

**A CRITICAL ASSESSMENT OF ANTON SZANDOR LAVEY'S PHILOSOPHY OF
INDULGENCE AS A DOGMA BASED ASSAULT ON SCRIPTURE**

BY

SIMON MUWOWO

STUDENT NUMBER 28399928

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Supervisor: Prof. dr. Johan Buitendag



DEDICATION

*I dedicate this piece of work to my son Shubert Wanjiyulila and my darling wife Marjory whose
sacrifice remains unquestionable.*

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PREFACE

It is with great delight for me to present this dissertation on Anton LaVey's Philosophy of Indulgence as a dogma based assault on Scripture. It may come as a surprise to the readers of this work that Christianity seems to be existing in total ignorance of other dogmatic challenges existent in our world today. A lot has been talked about with regard to Satanism and conclusions have been made concerning what Satanism is. Mainly the general concept has been that Satanism has to do with superstition. However this research has taken a deeper root in trying to get to the bottom of the sect and thus assess its dogmatic positions against Scripture.

This particular work brings out an exciting concept that should open a new study. A study on dogmatics of assault. But what are dogmatics of assault? Well dogmatics of assault are teachings that seek to impinge Scripture negatively.

In this dissertation I take time to only consider one dogmatic of assault called the Philosophy of Indulgence found in the Satanic Bible, an earthy book written by Anton Szandor LaVey (1937-1997). LaVey was the founder of the Church of Satan in United States of America in 1966. He wrote 'the Satanic Bible in 1969.

Indulgence, the word that dominates this dissertation, is not a word that is commonly used in theology except when we make reference to papal indulgence in the Roman Catholic which all together carries a different meaning. This particular Indulgence under assessment in this work is a philosophy of choices done in response to nature.

This understanding may have very little relevance to Christian dogmatics but it is a good level of engagement.

LaVey's Philosophy of Indulgence is specifically used as the main subject matter in my argument as I view it because it will be based on a long term journey of God and creation. Questions that people ask, namely, "What is life? Where is life going? What do we have to hope for as we struggle to reach satisfaction? This dissertation will by and large provide us with a basis for understanding the meaning of our existence and where our satisfaction lies.

I pray for all the readers of this dissertation that the good Lord may give you strength to grasp this work.

INTRODUCTION

This dissertation takes into consideration an in-depth study in what I will call “Dogmatics of Assault”. By this I mean dogmatics that seek to impinge Scripture through philosophies that affect people’s values and perceptions of religion and the world. One of the 20th century pioneers of such dogmatics of assault is Anton Szandor LaVey (1937-1997), the founder of the Church of Satan in the United States of America in May 1966. In 1969, LaVey wrote an earthy oriented book called “the Satanic Bible”, a radical controversy to the Christian Bible. The basic argument of the Satanic Bible is the Philosophy of Indulgence. This philosophy entails that human beings are not aliens in the world but they are created to be involved in every aspect without any theoretical or moral captivity. In this LaVey alludes to the fact that to be a Christian or some other faith that makes boundaries to the enjoyment of life is hypocritical (LaVey 1969:21-22). Therefore, human beings must do what can satisfy their life to the full, celebrate their bodies as objects of pleasure and indulge in any action of choice in order to attain a true meaning of life. According to LaVey, the biblical Satan is regarded as a symbol of such values and choices.

In Zambia, the case of the presence of Anton Szandor LaVey’s Church of Satan was reported in 1997, with a lot of youths being part of the organization. Testimonies were given publicly by former Satanists who were later prayed for in Pentecostal churches. The everyday reports about the sect prompted the government of the republic of Zambia to publicly be involved in exposing the agenda behind the practice of Satanism. Suspicion of this made the government close down operations of the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God in Lusaka and deported its pastors to Brazil

for being regarded as some of the suspects pushing the satanic agenda in the country that is constitutionally, 'the Christian Nation'(Times of Zambia [18.04.1997]);The Constitution of Zambia(Act No 18 of 1996).

In this study, I want to bring to the attention of Dogmaticians the underlying dogmas pioneered by Anton Szandor LaVey as argued in the Satanic Bible (1969). I wish to take a critical assessment of the philosophy by exposing some of the merits and demerits it upholds. The basic argument of the problem considers how LaVey's Philosophy of Indulgence is a dogma based assault on Scripture.

The main striking feature of this study exposes some contemporary ethical and dogmatic utterances used to express disagreements which LaVey alludes to in the Satanic Bible. The debate in which these disagreements are expressed is their interminable character of the concept of what defines human morality. Is it an individual's choice or should its morality be shaped. The Church teaches that God defines what is right and wrong. Anton LaVey's philosophy on the contrary states that, "it's a person's choice to decide what is right and wrong."(1969:81-86).In the ethical theory of teleology, it is proposed that a just war is one in which the good to be achieved outweighs the evils involved in waging the war and in which a clear distinction can be made between combatants (Frankena 1995:12-15; Macintyre 1995:7-22).The philosophy under review will be assessed following its effects. Does it create a just world and a set of values in the same way Scripture does? Does it create unity of purpose or divergent views that put the world and the church on crossroads?

I am convinced that such research will add value to the world of dogmatics in the 21st century enlightened world of theology and ethics debate.

1.1 THE METHODOLOGY

My approach in this study begins by examining LaVey's philosophical discourse which is derived in the dairy experience of human life (1969: 50). The details of the philosophy of life in LaVey's argument are dealt with more concretely in chapter 1. People usually ask questions about God to relate to their daily existence and therefore strive towards that theology based on human experiences, or do they live in such confusion that they hardly find the real meaning of life in the Kingdom of God Christ referred to in the gospels? (Moltmann 2000:3). This work basically pursues LaVey's main Philosophy of Indulgence driven by the experience of his own life as a player of the calliope and organ for bawdy shows on Saturday nights at the Carnival, as well as for tent Evangelist on Sunday mornings. This is captured in his introduction to the "Satanic Bible" in which he testifies as follows: "when I saw men lusting after naked girls dancing at the carnival and on Sunday morning when I was playing the organ for tent – show evangelists at the other end of the carnival lot, then I would see the same men sitting in the pews with their wives and children, asking God to forgive them and purge them of carnal desires. And the next Saturday night they'd be back at the carnival or some other place of indulgence" (LaVey 1969:12). With this he concluded that the Christian church (not individual Christians) thrives on hypocrisy and that man's carnal nature wills out! (LaVey 1969:7).The conclusion of this

provided a firm, earthy background for evolving a cynical worldview that was mainly concerned at regarding human beings as a subjects and objects of their choices.

In this work, I will pursue some of the philosophical thoughts of Philosophers such as Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900), Ayn Rand (1905-1982) and Louis Mencken (1880-1956) whose works by and large influenced Anton LaVey to enter into a sphere of analyzing human behaviour on every level, from the impulses of the individual to the dynamics of the herd. In my assessment of LaVey's Philosophy of Indulgence as a dogma based assault on Scripture, I will take into consideration the history of human beings from the animal kingdom as it relates to the behavioural changes of human beings from the primeval stage to the current ([Darwin 1859] in Kung 2007: 85-105). My point of assessment also looks at the value of indulgence from a sociobiological point of view with attributes to the kingdom of God which is the ultimate basis of the teaching of the Church in Scripture. I will attempt to raise an academic debate between LaVey and Moltmann in their understanding of life which should at the end provide the basis for wholeness. The striking point of departure regards nature as a reality without any superficial interference (Nietzsche 199:5-7). This argument will be wide spread in the majority of my assessment of LaVey's philosophy developed in this work. It is in the light of my argument that the past theories and philosophies will be tested in the modern spheres, and new possibilities raised. These possibilities will then be subjected to biblical scrutiny to establish whether these new proposals hold a sound theological and ethical view the church can uphold with Scripture, as the ultimate authority.

1.2 THE PROBLEM

The challenge of the world today is an identity crisis. It is very evident that in the history of human development as outlined by the agonist Charles Darwin (1809-1882) today's generation is a chaotic one. This can be attributed to the failure of the Enlightenment war to create a faithful and just world. Firstly the lines of what defines our roles and sets of values have become a problem. One renowned African theologian Kinoti, H (1992: 73) has compared such crises the world is facing today to the story of a hyena who was following the aroma of the meat being barbecued. When the footpath forked, he did not know which one to take. For fear of losing out if he followed only one of the foot paths, he decided to put one leg in one footpath and the other leg in another foot path. As paths started drifting, further apart, he ended up splitting in the middle. As he coherently puts it:

“Today the world is at a crossroad and the path has forked. In terms of every day conduct for individuals and communities there is uncertainty, disillusionment and even despair. There is much grumbling and lamentation. It is not difficult to conclude that the people lament and grumble because they possess some knowledge of what morality is and what is not which ensured the well being of the communities and individuals alike”.

This narration sets my point of departure in assessing Anton LaVey's Philosophy of Indulgence.

1.3 THE ARGUMENT

It is my argument that in the light of the problem of the matter at hand, LaVey offers a concept of indulgence that is neither exclusively transcendental, nor anthropologically based. The exclusively transcendent aspect of indulgence is not relevant to the real experiences that people have. It is simply a fallen human condition. It is for this reason that we cannot construct a general concept of indulgence, as that will defeat the reasons of our purpose of existence through human history.

It is my hypothesis that LaVey's Philosophy of Indulgence is a dogma-based assault on the teaching of Scripture because the essentials of its basis undermine the teaching and the authority of Scripture in transforming the world. My argument does not mean that the philosophy is not based on life experiences at all, but the problem is figuring out the relationship between life experience and the essence of our being as moral agents (Frankena 1995:1-5). I am writing from a perspective of a classical dogmatician in which there is a strong search for the meaning and identity of our existence in relation to God. Although LaVey uses a sophisticated philosophical argument to describe Indulgence, he nevertheless offers a concept that can be applied with a moral conscience.

My second point of argument is that although LaVey's Philosophy of Indulgence does not hold a clear basis for the purpose of the existence of life (a concept that is traditionally believed), it is a good level of engagement in understanding the reality of

the character of human beings as he engages in a chaotic sphere where nature plays a major role (McGrath 1999:131-139).

I wish to raise the argument that assesses LaVey's philosophy of life which allows the existence of life to be totally dependent on an individual's natural choice of indulgence. The underpinning synthesis is whether LaVey's philosophy fits in the rule of life.

The importance of the people to whom LaVey's views appeal cannot be underestimated; the problem statement in this regard will be assessed in the light of the general church dogmatics standard and ethical positions. Here, I will limit my self to the problem of the general concepts of fecundity, health and prosperity as the deciding factors to the existence of life.

In order to give a balanced argument of the problem, I will look at several human problems that appeal LaVey's bias into the modern sphere of understanding with regard to such issues as debt crisis, poverty, child abuse, corruption, war and many others. I have decided to consider the few mentioned above because in my opinion, they clearly highlight the problems caused by the absolute and exclusive use of Scripture. This is rather going to be one of the humble contributions to the challenges facing Christian dogmatics and ethical discourse in the fast changing world.

