

# OZZY

## THE GREAT AND POWERFUL

Yesterday I was driving my car listening to the long tributes on the radio to Ozzy Osbourne. Ozzy died yesterday at the age of 76 after a farewell concert he did weeks ago with his fellow bandmates of Black Sabbath.

I had watched several clips of from the show, and I got an eerie feeling that this was actually Ozzy's living funeral. He left this world as a rock legend and superstar but one who was always shadowed in mystery because of the rumors that persisted that he was a devil worshipper.

Ozzy Osbourne, known primarily as the lead vocalist of the heavy metal band Black Sabbath, has had a long and often contradictory relationship with themes of heaven, hell, God, Satan, salvation, and judgment. Much of his public persona and lyrics are steeped in dark, controversial, or provocative imagery.

Being a lover of horror movies, I loved the aesthetic. Even though many judged Black Sabbath as a satanic band -- Ozzy and his colleagues not only wrote and produced religious songs but also songs about good and evil, spiritual warfare, and the afterlife.

In the song "After Forever" (1971), written by bandmate Geezer Butler (a practicing Catholic), the lyrics ask: "Could it be you're afraid of what your friends might say If they knew you believe in God above?"

"Have you ever thought about your soul, can it be saved? Or perhaps you think that when you're dead you just stay in your grave. Is God just a thought within your head or is he a part of you? Is Christ just a name that you read in a book when you were in school?"

When you think about death do you lose your breath, or do you keep your cool? Would you like to see the Pope on the end of a rope, do you think he's a fool? Well, I have seen the truth, yes, I've seen the light and I've changed my ways. And I'll be prepared when you're lonely and scared at the end of our days.

Could it be you're afraid of what your friends might say, if they knew you believe in God above? They should realize before they criticize, that God is the only way to love. Is

your mind so small that you have to fall in with the pack wherever they run. Will you still sneer when death is near and say they may as well worship the sun?

I think it was true, it was people like you that crucified Christ. I think it is sad the opinion you had was the only one voiced. Will you be so sure when your day is near, say you don't believe it?

You had the chance, but you turned it down, now you can't retrieve. Perhaps you'll think before you say that God is dead and gone. Open your eyes, just realize that he's the one. The only one who can save you now from all this sin and hate. Or will you still jeer at all you hear, yes, I think it's too late."

With lyrics like this isn't it weird that we had to hide our Black Sabbath records from the parents: they looked satanic with witches on them covers, creepy echoing lyrics sprinkled with variations of Lucifer's name or the devil spreading his wings.

Yes, that was Black Sabbath and that was Ozzy.

He would occasionally quip about the advantages of having an inside advantage with the devil, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. Ozzy did not catch the virus and joked "Being a devil worshipper does have its good points!"

And this anecdote along with the two smileys tattooed on Ozzy's kneecaps probably tell us best about the nature of the relation between the members of Black Sabbath and the Devil a big misunderstanding and laughable number. Not only that, but Black Sabbath have a lot of references condemning or at most just anxiously respecting Satan and rather advocating for the fallen angel's opposite force that is God and one monotheistic religion like Christianity.

Most of the band were good Catholic boys.

I wouldn't go so far to call Black Sabbath the first Christian Metal Band, since there is a difference between true faith and lordship and the mere reference to Christian truth in rather few lyrics. Yet still, the references are there and stand in stark contrast to this band's public Satanic image that still lingers around, fed by episodes by Ozzy biting off a bat's head.

They're just playing and flirting with a certain idea that they mainly touch on the aesthetic surface, driving it to a caricature level.

Those in on the joke knew Ozzy as a Christian, struggling like all the other one's and vesting himself in a Gothic persona that got him the label the Prince of Darkness.

If the Devil was doing a good job, he would have also protected him from other health issues. In a press conference he revealed that he'd been diagnosed with Parkinson's

disease, while before that he had to undergo surgery related to a nasty fall, while he also contracted a potentially fatal staph infection.

