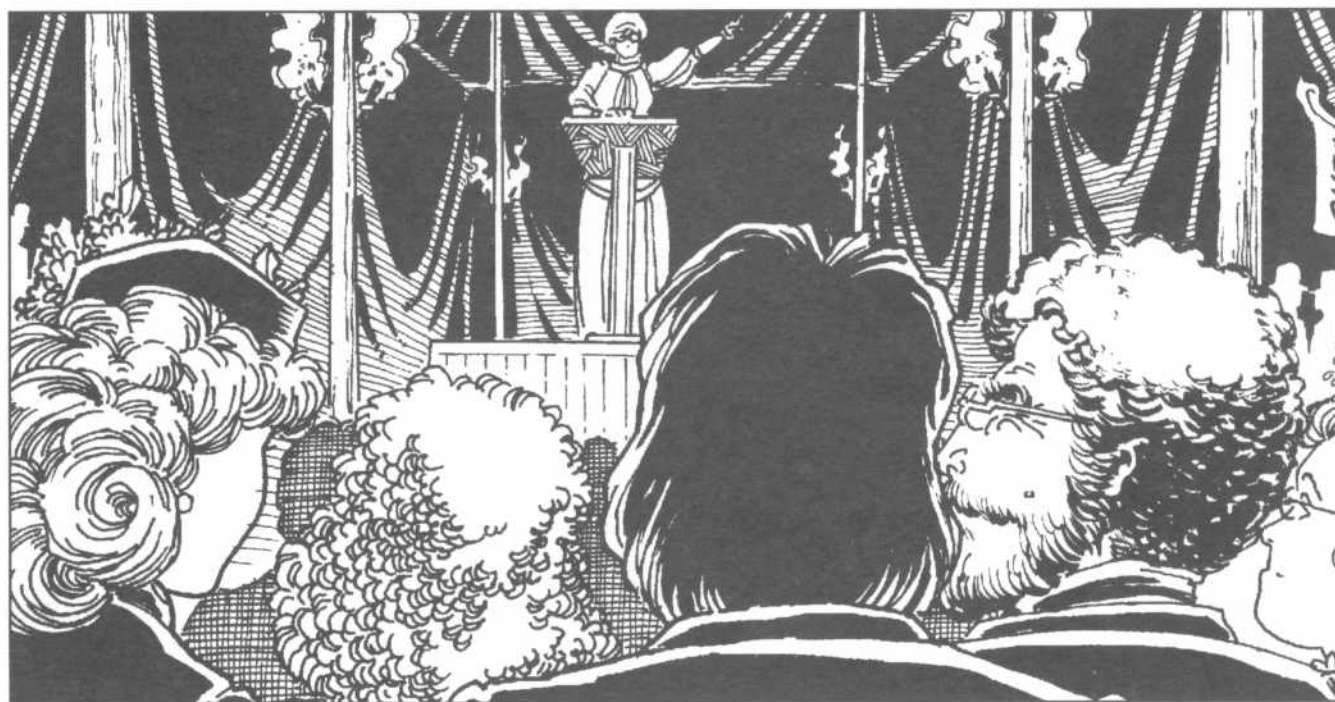


THE WAY OF THE RIGHTTEOUS





THE WAY OF THE RIGHTEOUS



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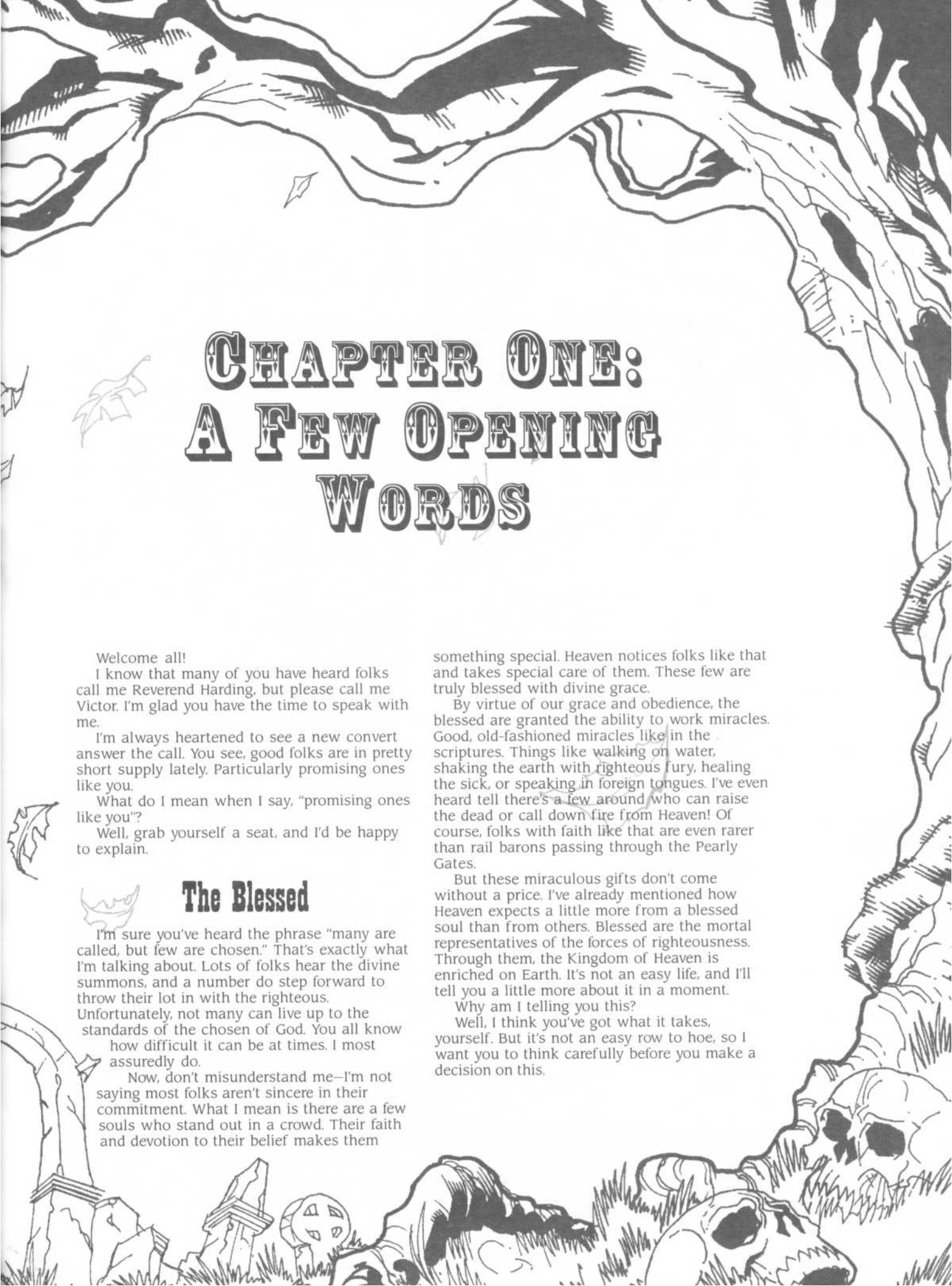
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Dedicated to: To all the *Deadlands* D20 fans out there. Without your support none of this would be possible.





CHAPTER ONE: A FEW OPENING WORDS

Welcome all!

I know that many of you have heard folks call me Reverend Harding, but please call me Victor. I'm glad you have the time to speak with me.

I'm always heartened to see a new convert answer the call. You see, good folks are in pretty short supply lately. Particularly promising ones like you.

What do I mean when I say, "promising ones like you"?

Well, grab yourself a seat, and I'd be happy to explain.



The Blessed

I'm sure you've heard the phrase "many are called, but few are chosen." That's exactly what I'm talking about. Lots of folks hear the divine summons, and a number do step forward to throw their lot in with the righteous.

Unfortunately, not many can live up to the standards of the chosen of God. You all know how difficult it can be at times. I most assuredly do.

Now, don't misunderstand me—I'm not saying most folks aren't sincere in their commitment. What I mean is there are a few souls who stand out in a crowd. Their faith and devotion to their belief makes them

something special. Heaven notices folks like that and takes special care of them. These few are truly blessed with divine grace.

By virtue of our grace and obedience, the blessed are granted the ability to work miracles. Good, old-fashioned miracles like in the scriptures. Things like walking on water, shaking the earth with righteous fury, healing the sick, or speaking in foreign tongues. I've even heard tell there's a few around who can raise the dead or call down fire from Heaven! Of course, folks with faith like that are even rarer than rail barons passing through the Pearly Gates.

But these miraculous gifts don't come without a price. I've already mentioned how Heaven expects a little more from a blessed soul than from others. Blessed are the mortal representatives of the forces of righteousness. Through them, the Kingdom of Heaven is enriched on Earth. It's not an easy life, and I'll tell you a little more about it in a moment.

Why am I telling you this?

Well, I think you've got what it takes, yourself. But it's not an easy row to hoe, so I want you to think carefully before you make a decision on this.



Preachers & Priests

The blessed are expected to live up to higher standards than the average person. Often, these folks become ordained ministers of the faith—but not always. There are quite a few famous faces among the blessed who weren't formally ordained.

Of course it's a tremendous boon to a preacher to be able to prove his faith with an occasional miracle. Lots of folks on the borderline of decision can be swayed to the side of good by a dose of divine evidence. But believe me, there's more than a few blessed out there who have never once stood behind a pulpit of any kind.

A prime example of a hero like this is Joan of Arc. Although she was very pious, this brave girl certainly never held official church office. Does that lessen her accomplishments?

A devout soldier of Grace can serve Heaven as diligently by fighting the forces of Old Scratch in the wilds of the frontier or preaching from the pulpit as he can from a pew!

The Divine Calling

Over 10 years ago I heard the Holy call myself.

Oh, I don't mean an angel came down from above and said "Victor, now is your time." Although some folks do get special attention like that—or at least claim so. I've always been inclined to give a fellow the benefit of the doubt. The Lord knows I've seen stranger things. It just so happens that most of them were trying to make me Sunday brunch.