1.4 HOW IT IS ARGUED

Chapter 1 aims at describing the inception of LaVey's concept of the Philosophy of Indulgence which serves as a goal of nature. LaVey's philosophy is based on natural explanation and it is therefore important to give this description of LaVey's view of Indulgence vis-à-vis a dogma-based assault on Scripture. If there is a place where one can describe LaVey's philosophy as being complacent, then it is this concept, but LaVey deliberately attempts to describe the Philosophy of Indulgence as a natural cause that when avoided produces compulsion which is a result of not being able to indulge. Compulsion, he explains, "is more dangerous to a human being than indulgence (LaVey 1969:81-82). As we will see, this argument cannot be described as being exclusively theocentric but it is explained from a more natural point of view.

Chapter 2 deals with what LaVey's understanding of Indulgence in the life of human beings is. The argument is that Indulgence forms part of the individual's approach to life, death and the hereafter. This is summed up in his statement that "life is a fulfillment of the ego" (LaVey 1969:91-92). I will in this chapter attempt to refer to some of the renowned theologians such as Jürgen Moltmann's view in relation to life, death and the hereafter. After gaining insight from other scholars, I will then attest to it in generalized views found in my context Zambia. These different descriptions are to be perceived in a manner in which we can assess LaVey's Philosophy of Indulgence to our understanding of life partly, as a scientific analysis as well as a cultural analysis. If indulgence justifies and influences an individual, then it must have an historical significance for consideration in the history of our development.

Chapter 3 offers some of scriptural dogmatic assessments to the Philosophy of Indulgence which respond to LaVey's philosophical discourse discussed in chapter 2. The chapter also makes an exegesis of some scriptural passages around the debate on sex and homosexuality which are the main discussions in the Philosophy of Indulgence. Chapter 4 describes different historic approaches to the establishment of the philosophy only to be confronted with the question whether the sense of being is transcendent or humanly inspired. LaVey's views here bring these two concepts together, establishing the reality from sociobiological developments in explaining the result of indulgence. This chapter also evaluates the different times in the history of reality.

In view of the above, chapter 5 will endeavor to critique LaVey's philosophy. This is what will form the pinnacle of the whole research project on the Philosophy of Indulgence as a dogma based assault on Scripture. The ethical implications of the Philosophy of Indulgence will be assessed in an argumentative way. This will take different view points including Christian ethical implications- social, moral and theological. This chapter will form most of my argument, which will lead us to the conclusion that will seek to create a dogma of reality which will focus on the understanding of nature in relation to the transcendent.

Throughout the dissertation, I will use the New International Version (NIV) of the Bible when referring to scriptural passages whenever necessary.

CHAPTER ONE

THE INCEPTION OF THE PHILOSOPHY OF INDULGENCE

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The Philosophy of Indulgence vis-à-vis a dogma based assault on Scripture opens an interesting field of study for the 21st century dogmaticians. Like Charles Darwin (1809-1882), “I see new fields in the distant future for far more important researchers. Psychology will be based on a new foundation, that of the necessary acquirement of each mental power and capacity by gradation. Light will be shown on the origin of man and his history.” (Darwin [1859]1999:399). This important insight opens a line of what in my view should define Christian theology in the 21st century. It is evident that theology for a 21st century listener must have much more value than the previous centuries because the essence of it should be founded on reality and through rational faith.

The authority of the reality of Scripture is challenged by many factors today. This is because Scripture does not live just within the church any more, because if the church itself is open to being true to its own nature and vocation in the world ,it opens up to the world of reality (Wright 1994:6-21). In this case truth is under scrutiny and even attacked. Every day we can witness countless people whose Christian tradition shaped their moral life but today with complexity of society that prophases, such aspects as individualism, materialism, atheism etc are based on the current times which make it somewhat the time to revise Christian theology, that will not only be based on the Bible alone, but on the foundation of other components of social sciences that can inform the kind of teaching that will challenge people to

understand the existence of life. This pursues the line of, Prof. Johan Buitendag of the University of Pretoria in his inaugural address on (“Nature as Creation from an eco-Hermeneutical perspective: from a ‘Natural theology’ to a ‘Theology of Nature’”) where he stated, “The time is ripe for us to be able in an accountable way to arrive once again at a qualified natural theology” (Buitendag: 18.06.2009). In his analysis of the term ‘Natural Theology’ Buitendag actually means a theology that answers the question of a purpose of existence of life that helps us to reach the transcendent God from below. To this effect, Buitendag citing McGrath (2008: 60) points to three approaches towards reaching the transcendent God. He states that in order to attain the ultimate goal of reaching God, we need to:

- A. *Ascend from nature to the transcendent.* In this case human nature and the whole of creation should be seen as the launching platform to reach the ultimate. This presupposes that the secret of the being of God remains hidden if we do not recognize it in nature. It is upon our ability to perceive God among us that we can know the transcendental purpose. This can be attributed to the incarnation of God in the person of Christ. When God becomes matter and we recognize him in nature then that becomes a ticket to know him as the all powerful God.
- B. *That we need to see through nature to the transcendent.* LaVey in his analysis of the philosophy of indulgence figures out that human satisfaction is in indulgence, a conclusion that he makes by observing the behaviour of human beings at the carnival. However McGrath’s argument is that nature is merely a portal that can explain the transcendent beyond it. This is why Moltmann

looks at the Kingdom of God as the ultimate goal of human beings, as its liberation is holistic. I wish to offer that human beings struggle to understand self as it is attributed to the mystery that lies in his own life. The life we have in nature is simply an image of the life beyond it.

- C. The last part that he offers is that we need to *withdraw from nature* into the human interior. It is important at this stage that there is a part within the human beings which senses things according to experience. Kant talks of holistic knowing usually when we talk of nature, we refer to the real things we can see and touch. This concept however considers the psychology of nature and truth vested in humans as transcendental beings. However Moltmann looks at this in the light of the kingdom of God where creation has capacity to reveal the supernatural.

In view of the above, we see a potential that can explain human behaviour which can lead us into a full understanding of the transcendent God's involvement in the world. Assessing LaVey's Philosophy of Indulgence in this case implies that the naturalness of human kind is what allows them to act in any way that flows naturally without any moral captivity (LaVey 1969: 92). The definition of nature in LaVey's discourse simply means 'that which is not polluted' by any teaching, dogma and or up- bringing but operates within the instincts of life. For him, some people are born to indulge and others not. Those that are born to indulge in any action must do so and those to whom indulgence does not appeal should not (LaVey 1969: 81-94).

It is however very realistic that the Christian has been a “ ‘moral being’ a curiosity without equal, as a ‘moral being’, more absurd, mendacious, vain, frivolous, harmful to himself than even the greatest despiser of mankind could have allowed himself to dream (Nietzsche 1979:102).

In saying this Nietzsche was probably very close to truth considering how humanity has tended to distort the Christian message for self gain. If we were to agree totally with Nietzsche’s statements one would not hold any hope for the possibility that life could bring anything good with indulgence if there is no moral code. World disasters such as HIV/AIDS, poverty, unemployment, economic constraints are a typical of example of man’s failure to create a faithful and just world. If we were to deny totally Nietzsche’s views then we would be blind to the reality of human suffering in the midst of chaos which sometimes is caused by the Christian religion through its uncritical use of Scripture.

It is in the culture of human beings to create a standard of life even if law breakers will always be ‘wolves in sheep skin.’ As Nietzsche alluded to above, “there is no people without a religion, much less without an ethic” (Kung 2007: 102). This implies that every ethnic group has quite specific values and criteria which are a creation of society. It is within this framework that Christian doctrines become part and parcel of the wider societal teaching.

It is, however worth noting that the Christian dogma has had a history of exclusion and condemnation rather than inclusion and encouragement (Bantley 2003:60-70).

Today comments are made that show that the church's policy of exclusion is over, but still in Zambian Christian denominations, especially, some Pentecostal churches still teach that HIV/AIDS is a curse and a punishment from God. At the same time people with homosexual and lesbian orientations continue to struggle to find recognition within the church as they are declared unrepentant sinners (Bantley 2003: 78). In most Pentecostal churches those who have not experienced the gift of tongues are considered not to be filled with the Holy Spirit. These are some of the generalizations but the fact is that exclusion is real in the church today. Some of the exclusion has been necessitated by the uncritical use of Scripture in which most portions of Scripture are quoted outside context.

Nietzsche refuted Christianity because of this and commented on the Christian life, "you will have to look more redeemed if I am to believe in your Redeemer" (Thielicke 1966:187). The stance of the church today reflects a closed orientation and they would struggle to associate with reality on earth.

Anton LaVey struggles with the church's exclusiveness, especially when he observes that the same Christians who proclaim redemption in Christ are the ones that find pleasure in indulgence (1969: 13). LaVey uses the concept of indulgence to depict the manner of the freedom of choice that every human being has to celebrate life. This follows the argument that indulgence is a necessity because it provides room for nature to be the deciding factor and thus leaves no sense of guilt since it is an earthy philosophy (1969: 81).

1.2 WHO IS ANTON SZANDOR LAVEY?

Anton Szandor LaVey is characterized by his questioning of religious doctrines which prevent people from facing the world of reality. He also opens a new way of looking at the philosophy of life through an earthy world view. The argument he poses is that “freedom to face reality emancipates human beings from hypocrisy and guilt consciousness that makes confessions of sins unnecessary” (LaVey 1969: 13).

In his book “the Satanic Bible” (1969) Magus Peter H. Gilmore, shares LaVey’s journey of trying to make sense of the philosophy of Indulgence which was formulated as a basis for his philosophical and religious discourse, eventually to become a pinnacle of debate after his death.

1.3 HIS BIRTH AND CALLING

LaVey was born on 11th April 1930 in Chicago, Illinois to Jewish parents and died on 29th October 1997. While he was still young, his parents relocated to California, the western most gathering place for the brightest and darkest manifestations of the “American dream” (1969:14-17). From his Eastern European grandmother, young LaVey learned of the superstitions still existent in that part of the world concerning the power of magic. This provided a starting point in gaining interest into the study of human beings’ behavioural changes. At the age of 36 LaVey, became the American founder and High priest of the Church of Satan. He then became a writer, occultist, and musician of his day. As a founder of a synthesized system of his understanding of human nature and insights of philosophers who advocated materialism and individualism, LaVey gained ground and a basis for an earthy philosophy.

LaVey's first public interaction, that would later initiate him into establishing the Philosophy of Indulgence, was through his musical abilities which were noticed early in life as he was given free reign by his parents to try his hand at various instruments. He found time to practice and could easily reproduce songs heard by ear without recourse to books (1969: 18). The talent proved to be his main source of income for many years. His talent also helped to usher him into playing for tent revivalists every Sunday of his time. His odd interests as a result marked him as an outsider, but could not alleviate it by feeling any compulsion to be "*one of the boys*". He despised gym class and team sports and often cut classes to follow his interests (1969: 19).

Moving beyond the standard texts, LaVey absorbed volumes of books analyzing human behavior on every level, from the impulses of the individual to the dynamics of the herd. His critical thinking and dedication to understanding human beings made him drop out of Globe High School to spend time studying people's behaviour at the carnival. He became well versed in many rackets used to separate the rubes from their money along with the psychology that leads people to such pursuits. This study by observation slowly started developing into something that would become a career.