But undaunted he kept working right up to his death.

While there seemed to be an upswell in respect for Osbourne, I started to notice that there was also an upswell of Christians posting on the internet condemning Ozzy to hell, holding him in judgment because of his so-called peddling of evil images and madman persona.

During a 1989 interview, Ozzy denied claims he worshipped the devil, saying, "I am not into Satanism. I am not a devil-worshipper. I have never been involved in black magic personally at all."

Yet with all the judgmental Christians on Facebook, you would think that the poor man was thrown directly to hell. Others speculated that he repented on his death bed.

Others questioned the validity of a repentance by Osbourne -- it is insane how easily Christians think that their spreading love by using hate as a tool for judgement even though the very Bible they read specifies that the only judge we have is Jesus Christ.

"I'm a Christian. I was christened as a Christian. I used to go to Sunday school," he said in a 2014 interview with The Guardian. He also told The New York Times in 1992 that he was "a practicing member of the Church of England" and prayed before every concert.

I wasn't at all surprised about those who spread hypocrisy in the church, we should still be offended by it. We should be offended because it is wrong, and these thoughts and practices are a pipeline to other darker thoughts.

Most young people today and others in the 70's and 80's became fascinated with Satanism because of all the societal obsession from Christian groups.

There were always satanists appearing on Phil Donahue. Gene Simmons of KISS was decked out in his demon gear that appeared on Mike Douglas. the plan was to scare every mother to death.

This raised an onslaught of psychologists aimed at alarming parents and helping them detect "signs" that their child might be involved in Satanism or the Occult. This usually included black clothing, metal albums, candles, pentagrams, and other spooky revelations.

It resulted in a lot of kids being straight up abused at home for listening to Ozzy, Alice Cooper, KISS, or even STYX. Kids were being told that if you played your records backwards there would be evil Satanic messages in them.

It was a wild time to be alive -- it was so weird that Christian groups went out of their way to hold meetings about the evils of Metal music and at the forefront the bad guy of them all was Ozzy Osbourne.

Something as simple as liking the color black or making weird art was all it took for some to assume you must be a horrible person, even if you are a kid/high schooler. Lots of people assumed that if you liked metal, you were just a social degenerate.

Now Ozzy is gone an era has passed and metal stadium rock is going the way of the dinosaur --and looking back all that fear of devil worship has dissipated but not for those who still believe it is okay to kick a man's spirituality after he has died.

Owen Anderson of Real Claer Religion wrote an opinion piece about the Christian condemnation of Ozzy Osbourne and his family saying: Can Christians Make Moral Judgments About Public Behavior? Yes — And They Must.

Andersen said that " Unless Ozzy placed his faith in Christ, he is not at peace or at rest."

To be a Christian is not in my opinion to have carte blanche to be a smug moralist-- especially when someone like Ozzy who a lot of people listened to has died from painful maladies.

The brilliant idea behind Black Sabbath was that people who enjoy old horror movies would like the same overtones in their rock and roll.

The name Black Sabbath was indeed inspired by a 1963 Italian-French-American horror film starring Boris Karloff.

It had nothing to do with Devil worship.

Don't you find it at all interesting that these days that people can no longer accurately judge character. This seems to be a borderline- example of a lack of object constancy— where a person has a difficult time averaging out another person's behavior and only looks at the last thing they did to assess them.

This is all probably due to the indoctrination we are all experiencing now and have been experiencing for years.

But this judgement fad and cancel culture is harming us and it is also changing the minds of young would-be Christians to abandon ship.

They see the hypocritical judgments as a weaponization of religion.

Christianity is the single largest religion on the planet, but Christians are slowly declining as a share of the world population. Islam is the second largest and is growing the fastest.

The third place goes to what are being called the Nones. Nones are not sisters-- they are None of your business and none of the above.

It is not because of a lack of faith it is because they are disengaged and apathetic -- they see these so-called judgmental Christians and not want to associate with these types.

Again, they don't want any part of the weaponizing for religious belief.