As for me, it was only a gentle nudge (with a scattergun). That and the sense that it was the right thing to do. I suspect that's the way it is

for most of us. That might be why there's so few of us around. It could be a lot of people don't recognize the call when it comes.

The Reverend's Story

Indulge me a moment as I share my tale.

My father wanted me to be a Philadelphia lawyer, but I had other plans. I first came to the West in search of adventure and, like most, to strike it rich. I wasn't very good with a gun, and the few years of college I'd taken didn't help too much, unless I wanted to be a librarian or schoolmarm. So I took up a pick and shovel and headed off to try my luck in the Maze.

The things I saw there should have been enough to open my eyes to the Lord, but I was blinded by my one driving goal: to strike it rich. Even when half of our camp was massacred by pirates, I wasn't deterred from my goal. One day, I struck the motherload: a chunk of Ghost Rock the size of a Conestoga—and I was the only one who knew where it was.

I don't remember much of the week after that, how many rounds on the house, how many women. I stumbled into the bank late one morning to get more money, still drunk from the night before. And that's when my life changed forever.

Two men wearing bandanas were holding up the bank. One had the banker on his knees with a pistol in his mouth, and the other, a real big guy, was covering the room with a scattergun. I must have startled the big guy because when I walked into the building, he spun and opened up with both barrels at me.

Time slowed to a crawl. I saw the flash, felt the heat from the blast (which was only five feet away), heard the lady in the corner screaming and the whiz of the pellets past my face. I let out a scream as the world exploded around me. Next thing I remember, the men were running out of the bank empty-handed, tripping over each other to get out of there.

I don't know why the Lord chose to intervene that day to save my miserable life, but He did. In thanks for His unknowable wisdom, I decided to give up the bottle once and for all and take up the pulpit. The next day I sold my strike and used the money to build the first church of Quincey.

The Lord works in mysterious ways.

The Homily

That's why I'm talking to you. I don't want you to miss your call. You've probably already had a nagging sense there was more you could do—more you should do.

I've seen the sincerity of your faith. But I know you've also got a fire in your bellies, like Joshua when he crossed into Canaan. You're sick of watching the evil spreading across this country of ours unchecked and want to do battle with the Enemy.

I recognize it because I felt it too. I still do. Anyone can stand on a stump and make pretty speeches out of the Good Book—or any other book for that matter. But it takes a special person to stand up and fight back the darkness that's creeping over our land with the only thing that can destroy it: the burning light of truth.

Now, I generally have a good feeling for a person's makeup, and I think you've got the talent, faith, and desire to fight against the night.

If you answer the call, have no doubts that it is a rough road ahead of you. There are trials and tribulations you've never imagined in your worst nightmares. But take heart, for you have the best companions to walk that road with you: your faith and the power of the Lord.

Layout o' this Book

Way o' the Righteous is divided into three parts: Posse Territory, No Man's Land, and the Marshal's Handbook.

Posse Territory contains information accessible to any blessed. If you're reading this book, we're assuming you're familiar with blessed characters and you've checked with your Marshal before delving further into the mysteries and miracles they perform.

Here there are a couple of new skills, feats, and prestige classes for characters—plus some new uses for an old skill. Of course, there are also lots of new miracles along with a selection of new gifts.

Lastly, there are a few parting words of advice from the good Reverend Harding.

No Man's Land contains information normally restricted to Marshals and more experienced characters. In this section, the only secrets are some new relics of special interest to the blessed.

We've included a new, optional take on Divine Interventions as well. These are difficult

Opening Words

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to come by and best used when divine power is the only thing that can save the posse.

The **Marshal's Handbook** is for review only by the Marshal. In it, the Marshal gets new information on handling blessed characters in her campaign. There are also some pointers on how to handle a blessed who has fallen from grace. We've also tossed in a few words of advice on how to set up visions and cryptic dreams in your scenarios.

And finally, just to make sure the other side gets a fair shake, we've included information on how to develop the natural enemies of the blessed: cultists!

The Benediction

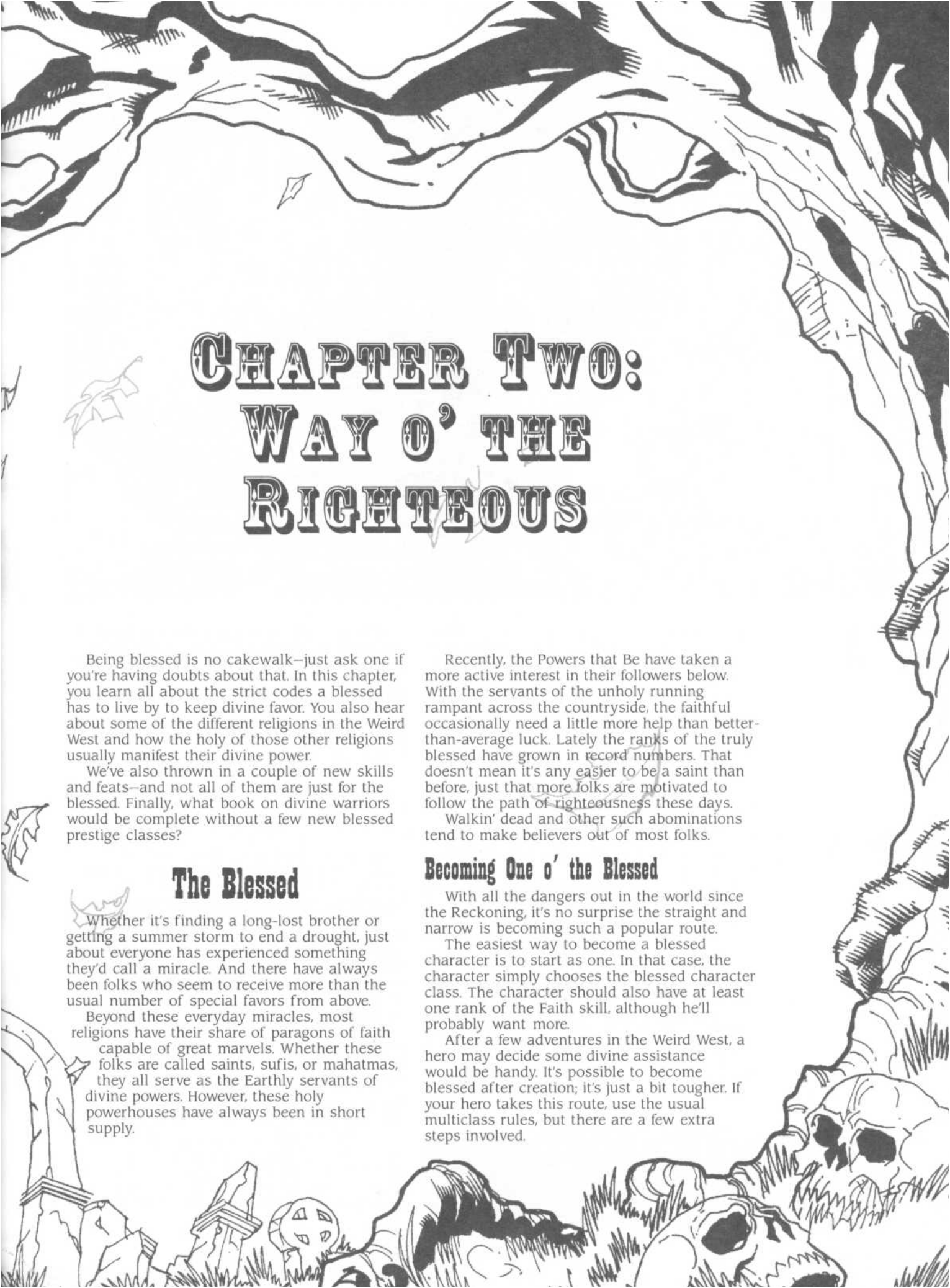
You have been chosen as a champion of Good. But the battle against Evil has gone on for longer than memory, and the forces of Darkness have had millennia to learn humanity's weaknesses and fears.

You're armed with little more than your own skills and the power of your faith. Right now, that makes it an even battle.

So gird yourself in the armor of your faith, shield yourself in virtue, and lift the sword of righteousness, for night comes swiftly out here in the Weird West.







CHAPTER TWO: WAY O' THE RIGHTEOUS

Being blessed is no cakewalk—just ask one if you're having doubts about that. In this chapter, you learn all about the strict codes a blessed has to live by to keep divine favor. You also hear about some of the different religions in the Weird West and how the holy of those other religions usually manifest their divine power.

We've also thrown in a couple of new skills and feats—and not all of them are just for the blessed. Finally, what book on divine warriors would be complete without a few new blessed prestige classes?

The Blessed

Whether it's finding a long-lost brother or getting a summer storm to end a drought, just about everyone has experienced something they'd call a miracle. And there have always been folks who seem to receive more than the usual number of special favors from above.

Beyond these everyday miracles, most religions have their share of paragons of faith capable of great marvels. Whether these folks are called saints, sufis, or mahatmas, they all serve as the Earthly servants of divine powers. However, these holy powerhouses have always been in short supply.

Recently, the Powers that Be have taken a more active interest in their followers below. With the servants of the unholy running rampant across the countryside, the faithful occasionally need a little more help than better-than-average luck. Lately the ranks of the truly blessed have grown in record numbers. That doesn't mean it's any easier to be a saint than before, just that more folks are motivated to follow the path of righteousness these days.