In making some extra money for survival, LaVey decided to work for a while as a photographer for the police department, and during the Korean War being enrolled in San Francisco City College as criminology major. Both his studies and occupation revealed grim insight into human nature and confirmed his rejection of spiritual doctrines pursued.

In the 1950s LaVey became an investigator of alleged supernatural phenomena “Nut calls” referred to him by friends in the police department. That experience proved to him that many people were inclined to seek bizarre “Other worldly” explanations for a phenomena that had prosaic causes. His rational explanations often disappointed the complainants and so LaVey invented exotic sources to make them feel better. At this point, he gained insight as to how belief functions in people’s lives. A new chapter of his philosophical journey gradually started maturing.

To that effect, LaVey created a process of lectures to the general public towards an understanding of self through mental emancipation. When he began moving into a conceptual analysis of life in his explanation, a member of the public, satisfied with LaVey’s views, suggested that Anton LaVey had a basis for a new religion. LaVey agreed and on 30th April 1966 decided to found the Church of Satan to enable him communicate his ideas. The Church was initiated to later become a radical and controversial challenge to the Christian Church dogma and its Scriptural doctrines as expressed in the nine Satanic Statements (LaVey 1969:25). By the end of 1969 LaVey took his monograph he had written to explain the philosophy of indulgence, as a basis of emancipating people’s consciousness (1969: 17). His philosophy was authenticated with influence of other philosophers such as, Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900), Ayn Rand (1905-1982) and Louis Mencken (1880-1956) in addition to the wisdom of the carnival folks. The main basis of LaVey’s satanic philosophical discourse exposed him to unusual individuals from all stratus of society. He elaborated to his followers that the philosophy of indulgence “makes human beings

gods of their own subjective universes” (1969:44-45). Further LaVey alluded to the equality of human beings at all levels and challenged people to exercise their faculties to judge and be judged in all that they do. He dethroned the seeking of the external saviors and championed the responsibility for all of ones actions and the resultant consequences (1969:7). It was from this point of view that the Philosophy of Indulgence became a platform for his understanding.

In the following chapter we will look more concretely at the Philosophy of Indulgence which in this dissertation is a dogma based-assault on Scripture.

CHAPTER TWO

INDULGENCE ACCORDING TO ANTON LAVEY.

1 INTRODUCTION

Indulgence in the Webster's Dictionary is defined as: "to give oneself up to something"; "not to refrain or oppose"; "to give free course to"; to gratify by compliance or to yield to something without being forced". The meaning of the definition of indulgence implies that indulgence is an act on choices made by an individual in the absence of any dogma, group or superficial captivity. In this regard when choices are made by a person they become that person's centre to determine a standard of life they will lead, either in a positive or negative way. Human beings in a real sense are subjects and objects of their choices but these choices should flow naturally. Nature is thus deemed as a platform of indulgence because the basis of our being is to make choices driven by our own understanding of life.

In the construction of the Philosophy of Indulgence, the highest plateau of human development is regarded as 'the awareness of the human nature' imbedded in the flesh with feelings and expressions (LaVey 1969:81- 82). This only differs with the animal kingdom in that animals can only sense the environment good for their species through natural instincts (Pannenburg 1970:15). When it comes to human beings, choice becomes the centre of all actions but the choices made should only come with natural drives or instincts unique from the animals. It is the feelings for expressions within which should produce aspirations and when aspirations are attained, the meaning of life is complete. The argument here entails that the Philosophy of Indulgence figures out the facts of the reality of what makes human

beings satisfied in their life. LaVey (1969:81) indicates that lack of satisfaction builds harmful desires that would rapidly grow into compulsion, thus promote a life of frustration. The basic analysis is that nothing is created for nothing and so the challenge to discover the purpose of life is the ultimate goal of satisfaction. Satisfaction in this context means the accomplishment of all desires necessary for happiness. In this regard I want take the body as a case study which in the assessment of the Philosophy of Indulgence simply expresses that which is natural within itself. According to LaVey, It is worth noting that, before anything else, people are created natural beings in all spheres of life and therefore indulging in their natural desires are simply a fulfillment of the obedience to the Law of Nature. This owes to the fact that the goal of human beings is to find rest in nature, with no frustrations which can be harmful to self and others. That is why, I think, Saint Augustine's reference to the soul of man as restless till it finds rest in God makes ultimate sense about the character of human being's rest in satisfaction as proposed by LaVey. In the Philosophy of Indulgence, indulge is a pursuit of the natural make up that brings satisfaction.

In taking the Christian Church as a case study the Philosophy of Indulgence entails that the Christian Scripture has laws and instructions for a righteous living but the followers thrive on hypocrisy "for the man's carnal nature over powers even the most faithful" (LaVey 1969: 21;81-86). Nature, according to the Philosophy of Indulgence is unavoidable and thus a response to that, which is natural, is not failure, but accomplishment of purpose for which nature thrives. There are two words, which are referred to as cited outside context, 'Indulgence' and 'compulsion'. Compulsion in the

very meaning of the term in its context is never created by indulging, but by not being able to indulge as alluded to above. This alludes to the fact that in compulsion there is lack of choice for one is simply compelled into performing an act. This is why LaVey contends that religious communities have caused chaos because people are compelled to act against their natural instincts (LaVey 1969: 103). Dawkins in the same way argues that “the world would have been better off without religion as a result” In this context freedom of choice is at the heart of human satisfaction and not created dogmas or an ethical description of life. LaVey argues that the making of any kind of indulgence a taboo, “only serves to intensify the desire to indulge” (LaVey 1969:81-86). The underlying argument is that the ego of a human being has been prone to the things they have been told not to do in the proverb. “Forbidden Fruits are the sweetest”.

The challenge is to what extent does indulgence go? In looking at the philosophy, one notes that indulgence does not promote any moral order that can be followed, but chaos in action. It excludes the authority of Scripture in a day to day life, mainly because Scripture dwells far above what a natural human being can reach. This poses a challenge of where specific ethical values, criteria and norms emanate from! We will look at them briefly and succinctly as we progress in the development of this argument.

1.1 THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PHILOSOPHY OF INDULGENCE

It is quite specific that the Philosophy of Indulgence mainly surrounds the sexuality code, because sexuality is the mostly debated topic of the last two centuries. It is my desire that in the distant future there shall be a construction of a comprehensive theology of the body: a study that will focus on the study of God in human beings. "According to John Paul II, God created the body as a 'sign' of his own divine mystery," explains Christopher West, a moral theologian, author and speaker (Brinkmann. "In the Image of God" Catholic Standard & Times [May-June, 2004]). This means if we are to exposit God's divine mystery in the body, we face a challenge to establish a theology of the body that will respond to human sexuality.

Because God Himself is the source of the complementarity of the sexes, when he created man in the image of himself, he created both a male and a female (Genesis 1:26-27). They were then directed to "be fruitful and multiply" by becoming "one flesh." (1:28-29). This was the original vocation of man and woman, to unite their bodies and produce life, but to do so in the "image of God" which means it must bear the following characteristics: it must be free, total, faithful and fruitful. Do these three mean Indulgence?

I shall look into the full details of the Philosophy of Indulgence according to LaVey in the following section. It will be noticed that LaVey has a bias on sexuality as a major faculty of indulgence. I shall, however, also consider other areas of indulgence he refers to in the book "The Satanic Bible" (1969). A response to the philosophy will be dealt with in the next chapter.

1.2 SEXUAL INDULGENCE

Sexual indulgence and free love among human beings is very paramount in LaVey's philosophy in his book "The Satanic Bible" (1969). LaVey does not find any breach of a moral code as Scripture will clearly hold its position with regard to human morality not based on nature but on dogma. In the Philosophy of Indulgence love and desire are a driving force for release. LaVey defines this force as "a faculty of human existence that flows naturally in the life of human beings" (LaVey 1969: 85). Love, sex and desire go hand in hand and they are considered free ways in the Philosophy of Indulgence. However in respect of freedom, free love means exactly that – freedom of either being faithful to one partner or to indulge ones sexual desires with as many others as one feels is necessary, if the act and desire flows naturally. Natural law in this matter is a prerequisite to indulgence. The implication of this is that, indulgence discourages orgiastic activity or extra marital affairs for those to whom they do not come naturally. Unnatural indulgence in either extra marital affairs or to be unfaithful to a chosen mate if that doesn't flow naturally is detrimental as it does not provide for the emancipation of the mind. The argument is that, for others who are naturally created sexually active," It would be frustrating to be bound sexually to just one person" (LaVey 1969:84). It is argued that each person has a different orientation of sexual activity and thus each one must decide for them selves what form of sexual activity best suits their individual needs. "forcing oneself to be adulterous or to have sex partners when not married just for the sake of proving to others that they are emancipated from sexual guilt is just as wrong, by standards of indulgence" argues Anton LaVey (1969:81). So with standards of indulgence, the

most paramount aspect is that there should be no guilty feeling left because guilt quenches satisfaction.

The entails that those who are constantly preoccupied with demonstrating their emancipation from sexual guilt are in reality held in even greater sexual bondage than those who simply accept sexual activity as a natural part of life and don't make a big deal over their sexual freedom (LaVey 1969: 82). The example of a fact of an established truth is that "every man's dream girl is not sexually free," but is actually frigid and moves from man to man because she is too inhibited to ever find complete sexual release(LaVey 1969: 86). There are two misconceptions of life which are highlighted here to work as a basis for life. First the idea that the ability to engage in group sexual activity is indicative of sexual freedom and that contemporary free sex groups have one thing in common vis-à-vis discouragement of fetishistic or deviant activity.

The reality of LaVey's Philosophy of Indulgence under assessment is that if a person is a sexual connoisseur i.e. truly free from sexual guilt, they cannot be stifled by any sexual revolutionists than they can by prudery be a quiet ridden society. The free sex clubs such as brothels miss the whole point of sexual freedom in this way. "Sex is a game of freedom and that freedom is a natural response to the human nature" (LaVey 1969:84). Unless sexual activity can be expressed on an individual basis, which includes personal fetishes, there is absolutely no purpose in belonging to a sexual freedom organization which by and large produces a guilty conscience.

In a research conducted among sex workers in the streets of Lusaka in August 2009, 95% indicated that, though they are prostitutes belonging to a particular sex club, they are driven by personal circumstances into having sexual activities with people they are not sexually compatible with. For them sex is not enjoyable, it is for economic reasons. “Besides, every hard work involves pain in order to put food on the table” said one professional prostitute. Later, an interview among financially sound men and women who do sex as a result of pleasure, 100% indicated they enjoy it because they have made a choice to be in love and enjoy sex for pleasure. The two parallel groups agree on one thing: that sex is a substance of choice and in the absence of choice there is no satisfaction but guilty conscience. In Zambia, young girls involved in early sexual relations due to peer pressure are in most cases psychologically affected (Zambia Counseling Council [ZCC] report 2009). Most cultures in Zambia publicly encourage sex as a matter of personal choice but this is expected to happen in the confines of marriage. Women are taught to remain virgins until marriage in order to have a full satisfaction of sexual intercourse. Before being married, a virginity test is done to a girl espoused to be married, and if a girl is not a virgin, no lobola is paid to the family. This ethical code is standard to prevent young people from indulgence in free sex. The Christian dogmatic code on sex is thus regarded as a standard for a traditional ethical behavior in Zambian communities.

