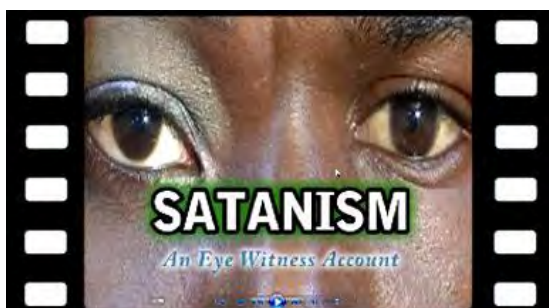




FILM: SATANISM – AN EYE WITNESS ACCOUNT

A film produced by FENZA and CMSTV (2010).

The film is available at FENZA



The film *Satanism: An Eye Witness Account* (28 min) was produced jointly by CMSTV Studios & FENZA (2010). It takes seriously the inner experiences that many youths have undergone in Zambia (based on testimonies collected by the "[Fingers of Thomas](#)"). At the same time the film tries to go beyond the immediacies of the testimonies, and brings in a reflective and critical angle. The film was made to be a tool to enhance group discussions on the topic of Satanism in Zambia.



The opening scene is based on a true life story, where a young man (in the film called Alex) was invited to an overnight prayer meeting at a big house. He was offered money and encouraged to become a "member". Suspecting Satanism, he decided to run away from the prayer meeting. The *Fingers of Thomas* followed up his case, but could not prove a connection of the suspected prayer-group with Satanism. Because of the rumours and testimonies regarding Satanism, many churches today in Zambia have become suspect to the public.



The film then introduces the testimonies of two people delivered from Satanism (played by brilliant actors). Satanists in Zambia speak about initiation, going to another world, sacrifices of family members, and failed missions if they encounter prayer. They give a detailed account of an unseen spiritual world that many Christians believe in, yet cannot see. The testimonies of the film are based on real-life testimonies of Satanists, whose identities the film protects.



Initiation happens involuntarily for many Satanists in Zambia. Experiences of being taken into another world often started with dreams. At a certain point it becomes difficult and even impossible to distinguish their subjective inner worlds from the objective outer world. The *Fingers of Thomas* work with the distinction of inner and outer worlds, for the sake of seeking clarification. The inner world is marked by the realm of belief and faith and by a personal life-history. It is a real world though not accessible by others. But public action, so the "*Fingers*" maintain, should be based on the issues of the outer world that are accessible to all.



The new context of Satanism has changed the prayer-life of many Christians in Zambia. People may be praying more because of the perceived threats of the Devil. But prayers are often based on fear: lack of prayer will make people more vulnerable to Satanic attacks. A prayer life that increases fear may make Satanic possession more common.



The testimonies of many delivered Satanists are marked by common key-symbols: blood, black clothes, the ocean, the underworld, rings, queens, black cars, spiritual husbands or wives. Satanism is a new phenomenon, but many of the Satanic symbols have a long history in Zambia, reaching deep into colonial times, when people spoke of 'banyama' or 'bakamunyama'. Modern Zambian Satanism may be a new tree, but it has old roots, going back to concepts of both spirit possession and witchcraft.



The symbolism around the inner experiences of delivered Satanists is often marked by Pentecostal / charismatic preaching and a dualistic worldview: humans find themselves trapped in a spiritual fight between a powerful Jesus and a powerful Devil. People who are or feel they are possessed often find themselves torn-up in this fight. Their own inner powers (will-powers, freedom, value system, sense of a personal identity) are compromised in the face of the spiritual powers (good or evil) which seem to take over. For this reason the Fingers of Thomas propose a way of prayer that does not focus on the spiritual powers of a pastor, but on building up the person's strength, with an empowering community. Family therapy also helps to create a conducive environment in which people can recover.



Satanism in Zambia has to do also with new experiences of inequalities. The socio-economic landscape of Zambia has changed very drastically during the last two decades. Also Zambian concepts of the occult world has changed. The symbolic world of Satanism describes in a unique way how many people experience the effects of modern life in Zambia. Many feel that their life-force, their free will, and also solidarity in their families has been "sacrificed" to the egoistic tendencies of individual family members. Access to power and wealth in Zambia remain opaque.



As a way to help, the Fingers of Thomas propose to

1. Resist fear. Avoiding a person suspected of Satanism makes things worse, not better.
2. Engage with the person trapped in the world of Satanism; build on the strong points of the person. In this way the person's own inner powers can be restored.
3. Unite the family. When a person's family is engaged in the process of healing and acceptance, and when also outstanding family issues can be addressed, a new living environment is created for all.
4. Pray - using the symbols and faith of the person suffering from spiritual attacks.

Click here: [for more information on the "Fingers of Thomas"](#).