaging in these instinctive urges. LaVey submits that this is a device to guarantee that humans within the Christian religious framework will surely sin and have no choice but to beg God for forgiveness; therefore, dependence upon the Church is assured. Instead, LaVey states that as all of these so-called sins are natural to humans, they should be embraced and even considered virtuous. This excerpt, for example:

Envy and greed are the motivating forces of ambition - and without ambition, very little of any importance would be accomplished.[3]

He goes on to explain that in this modern age, religionists have had to constantly reinterpret their own texts in order to keep up with the demands of people that they be permitted to indulge their normal human desires. LaVey views this as both hypocritical and evidence that these religions are inherently obsolete and should be discarded entirely, to be replaced with a religion better suited to man's needs. Satanism, LaVey suggests, is that religion.

LaVey then justifies Satanism as a religion by explaining that it is not merely a philosophy. He explains that one reason man has always had religion is because he has a need for dogma and ceremony; Satanism acknowledges this, and therefore supplies its adherents with dogma and ceremony in the form of magic and ritual. LaVey claims that it is precisely this trait that distinguishes Satanism from Humanism or other essentially atheistic philosophies, and makes it a true religion suited to man's carnal nature.

LaVey concludes the essay by explaining that even other religions or new-age movements that claim to supply adherents with magic have failed in this by distinguishing "white magic" from "black magic;" LaVey claims that all magic is one and the same, as all of it is done for the glorification of the magic user and therefore (like all human actions) is essentially selfish. He suggests that a Satanist may choose to help those he cares for, including himself, or condemn those he hates, but in all cases what he does is at his own discretion and therefore done for selfish reasons.

IV. Hell, the Devil, and How to Sell Your Soul

In this essay LaVey now explains why, if he does not believe in literal concepts of gods or devils, he chose the name "Satanism" to describe his religion.

LaVey points out the Hebraic origin of the word "Satan" as a term to mean "adversary", not only applied to a supernatural being but to any person who is your opponent. He likewise describes the mythological and literary significance of Satan in history, from the Greek Pan to the "scapegoat" used to absorb men's sins to the co-opting of pagan deities and devils by Christianity.

LaVey's final assessment is that as Satan and all the devils have represented man's carnal nature made sinful, and the opposition of everything from servile god-worship to conformity, Satan as a literary and mythological figure is the ideal symbol for a religion that exalts man's carnal and independent nature. LaVey's view of Satan might be best compared to John Milton's literary Satan, a proud and independent beast.

V. Love and Hate

A surprisingly short essay given its importance, here LaVey explains in no uncertain terms how Satanists view matters of love and hate, and their role in human affairs.

LaVey makes it very clear that although Satanism is an uncompromisingly selfish religion, he defines selfishness according to what an individual truly wants. Therefore, if a person should honestly care for another person and wishes to express love, then he should do so wholeheartedly; a truly selfish person can acknowledge that if a person is loved by him, then they are important by virtue of his love. This can be compared favorably to the arguments of ethical egoism—that what sometimes benefits others can be beneficial to oneself, but that one must always have one's own interests first in mind. LaVey never suggests that love is not a natural emotion in man, and on the contrary suggests that loving select individuals is very natural, but he does claim that to love all people is not only a philosophical mistake but is in fact impossible and even damaging to the ability to truly love those few individuals who deserve it.

LaVey explains that hatred is likewise a natural emotion in man and therefore not to be shunned. He makes clear that hatred should be directed at those who deserve it by virtue of their actions to offend the individual, and like love, it is senseless to universally apply hatred to all mankind. He muses that while Satanism strongly advocates both individual love and hate, because white-light religion has such a strong aversion to acknowledging hate as a natural feeling in man that to merely mention that Satanism permits individuals to hate their enemies, Satanism is automatically portrayed as a hateful religion, a claim he maintains is false and ignorant of the true ethics of Satanism.

VI. Satanic Sex

Contrary to the popular opinion that Satanism advocates promiscuous behavior in all individuals, in this essay LaVey actually lambasts the "free love" movement (a movement very much in motion in the 1960s when LaVey wrote The Satanic Bible) as being equally restricting as the white-light view that any unholy sex is wrong.

LaVey's stance, once again, takes a purely individual approach to sexual matters and ethics. He maintains that while some people are indeed happy with sexual promiscuity, some are, by their nature, happier with much less sexual activity, or perhaps no sex activity at all. LaVey believes that neither of these states is unnatural or deserving of condemnation, but rather that it is a decision for each individual to make concerning their own sexual tastes and activities.