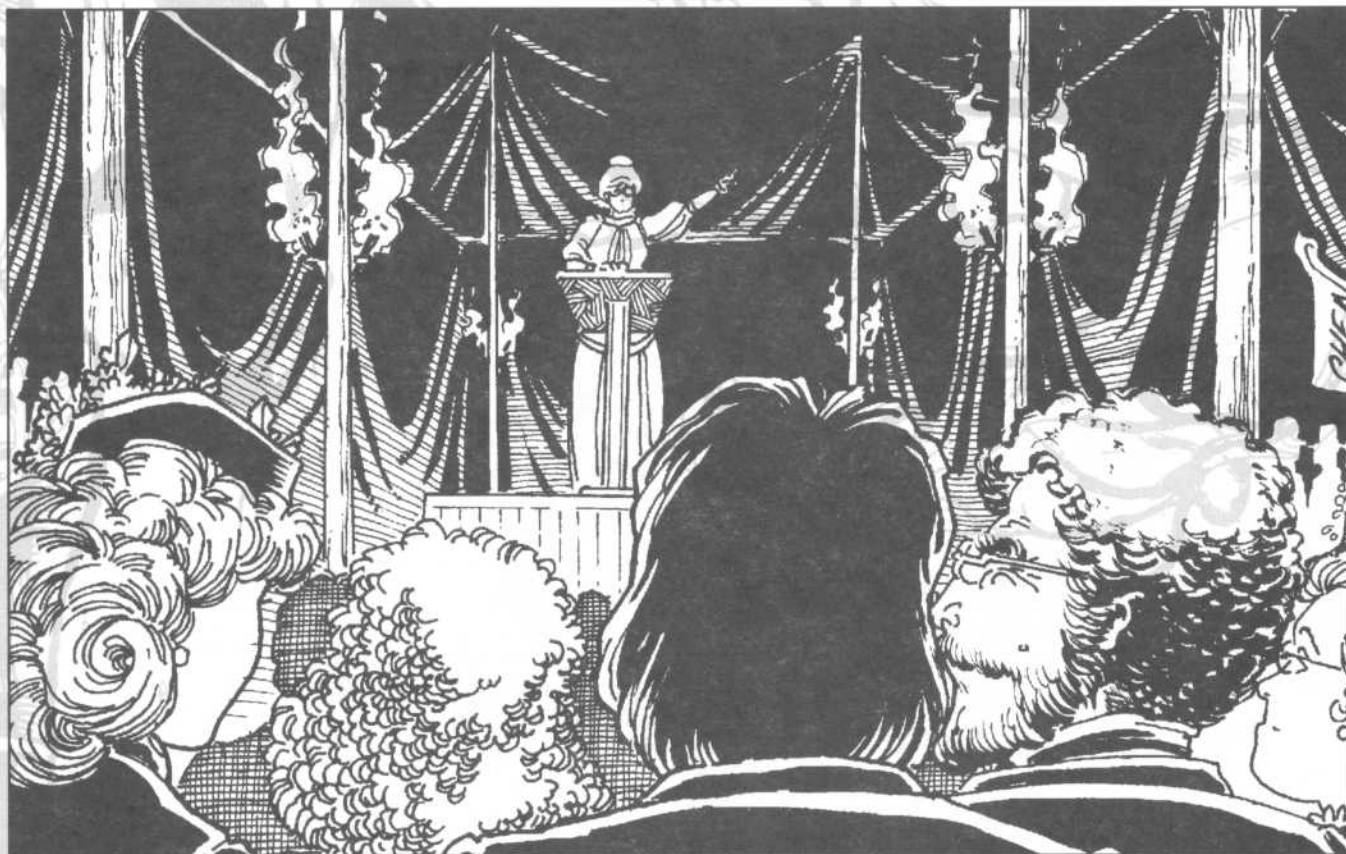
Walkin' dead and other such abominations tend to make believers out of most folks.

Becoming One o' the Blessed

With all the dangers out in the world since the Reckoning, it's no surprise the straight and narrow is becoming such a popular route.

The easiest way to become a blessed character is to start as one. In that case, the character simply chooses the blessed character class. The character should also have at least one rank of the Faith skill, although he'll probably want more.

After a few adventures in the Weird West, a hero may decide some divine assistance would be handy. It's possible to become blessed after creation; it's just a bit tougher. If your hero takes this route, use the usual multiclass rules, but there are a few extra steps involved.



First, she must have the Faith skill. Once she decides to walk the path of the righteous, she must devote herself to it. Spending the skill points gained from her latest level advancement to gain the Faith skill shows this. She only needs 1 rank, but we'd recommend that she have more. Part of the process of becoming blessed requires her faith be tested, so the stronger it is the better!

Next, she spends a minimum of one week meditating and fasting. At the end of this time, she makes a DC 20 Faith check. For every week beyond the first, she gets a +2 bonus to the roll. If successful, she can move to the next step. If not, her spirit isn't quite into her faith, and she must meditate again.

Finally, she must undertake a quest or task to prove her sincerity. The Marshal has the details on this, but it's enough for the character to know it generally takes 2 to 3 weeks and a lot of hard work to complete the task.

Once the hero has proven her faith and sincerity, she immediately gains one miracle and the ability to turn the undead as stated in the *Deadlands d20* rulebook. She gains another miracle each week until she reaches the maximum of four miracles allowed for a starting character. After this she learns new miracles normally.

One last note. As stated in the *Deadlands d20* rulebook, hucksters, shamans, and mad scientists may not multiclass as blessed.

Duties o' the Blessed

All religions require some sort of service from their spiritual leaders. Whether it is conducting religious services, providing wisdom, or simply serving as a good example to others, the patron of each belief places certain expectations upon their most-favored servants.

That doesn't mean all blessed characters have to travel the country preaching to every cowpoke they encounter. There are plenty of itinerant preachers wandering around the West, making their living doing nothing but that. Besides, lots of times a kind word and a good example go further than a Hellfire and brimstone sermon.

On the other hand, it does mean the blessed's patron expects the character to live according to a certain code. This code may include performing certain formal religious ceremonies for the faithful, or it may require the character serve the followers of the deity in a more subdued and personal manner. It all depends on the patron and the religion the blessed subscribes to.

Transgressin'

While each religion has its own particular set of rules, it's a fairly safe bet most of them frown on a lot of the same actions. Things like lying, stealing, adultery, and murder are generally not acceptable habits for blessed of

any religion, or for most other folks for that matter.

Failure to live up to those standards causes the blessed to lose favor with her patron. Often, small transgressions may be overlooked, but larger ones are punished swiftly and sternly.

What does all that mean? Well, it means if your character doesn't follow the guidelines of her religion fairly strictly, her faith suffers for it. And when her faith lacks, she's asking for trouble when it comes to miracles.

Sinnin'

Any time a blessed hero breaks a rule of her religion, she must make a Will save against a DC from the Sinnin' Table below.

Normal folk with Faith have to worry about violating their religion's laws too. The Powers that Be aren't quite as tough on their non-blessed followers—only when one of them commits a major or mortal sin does he have to worry about making a Will save.

Failure on this roll means the character cannot use her miracles for 1d4 hours. There may still be ramifications from the character's disobedience even if she makes the Will save. The Marshal has the final say on this. Divine patrons require strict obedience from their chosen.

This goes for minor sins. If the character commits a major sin and fails to repent via the Will save, he loses his miracles for 2d6 days and gifts and interventions for 1d4 days. Committing a mortal sin and not repenting means the character has fallen from grace. He loses all of his miracles, gifts, and interventions until he performs a holy quest to redeem himself. This quest is up to the Marshal, but it should be proportional to the sin committed.

Because of the sheer number of religions in the world, detailing a list of each religion's transgressions is pretty close to impossible. Instead, we've given a few guidelines based on the severity of the violation.

The Marshal makes the final decision on how severe the infraction was. To help make his determination easier, we've included a few examples. Not all the examples apply to every religion. For instance, it doesn't make much difference whether a Lutheran eats pork or not, but a Jew would be violating her beliefs.

Sinnin'

Sin	DC	Examples
Minor	10	Eating proscribed foods, taking the Lord's name in vain, refusing others in need.
Major	15	Theft, refusing others in dire need, telling harmful and deliberate lies, failure to observe holy days or ceremonies, hoarding wealth.
Mortal	20+	Murder, adultery, theft of something of great importance, blasphemy (denial of one's religion).

Way o' the Righteous

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The Wages o' Sin

A blessed character who loses all her Faith can't perform any miracles at all. To such a hero bereft of Faith, the blessed class is nothing more than a painful reminder of the character's former status.

To regain her former status with her patron, the character must spend 5 skill points to regain her first rank of Faith. She also has to complete a quest like those performed by characters seeking to multiclass as blessed.

Religions in the Weird West

There are a whole lot of different beliefs running around the frontier lately. You've got your western religions, you've got your eastern religions—you've even got a couple from the good old US of A. (before the War, of course).

With all those religions, a fellow's bound to ask, "What's the difference?"

Well, in game terms, not a lot. Just about any follower of a religion can be blessed. There are a few exceptions, of course.

This book tells you a little about each of the most prevalent religions in the Weird West—not counting the beliefs of the Indians. Those are addressed in *Way o' the Brave* and *Ghost Dancers*.

The information we've provided is mostly limited to a basic overview of the beliefs, what types of miracles are suitable for each religion, and how widespread the followers are. If you want to learn more about the actual tenets of the religion itself, we recommend you look somewhere besides a game book. Likewise, the relative severities of sins or transgressions are only listed as examples for game purposes—not as an actual depiction of any religions' beliefs.

Religions & Movements

When we say religion, we're talking about a specific belief system detailing the requirements of a person who follows it. Inside each religion, there may be several movements, groups or sects. For example, Christianity is a religion, and Catholics and Methodists form two different movements within Christianity.

A character's Faith is based on his religion, not the particular movement or sect within it.

Here are the five most common religions in the Weird West.

Christianity

Christianity is far and away the largest religion in the West. Most larger towns have a church or chapel dedicated to the God of Christianity. In fact, most folks think of

themselves as "Christians" even if they never darken the door of a church!

Followers of Christianity believe Jesus Christ was responsible for the spiritual salvation of humanity through his death and resurrection. Christians also believe a person has only one life, and your actions here on Earth determine your place in the afterlife.

Baptism is the common initiation into Christianity. A ceremonial meal often known as Holy Communion, performed in memory of Christ's sacrifice, is regularly observed.

The Christian religion holds a firm belief in a protective deity who watches over his worshippers. The legends of Christianity have a strong tradition of its followers confronting the servants of evil in battle, and the blessed are no exception.