1.3 SEXUAL ORIENTATION

The Philosophy of Indulgence affirms that human existence cannot do things outside its natural instincts or drives within them. It is therefore a case of obedience to the naturalness of behaviour. Sexual orientation is one natural behaviour which is

caused by the natural make up of an individual. Jesus, when talking about celibacy affirmed that some people are born different from the expectation of society. He for example said some people are born celibate while others are made by men to be so (Matthew 19:11ff). In the absence of any explanation, the implication of this raises the question of being born with a particular sexual orientation which sometimes may not be the expectation of society e.g. if one is born with a homosexual or lesbian orientation. In this case the emancipation of the mind for a person, who discovers his natural orientation, can only be found when satisfaction is attained within the framework of their genetic formation. Indulgence dismisses those who forcefully change their sexual orientation to deal with their frustration because there is no natural operation in it (LaVey 1969:82ff). This entails that any type of sexual activity which properly satisfies ones individual desires; be it heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual, or even an asexual, can be expressed with a free mind within natural operation. This comes to terms with any fetish or deviation which will enhance ones sex life, so long as it involves no one who does not wish to be involved. Rapes, incest, defilement among others are not natural activities and any one who does them is acts outside the natural framework.

It is worth noting that there are more sexual variants than unenlightened individuals can perceive in our society today. The Philosophy of Indulgence holds that everyone has some form of fetish, but because they are unaware of the preponderance of fetishist activity in our society, feels they are deprived if they submit to their “unnatural” yearnings (1969:84ff). Human beings have weaknesses and strengths imbedded in their nature which cannot be explained. Paul in the letter to the

Corinthians admits to this “whatever I want to do I don’t do but whatever I don’t want I find myself doing it” (Romans 7:21ff). This points to a study conducted (through questionnaires) among non-sexually active young people between the ages 16 to 25 years in Zambia in August 2009 which revealed that, 60 % of the youth, who are called morally upright is attributed to lack of opportunity for expression. For this reason, a number in them in this category resort to masturbation, child molestation, and I believe rape at a later stage, against people who are physically not powerful enough to defend themselves. It is reported that many sexual desires never progress beyond the fantasy stage; and that lack of release often leads to compulsion and therefore a great number of people devise undetectable methods, of giving vent to their urges (LaVey 1969:81). Since most fetishistic activity is outwardly not apparent due to lack of opportunity for expression, the sexually unsophisticated cannot be excluded from fetishistic behaviour. LaVey alludes to the example of a fetish mentality where in, for example, the male transvestite will indulge in his fetish by wearing feminine undergarments while going about his daily activities; or the masochistic woman might wear a rubber girdle several sizes too small, so she may derive sexual pleasure from her fetishistic discomfort throughout the day. In giving these examples, LaVey uses the law of indulgence as a prime factor in stating that any form of sexual expression is good and permissible as long as it hurts no one else. This affirms Socrates’ appeal to the general moral rule or principle, “we ought never to harm anyone in our actions” (Frankena 1995:2-5ff). By not hurting another, he states it does not include the unintentional hurt felt by those who might not agree with your views on sexual orientation, because of their anxieties on sexual morality.

Sex in this case is perceived as a mature stage to be conducted by mature adults who willingly take full responsibility for their actions and voluntarily engage in a given form of sexual expression, even if it is generally considered a taboo in most African societies. Sex for human beings is compared to food, as no two people are exactly the same in their choice of diet or have the same capacity for consumption of food. Sexual tastes and appetites vary from person to person. It is in this case that the Philosophy of Indulgence proposes that, no person and no society has the right to set limitations on the sexual standards or the frequency of sexual activity of another because it is a natural application. This directly attacks the exclusive use of Scripture in transforming the world. "Proper sexual conduct can only be judged within the context of each individual's situation" (LaVey 1969:66-67). For this reason LaVey (1969:103) says "What one may consider sexually correct and moral may be frustrating to another" (LaVey 1969:68). On the other hand this figures out that, one person may have great sexual prowess, but it is unjust for him to belittle another whose sexual capacity may not be equal to his own. It would therefore be inconsiderate for one to impose himself upon the other person i.e. the man who has a voracious sexual appetite, but whose wife's sexual needs do not match his own needs to consider this within the framework of marriage.

1.4 SEX AND MARRIAGE

In the Philosophy of Indulgence, an ideal relationship is one in which two people are deeply in love with one another and are sexually compatible (LaVey 1969: 81). Compatibility is a prime factor in an ideal relationship. However it is worth noting that in the Philosophy of Indulgence developed by LaVey, points to the concept that,

perfect relationships are relatively uncommon following the human condition of nature in which men predominately are born unfaithful mates. LaVey argues that “mutual Love and sexual Love can, but do not necessarily, go hand in hand.” (LaVey 1969: 70). If there is an amount of sexual compatibility then it is limited and not all sexual desires will be fulfilled in this case.

The bone of contention is that there is no greater sexual pleasure than that derived from association with someone you deeply love, if you are sexually well suited. In marriage the Philosophy of Indulgence entails that “lack of sexual compatibility does not indicate lack of mutual love.” (1969: 82). One can, and often does, exist without the other. With this, one member of a couple will resort to outside sexual activity because he deeply loves his mate and wishes to avoid hurting or imposing upon his loved one. This owes to the fact that deep mutual love is enriched by sexual love, and it is certainly a necessary ingredient for any satisfactory relationship; but because of differing sexual predilections, “it becomes ideal for a spouse to fulfill his sexual desires outside marriage” suggests LaVey (1969:84ff)

Although the emphasis of indulgence in marriage only applies to a person who is not sexually compatible with his wife and goes elsewhere to find sexual satisfaction, the philosophy actually encourages sexual faithfulness to the chosen mate except where satisfaction is not attained. This idea suits best in African cultures where polygamy becomes a remedy for unfaithfulness.

1.5 THE SEVEN DEADLY SINS OF HUMAN NATURE

The phrase ‘seven deadly sins’ of human nature is part of the Roman Catholic folklore and church tradition dogmatics where some sins within Scripture were deemed as ruin to spiritual progress. They were labeled deadly or capital in Roman Catholic dogmatic teaching, though they have no foundation in Scripture. In the book “The Satanic Bible” (1969), LaVey prefers to use the same reference of the phrase “the seven deadly sins of human nature.”(LaVey 1969: 46). The list consists the following:

“Greed (Avarice), pride, envy, anger, gluttony, lust and sloth” depicted from different scriptural passages, as they are nowhere listed as grouped. They, as is every other sin, are warned against throughout Scripture in many different ways. In the philosophy of Indulgence LaVey, advocates indulging in each one of these as they lead to physical, mental, or emotional gratification which is a point of body satisfaction. These sins are deemed a centre of human satisfaction. In the development of the argument on indulgence, LaVey explains that nothing is wrong with being greedy as it only denotes that one wants more than he already has; Desire to have more, is part of human nature. This can be attributed to people who are by nature hunter gathers, wanting to have and be always more than the others. That is within human nature. With envy LaVey states that to have favor upon the poisons of the others and diversions of obtaining similar things for one self are not a weakness but a substance of wanting to develop further within the natural sphere. Envy and greed are the motivating forces of ambition and without ambition, very little of any importance would be accomplished in this life. Gluttony, pride, lust and sloth are also

all part of human nature. And so to come up with a concrete behavioural pattern that responds to human nature, a study of God's involvement with nature is ideal.

The reality is that the strongest instinct in every living thing is self preservation. When it is tampered with it brings humanity to the last of the deadly Christian sins - anger. Anger is not our instinct for self preservation but is aroused when someone harms us; when we become angry enough to protect ourselves from further attack. When we react we are simply appreciating that naturalness of our being. Indulgence in this case entails that it is quite a natural practice propelled by natural instincts that when "one smite thee on one cheek, smash him on the other!" The logical argument is that wrong must be addressed and this is natural. A person is born dangerous and must always be dangerous. "Be a Lion in the path- being dangerous even in defeat!" (LaVey 1969: 92)

If natural instincts lead human beings to sin, all men are sinners and therefore captives, and only indulgence provides them with such freedom of expression without any guilty conscience. The appreciation of the naturalness in humanity makes human beings free to make choices that seem best to them. These choices happen to be natural but each one has its own consequences. The basis of the argument is that natural times and Knowledge provide such understanding that man no longer needs a dogma that is rigid, but one that responds to the time without compromising the gospel of the Christ. This challenges that the tenet of faith in the 21st Century has rather become a dying faith in most parts, due to lack of critical and exclusive interpretation of the time in which the church exists.

Religion, therefore, has a special role, i.e. that of representing the spiritual nature of man, with little or no concern for his carnal or mundane needs. Life is predominately perceived as transitory and the body merely as a shell; a physical pleasure, trivial, and pain a worthwhile preparation for the Kingdom of God.

1.6 LIFE AS FULFILLMENT OF THE EGO

LaVey's philosophical discourse on death figures out the fact that man is aware that he will die someday (LaVey 1969: 46-48). This particular instinct prepares man for the hereafter. For example animals, when nearing death, know they are about to die; but it is not until death is certain that the animal senses his coming departure from this world. And even then he does not know exactly what is entailed in dying. It is often pointed out that animals accept death gracefully without fear or resistance.

When an animal is sick or injured it will fight for its life with every matter of strength it has. It is this unshakeable will to live that if man were not so, 'highly evolved', would also give him the fighting spirit he needs to stay alive. In this case the value of life in the philosophy of indulgence is totally dependent on the operation of the ego. The ego in this case is a power house of life here and after. Life after death according to the philosophy of indulgence "is a substance of the fulfillment of the ego and death being the only abstinence" (LaVey 1969:91-93).

It is a well-known fact that many people die simply because they give up and just don't care anymore. A number of suicides among people who are frustrated and those whose sickness persists, are as a result of this. Suicide has become less

repugnant to many people than any number of other sins because the essence of this is failure to fulfill human satisfaction.

In the Philosophy of Indulgence when a person dies, it is the greatest abstinence that provides freedom from indulging in bodily matter, but at the same time it is touted as “a great spiritual awakening” (LaVey 1969:104) - one which is prepared for throughout life. It is this lust for life in the ego which will allow the vital person to live on after the inevitable death of his bodily shell. In other words the philosophy of indulgence rightly acknowledges the life after death, but that life is a preparation done during the bodily shell period. This argument does not dismiss the Christian understanding of the end time and the hereafter.

The Philosophy of Indulgence emphatically puts it that “life is one great indulgence, death the one great abstinence.” (1969: 92) To a person who is satisfied with his earthly existence, life is like a party, and as a matter of fact no one likes to leave a good party. By the same token, if a person is enjoying himself here on earth he will not so readily give up this life for the promise of the after life about which he knows nothing. Anything that does not promote good, healthy, self satisfaction or honest pride in earthly accomplishment is against life (LaVey 1969:91-94). If, therefore, people were able to divorce themselves from the stigma attached to personal ego fulfillment they would not need to play self deceitful games such as belief in re-incarnation as a means of satisfying their natural need for ego fulfillment.