From this basic principle, LaVey then expounds upon this by pointing out exactly what is and is not permissible Satanic sexual activity.

The basic premise of what is permissible is summed up by the maxim:

Satanism encourages any form of sexual expression you may desire, so long as it hurts no one else.[4]

LaVey quickly explains that this does not preclude sexual sadism/masochism, as "so long as it hurts no one else" must be interpreted to mean "who does not wish to be hurt."

This statement openly condones homosexuality, bisexuality, polyamory, premarital or extramarital sex, sexual games including BDSM, multiple partners, and any other such proclivity, while at the same time not excluding heterosexuality, monogamy, or "traditional" marriage. Satanism views all such activities as entirely equal,[citation needed] and deserving of the same respect. LaVey also specifies asexuality as a valid expression, for one for whom sexual activity is simply not desired. LaVey claims Satanism to be the first religion to openly take this stance.

However, the same statement therefore excludes any such activity as rape, pedophilia, or other sexual activities in which any of the participants are unwilling or unable to give knowledgeable consent[citation needed] (as is the case with a child or animal). Satanism also expressly forbids illegal activity of any kind.[citation needed]

VII. Not All Vampires Suck Blood

One of the most famous essays from The Satanic Bible, it is here that LaVey coins the term "psychic vampire". LaVey defines a psychic vampire as one who attempts to psychologically manipulate others by systematically playing the victim; for example, a person who constantly uses some minor physical flaw as an excuse for their shortcomings and a means of gaining sympathy and favor from others. LaVey believes that people who use a victim status as a means to induce guilt in others are fundamentally weak, and therefore to be shunned by Satanists. (LaVey does not imply that anyone with a flaw is automatically weak, but rather that the use of that flaw to gain sympathy and favor is weak.)

LaVey advises that such people are psychologically draining (hence the term "psychic vampire") and should be dealt with mercilessly and discarded before they are permitted to take control of the lives of vital individuals.

VIII. Indulgence NOT Compulsion

Here, LaVey puts forth Satanism as an essentially Hedonistic philosophy; however, LaVey's approach to hedonism is epicurean in nature.

LaVey states clearly that he believes that man should always tend towards indulgence, not abstinence. Whereas other religions seek to dictate what man should abstain from (which according to LaVey, is most of man's natural urges), Satanism seeks to encourage man to indulge all his carnal desires (so long as they fall within the bounds of Satanic ethics, see the essay on Satanic sexuality for example). Satanism, as an atheistic religion, holds that as there is no afterlife and therefore no paradise or heaven, all happiness and satisfaction must be attained here, on earth. LaVey therefore advises that you indulge to the greatest extent possible, that your days on earth may be best spent.

However, LaVey also cautions against failure to exercise self-control, and especially engaging in self-destructive behavior masked as "indulgence". This is commonly used as a Satanic argument against such things as drug use. LaVey also points out that religionist guilt preventing them from enjoying themselves is in fact only compulsion masked as religious piety, a compulsion to self-denial.

IX. On the Choice of a Human Sacrifice

In this essay, LaVey unequivocally condemns the practice of killing or harming an animal for ritual or magical purposes, in direct opposition to the common belief that Satanists advocate this practice. He states that to harm an innocent animal is a gross injustice and magically useless.

LaVey offers instead that the magician offer himself: in the case of a lust ritual, for example, through the production of an orgasm. He explains that the alleged purpose of an animal sacrifice is to release the vital energy of the animal to aid in the production of magic and that a superior magical effect is achieved by releasing one's own vital energy through orgasmic output.

He also offers that while a Satanist does not under any circumstance advocate criminal activity, if you believe a person deserves to die, then you are perfectly justified in placing a curse upon them and making a figurative "human sacrifice" of them.

While this essay does expound in important ways upon Satanic ethics, especially as regards the treatment of animals and certain aspects of magic, it is also wrought with a certain humor, as in the statement in reference to so-called "white magicians":

One good orgasm would probably kill them![5]

X. Life After Death Through Fulfillment of the Ego

Taking further the non-spiritual view of the world, LaVey infers that if there is no afterlife, then this life must be valued very highly and the life of the individual should not be devalued. Therefore, he recommends that Satanists take great care to preserve their own lives so long as they can, and strongly criticizes the religious practice of martyrdom.