Christian Holy days

Sunday is the day most Christian sects hold worship services. Many also consider it a day of rest and inappropriate for business.

Other important holy days to Christianity are Easter (commemorating Christ's resurrection), Ash Wednesday (marking the period of his last arrival in Jerusalem), Pentecost, and Christmas (the date Christ's birthday is observed). The date of Easter varies, but it is always a Sunday between March 22 and April 25. Pentecost occurs on a Sunday seven weeks after Easter. Ash Wednesday falls on the Wednesday 40 days prior to Easter and marks the beginning of Lent, a period of fasting and special services. Christmas always falls on December 25.

Christian Movements

There are three primary sects in Christianity: Catholic, Eastern (or Greek) Orthodox, and Protestant. Although the particulars in each movement may be very different, each reveres Christ as an important central figure.

Catholicism

The single largest Christian group is easily Catholicism. The influence of the early Spanish missions is still strongly felt throughout the frontier, particularly in the Southwest.

Catholics recognize seven sacred ceremonies or sacraments. These are baptism, confirmation of baptismal vows, regular confession and absolution of sins, Holy Communion, last rites at death, marriage, and ordination of the priesthood.

From time to time, the church may declare a person of great virtue or benevolence has been granted a special place in Heaven. They are therefore entitled to reverence on Earth as saints. Each saint holds a special place in the Catholic belief, overseeing a particular aspect of life.

Catholic Clergy

The Catholic Church has a very structured hierarchy of clergy. Priests are responsible for a particular church, bishops for a group of churches or a diocese, and archbishops oversee a large diocese or several smaller ones. All clergy of the Catholic Church are to remain celibate and unmarried.

At the top of the Catholic Church is the pope, who is the final authority on matters of Catholic dogma and morality. Directly beneath him are cardinals, who help run the affairs of the church.

Women may serve the church as nuns. Nuns often reside in convents, which are presided over by a Mother Superior.

In game terms, a priest or nun has 1 level of Religious Rank, a bishop or Mother Superior is level 2, and an archbishop holds level 4. A priest is referred to as "Father," and a bishop as "Your Excellency."

Clergy does exist above Religious Rank 4 in Catholicism, but these folks have too many duties to get involved with a posse of cowpokes for any length of time.

Catholic priests all must have at least one rank in Speak Languages (Latin), as portions of many important rituals are performed in that language. The Bible, particularly the Latin Vulgate version, is the sacred text of Catholicism.

Smaller Catholic sanctuaries are known as churches, while larger ones—presided over by bishops—are referred to as cathedrals. All such places of worship are made holy ground by the miracle *sanctify*.

Eastern Orthodox

The Eastern Orthodox Church has only a small following on the North American continent. A few practitioners live in New Orleans, but outside that enclave, the belief is virtually unknown.

There are many similarities between Eastern Orthodoxy and the Catholic Church. They both follow the central teachings of Christianity and differ from each other in only a few areas. For example, Catholics sprinkle infants with the water during their baptism ceremonies, while Eastern Orthodoxy requires full immersion of the petitioner. Also, Eastern Orthodoxy allows its members both wine and bread at communion ceremony, while Catholicism limits wine to the clergy.

Eastern Orthodox Clergy

The Eastern Orthodox Church, like the Catholic, has a clerical hierarchy of leadership. Priests are responsible for a particular church, bishops for a group of churches or a diocese, and archbishops oversee a large diocese or several smaller ones.

A priest usually leads a church, although larger ones may be presided over by a bishop. Bishops are most often responsible for districts known as diocese. Patriarchs are responsible for large cities. The leader of the church as a whole is the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople.

Unlike Catholic priests, Eastern Orthodox clergy may be married, provided they have

done so prior to ordination. Bishops, however, must be unmarried. The clergy of the church is male.

In game terms, a priest has Religious Rank level 1, a bishop Religious Rank level 2, and a patriarch is Religious Rank level 4. The Patriarch of Constantinople is the highest authority in the church.

All Eastern Orthodox clergy must have at least one rank in Speak Languages (Greek), as many ceremonies are conducted in this language. The sacred text of the church is a Greek translation of the Bible.

Sanctuaries are typically called churches and are consecrated by the miracle *sanctify*.

Protestants

Protestant followers of Christianity together actually far outnumber Catholics in the Weird West, but there are quite a few different Protestant movements. Lutheran, Methodist, and Baptist are just a few of these. The Protestants make up for what they lack in organization and tradition with enthusiasm. A "Hellfire and brimstone" preacher is likely to be a Protestant.

Having their roots directly in Catholicism, Protestant churches have many of the same types of sacred ceremonies that Catholics have, although exactly which ones can vary greatly from one denomination to the next. Be sure to research your hero's chosen faith if you want to roleplay it properly.

Unlike Catholic clergy, Protestant clergy can usually marry, even after ordination.

Protestant believers abound throughout the frontier. Any town may have a mix of many different Protestant beliefs. However, few settlements except the most well established have formal places of worship. Often, schoolhouses or general stores are used as impromptu places of worship.

In recent years, many of these sects have put aside their differences and sought fellowship with other Protestant groups. There are two main reasons for this. The first is that the scattered population on the frontier means most folks often can't find a church dedicated to their particular belief, so they meet with one or more other Protestant groups to worship.

The other reason is that when faced with a bloodthirsty walking corpse, high-minded theological debate tends to take a back seat to more immediate worries!

The notable exception to this reconciliatory attitude is the Mormon sect, a fairly recent addition to the mix. Other Protestant sects tend to be intolerant of these folks and generally avoid dealings with them. Not to be easily so dismissed, the Mormons have responded to this ostracism by founding their own nation, the State of Deseret.

Protestant Sects

The sheer variety of Protestant beliefs prevents us from giving you more than a brief overview of a few of the most common.

Baptists

The Baptist movement is the single most popular Protestant movement in either the Union or the Confederacy. Much like the former United

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States, the Civil War sundered the Baptist belief. Disputes over slavery formed the followers into northern and southern camps. Following the emancipation of the slaves in both the Union and the Confederacy, this schism has begun to heal.

As with many Protestant beliefs, it's difficult to define exactly what makes a Baptist. Baptist churches limit their practices to only what they find in the New Testament of the Bible. They recognize no central authority, and each church may have its own interpretation of the scriptures.

Baptists believe each person must study and interpret the Bible for himself. As a result, few congregations baptize children under the age of 11 or 12.

The Order o' St. George

In 1869, the Catholic church convened a special Vatican Council. The purpose of this council was to address the strange happenings occurring since the summer of 1863.

Lack of evidence prevented any official church stance on the issue. However, the council decided to invest a special order of clergy to further study the variety of disturbing phenomena. This group was named the Order of Saint George, after a hero of the early church who is reputed to have killed an actual dragon.

The Order is a small one, composed of only 100 total clergy. The members of the Order—often called Georgians for short—report directly to the Vatican. Currently, about 20 members are active on the North American continent.

Due to the lack of an official church endorsement, the Order tries to operate as subtly as possible. Their primary mission is to research supernatural occurrences. Despite this, the members of the order are sometimes drawn into direct conflict with the forces of evil.

Those members of the Order of St. George who operate in the Weird West often work in cooperation with the Pinkerton Detective Agency. The two organizations often exchange information or work in conjunction on cases dealing with particularly nasty abominations. Members of the North American branch of this organization tend to have more liberal views on many things than their Old World cousins, but they still refuse to have anything to do with the notorious Pinkerton "Cleaning Crews."

All Georgians have at least 2 levels in the Religious Rank Feat and must be of at least 5th level or better to represent their ties to the Vatican, and association with the Pinkerton Detective Agency.

Chaplains

In 1863, Confederate General Leonidas Polk stepped down from his position as a field commander and founded the Chaplain Corps. As a practicing Methodist minister, Polk was convinced he could better aid the Confederacy in a spiritual manner.

In a short time, Polk's Chaplain Corps had a profound effect on the armed forces of the Confederacy. Not only did the ministers provide needed moral support, but more than a few were rumored to have performed miracles themselves. The success of Polk's Corps did not go unnoticed by the Union, and the North soon developed a similar agency.

Chaplains serve voluntarily and are primarily Protestants. They are considered noncombatants by both sides, much like doctors of medicine. Chaplains are commissioned as officers in their chosen army, but they don't hold command positions.

Because they must cater to the spiritual needs of many denominations, chaplains receive instruction in the rituals of all forms of Christianity, from Catholicism to Baptist. To date, only Christianity is represented in the Chaplain Corps, due to the scarcity of other religions in the rank and file of Union and Confederate armies.

After Gettysburg, with the strange and horrible occurrences that have begun taking place, the Chaplains' job has become a little more difficult.

Higher-ranking members in the Chaplain Corps received special government training in dealing with supernatural occurrences on the battlefield. The only distinguishing factor between these special chaplains and the rest of the Corps is their training and ornate sabres they are issued (which have a +3 magical enchantment bonus). The closest thing the North has to the Special Corps is the Order of St. George. A member of the Special Corps must have at least 1 level of the Religious Rank feat and a minimum of 2 ranks in the Knowledge (occult) skill.

The leader of a Baptist congregation is called a pastor and usually has Religious Rank at level 1. Elected leaders called elders and deacons assist him. There is no other hierarchy within the church.

The only sacred text recognized by Baptists is the Bible.

Baptist services are held wherever a location is available. Some communities have permanent churches, although these are seldom *sanctified*.

Episcopalians

The Episcopal Church is the American branch of the Church of England, or Anglican Church. Following the Revolutionary War, the church suffered from its association with the Church of England. However, extensive missionary work in the frontier of North America has helped spread the belief.

Although the Episcopal Church has a fairly structured hierarchy of clergy, there are various interpretations of the Bible throughout the belief. Gathering for study and fellowship are important parts of Episcopal worship.

Like the Catholic Church, Episcopalians venerate saints as intercessors with Heaven.

Episcopal congregations are known as parishes and are presided over by a priest (Religious Rank level 1). Unlike many Christian sects, Episcopalians allow women as priests. The correct form of address for a priest is either "Mr.," "Miss," or "Mrs." as appropriate.