LaVey believes in “complete gratification of a human beings ego” (LaVey 1969:92-95) as a prime factor in understanding life. Fulfillment of life is intensified or encouraged by the ego. If a person’s own ego is sufficiently fulfilled, one can state that a person can afford to be kind and to be complimentary to others without robbing himself of their self respect. In this case the ego results from a need to satisfy our own impoverished egos. If Scripture, however, needs to be a firm foundation then it should recognize the purpose of the ego. LaVey teaches that “the development of a good strong ego is when it gives people self respect necessary for life and have fought through to the end for their earthly existence” (1969:96ff). It is this ego which will refuse to die even after the expiration of the body which housed it.

Death comes as an indulgence because of the extreme circumstances which make the termination of life a welcome relief from unendurable earthly existence.

CHAPTER THREE

A SCRIPTURAL DOGMATIC RESPONSE TO THE PHILOSOPHY OF INDULGENCE

1. INTRODUCTION

The Scriptural dogmatic response to the Philosophy of Indulgence begins with the essence of recognizing the creation of human beings in the image of God. Creation itself does not originate from complete nothingness but the nature of the Creator. All people are created in the image of God, and are called to live in love, mercy and justice. In this case the value of life is imbedded in doing what is just, for the common good. As created beings, humans are entrusted with responsibility for self and to live in the hope of the kingdom of God which is the real satisfaction in life. The Philosophy of Indulgence in this case does affirm this Scriptural position of what the meaning of life is. Our sexuality and its behavioural expression should both be used as conformity to the image of God.

I want to affirm that human sexuality is a sacred gift of God, “a sign of God’s mystery” which must be celebrated. However, our alienation from God has damaged every area of our lives and consequently every person's sexual experience and expressions fall short of the glory of the gift and it’s Giver. This is why the aspect of affirming the sanctity of human sexuality remains a question. God did not give ‘sex as a thing to give human beings guilt’ as LaVey puts it in his development of the philosophy of indulgence. In a real sense God gave all gifts freely and all gifts are good and perfect.

It is not a person's sexual orientation, in itself, which is a factor in determining one’s satisfaction with life. It is a person’s sexual practice that legitimately influences such

a determination. I will now discuss some of the areas of sexuality in response to the philosophy of indulgence.

1.1 SEXUALITY IS AN INTEGRAL PART OF OUR LIVES.

The creation stories of Genesis 1-2 teach that God created humanity as “male and female”. We are gendered beings. Much of what we do therefore comes out of our self understanding of what it means to be male or female. The sum of our self understanding and behaviours as male or female is often referred to as our “sexuality”. What we do with our sexual organs is one dimension of our sexuality. Genesis 1:26-28 notes that it is only a male and female co-humanity that can fulfill God’s commission to fill and rule the world. Genesis 2:24 concludes that it is the need for one another that drives men and women to be united in marriage. At times, some within the Christian church have denigrated, and even despised, both sexual desire and its expression in sexual intercourse. It is worth noting that the influence of certain Greek philosophical ideas which saw the body, with its desires and pleasures, as evil, against the “spirit” (or “soul”) which was thought to be good. The Bible however gives an important place to the body. We were created as embodied beings, and one way in which we express this is through our sexuality (1 Corinthians 6:12-20).

1.2 LOVE IS THE DEFINING MARK OF ALL CHRISTIAN BEHAVIOUR.

Jesus pointed his disciples to the central place of love in Christian ethics when he taught that love for God and love for others lies at the centre of God’s will. This is reiterated throughout the New Testament (Romans 13:10, 1 Corinthians 13, 1 John

3:16, 4:13-21). Whatever other guidelines we apply to sexual expression, love must be part of that expression if it is to be truly Christian dogma.

1.3 SEXUALITY CAN BE DISTORTED BY SIN

LaVey's experience at the carnival, which gave rise to the philosophy of indulgence, can not be underrated. Sexuality can be distorted by man's carnival desires. The "curses" of Genesis 3 affirm that human sin (rebellion against the will of God) has had unfortunate consequences for human existence, which includes our sexuality and sexual behaviour. Whether this is a myth, it still remains in the Christian dogmatics that the original sin has made man an alien of God's divine purpose for humanity. Sexual behaviour can easily become selfish. It can become the desire to experience sexual pleasure without proper regard for the other person. Sex can be one means by which one person exercises power and control over another. Rape is the most violent form of this. Sexual behaviours can become divorced from relationship and love, and people can be manipulated or forced into sexual acts which are unwanted and/or unhelpful.

1.4 SCRIPTURE AND MARRIAGE

There is no one model of marriage in Scripture. The Old Testament refers to several patterns which are not accepted in our society today, e.g. polygamy, concubine and *levir* marriage (Deuteronomy 25:5-10). There is no made reference to sexual or mutual compatibility. However, the meaning and purpose of marriage, as traditionally accepted in the Christian Church, can be seen in four biblical passages.

A. GENESIS 1

Here the picture is of God calling the world (nature) into being over a period of six days and giving to the various animate creatures the command to “be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth” (v.22). It is this need that explains (in part at least) the sexual differentiation of the animate world, including human beings. The creation of human beings as male and female is followed by the same command to “be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth”. The implication is that the populating of the earth will be achieved through the sexual union of male and female who are mutually compatible and committed to the ideal sphere of the bond. Genesis 1 therefore emphasizes sexual differentiation for the purposes of Procreation. However, it would be wrong to conclude that procreation is the only or primary reason people may engage in sexual intercourse.

B. GENESIS 2

Genesis 2:18-25 points rather to the complementary natures of men and women and sexual intercourse as a celebration of their partnership. Verse 18 states that “it is not good for the man to be alone”. Thus God creates another person, of opposite gender, and unites them in marriage. In becoming “one body” (v.24) (seen by most scholars as involving sexual intercourse) the aloneness of each is overcome. It should be noted that marriage is not the only means by which human aloneness is overcome. We can experience deep interpersonal relationships in a variety of contexts (e.g. our families of origin and close friendships such as those shared by David and Jonathan and by Jesus, Mary and Martha in our Scriptures). It is appropriate to see Genesis 1 and 2 as complementary. Genesis 1 focuses on the procreative aspect of sexual intercourse, while in Genesis 2 the emphasis is placed

on the way in which it expresses the closeness of relationship. This application entails the nature of human beings in reality. Human beings need fellowship and fellowship was to be the greatest indulgence that would be the most perfect of the philosophy of indulgence.

C. SONG OF SONGS

Like Genesis 2:18-25, the Song of Songs celebrates the relational dimension of sexual intercourse. The song is an emotionally charged and deeply erotic love poem leading to love's consummation in marriage. Though some understand it to be an allegory of God's love for his people, most commentators recognize that this was not its original intent. Rather it speaks of the sexual celebration of a human love relationship. Indeed, it is quite remarkable that in a community in which procreation was highly esteemed the poem makes no mention of the procreative function of sex. The emphasis is placed firmly upon the delight two Lovers take in one another's bodies.

D. 1 CORINTHIANS 7:1-7

Some have seen this passage as denigrating marriage and sexual intercourse. I think this would be a distorted interpretation. Whatever Paul says that can be construed as a negative evaluation of marriage needs to be seen as a response to an (unexplained) "impending crisis" facing the Christians at Corinth (v.26). Some of the more recent commentators see the passage as addressing an ascetic argument adopted by some Christians in Corinth. They suggested that all sexual relations were to be avoided, even between husband and wife. (Verse 1 quote the Corinthians—"it is well for a man not to touch a woman"; have sexual relations with a woman etc).

Paul's response is to affirm celibacy for those who are thus gifted and to affirm marriage, and a full sexual relationship within it, for those who are not so gifted. This can be one area in which LaVey approaches with his argument that it is the naturalness of our being that matters. Rather than denigrating sexual intercourse, Paul recognizes it has an important and legitimate place within married life and not in indulgence.

E. EPHESIANS 5:21–33

Paul's positive attitude toward marriage can be seen in his use of the marriage relationships as an analogy of that between Christ and the church. These Scriptures stand behind the traditional Christian viewpoint, that marriage is the life-long, voluntary union of a man and a woman, and is God's intended setting for sexual intercourse. It is one of God's most precious gifts and includes both the pleasure husband and wife find in each other, and the hope of procreation. The Christian doctrine states that the Scriptural ideal for the acceptance and expression of our sexuality is in marriage, and it is best secured by the principle of chastity for those who are unmarried, and faithfulness for those who are married. The doctrine of the church therefore has an obligation to teach and uphold this biblical ideal and to demonstrate the benefits that come when it is maintained. For many unmarried people embracing this ideal will involve struggle and tension. This should be met with a genuinely empathetic and loving pastoral response. The Christian church should seek to create an environment in which single Christians can be honest and open about their sexuality and find support for their Christian journey.

1.5 DE FACTO RELATIONSHIPS

It is worth noting that there is no single model of marriage in Scripture. One should not assume that the traditional Western model is the only model Christians accept, and thus raise the question of the status of de facto relationships. Three views can be found in Christian community dogmatics.

1.5.1 DE FACTO RELATIONSHIPS NEVER COUNT AS MARRIAGE

To be classified as a marriage relationship, a marriage must be exclusive; publicly acknowledged at some event; permanent (or at least entered into with this intention); and consummated by sexual intercourse. De facto relationships fail on the second count and often on the third as well.

1.5.2 DE FACTO RELATIONSHIPS MAY COUNT AS MARRIAGE

This view accepts the criteria for marriage noted above, with the exception that the relationship is publicly entered into. This is thought to be a feature of culture and not necessity for any de facto relationship marked by exclusivity, the intention of permanence, and consummation in sexual intercourse should be considered a marriage. If there is no genuine intention of permanency it cannot classify as a marriage.

1.5.3 DE FACTO RELATIONSHIPS ALWAYS COUNT AS MARRIAGE

Some suggest that sexual union makes two people “one flesh” and it is this that defines them as married. Others argue that a de facto relationship involves two people in an ongoing commitment to one another which includes exclusivity and a sexual relationship. While they may not identify themselves as “married”, they are married emotionally and thus need to become legitimate husband and wife. In the

case for Zambia, Penal code 50 of the Laws of Zambia, states, “if two people (Male& Female) cohabit for a period of six months, the state recognizes them as married.” This law is aimed at discouraging relationships which do not have a basis in Zambia.

1.6 HOMOSEXUALITY

There is a distinction to be made between homosexual orientation (the causes of which are much debated) and homosexual behaviour. Homosexual orientation describes a person’s feelings of sexual desire and attraction being predominantly oriented towards people of the same sex. Homosexual behaviour is sexual activity with a person(s) of the same sex, in preference to either heterosexual activity or sexual abstinence. Scripture speaks about homosexual genital behaviour and not about homosexual orientation, and sees people as responsible for their behaviour and the choices they make. Before preceding, it is worth noting that there is a wide variety of sexual orientations that exists in our society. These include heterosexuality, homosexuality, bisexuality and asexuality. LaVey has alluded to all of them in the philosophy of indulgence as acceptable and healthy as long as they flow naturally.