They cite banning abortion and contraception, repressing LGBTQ people, Ten Commandments everywhere, school prayer, funneling public money to churches—these regressive seculars have different priorities. They cheer on anti-immigrant bigotry, put forth pseudoscientific justifications of racism and sexism, and fight any social-justice cause that they label with the all-purpose sneer of "woke".

So, it appears that the problem has nothing to do with a man that jumped around in tights singing about Aleister Crowley and werewolves.

The problem lies in the minority of Christians that have become hateful and narcissistic about their beliefs.

No one is asking anyone to compromise their strong beliefs in keeping families together and having a moral compass, but most people think they are good and don't need to be condemned because someone wants to pass an unwarranted judgment on them.

This is why I find the whole "Ozzy Burn in hell thing" so counter intuitive -- yes, he was a bad boy of rock, yes, he lives like a Rock Star. But he had a respect for his family and a love for his fans and his colleagues.

He had a sense of humor about being labeled the Prince of Darkness-- and he lived that character every time he took the stage.

There is NO ONE that came before like Ozzy and no one will be able to compare to him after his death- He was so unique as a singer and as a person who could perform the character of rockstar and then go home and be a family man to his wife and kids.

Black Sabbath were pioneers in the heavy metal genre of music, writing classic tracks like Paranoid, War Pigs and Iron Man.

After leaving the band in 1979 over rising tensions with its other members, Osbourne had a lengthy solo music career releasing more than a dozen albums. His debut single released the next year, Crazy Train, is arguably one of his most famous songs.

In the 2000s, his wild image was transformed thanks to the MTV reality show The Osbournes - which portrayed the star as the well-meaning, frequently befuddled patriarch of an unruly household.

There have been several rumored antics that Ozzy had allegedly did -- the famous one of allegedly biting the head off a bat which gave him rabies -- biting the head off of a dove to impress record executives and, snorting ants' poolside with Motley Crue.

He was an epitome of the wild and crazy rockstar, but his colleagues say that he was more down to Earth when the camera were off -- quiet and genuine.

Ozzy's scary motif was all show biz but some people were uncomfortable with it.

He was honored to be in the Rock n Roll Hall of Fame, once with Black Sabbath -- the other as a solo artist -- he also had a star on Hollywood Walk of Fame.

Osbourne admitted he had uncertainty and fear about what comes after death. In a 2010 interview with Classic Rock magazine, he said: "I don't know what happens when you die. And I don't want to find out."

In his memoir, *I Am Ozzy*, he reflects on the reality of death and the possibility of judgment: "If there is a heaven and hell, I'm going to be in the middle of them both."

In The God Delusion Debate era (around 2007), Osbourne was asked about Richard Dawkins and atheism. He replied: "I'm not an atheist. I believe there's something... God, whatever you want to call it. But I also believe in the power of evil."

In a 2002 interview, Osbourne said: "Satanism? That was never my bag. I've always believed in God; I just don't always live like I should."

In his autobiography, Osbourne expresses a sense of guilt and fear of divine judgment: "I've done some terrible things. I hope God can forgive me."

In a 2009 interview with *The Times*, he commented: "There's gotta be a judgment. There's got to be a price for some of the things I've done. But I hope I can make peace with God before I go."

Osbourne has often played with satanic imagery for shock value or artistic metaphor, but his own words repeatedly disavow satanism and affirm a belief in God and some form of final judgment:

"I believe in God. I'm not a bad guy... I've just done a lot of bad things. I believe God is the only One who can fix me."

He also often speaks of guilt, redemption, and hope of mercy. Though not doctrinally consistent or clearly grounded in Christian theology, his statements suggest a man aware of his moral failings and uncertain about where he stands with God—yet hopeful for grace.

What I see here is a humble man – who wonders just how God is going to deal with him and how he will be judged for some of the vices he had.

We all know that Ozzy wasn't perfect and it does not warrant some smirky fool holding him in judgement by saying he will burn in hell.

May he rest in peace.