A group of parishes makes up a diocese under the care of a bishop (Religious Rank level 2) and an archbishop (Religious Rank level 4) presides over a group of diocese.

Both the Bible and the Book of Common Prayer are used as texts. Established Episcopal sanctuaries are either churches or cathedrals and are usually *sanctified*.

Lutherans

German and Scandinavian immigrants brought the Lutheran church to America. As a result, it has a much stronger following in the Union than the Confederacy.

Lutherans hold that the Bible is the guide to salvation and a person can reach salvation through faith alone. The rites and rituals of the church serve only as aids to faith.

A Lutheran church is shepherded by a pastor (Religious Rank level 1). The church also appoints bishops (Religious Rank level 2) to help administer to its needs.

A permanent Lutheran place of worship is *sanctified*.

Methodists

The Methodist church is also descended from the Church of England. However, Methodism separated from the Anglican Church before the Revolutionary War and wasn't subject to the same suspicion as the Episcopal belief. The Methodist church is the second most numerous of the Protestant religions in both the Union and the Confederacy.

Methodists have a strong belief in the free will of individuals and the necessity of salvation. Although there exists a hierarchy in the Methodist clergy, individual churches—called charges—may show diverse practices.

Methodism is most famous for its circuit-riding ministers and outdoor meetings. The church also has a very strong missionary movement across the globe.

A Methodist charge is ministered by a pastor (Religious Rank level 1) who is appointed by the region's bishop (Religious Rank level 2). Ordained Methodist clergy are always male, although women may participate or even lead a meeting.

The Bible is the only sacred text used by Methodists.

A permanent Methodist church is usually consecrated by the miracle *sanctify*.

Mormons

The Mormon religion, or Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, is centralized in the State of Deseret, formerly known as the state of Utah. Although on paper Deseret remains an ally of the Union, it has been an autonomous body since declaring its independence in 1866. While the majority of Mormons, or Saints, are concentrated in Deseret, the sect has a strong missionary practice, and followers may be found throughout the Union, Confederacy, and even beyond.

The Mormon belief was founded by Joseph Smith in 1830 and is based on his translation of golden tablets revealed to him by an angel in 1827. Mormons have been subject to intense religious persecution ever since. A lynch mob killed Smith in 1844, and if not for the leadership of Brigham Young, the sect may have failed.

Young guided the remaining members of the church to the shores of Salt Lake City in 1847. In this natural sanctuary, the Latter Day Saints recovered and have risen to control all of the former state of Utah. For a more detailed history of Deseret, take a gander at the *City o' Gloom* boxed set.

Some folks claim that Mormons aren't truly Christians, but rather a religion all their own. The Saints, like all followers of Christianity, recognize the position and importance of Jesus Christ. They also use the Christian Bible as a scripture. However, there are a few differences.

Mormons have another scripture, the Book of Mormon, which they hold as sacred as the Christian Bible. The Saints believe in the sanctity of the human body, and any use of a mood-altering substance—including alcohol, morphine, opium, coffee, or tea—is discouraged although not entirely prohibited.

One of the practices which has drawn the most attention from other Christian sects is polygamy—the practice of having multiple wives—although this is itself a source of hot debate even among the Mormons.

All Mormon men are ordained as ministers of their belief, however a bishop (Religious Rank level 1) usually leads regular services. Bishops also serve in a civil fashion the theocratic government of Deseret, so they don't usually travel far from their congregations.

Places of worship are called temples or churches. Salt Lake City has a grand worship hall referred to as the Tabernacle. The Tabernacle is *sanctified*, but this status varies among other Mormon temples or churches.

The Mormons and Doctor Hellstromme are currently living together in relative harmony in the region around the Great Salt Lake, although the peace is tentative at best. Hellstromme's god is that of science, and this sometimes puts him in conflict with his neighbors.

Christian Strictures

In spite of the differences between the various Christian movements, they generally share a common interpretation of what behavior is forbidden. Also, regardless of the particular sect, all blessed followers of Christianity have access to the same miracles.

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Sinnin'

Sin

Minor

Example

Taking the Lord's name in vain, getting drunk, lying, refusing aid to those in need, envying another's possessions.

Major

Theft, turning away from others in dire need, failing to take communion (for a Catholic).

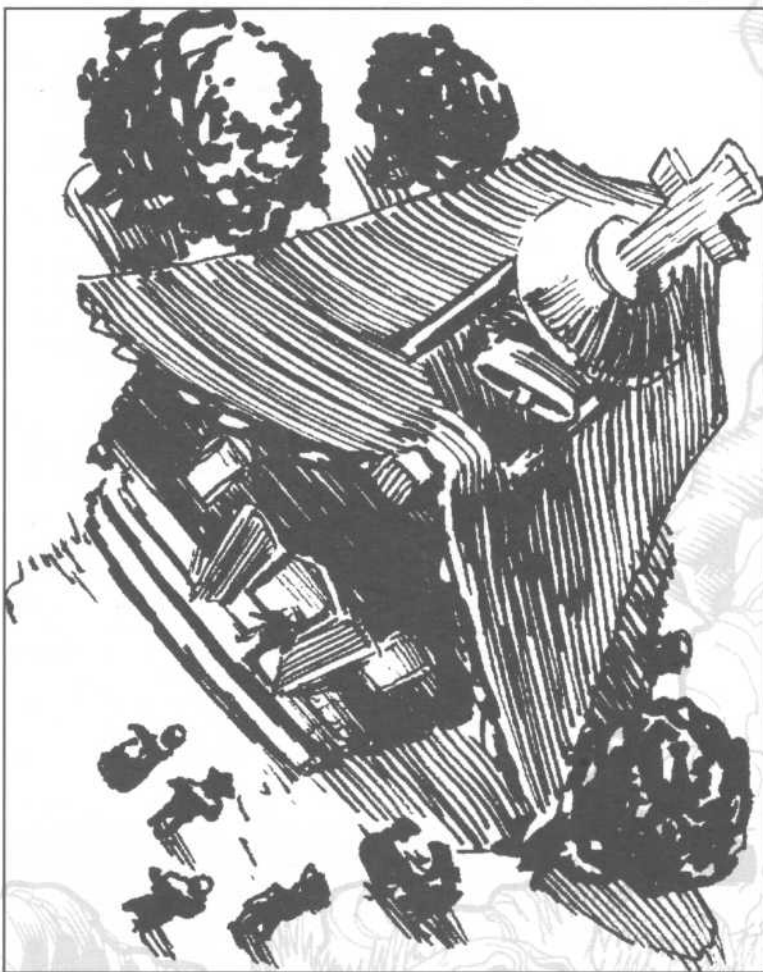
Mortal

Adultery, killing other than in self-defense, blasphemy (denial of religion).

Miracles & Gifts

The following miracles are not allowed to Christian blessed: *dervish*, *enigma*, *mysterious ways*, and *two places*.

The following gift is not allowed to Christian blessed: *self-discipline*.





Judaism

One of the oldest religions still practiced, Judaism got its start in the Middle East over 3,500 years ago. The first Jewish patriarch was Abraham, who made a covenant with Yahweh to carry His message to the world. Both Christianity and Islam trace their roots through Judaism.

Jews believe the covenant Abraham made with God indicates they are the chosen people of the Lord. Also, while many Jews think Jesus was a great teacher, they don't agree with the Christian view on his divinity.

The Jewish people are still awaiting a Messiah to come and deliver them from their enemies—and if one thing's for sure it's that the Jews have a lot of enemies. Throughout their history, they have been the focus of religious and political persecution from just about every side. Prejudice is still somewhat present in the Weird West, although to an extent far less than that faced by blacks, Indians, and Chinese.

Jews are found in all walks of life and throughout the frontier. However, the population is thinly scattered, and few permanent synagogues of any size are found except in the larger cities in the West.

The 10 Commandments came from Judaism and form many of the tenets of the religion's belief. The rest are found by studying the Torah (which corresponds to the first 5 books of the Hebrew Bible) and the Talmud (which contains interpretations of those books).

Also, the Jewish people have strict dietary rules known as the kosher laws. These dictate not only what type of food a Jew may eat, but also the method of killing, preparing, and serving. As a result, Jewish folk can't eat the meat of an animal that's been hunted and killed.

Although Jews have a number of restrictions upon their behavior, they aren't expected to follow these guidelines if doing so would endanger their lives. For example, a Jew could eat from a hunter's catch if she was starving to death. In such circumstances, a Jewish blessed doesn't have to make a check on the Sinner's Table. The only exceptions to this are mortal sins (murder, blasphemy, adultery).

A Jewish spiritual leader is known as a rabbi (Religious Rank level 1 or 2). Rabbis must have at least one rank of Speak Languages (Hebrew), due to the fact that many parts of the worship service are conducted in this language. Rabbis usually know another professional trade in addition to their theological one.

Jewish worship services are called synagogues, they may be held anywhere a copy of the Torah and 10 adult males can be found. Buildings that are used as permanent places of worship are also called synagogues, and these places are *sanctified*.

Prominent Jewish holidays include Passover or Pesach (in March or April), the Feast of Weeks or Shavuot (50 days after Passover), New Year or Rosh Hashanah (in September or October), the Day of Atonement or Yom Kippur (10 days after Rosh Hashanah), and the Feast of Dedication or Chanukah (in November or December). The Hebrew calendar is on a lunar cycle, the exact dates of these days vary each year on a Western calendar.

Orthodox Jews

Orthodox Jews follow closely the teachings of the Torah and Talmud. They are the largest sect of Judaism.

Men and women are separated in worship services, and both cover their heads. The kosher laws restricting the diet are stressed. Orthodox Jews, if possible, only rest and worship on the Sabbath.

Hebrew is the language used in Orthodox worship. Orthodox Jews await a Messiah to come and restore the Jewish people to an Earthly kingdom.

Reform Jews

Reform Judaism is a fairly recent development, beginning in central Europe. However, its appeal is causing it to grow quickly, particularly in the Union and Confederacy.