Four views can be noted in the argument of the philosophy of indulgence as a dogma based assault on Scripture.

1.6.1 SCRIPTURAL ETHICAL VALUES DO NOT CHANGE

Both Old and New Testaments condemn homosexual behaviour as a practice and is silent about homosexual orientation, and that same evaluation applies today. It is true that Jesus does not mention homosexuality; but nor does he mention rape,

incest, child abuse, and other questionable practices. We need to revise Scriptural ethical values which no longer apply in our changed social context. This principle is seen within Scripture in the revision of laws relating to the Sabbath, circumcision, food etc. In more recent times Christians have come to see that slavery, lawful in New Testament times for Christians, is not in harmony with the gospel. This principle is then applied to laws on the critical issues of human sexuality orientations, and a new ethic is sought which will inspire people to engage with the demands of discipleship, instead of alienating them from God and the church.

1.6.2 HOMOSEXUALITY IS A DISTORTION OF THE DIVINE PLAN FOR SEXUALITY

This plan is to be discerned in such Scriptures as Genesis 2:18–25. One result of the ‘fall’ is the distortion of sexual expression and the possibility of unfaithfulness in marriage. Again, Paul’s dissertation in Ephesians 5:22ff on the marriage relationship, where it is used as an illustration of the relationship between Christ and the church, highlights God’s original plan for the relationship between man and woman.

2. RECENT CHALLENGES TO TRADITIONAL CHURCH TEACHING

Scripture refers to homosexual behaviour on a number of occasions. In each instance the behaviour is described as contrary to God’s will. The traditional position of the Church has been that Scriptures teach that, homosexual intercourse is always a violation of God’s will. This understanding has been challenged mainly by new systematic theology constructs. The suggestion is that the texts dealing with homosexuality have been either misunderstood or misapplied to the issue of homosexual relationships today. It is beyond the scope of this dissertation to persist

on an overview or response to these. The challenges and analyses of the teachings and the contextual challenges are really considered, but by my analysis I cannot find to be convincing. Thus this dissertation affirms the traditional understanding.

2.1 THE BROADER SCRIPTURAL CONTEXT

When developing a scriptural perspective of sexuality it is important to take into account both those scriptural passages which speak directly to the issue and the broader Scriptural approach to sexual relationships. The broader contexts suggest that the marriage relationship of a man and woman is the morally normative environment for sexual intercourse and that those who do not share this relationship are called to celibacy (e.g. Genesis 2:18–25, 1 Corinthians 7).

2.2 SOME SPECIFIC BIBLICAL TEXTS REFERRING TO HOMOSEXUALITY.

2.2.1 Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13

These passages condemn all forms of homosexual sex. A dominant theme, in this part of Leviticus, is that God's people must be holy as God is holy. Human sexuality is one of the issues dealt with under this theme, and it is clear that sexuality and holiness belong together.

2.4.2 Romans 1:26–27

This is the most significant of all the biblical texts proscribing homosexual and lesbian behaviour. Verse 27 clearly describes male homosexual acts, and the phrase “in the same way” refers to female lesbian behaviour in verse 26.

2.4.3 1 Corinthians 6:9–10 and 1 Timothy 1: 9–10

Paul's theology is probably too fundamental in determining the culture of naturalness. In the above Scriptures he mentions a "vice list", a catalogue of behaviour's which disqualify people from the kingdom of God, the final home of the faithful. There is some linguistic uncertainty attaching to the words used in 1 Corinthians 6:9, but I believe that the language refers to some form of homosexual behaviour which should not be overlooked. Homosexual behavior is only one of the vices on these lists, and that it does not earn any stronger condemnation than e.g. greed and drunkenness. So the emphasis here should be solidarity vice,

3. The Meaning of Life

In discussing the meaning of life as a response to LaVey's dogmatics of assault on life, I wish to raise a debate between LaVey and Moltmann on the meaning of life. Moltmann represents some of the dogmatic views of the church with regard to the eschatology of hope. For Christian dogmatics, human life does not refer only to a person being alive, but is identified in one's philosophy of life in its totality (Moltmann 1996:49). This includes the events of death and the state of existence in the hereafter, in other words. Life and death go hand in hand. One cannot live without dying. Death in itself attains a certain meaning, pending our understanding of what is to follow. The one thing that unites all cultures and histories is the fact that we all have an understanding of life in the light of death. As opposed to Anton LaVey's synthesis that states that life is a fulfillment of the ego, one's life for a Christian is derived from how we make sense of the process from life to death, and then in turn, to that which is beyond. It is how life, death and the hereafter are connected by our

philosophies that determine whether we have succeeded in actually living in the first place.

In this case it is upon, when looking at the life styles in general that the philosophy of indulgence attributes to above. Moltmann identifies two main responses to the question of life and death, describing those who live with death as a final destination, and those who live as if death does not exist (Moltmann 1996: 49-58). LaVey is probably close to the truth, when he states that if human beings could have an ego to fight through life to the end like animals, living can be ratified (LaVey 1969: 78).

To Moltmann, the first attitude towards the link between life and death could be described by the question, “is death the finish?” (1996:49). In the philosophy of life, life is a stepping stone in our existence. It is a gift of grace that is given to each individual, only to be confronted with the finality of this gift in death (1996:51). Here death is seen as the final event of one’s existence. The meaning of life therefore is a blessing from God and not the fulfillment of the ego because life itself portrays that which is beyond.

So when observing human behaviour, the perspective of observing life and death is perhaps the most natural. “Since in our consciousness we cannot perceive our own death and do believe in our own immortality, and allows us in the privacy and secrecy of our unconscious mind to rejoice that it is the next guy, not me” (Kubler- Ross 1969:28). So in this case we can say that a life style that is focused on the present life can be described as being irresponsible and foolish.

Nietzsche, LaVey's philosophical mentor identified the tendency of life and death in human behaviour by referring to those who hold this view as being in grasp of Dionysus (Nietzsche 1995:5-7). By this he means that there are people who live their lives being, captivated by their own passion without any regard for the future. The present is what matters and the future will be dealt with when it arrives. Life then rests in the Kingdom of God and death cannot be more powerful than the state of our being for our human spirit is linked to the divine 'ruach' (Moltmann 1996:72). The Kingdom of God is therefore neither transcendent, nor material in nature, but is to the individual the essence of experiencing the true and unconfined relationship with God in humanity. In this case the greatest symbol of the temporal, namely death cannot overcome the Kingdom as experienced in life, nor be its final destination (Hebblethwaite 1984:211).

In this one can conclude that the basis of understanding of our being rests in the Kingdom of God which is the ultimate goal of our existence.

CHAPTER FOUR

HISTORICAL APPROACHES TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE PHILOSOPHY

1. INTRODUCTION

Anton LaVey in his introduction to the life of human beings sets in motion that “man is aware that he will die someday “(1969:91). This is attributed to man’s struggle for existence, which is only strengthened by natural selection. (Darwin [1859] in Kung 2007:85-88). Through natural selection, man is able to put up a struggle for his life in its development propelled by nature and response to nature. LaVey does not see any spiritual or empirical argument relating to nature being the centre of human development (LaVey 1969: 93). It is worth understanding that human beings are both subjects and objects of reality. The reality of the history of the human beings is what explains the attitude and the drives that form the human person. Pannenburg describes human beings as complex in the history of all created things. He alludes to the fact that , “when we look at a human being, the world and the whole of the environment turns out to be a place for his re-creative activities” (1970:1-13). His main concept of humanity is that the development of human beings from a primeval stage makes them to be reproductive beings. But that does not end there, because as a subject of choices it is quite natural that in the midst of finding identity and then true meaning of life, human beings are prone to make wrong choices that are capable of reproducing chaos. In responding to Bultman and Cullman, Moltmann suggests that “all history is on a journey and the end point will be reality in which fulfillment will be found (Moltmann 1996:138).

This reality can be described as the essence of participating in history and also works from beyond history, to create a new dimension of life that can be described as existence within the Kingdom of God. The main point is that the end result of that reality should be that the meaning of life does not rest in nothingness but into God (Kung 2007: 85-88). The real questions that we need to deal with concerns the contents of history that proceed towards informing the essence of our being. It would be irrational and pointless for history to move towards nothingness for what is in history defines who we are in our destiny.

In reference to this I don't think LaVey's arguments on the naturalness of human beings are justifiable at all. Suffice to say that human beings have advanced so much that digging into their own history tells a story of the real identity they have achieved. This advancement makes it possible to make sense from Scripture, in the sense that Scripture appreciates the dignity of fully developed beings whose duty is to create a just world. It is therefore unrealistic to think of a human being as one who does not have control over their own nature and drives. Apart from the genes which Haag calls the "selfish gene" in sociobiological development (Bennet 2008:100-109), behavior itself is a social construct. This means that human beings can define their lives, unlike animals who are driven by their instincts, (Pannenberg 1970:1-20). This is attributed to the fact that human beings have both reason and disposition to figure out what is moral and or immoral on issues that will be glued to the faithfulness of our being. Talk of Indulgence in this sense does not clearly define a human being from the basis of history. If the character of human being's development evolved to make a more meaningful life, it will be imperative to state that it is not about the

naturalness, but about the essence of a societal influence. I would like to suggest that the content of history depicted by LaVey is based on uncritical perception of life. Yes, it is important to acknowledge the independence of human beings in making choices, but the whole synthesis lies in the wholeness of life which includes fecundity, prosperity and good health which are regarded as the fullness of the human person, culminating in the Kingdom of God.

1.1 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN BEINGS

Sociobiology as a ‘Synthetic Science’ (Haag 2008) figures out a complex human history which informs our being. It challenges LaVey to pursue his philosophical discourse, with a unique perspective it offers for assessing nature vs. the nurtures problem found in LaVeyan synthesis. This points to the fact that the behaviour of species is attributed to the evolutionary benefit of behaviours. In this way, biologically inherent (nature) factors are privileged in the explanatory process, while environmental (nurture) factors are downplayed. The argument here is that the nature of human beings evolves as it responds to natural causes which by and large help its standard of life. This idea poses the main examination that can help us understand Anton LaVey’s argument on human behaviour, and perception of morality in order to perceive the evolutionary thinking of behaviour vis-à-vis the authority of Scripture over and within the historical framework.

In a book entitled “Adaptation and Natural selection” published by George Williams (1966), Williams, proposes that “the gene in a person functions as the fundamental unit of selection because the genes are capable of accurately replicating itself into

something greater within its natural order. (Williams 1966:90-91). Here one sees LaVey's synthesis on nature as a perpetrator of indulgence. It is worth noting in this regard that the genes of human beings, live by their natural instincts can only act within that framework naturalness if the meaning of life is to be attained. Here the argument is that human beings from this historical sphere can only be more parsimoniously explained by gene selection which produced a full human being who developed to a point of becoming a danger of himself (LaVey 1969: 46-50). Williams' proposal on gene selection centers on the idea that within the genetic make-up of human beings, certain individuals are born to cheat, others to indulge etc. That defines their nature. LaVey attributes indulgence and compulsions to human beings natural history, where by actions performed are a fulfillment of the natural instinct and not out of an unnatural way (LaVey 1969: 81-86). This historical argument implies that if gene selection of behaviour moves to being natural, behaviour becomes more plausible to comprehend a genes representation in the next generation.