LaVey states that the circumstance under which a Satanist would willingly give up or risk his own life are very limited indeed. Among those circumstances he specifically names the defense of loved ones, especially one's spouse or children. LaVey views the defense of those you love as a natural instinct in animals (including man), and also as an informed risk: on the one hand, one's own life is of vital importance to oneself, but the life of those you love most may be equally important, and therefore a person may be forced in some circumstance to weigh this and may choose to defend those he loves with his own life. LaVey also condemns suicide, except under those circumstances where, as he puts it, life itself has become a form of abstinence and death has become an indulgence. This does not include those who suffer unwarranted self-loathing, but rather this refers to those who, due to terminal and painful disease or other such circumstance, cannot expect any more joy from their short life, ever, and chose to end it quickly and painlessly rather than endure ongoing suffering.

Further, he takes the stance that as one will never achieve glory in the afterlife (as the afterlife does not exist), that one must strive for glory in life. He takes the somewhat classical stance that immortality is achieved by creating an enduring name for oneself by great deeds; compare this, for example, to myths of Greek heroes such as Achilles.

XI. Religious Holidays

LaVey briefly outlines the few Satanic holidays.

The most important holiday in Satanism is one's own birthday, as the birth date of one's own god. To a Satanist, you are the most important being in the universe, and celebrating your own birthday honors your own vital existence. LaVey recommends that a Satanist celebrate his own birthday in any way he sees fit. The Satanic celebration of the birthday can also be seen as a mockery of the holidays commemorating the birth of various gods or saints in other religions.

After one's own birthday, LaVey names two other holidays of importance, Walpurgisnacht and Halloween.

Chief among these holidays is Walpurgisnacht, which in addition to the occult significance the date carries, also marks the formation of the Church of Satan in the year 1966, or I Annos Satanas. This date is commonly celebrated by Satanists with private or group rituals, and private parties or family celebrations to commemorate the foundation of the Church of Satan.

Halloween is likewise celebrated for its occult significance, though Satanists tend to take a certain humor in its celebration, as it is also celebrated by non-Satanists.

LaVey also names the summer and winter solstices, and the spring and fall equinoxes as Satanic holidays, as natural days of change in the seasons and days of universal ancient significance.

XII. The Black Mass

The final essay of The Book of Lucifer begins the transition into the last two books of The Satanic Bible by a summary history of the "Black Mass", which LaVey outlines as being primarily a literary invention of Christians and inquisitors to impress upon people the depravity of the accused witches (which, as LaVey points out, were more often than not innocent of any witchcraft, guilty only of being eccentric, senile, or ugly). However, LaVey believes that emotionally evocative psychodrama has a place within Satanism as a means of emotional outlet and motivation, a topic he treats in detail in the remainder of The Satanic Bible.

The significance of The Book of Lucifer to Satanism cannot be overestimated. The topical essay format became LaVey's signature style, and the most important foundations of Satanic thought are contained within this section of The Satanic Bible. Stylistically, it is carefully written with an economy of words to ensure that his points are always delivered clearly and not subject to reinterpretation, but at the same time restricted to only what needed to be said. It is also worth noting that LaVey refrains from any use of vulgarity in The Book of Lucifer and maintains a carefully worded, calm tone throughout in order that what he wrote here might be taken most seriously (although he does interject humor into his writing, even here). This contrasts with much later essays published in The Devil's Notebook and Satan Speaks!, in which he writes more casually and freely. All of the essays contained in The Book of Lucifer are held to be invariable and indisputable Satanic dogma, whereas those later books contain a mixture of essays, some of which are considered dogma to Satanism, and others which are clearly personal opinions or musings by LaVey or simply essays on topics of interest to him.

The Book of Lucifer is symbolically associated with the element of Air.

[edit] The Book of Belial

The Book of Belial: The Mastery of the Earth introduces in detail the Satanic concept of magic. It is, like the Book of Lucifer, divided into essays, each of which brings greater explanation of what LaVey defined as magic and how he believed it could be applied. These essays and their meaning are briefly summarized here:

I. The Theory and Practice of Satanic Magic (Definition and Purpose)

LaVey gives the following definition for magic:

"The change in situations or events in accordance with one's will, which would, using normally accepted methods, be unchangeable".[6]

LaVey then goes on to distinguish what he terms Lesser Magic from Greater Magic.

Lesser Magic consists of non-ritual or manipulative magic, through use of natural abilities to manipulate other humans and therefore circumstances by wile and guile. At the forefront of this effort, according to LaVey, is knowledge of how to employ appearances to one's advantage. He states that a person can employ contrived appearance to gain the alliance or obedience of others, and a competent magician can even combine these aesthetics as necessary. LaVey also states that a magician's actions to manipulate are an important component of Lesser Magic. LaVey later treated the matter of Lesser Magic in considerable detail in his book The Satanic Witch.