The adherents of this sect believe Judaism is an evolving religion. They believe the Talmud is an historical document and has no real authority for the modern Jew. Finally, they do not seek a homeland or a messiah. Rather, they

hope for an overall improvement in the state of the Jewish world.

Reform Jews don't employ Hebrew as often in worship, using instead their native tongue. Synagogues are called temples. The kosher laws are not strictly held, although some dietary restrictions are usually practiced. Many of the Talmud's limitations on Sabbath activities are also ignored.

Women are allowed a greater role in Reform Judaism. In fact, in certain communities, there is a movement to allow women rabbis.

The Cabbala

Throughout its history, there has been a strong occult element in Judaism. Accounts of magicians and sorcerers opposing the righteous abound in the Torah. The study of this mystical side of the religion is called the cabbala, which means "tradition." This occult study probably began between the 6th and 10th centuries among Babylonian Jews. By the Middle Ages, the cabbala was fairly widespread among the many Jewish communities in the world.

In spite of its earlier popularity, the cabbalist following has dwindled dramatically in recent centuries. The cabbala is easily the smallest sect of Judaism. In fact, many Jews aren't even aware of its teachings.

Cabbalism holds that there are encoded messages hidden in the Torah and other texts. By studying these writings, the cabbalists hope to realize unknown truths about the universe. Cabbalists tend to be diligent searchers for hidden knowledge.

Students of the cabbala are more open-minded than most folks in accepting tales of the supernatural. The cabbalists believe that evil does not exist—rather it is the negative side of good. Exactly what that means is a subject for debate among sharper minds than ours! Since the Reckoning, the group's numbers have more than tripled.

In addition to the Torah and Talmud, cabbalists also study the Zohar. The Zohar is a collection of cabbalistic writings.

Jewish Strictures

Jewish sects have generally the same requirements on their followers.

Blessed followers of Orthodox and Reform Judaism have access to the same miracles. Cabbalists have access to a few special miracles not available to the other Jewish movements.

Sinnin'

Sin
Minor

Example

Showing disrespect for one's parents, working on the Sabbath (between sundown on Friday and sundown on Saturday), eating non-kosher foods, refusing aid to those in need, envying another's possessions.

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Major

Theft, turning away from others in dire need, lying, taking the Lord's name in vain.

Mortal

Adultery, killing another person, blasphemy (denial of religion).

Miracles & Gifts

The following miracles are not allowed to Jewish blessed of the Orthodox and Reform sects: *dervish*, *exorcism*, *mysterious ways*, and *two places*. Cabbalists may not select *battle hymn*, *dervish*, *inspiration*, or *two places*.

The following gift is not allowed to Jewish blessed of any sect: *self-discipline*.

Islam

The prophet Mohammed founded Islam in the deserts of Arabia in the 7th century. The beliefs of Islam are not yet widespread in either the USA or Confederacy. That doesn't mean, however, the religion has no followers on the frontier. There are a few devout and adventurous Muslims already traveling the Weird West.

The basic belief of the religion is there is only one God, commonly called Allah. Each person has only one life, and how he leads it determines his place in the afterlife, so it's pretty important to get it right the first time.

Islam has five pillars that every Muslim must uphold. They are:

1) The Creed: "There is no God but Allah, and Mohammed is his messenger." This is a very important part of Muslim life. In fact, it's so extremely vital it's often the first words an infant hears and the last words across a dying man's lips.

2) Daily Prayer: Muslims are expected to pray daily at dawn, midday, mid-afternoon, sunset, and nightfall. These prayers must be directed toward Mecca—that's towards the east if the character is in the Weird West. Before praying, the Muslim must cleanse herself of any dirt or impurities.

3) Almsgiving: The follower of Islam is expected to share his wealth with the poor. This may be as little as 2-3% of his wealth, but many give more.

4) Fasting: During the month of Ramadan, Muslims must fast during the day. This is a strict fast and entails no eating, no drinking, no smoking, and no sexual activity during the daylight hours. These restrictions are lifted only for the sick, nursing mothers, small children, soldiers, and travelers. Because the Muslim calendar is a lunar calendar, the month of Ramadan varies from year to year. However, in 1876, Ramadan begins around the end of July, in 1877 it falls about mid-July, and so forth.

5) Pilgrimage: "The Hajj." Each Muslim must travel to Mecca once during his lifetime, no matter how far he is from the holy city in the

heart of Arabia. This can be a tall order for Muslims living in the Weird West, but all of the faithful hope to someday make the long pilgrimage.

Islam raised the place of women in Arabic cultures, although not quite to the level of men. Women are still encouraged to pray at home instead of the mosque. Also, polygamy is an accepted practice.

The sacred text of Islam is the Quran, or Koran, as it is sometimes written. Muslims gather to pray in *sanctified* temples known as mosques. Prayers are led by an imam (Religious Rank level 1)—the closest thing Islam has to a minister or priest.

Although this religion certainly has its share of blessed folks, Islam in general does not have as strong a tradition of miraculous occurrences as either Christianity or Judaism. The holy people of Islam seldom perform the overt wonders attributed to the saints and prophets of those other religions.

Sunni Muslims

After Mohammed passed on, the leadership of the Muslim world passed to abu-Bakar, one of the friends of the Prophet. He was named "Caliph" and continued unifying the nation Mohammed had begun. After abu-Bakar, two more friends of the Prophet were made caliphs, but both were murdered while holding this position.

The fourth caliph of Islam was Ali, Mohammed's son-in-law. In 661, he had the position wrested from him by the Umayyads, a new Muslim dynasty.

The majority of all Muslims are Sunni. They hold to the traditions of Islam and recognize the authority of the "orthodox" caliphs, Mohammed's first four successors.

Within the Sunni sect, there are four major divisions: the Hanafites, the Malikites, the Shafites, and the Hanbalites. The major differences between these groups are primarily in interpretation of the rituals and Muslim law. In general, the Hanbalites are the most conservative of the various Muslim groups.

Shiite Muslims

Nineteen years after the Umayyads dethroned Ali, his son Husain challenged the new dynasty. Unfortunately for Husain, he lost and was summarily executed. Shiites believe Ali was the only true successor to Mohammed.

The Shiite sect holds that the beginning of Islam did not end with Mohammed and the Quran. Rather, there were revelations in later generations by people known as imams. Shiites place greater meaning on the word imam than do Sunnis. The first of these was Ali's other son, Zain. After Zain, there were a number of other imams.

Here the sect is split.

Some (called "Seveners") believe there were six other imams. Others (called "Twelvers") maintain there were 11 more imams. Regardless of the arithmetic, both groups believe some of these original imams are still alive and in hiding, waiting for their appointed time of return.

Shiites also await the arrival of the "mahdi" or messiah who will lead the world into an era of peace and justice. Many members believe the arrival to be very soon.

Because the Quran makes no obvious mention of these other imams, Shiites believe it has hidden allegories and meanings. Thus, they have a distrust of the current version of the text.

Sufis

Sufis are Muslim mystics. They seek a personal relationship with Allah not normally found in Islam. Followers of this sect are often called fakirs or dervishes. These folks live in poverty and deprivation—all in the name of their beliefs.

This particular sect does not observe many of the long-standing traditions normally associated with Islam. For one, women hold a greater role in Sufism than they do in any other aspect of Islam.

Sufis are also famed for their miraculous acts like eating hot coals, walking on fire, laying on beds of nails, or even swallowing live snakes. This is the kind of thing that gets people to sit up and take notice, and they were doing these kinds of things long before the Reckoning came along.

Muslim Strictures

Muslim sects, in spite of their interpretive difference, impose the same behavior restrictions on their followers.

Blessed followers of Sunni and Shiite Muslim sects have access to the same miracles. Sufis have access to a slightly different selection of miracles and gifts.

Sinnin'

Sin	Example
Minor	Showing disrespect for one's parents, eating pork, drinking alcohol, gambling, envying another's possessions.
Major	Refusing aid to others in need, breaking the fast of Ramadan, failing to observe daily prayers.
Mortal	Adultery, killing another Muslim, blasphemy (denial of religion), theft, and idolatry (worshipping graven images).

Miracles & Gifts

The following miracles are not allowed to Muslim blessed of the Sunni and Shiite sects: *burnt offerin', mysterious ways, snake handlin', two places, and walk on water*. Sufis may not select *battle hymn, chastise, feast, mighty fortress, sanctify, or smite*.

The following gift is not allowed to Muslim blessed of Sunni or Shiite sects: *self-discipline*. Sufis have access to all gifts.

Buddhism

One of the most recent additions to the mix of religions in the West is Buddhism. There is a growing population of practitioners of this religion in the Great Maze and South Dakota. In fact, after Christianity, Buddhism may be the next largest religion on the frontier.

These numbers aren't so much new converts as existing followers who've immigrated from the East. This is due largely to the success of Kang (owner of the Iron Dragon Railroad) and the other Chinese warlords in the Great Maze. Their success has encouraged a number of their countrymen to cross the Pacific and seek their fortunes on the American frontier. Most of these folks are employed by one of the existing warlords, but a few have arrived by their own means.

Buddhism teaches its followers to strive for internal perfection. Buddhists seek personal enlightenment by following the teachings of Buddha. Although most practitioners of the religion revere Buddha, many followers also hold him as an example of the potential of humanity rather than a deity.

The teachings of Buddhism center around the Four Noble Truths and the Eight-Fold Path.

The Four Noble Truths:

- 1) Life is suffering
- 2) The cause of suffering is desire
- 3) The cure for sorrow is the elimination of desire
- 4) Desire can be eliminated through the Eight-Fold path.

The Steps of the Eight-Fold Path:

- 1) Understand the Four Noble Truths (right belief)
- 2) Positive thoughts about people and all life (right thought)
- 3) Avoid unkind speech, gossip, and lies (right speech)
- 4) Act without violence or vanity (right action)
- 5) Earn a living without harming others (right work)
- 6) Work hard and use time wisely (right effort)
- 7) Learn to concentrate and show compassion (right mindfulness)
- 8) Be at peace with yourself (right meditation).