While Williams looks at the gene selection which LaVey calls Natural instinct due to his limitation of language, Richard Dawkins examines the other aspect that leads to human indulgence without any conscience. He calls it "the selfish Gene." In the selfish gene, the influential notion that Dawkins raises is that, "behaviour is influenced by the natural process of evolution." This is best known as "survival of genes." One can observe that in this process evolution appears to promote the genetic transfer from the past to the future. In reality, it is the survival of the genes which is at stake through natural selection. Dawkins provocatively refers to genes as

selfish through their mechanisms of reproduction because they operate for their own good only.

According to the focus on “selfish genes” it makes sense to explain certain behaviours with regard to individualism and materialism in our societies. It explains the greed, selfishness and oppression in our world today. Let us take altruistic behaviour which appears in social behaviour for example to analyse the problem as follows: if genes are selfish, why would an individual sacrifice his own life or reproductive ability for the benefit of another individual? In response to the questions, one notes the fact that, our genes are not ours only, we share them with others and that is why group selection becomes a dominant entity of our being. LaVey relates this to our natural behaviour (LaVey 1969: 93). This implies that our genes have been selected precisely because of their ability to cause characteristics which will ensure genes replication. It is therefore; the question of our reproductive interest that those who share our genes reproduce also. This altruism between relatives evolves because it is in the interest of each individual to cooperate with its compatible gene bearers. A gene here is viewed as a family or group entity and should be seen as being transferred from one generation to the other.

In our assessment of the Philosophy of Indulgence in this regard, one sees that the argument LaVey focuses on is about reality in historical terms, as a prerequisite to the Philosophy of Indulgence. Now it is important for us to define reality in a language that makes sense historically in order to apply for the present. Certainly when LaVey argues on the basis of reality, he sidelines all aspects of community, and brings to

mind that a human being 'is just another kind of animal', and that his life is simply a fulfillment of the ego (LaVey 1969:41-46). It is therefore, important to state that in the world of reality (especially for human beings of all levels and classical colors and races, actions and religions, the individual and society- the greatness and misery); life is a pilgrimage that is propelled by changes influenced by many factors. It is the human being as a natural being, the object of science and medicine, and at the same time the human being as free being, the object of the humanities which cannot be calculated precisely and which often enough is a riddle of him self. Human beings in this sense become responsible for vast technological progress, but also for an unprecedented destruction of the environment, the population explosion, the shortage of water, AIDS and so on.

In history we are looking at the reality of life which essentially entails that human beings in their individual capacities can become objects and subjects of self awareness. But reality is also human beings with spirit; body with disposition; behaviour with strengths and weaknesses, heights and depths, light sides and shadow sides etc. According to scientific insights which LaVey refers to, human beings are completely without any gaps. But in the indisputable experience of humanity and countless others on which we can also reflect critically, we recognize that human beings are capable of knowing themselves and deciding for themselves for thinking and acting strategically. This makes it possible to face the question of what reality really is. It is worth noting that reality is not one dimension and not one on level, but rich in facets. This is why in trying to exposit Anton LaVey's Philosophy as

a dogma based assault on Scripture, we need to focus on the essentials of life that need amplification.

It is therefore, a valid analysis in the face of absolute rationality; in the face of the ideology of rationalism, and we must reckon on the priority of different characters of the reality which cannot justify Anton LaVey's argument on Indulgence. The reality can indisputably occur in very different ways and not only on just one way of moral captivity. It can have a very different character. The basis of this historical argument is that reality provides us with questions which we raise, that can provide different answers to what reality is, depending on who perceives it. In this regard I want to argue that the moral rule on human beings will only appear to different people depending on the platform on which they stand.

It is evident that in the theory of everything, as it is in the Philosophy of Indulgence, people no longer see how things really are, but on what they want to see. The general concept as referred to above with regard to the decision of the theory of everything that looks closely, is a theory only for all that is physical, and contributes little to the understanding of spiritual reality in Scripture . It also happens in the debate about the brain and freedom of will, as we shall see later. It is quite unfortunate that if Anton LaVey throws out the philosophy of morals which find Scripture to be holding a strong foundation to life.

The facts in our history of human beings prove that there are many kinds of proven realities, but to make a whole reality also, is a mystery of a human being in whom the

secrets of God are hidden. The fullness of God is in human beings creation as the image of God. It is therefore, a point of strength that in all the different perspectives, dimensions, layers aspects, and differentials, there is a reality that is split up by human beings, always at the expense of their full humanity in this world.

It is in this vain, that at an early stage' Descartes'(Kung 2007:161ff) talked of dualism between subject and object, thought and being, spirit and matter, soul and body, man and animals as subjects of criticisms. But also in the face of the dualism between reason and faith, philosophy and theology, the unity and truth of reality must time and again be expressed in a new way. The question posed by Greek philosophy about the unity and truth of our being finds fulfillment in our evolutionary history and our creation in the image of God.

It is in light of the above may I state that, although independent reason and indulgence that LaVey talks about may be justified in principle and historically necessary, absolute rationality is to be rejected. Too much faith also is to be rejected. It is worth affirming that every physicist, philosopher, man or woman has to do with more than reason i.e. with willing and feeling, imagination and disposition, emotions and passions etc. These cannot simply be reduced to reason alongside methodical thinking. Descartes 'spirit de geometries' states that there is intuitive holistic knowing, sensing feeling, and the 'esprit de finesse'. Jürgen Moltmann has formulated the correct counterpart to this i.e. "reason, in its enlightening victory over what it is called faith, could not hold out alone, but developed highly unreasonable forms of the naïve credibility to arrive at the reality. "

1.2 DEVELOPMENT OF THE HUMAN BEING AND HIS CHARACTER

It is true that as human beings we are in the process of a long history still to be arrived at. This process makes us custodians of nature and environment. The success of science prove the reality of our real essence in history which gives us a clear picture that as human beings we did not just come into being as finished products, but through a process of purification which is simplified as evolution. This means that we are fully developed and that the capacity of our brain comprehends that our history is made plain. It is therefore, not strange that LaVey looks at human beings as just another kind of animal, and that though there may be a distinction with animals, as human beings certainly we share the same history with the animal Kingdom. This is why the chemical reactions which enable animals to flee from danger react to situations, and also share affection with a member of the group compares human beings. This is the reason why LaVey, when he looks at indulgence, justifies it on the basis of complete dependence on nature and not by any captivity that produces compulsion.

Studies into the history of man inform us that all species of all human beings originate from one source, Africa i.e. that all the developments of human beings and animals started from Africa (Kung 2007:163ff). Africa, therefore, is a critically important continent upon which we can study the geological history of our earth, and at the same time, the evolutionary history of all habitants of human beings. It is also significant for the origins of human cultures and dogmas that define the way we should live as moral beings. When we look at the development of the human beings, Hans Kung states, that the focus is not on physical characteristics alone, but also on

the development of the intellectual and moral capabilities that define a human being's character and endeavors in the universe (Kung 2007: 168ff) The presupposition for development of technique, cultures and social life will provide us with an answer as to whether Anton LaVey's Philosophy of Indulgence is really one philosophy that can provide us with answers to life.

It is worth noting that, (as agreed to by other scholars as well), the two- footed attitude and locomotion were fundamental to the development of our being which is a long process of history extending a period of millions of years. This entails that from the primeval stages it were the natural conditions and natural selection for survival that allowed a steady development process of human beings. This was truly a natural synopsis which was motivated by nature. The basic theory is that the development over the course of several million years from the animal ancestors is very significant to understand the essence of our being. Through the whole series of anatomical and physiological peculiarities which appear at least in embryonic form among the closed relatives of the human being, the higher primates, there are analogies about humans with feelings, social behaviour and action which are a prerequisite to our understanding of life.

The first analysis is that human being's apparent occupation of a special position over and against all animals is because through natural selection, human beings have become more technical and advanced in the brain and able to communicate more than any other animal. Not only are we the only living beings walking upright with a rump kept vertical, we are also the living beings walking upright with highly

developed brains above all beings(Kung 2007:170ff). In other words , there is no being like the human being which is also capable of reflecting and researching into its history; not only in religion and philosophy but also in paleontology and science.

The question is where did the adventure of the human being begin, and what kind of mechanism does LaVey offer as a basis for indulgence over and against the authority of Scripture? Scholars of the late 19th century such as Sir James G. Frazer (1854-1941) give a detailed graphic picture of how they saw the whole history of humankind in a scheme of stages sequenced as: Magic- Religion- Science. LaVey takes all three concepts together. The premise is that early human beings were without religion, without God or gods. It was only gradually that the thought of religious customs and truths from magical practices evolved. Other scholars argued the sequence to state that from the onset, human beings were religious. They first were monotheistic, then polytheistic and the last part was magic.

In a nutshell, history informs us that the first phase of the human being was physical development that enabled it to stand upright and be part of the animal kingdom from that it sprang. Secondly, it was psychological development which involved the faculties of sensitivity, creativity, and social behavior change. This stage enabled the human being to relate to the world in which it existed and be able to independently make new discoveries of life. Finally, the human being was able to create an ethic of living and came up with limits, and thus make checks and balances into existence. Religion therefore became a necessary development for combating chaos, and Scripture itself became that authority in creating, and a just society displayed.

In the light of the historical framework it is important to then sum up and say, in the last stage of the history of human beings, the creation of religion became a necessary force to understand the essentials that connect the human being to the transcendent God. The invention of science and Scripture exist side by side and their articulation of reality is mutually complementary. LaVey's Philosophy of Indulgence in this case can only have ultimate support if it were to combine the essence of Scripture in the day to day of human history, and at the same time recognize that essence in the interior human being.

CHAPTER FIVE

CRITIQUE OF ANTON SZANDOR LAVEY'S PHILOSOPHY

1. INTRODUCTION

The critique of LaVey's Philosophy of Indulgence lies in the Authority of Scripture and creation. Scripture is a basis for life, death and the hereafter. However, we need to ask where the Philosophy of Indulgence fits with the order of the cosmos, and how it directly appeals to human instincts, as alluded to above. Taking each argument into consideration one finds that there is a clear description of the concept of indulgence within each argument discussed in the previous chapters. An historical aspect of the human being has been investigated, and some passages of Scripture have been discussed in response to the Philosophy of Indulgence. This chapter sums up the argument of the Philosophy of Indulgence as a dogma based assault on Scripture. Before engaging an assessment of LaVey's philosophy, one is tempted to ask: "Is indulgence a real argument for today? If so what value does it bring to the wholeness of life that awaits the coming of the Kingdom of God?"