Greater Magic includes all ritual and ceremonial magic, which LaVey spends the remainder of The Satanic Bible detailing.

II. The Three Types of Satanic Ritual

LaVey names three types of Satanic ritual:

Lust Rituals are conducted for the purpose of sexually attracting a person of your choice. LaVey specifies that you must have a particular person, or at least type of person, in mind for this to have any chance of success.

Compassion Rituals are performed for the gain of those you care for, or on one's own behalf. The purpose is to increase worldly gain for the target, whether it be a friend or yourself. Any ritual aimed at gaining material wealth, physical advantage, or increase in life station falls into this category.

Destruction Rituals are otherwise known as curses or hexes, and are employed for the destruction of one's enemies.

LaVey also warns that in each of these cases, the only risk is that you must truly want to see what you have wished for come to pass. He very clearly states that there is no guilt-ridden risk that your rituals (specifically, destruction rituals) will be returned upon you (such as the "threefold rule"), but rather that you must be aware of the consequences should you get what you want. He advises that if you perform a lust ritual, that you be prepared to take what you have desired should it come to you; if you perform a compassion ritual, be aware that all gains may be at another's expense; if you perform a destruction ritual, that you should not care whether your enemy lives or dies.

III. The Ritual, or "Intellectual Decompression Chamber"

LaVey begins by explaining the role of both solitary and group rituals, and which kinds of rituals are suited to group performance and which are not. He suggests that destruction rituals can be enhanced by group participation, but that compassion and lust rituals, due to their highly personal nature, are best performed alone, as self-consciousness has no place in the ritual chamber.

He then describes the ritual chamber as an "Intellectual Decompression Chamber", or a means of releasing pent up energy by willfully entering into a state of conscious suspension of disbelief. He adds that only by relieving oneself of intellectual critique of what one is doing in the ritual chamber, can one hope to truly achieve magical ends. He acknowledges that this is similar in principle to the rituals of other religions, but claims a distinction from them, as Satanists are consciously aware of what they are doing and the fact that they are entering into a suspension of disbelief for specific purposes, instead of the self-deceit and delusion characteristic of other religions.

IV. The Ingredients Used in the Performance of Satanic Magic

LaVey names five elements essential to a magical working:

Desire: The magician must possess great desire to see the intended outcome come to fruition.

Timing: A time for ritualization should be chosen to align with whatever time the target is most receptive; LaVey especially names the period in which the target is in deep sleep as the ideal time for this.

Imagery: Accoutrements conducive to the ritual environment, and the full visualization of the desired outcome, must be present. This not only includes the standard ritual equipment, but more specifically any specialized imagery or items the magician requires to give him a full mental view of what he wishes to happen. This can include drawings or paintings, sculptures, dolls, written poems or verses, or anything else that aids in visualizing the outcome.

Direction: As mentioned before, the magician must have a very clear target in mind. All three types of ritual demand that the magician know specifically who (or at least, what kind of person) he wishes to be targeted by his magic. The magician must also be able to give vent to all his desires during the ritual, not before or after.

Balance: The magician must temper his magic with a dose of common sense, otherwise known as the balance factor. LaVey states that ritualized desires must be realistic; wishing for the impossible or the absurdly far-fetched will not yield results, as the magician cannot reasonably hope to put forth enough magical energy to accomplish what cannot be accomplished by any means. To quote LaVey:

Magic is like nature itself, and success in magic requires working in harmony with nature, not against it.

V. The Satanic Ritual

This segment of The Book of Belial begins detailed instructions for actual performance of ritual and how it is conducted. It includes instructions of selection and use of ritual attire, the altar, Sigil of Baphomet, candles, bell, chalice, elixir, sword, phallus, gong, and parchment.

The Book of Belial is symbolically associated with the element of earth.

The Book of Leviathan

The Book of Leviathan: The Raging Sea contains explicit instructions as to what is to be said and done during ritual. Its text is largely comprised of invocations and ritual verse, including the Invocation to Satan performed at the outset of each ritual, The Infernal Names, and separate invocations for each of the three ritual types. It also includes the nineteen Enochian Keys, a dark reinterpretation of John Dee's verses of the same name in the fictive language Enochian. These keys serve as moving ritual chants in Satanic ritual, and the English translations serve likewise as versed statements of Satanic dogma. The meaning of the Enochian Keys was altered by LaVey from John Dee's version in an effort to make them more consistent with Satanic dogma while retaining their usefulness as ritual devices.

The Book of Leviathan is symbolically associated with the element of water (as opposed to fire).