By following those steps, an adherent can achieve enlightenment and bliss in the afterlife in Nirvana.

There are two main divisions of Buddhism: Theravada and Mahayana. Theravada is more philosophical than theological in its structure and limited to a few areas in Southeast Asia. Due to the strict regimen observed by its practitioners and lack of desire for converts, it is unlikely that a follower of Theravada Buddhism would be encountered in the American West.

Mahayana Buddhism takes a different approach. Adherents actively spread its beliefs. The sect is well suited for missionary work, as Mahayana readily incorporates existing religions

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into its own structure. Followers of this sect acknowledge deities of other religions as other incarnations of Buddha.

Because of its popularity and flexibility, Mahayana Buddhism has become intertwined with many Oriental religions. It is possible for a person to be a follower of Taoism, Hinduism, or another belief and still be a Buddhist.

Zen Buddhism

Zen is an example of an intuitive form of Buddhism. The practitioners of the Oriental fighting arts often follow its teachings. Zen is the largest sect of Buddhism in the Weird West, with a large following in the Great Maze.

This belief holds that a person can only reach a oneness with reality through self-knowledge and meditation. An instructor can't show the path of Zen to a pupil, nor does the student discover it by study of scriptures, faith in a deity, or rational thought. Instead, true realizations come in sudden flashes of insight.

Many masters of Zen believe rational thought actually inhibits a person's spiritual



The Dalai Lama

When one Dalai Lama dies, monks scour the land seeking his reincarnation. These monks look for a boy with certain characteristics—among them, large ears and an ability to pick out the former Dalai Lama's possessions from an assortment of items. Once the child is found, he begins training for his leadership role.

To date, these searchers have been lucky and have managed to find the child close to their ancestral home in the mountainous country of Tibet. However, times are tough all across the world, so it's possible that Tibetan priests are wandering the Weird West in the search for the reincarnated Lama. After all, it has been said that the current Dalai Lama has grown ill over the past few years. If he's actually gone, then the search is on.

growth. These masters may ask their pupils unanswerable riddles, shout at them, or even strike them in an attempt to confuse the reasoning processes and bring them to insight.

This type of behavior has some folks doubting the sanity of Zen Buddhists!

Zen has discarded most of the traditions of other religions. Temples, prayers, rituals, and sacred texts are unnecessary in this belief. In fact, Zen has no traditional tie to a deity in the Western sense. As a result, many miracles relying on the influence of a benevolent patron aren't available to followers of this sect. In particular, the *protection* miracle is not available to a blessed (or any other member) of the Zen sect. As a replacement, a blessed may take a gift of her choice. (Regular followers are out of luck.)

Although an enlightened Zen master may be famous among the followers of his religion, there is no formal ordination of priests. The Religious Rank feat is not available to blessed followers of Zen.

Tibetan Buddhism

The monks of Tibetan Buddhism are rare in the Weird West. Seldom do these mystics descend from the high Asian mountains—and even less often do they book passage on a ship for America!

This belief is an example of Mahayana Buddhism incorporating the existing religion of another cultural. Tibetan Buddhism is steeped in magic and tradition. This sect uses magic and miracles to deal with the threats of the unknown.

Tibetan monks have long relied on arcane defenses to defend against the shadows and demons they believe prowl the world. Doing battle with strange abominations is old hat for these blessed—there's just a lot more of it lately.

Tibetan Buddhists worship in *sanctified* temples, which are overseen by lamas (Religious Rank level 2). The largest group of Tibetan Buddhists is called the Yellow Hat School. The Dalai Lama—essentially the ruler of Tibet, leads it.

Buddhist Strictures

Both types of Buddhists we've detailed follow basically the same set of moral guidelines. Due to the nature of their beliefs, there is a difference in the miracles available to each sect.

Sinnin'

Sin

Minor

Major

Mortal

Example

Sleeping in large beds, wearing fine clothes or jewelry, using perfume.

Singing, dancing, drunkenness, eating after noon, accepting wealth, refusing aid to those in need, adultery.

Lying, killing, theft.

Miracles & Gifts

The following miracles are not allowed to Buddhist blessed of the Zen movement: *burnt offerin'*, *consecrate armament*, *consecrate item*, *exorcism*, *feast*, *protection*, *mighty fortress*, *sanctify*, and *snake handlin'*. Instead of the *protection* miracle, Zen Buddhists may choose any one gift.

Tibetan Buddhists may not select *babble on*, *burnt offerin'*, *feast*, *mighty fortress*, or *snake handlin'*.

Both types of Buddhists have access to all gifts.

Taoism

Another Oriental religion that arrived with the influx of Eastern immigrants, Taoism rivals Buddhism in popularity. Taoism has a complex belief system that can be studied for years and still not understood.

Taoism gets its name from the belief in an indefinable force uniting the universe, called the "Tao." The Tao is best described as the flow of nature and natural events. Even the gods are subject to its effects.

Taoists hold that life is the greatest possession and best lived simply. They hold vanity and pride in contempt. Their beliefs often lead them to look upon the advancements of civilization and technology with suspicion.

Originally a school of philosophical thought, Taoism has evolved over the centuries into a religion. Topping this hierarchy are deities known as the Supreme Triad and the Jade Emperor.

The first of the Triad is Yuan Shih Tien Ts'un, who translated the holy scriptures of Tao: the

Tao Te Ching. The second is Ling Pao Chun, who passed the wisdom of the scriptures to the lesser gods. The third is Tai Shang Lao Chun, who grants the secret wisdom to men to guide them to the creation of the potion of immortality. The Jade Emperor's position is more vague, but among other things he embodies the divine power of royalty.

Beneath the Supreme Triad and Jade Emperor is a passel of lesser gods. By petitioning these gods, Taoists hope to gain favorable influence over the problems of life.

One of the goals of many followers of Tao is immortality. Now, that's real "live forever" immortality—not the kind other religions promise in the afterlife! These scholars believe the secret formula to a potion granting eternal life is hidden in the scriptures of Tao.

The central scripture of Taoism is the Tao Te Ching. Temples are the usual places of worship for Taoists, and their spiritual leaders are priests (Religious Rank level 1, 2, or 4, depending on the size and status of the temple).

There are still a few Tao "purists" who adhere to the tenets of the original philosophy, but these are far outnumbered by the followers of the Taoist religion.

Taoist Strictures

Taoist blessed who revere the celestial hierarchy receive access to different miracles than those who practice the purely philosophical aspects of Tao. However, both movements hold to the same code of ethics.

Sinnin'

Sin	Example
Minor	Petty theft, lying, having sexual relations, vanity of any sort.
Major	Harmful theft or lying, disgracing one's ancestors, turning away from others in need.
Mortal	Refusing aid to someone in dire need, killing another person.

Miracles & Gifts

The following miracles are not allowed to Taoist blessed who worship the celestial hierarchy: *battle hymn*, *dervish*, *retribution*, *smite*, and *two places*. Also, they do not receive the *protection* miracle for free, although they may choose it normally. However, they receive the gift *longevity* instead of the *protection* miracle.

Taoist philosophers can't invoke the following miracles: *burnt offerin'*, *consecrate armament*, *consecrate item*, *exorcism*, *protection*, *mighty fortress*, *sanctify*, and *snake handlin'*. In place of *protection*, they may take any gift (including *protection* if they like). All gifts are appropriate to followers of this religion.

Other Religions

We won't even pretend we've covered all the possible religions for blessed characters in *Deadlands*. Just because we didn't address Hindu

blessed doesn't mean they don't exist—they're just *really* rare on the American frontier.

If you want to play a character of a religion we've not listed, consult with your Marshal. Assuming she says okay, go right ahead. You and your Marshal may have to do a little research about the religion though.

Whatever religion you decide on, remember characters in *Deadlands* are supposed to be the white hats, not the bad guys. So, if the religion you've chosen allows you to run roughshod over the huddled masses, exploit the weak, or steal folks blind, don't be surprised when your Marshal says NO!

Skills & Such

Now that we've spent some time on the life of a blessed character, it's time to talk about some meat and potatoes game business—things like new skills and feats.

But before we get to the new goodies, we're going to start off this section with a new look at an old skill.

Faith or Theology?

One of the first things a blessed character usually asks is "What use is Profession (Theology)?"

Well, that's a pretty good question.

The Faith skill is used to perform miracles. So, what does Profession (Theology) actually provide your character? Well, it's actually a very important part of a blessed character's life.

To put it simply, it shows how well your hero understands her own and other religions. It's

Tao & Spiritualism

The Taoist celestial hierarchy incorporates a number of gods ranging from nearly omnipotent beings to simple household guardians. Followers of Taoism petition whichever deity is most appropriate for the situation. As a result, there are many rough similarities between the Tao religion and the beliefs of the North American Indians.

If you're interested in playing a Taoist priest, you may want to consider using the magic system of Indian shamans to represent the Taoist belief in spirits and devils. Talk this over with your Marshal, because it might take some research to make this option work in your campaign. If you do go this way, be sure to pick up *Way o' the Brave* for all the specific details on Native American religions in *Deadlands* d20.



also an indication of how well she can explain her beliefs to others—both pretty important for a character that's specially favored by her deity!

A blessed without any levels in Profession (Theology) barely understands what she believes in. She may have a lot of faith in what she believes, but she's not got a very firm grasp of the principles.

If she tries to preach a sermon, she rambles and sounds confused about her own beliefs—at best. At worst, she comes across as a charlatan too inept to even make up a good story!

Heaven help her if she ever gets into a religious debate with another character. She's more likely to come out of it doubting her own religion than to convert her opponent!

Using Theology

Profession (Theology) serves a character in three ways: gaining converts, debating theology, and knowledge of other beliefs. Each of these is detailed below.

Converting the Lost

The most common method used to gain converts is giving sermons to groups of people.

The preacher must first assemble a group of folks to hear him speak. The more the better, but any number is fine.

Next, the preacher makes a Profession (Theology) check, but using his Charisma ability modifier instead of Wisdom. The DC for the check is based on the number of listeners he's garnered, as listed the table below. For every +1 above the DC the character gets on his roll, he gains one convert.