1.1 THE CRITIQUE

In each of the previously discussed chapters, indulgence is presented as the ultimate and complete goal of human existence in nature, while death is the ultimate abstinence. In personal understanding indulgence is found in the grasp of chaos, and the failure of humanity to accomplish the purpose of existence. This purpose of existence is found in our understanding of self, the world, and God (Pannenberg 1970:41-71). Our openness to God and to the world opens a discourse that provides us with answers that can satisfy our being. Failure to discover this identity, results in us becoming prone to other projections that we would like to use as an antidote to

our failures in life. In Scripture, the ultimate goal of our existence lies in the Kingdom of God, of which LaVey said; “it is the fulfillment of the ego”. It is worth noting that the cosmos is a universal acceptance of things, regardless of their origin. Different emphases create the illusion that the universe consists of many different processes at work with different outcomes in mind. This is not LaVey’s intention, as we find the common denominator of each of the proposed philosophies in other scientific explanations of nature.

The Ultimate point and the fulfillment of the concept of indulgence is not found in the order of Scripture alone, but in areas of nature such as the history of human beings, genetic make up , cultures and traditions. This is what brings a unified understanding of life.

1.2 LAVEY’S PHILOSOPHY OF INDULGENCE

The term “Indulgence” is not usually a good description of what LaVey is trying to convey. It is a term that is filled with questions that may not even be relevant to the discussion around the essence of our being. Of course, the process that theologians and those who submit themselves to modalism use would encourage the inclusion of this concept in any philosophy of nature although my argument is that LaVey’s philosophy undermines the question of human dignity and morality within the evolved cultures that respond to the sense of belonging to God.

The question is, do we really need satisfaction through indulgence as a means to an end? Or are we incomplete without indulgence? Any suggestion that man is in a

process of self advancement denies the dignity and role of human beings in the cosmos. It is disappointing that LaVey does not give sufficient explanation of the philosophy in his book, "The Satanic Bible." (1969). He does not actually develop a concrete argument that highlights an improved being, but is concerned solely with human beings as part of creation.

In LaVey's philosophy the relational concept is between human beings and creation. LaVey does not present his philosophy in a manner that points to the salvation part of humanity. His argument cannot be found to be an act of salvation or hope in God but he promotes only the existential experience of life within the natural realm, but very specific human satisfaction as the ultimate goal of existence. I would have probably been more satisfied if he considered looking at the role the covenant between God and creation plays in the created order. Jürgen Moltmann in his book "the Coming Kingdom 1996" asks the question: "What is the purpose of creation as we find it in its original relational state with God? "In other words "Where are we going?" It is quite evident that in Christian eschatology as it is with many philosophies the search or the meaning of life is very ideal. We are actually looking for, our end result which should focus on the glorification of the transcendent God as the ultimate purpose of Creation (Moltmann 1996:323) but at the same time the meaning of life and the hereafter. LaVey looks at glorification as a satisfactory mark for human beings, whose satisfaction is found in indulgence considered to be the emancipator.

The main understanding of the character of nature should be found in the creation narrative in Genesis 1 and 2, which should be understood in the very context of

creation. In the beginning was “chaos”, that is confusion. Disorder in this sense will mean not having any form that can be helpful for understanding. Indulgence therefore fails in this pinnacle of creation for it has no conscience of any kind. “God is the only hope for creation” Moltmann (1996: 329). This means that God should be traveling alongside creation. This understanding assumes two theological “developments” in creations’ realm i.e. God relating to his creation through self-revelation, which by and large provides an insight for moral obedience, and secondly, the uniqueness’ of God being part and parcel of his creation.

1.2.1 INSIGHT FOR MORAL OBEDIENCE

“To glorify God means to love God for his own sake, and enjoy God as he is in himself
“(Moltmann 1996:323)

When we are looking at the reality of God for moral obedience in nature, it actually means that God is making himself known to us in our very nature. This culminates in his incarnation, where by for us God becomes matter, in flesh and blood so that as a natural entity among people he demonstrates how nature itself can live in obedience without any natural instinctive power imbedded in our being. There are so many arguments with regard to the development of the nature of God which subscribe to that point of view that we do not know God fully with all his character. The most evident part of our being is that God came in the flesh yet he did not pollute himself with indulgence that LaVey demonstrates in his philosophy. 1 Corinthians 13:12 echoes the mystery of God and the limited knowledge we have of who the Creator is. This thought is what confuses LaVey because he sees no need for God’s relationship with the created order. There is a danger that when we consider God’s self-revelation

to the world of nature we begin to see ourselves as a constant and God as the variable (Moltmann 1981:4). The main argument which raises confusion when LaVey refers to God in a different context all together states that, “The God you serve might be your self”(LaVey 1969), This idea contributes to a very complex theory that speaks of a reciprocal relationship between equals, but as dictated to by the essence of our being. My main argument in this regard is that God’s attitude will be that which resembles anything that is, permanent in nature, and then we can relate back to him but with full recognition of who he is. Nature in creation cannot fully claim its absolute permanence without being created by God. It should accept its temporality and flux. The idea that LaVey proposes in his Indulgence Philosophy substitutes God in the creation order by pointing out that human beings are independent from any captivity. The underlying point is that perhaps, LaVey may have thought of the experiential dimension of human nature in the sense of involvement with the environment but, given his argument in the ,Satanic Bible, the Philosophy of Indulgence is far from this idea. However, this concept reflects Schleiermacher’s view that experience of faith in the world in itself should point towards God (Moltmann 1981:2).

The full self-involvement of God in nature may be theologically impossible but when we consider it from the perspective of incarnation, where we see God as participating in nature in order to correct its chaotic standard, this might make sense with full consideration of Genesis 1:1-3. This whole concept poses a challenge whereby God is portrayed as the Omnipresent, in which he represents what within the limitations of time and space would literally amount to the eternal time and space for God to reveal

God self fully. In this case, symbolic experiences in history are very important in order to understand the essence of human beings. In my understanding, there is a difference between the natural being and the full being revealed by God in the natural world. It is worth analysis that Jesus' state of being in the flesh is revelation enough to reveal that human beings are not only created naturally but that they have the ability to go beyond nature in order to be the sanctified flock of God. I do not dismiss the questions which can be raised, given the differences between the Creator and the created. The only crucial state of affairs is the role of human beings in the universe. It is upon the full understanding of such a role that our understanding rests.

Horne sees the possibility of this taking place only through the common denominator between God and creation, namely creativity. He looks at an interesting connection between the creative expressions of humanity, and cannot experience absolute freedom in the creativity. The link between God and humanities participation in creativity entails that God's freedom be released within us (Horne 1997:147). It is this released freedom that LaVey talks about as the power to choose according to our instincts in nature. LaVey's argument in this regard is limited, as it denies a personal relationship and experience between Creator and Creation.

Brunner (1970:117), however, makes another suggestion giving the development of God's creation revealed through history, as a key to God's self-revelation in nature. Brunner's theology describes God who is beyond all, revealing God-self to a finite and limited creation. We can actually see the evidence of God in relation to creation

when he uses the symbolic nature of names to make God self understood. Here we find a continuous development of the God-self in Scripture, as God reveals God-self increasingly to created beings. In the theological nature we can assume that the self revelation of God to created beings as paramount. God became flesh in order to make himself known to the whole of creation.

It is my opinion that the greatest experience in the development of our understanding of God, comes from God interacting with humanity and nature. That is why Charles Darwin's evolution theory is ideal. It re-introduces God to the world he created billions of years ago.

1.2.2 THE UNIQUENESS OF GOD IN BEING PART AND PARCEL OF CREATION

It is important to look at some of the aspects that aim at demonstrating God's uniqueness to the world. This clearly reveals that nothing, other than God himself, is the goal and the future of our being. Indulgence cannot therefore claim a place in the realm of reality, as it does not necessarily lie in the subjection of the historical earthly realms to the autonomous dictatorship of nature. True indulgence is a place where God is fully known and the people begin to interact with him in life experiences. LaVey's Philosophy of Indulgence denies this aspect of God's involvement in the recreation of the world of Chaos, and the focus in which creation will be reconciled (Olivier 1980:160-161).

This interaction referred to above deals with the temporal beings that have the capability to perceive events and experiences from different vantage points, due

mainly to the fact that they are bound to space and time. On the other hand, we are confronted by a Being who is beyond time, and therefore able to witness the same events and experiences from the eternal dimension. It would be ludicrous to state that both the Creator and the created are on the same journey towards the same goal at all.

Kant (In Helm 1997:43-44) therefore emphasizes the necessity for the incarnation as it provides the nearest point at which these two realities can meet. Helm of course objects to Kant's views by indirectly asking, "How is it possible for me to be free, knowing that a God exists who is already present in my future, experiencing it as reality?" (Kant 1997:43) and "How does God know time is in the present?" (Helm 1997:44). LaVey agrees with this questioning as the whole concept of Indulgence is realized depending on the complete and unhindered interaction between the created order.

CONCLUSION

The starting point for creating a dogma of creation and nature starts with facing up honestly with the meaning of creation. Of course nothing happens for nothing as evidenced in the history of human development. Every created thing is dependent upon the other. This concept applies to all biological discoveries, where each created thing is a parasite of the other, and the reality of it is only found at the end. In reading Moltmann's doctrine of creation vis-à-vis LaVey's Philosophy of Indulgence in the Satanic Bible, one finds the biggest display of direction within which a theological framework is done. "Human beings live for the future hope." (Moltmann 1967:228) In living for the future, I do not mean man is excluded from the world of his creation. The world will always play a role as humanities platform for its procreative nature (Pannenburg 1970:15).

The real dogma of reality in this case is that which recognizes man as living and existing within the horizon of history in nature (Moltmann 1967:289). Much as I may not agree with LaVey on most issues with regard to his perception of nature in human beings as a prime factor for indulgence, I believe nature should be our starting point in the creation of a dogma that answers to people's questions. If the meaning of life is to be attained, there must not be a distinction between humanity and the rest of creation. Man needs creation in order to realize the Kingdom of God and creation needs man to be perfected and conformed to the likeness of God. This is expressed in Paul's writing to the Romans that "creation groans for the sons of God to be revealed for its redemption" (Roman 8:18ff).

It is in the light of the arguments raised above that the philosophy of indulgence, lacks in its understanding of Scripture. Scripture in its entirety teaches an ethic of love that is transcendental and immanent. Scripture shows the way in which the believer should live and have a connection of the sense of that connection with the creator. I am pretty convinced that nature really plays a role in our understanding of God, but it is only when we are able to recognize God in nature that satisfaction is made complete. The whole journey should end in the Kingdom of God.

Since Scripture and the Authority of Scripture join to create an ethic of life, there is a distinctive feature to hold on to. People look for it in vain if they seek it abstractly in some idea or principle, some disposition, on horizon of meaning or a new dispensation of. "Love and freedom". These are indispensable tenets of Scripture and we ought to live by them, but at the same time live against the background of a "creation" or "consummation." But what then is the criterion of Scripture which LaVey in his analysis of the philosophy of indulgence does not perhaps comprehend? It is not an abstract, but a Godly purpose; in creation where by theology, or a theocentric system of thought grants us the meaning of life. There is a vividness of the God of history who is not foreign to our being. Our actions are known to him. Indulgence can never be the ultimate satisfaction, because nature solely depends upon the God of Scripture.

In this regard, Anton Szandor LaVey's Philosophy of Indulgence only seeks to assault Scripture; therefore, I view it as a dogma based assault on Scripture. I am convinced

that our nature if it is considered God's good creative activity will by and large be the ultimate platform to understand God and therefore relate to him.

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