The larger the congregation, the more likely someone is swayed by the blessed's words.

The Marshal may modify this DC according to the situation. After all, it's unlikely even the most persuasive preacher can get a lot of converts from a band of cutthroat outlaws!

Also, this method does not work on other players' heroes—those take a good deal more convincing (and roleplaying!) to sway.

Convertin'

Number of Listeners	DC
Less than 10	25
10-20	20
20-30	15
More than 30	10

Beyond the satisfaction of having saved a lost soul, the blessed also earns himself 1 Fate Chip for every five new converts gained in this manner. Such a boon may only occur once per game week.

Debatin'

Religious debates are kind of like spiritual gunfights. Two diehard believers meet to defend their religions. Fortunately, these knockdown, drag-out fights are philosophical rather than physical. Still, we're not talking about an easy discussion between friends.

Only two characters can be involved in a religious debate. Any more, and the effects on the participants are too watered down to have any real effect. Both wordslingers must be willing participants in the debate. It's just not possible to have an argument with an opponent who's not interested.

Each participant must make an opposed Profession (Theology) check against a DC of 15.

A higher margin of victory means the character won the argument. She's made her point well enough to get her opponent to concede the fight.

However, if the character wins decisively, she can sway her opponent's belief. If she gets +4 over her opponent's roll, he must make a DC 10 Faith check or lose one rank of his Faith skill. For each additional +2 the winner gained in the debate, the DC for the loser's Faith check raises by +1. This type of debate isn't suited for dinner conversation!

Theological Knowledge

Finally, there's the most obvious use of Profession (Theology): calling on simple information. A character can use this skill for any religion-based question—his own religion or any other. Most issues relating to the hero's own religion require only a DC 10 check to answer. More exotic ones may require higher DCs, but rarely more difficult than DC 15.

Questions relating to other sects still within his general religion require at least a DC 10 check for basic answers, with suitably higher numbers for more intimate knowledge. Religions outside his own usually have a DC of 15 for trying to answer even general questions.

Profession (Theology) can also provide some insight into the workings of evil cults. As a general rule, the Profession (Theology) skill can be used instead of Knowledge (arcana) when dealing with cults or their practices and beliefs. However, when used in this fashion, the DC is usually 20 or higher.

New Stuff

We've talked up the old stuff enough, so it's time to break out a few new options for characters. Most of these are intended for blessed characters, but some are available to any cowpoke.

New Skills

Fastin' (Con)

No, this isn't a way to draw a gun quicker! When a hero fasts, she deliberately avoids eating to enhance her spiritual focus. Cleansing the body of pollutants helps cleanse the mind. This skill is available to anyone of the blessed class.

To gain the benefits of Fastin' the hero must go without food for at least three days. Doing so, isn't easy, so she has to make a DC 15 Fastin' roll at the end of each day. At the end of the third day, she gains a +2 circumstance bonus to all Faith skill checks. She gains another +1 to her Faith checks at the end of each additional day after the third for which she continues to successfully fast, to a maximum of +5. These benefits are lost as soon as she eats.

Not eating does have a downside. Each day she fasts she loses 2 hp. Also, the lack of food weakens her physical body as it strengthens her spiritual; the hero's Str, Dex, and Con receive a -1 modifier each.

Although the fasting hero can't eat, plain drinking water is allowed.

Meditate (Wis)

This skill helps a character focus on his religion and beliefs.

The hero must find a secluded (or at least private) spot where he can collect his thoughts. His meditations must last at least 1 hour, although he can contemplate the mysteries of the universe for up to 8 hours.

At the end of his period of meditation, the hero makes a DC 20 Meditate roll. If he's successful, he gets a +2 bonus on his Faith rolls. The duration of this bonus is equal to a quarter of the time meditated. A hero who only spends 1 hour in quiet contemplation gets the bonus for a mere 15 minutes, while one who meditates for the full 8 hours gains the bonus for 2 hours.

New Feats

Conscience

Most everyone, except the lowest two-legged snake has a little voice telling him right from wrong. Some folks only hear a faint whisper, while others get the message loud and clear. A hero with this feat has a screaming voice of virtue.

Prerequisite: Characters must be of the blessed class.

Benefit: Whenever a character with this feat is about to commit an act that would force her to consult the Sinner's Table, the Marshal reminds her of her beliefs and the consequences of the act. She's free to take whatever course

Way o' the Righteous

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she wants, but she gets a warning about the possible results first.

Normal: Without this feat, characters are responsible to monitor their own sinnin'.

Religious Rank

Military organizations have a strict rank structure designating authority. Certain religions have a similar hierarchy, although the members of the church aren't nearly as duty-bound to follow the instructions of their superiors as a soldier is. A character with this feat has some authority within the organization of his religion.

Prerequisite: For each level of this feat, the character must have 4 ranks of Profession (Theology) and the previous level of the feat. For example, a priest must have 4 ranks of Profession (Theology), but to become a bishop the character needs 8 ranks of Profession (Theology) and must already have the Religious Rank feat once.

Benefit: Much like military rank, religious rank covers both authority and duty. The higher the hero's place in his organization, the more likely he has duties to the church as well. However, these responsibilities aren't usually as severe as those of military personnel.

It isn't necessary to be of the blessed class to select this feat, but a character must have the skill Profession: Theology as noted above.

Characters with Religious Rank gain a bonus to their Charisma checks equal to two times the level of the feat when dealing with members of their own religion. They are also able to call on the resources of their church from time to time, to help them in their battles.

Obviously, higher-ranking leaders have greater influence and larger resources to draw from. But remember, the resources of a church, no matter how large, are quite different from the resources of an army or similar organization!

Most ordained ministers have one level of Religious Rank—but not all religions have well-defined hierarchies, so this feat isn't appropriate to every blessed. If your hero follows one of these other religions, consider choosing the Renown feat instead. Consult with your Marshal if you're not sure which feat is more appropriate.

Religious Rank

Level	Rank
1	Priest, elder, or other leader with responsibility for a single congregation.
2	Bishop, high priest, or similar leader with responsibility for a single large or several smaller churches.
4	Archbishop, lama, or other leader with authority over a large group of churches.

MONSTER SLAYER

There are some folks who just like to take matters into their own hands, and there are blessed who number among them.

Monster slayers are those blessed who have put down the bible and removed the cassock in favor of a cross, some stakes, and a good pair of hunting boots.

Don't get them wrong. Monster slayers are just as religious as the next blessed, they just don't believe redeeming ends at the church doors. There are things running around nowadays that'd sooner kill you than look at you. And a six-shooter won't do anything but give them a target for their next ass whuppin'.

These blessed go out, take the devil by the horns, and spit in its face—literally. Fed up with watching folks disappear from their hometown parish or hearing about one nightmare or another despoiling the countryside, they put their knowledge and innate skills to better use than just praying. Some are sanctioned by their church, others aren't. Those who are sometimes have a posse of hunters that rides with them, although this rare. Word has it that there's such a monster slayer out in the maze with a posse that follows her around.

Most monster slayers tend to be loners. If it's their calling to fight the evils of the word mano-a-mano so be it, but they aren't going to drag anyone else down with them unless they have to.

Hit Die: d8/level

Requirements

Base Attack Bonus: +3

Faith: 5 ranks

Knowledge

(occult): 3 ranks

Intimidate:

3 ranks



Feats: Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Level Headed

Class Skills

Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Faith (Wis, exclusive skill), Holdout (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Knowledge (occult) (Int), Language (Int), Ridicule (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Speed Load (Dex), Tale Tellin' (Cha), and Wilderness Lore (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier

Class Features

Armor and Weapon Proficiency: Monster slayers are skilled in all simple weapons and firearms.

Fearless: When it comes to staring down an abomination, they don't come any tougher than monster slayers. At 1st level, monster slayers receive the Lion-Hearted gift at no cost.

Monster Lore: A monster slayer is a walking encyclopedia of knowledge on abominations and their ilk. At 3rd level a monster slayer gains a +2 competency bonus to all Knowledge (occult) rolls to determine something about the nature of a monster. At 7th level this bonus increases to +4.

Master Slayer: The last thing an evil creature should want is to piss off an experienced monster slayer. At 5th level whenever a monster slayer rolls a threat while attacking any sort of monster, she doesn't have to roll to determine if it is a critical hit. All threats are considered automatic criticals. The creature must be an evil being of supernatural origin or have supernatural powers—a black bear doesn't cut it, no matter how mad it is at you. Humans, even those with powers granted directly by the Reckoners, aren't subject to this ability either.

Nine Lives: If there is one thing about monster slayers, it's that they are tough to put down. At 10th level, a monster slayer is not disabled until his hit points drop to -5. From -5 to -9 the character is disabled as per the standard rules, but isn't dying. At -10 or below the character is dead. Sorry, you can only hold on for so long.

Monster Slayer

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+1	+1	+2	+0	Fearless
2	+1	+2	+3	+0	
3	+2	+2	+3	+1	Monster Lore (1)
4	+3	+2	+4	+1	
5	+4	+3	+4	+1	Master Slayer
6	+5	+3	+5	+2	
7	+5	+4	+5	+2	Monster Lore (2)
8	+6	+4	+6	+2	
9	+7	+4	+6	+3	
10	+8	+5	+7	+3	Nine Lives

WITCH HUNTER

Life is easier if you choose the obvious enemy to fight. But it's the subtle foe who's often the most dangerous.

For instance, if a ravening beast charged into a town, the good folk would most likely join together and gun it down in the street. On the other hand, if a honey-tongued stranger rode in, most people would likely at least listen to what he had to say.

That's where the real danger lies, hidden in the deceit of our fellow man. Insidious followers of wicked cults undermine our trust in each other and spread among us like a disease.

It's the chosen calling of the witch hunter to find these hidden vipers and root them out of their nests. Don't think they're here? They're everywhere, you just don't know what you're looking for.

Hit Die: d6/level

Requirements

Base Attack Bonus: +2

Faith: 3 ranks

Knowledge (religion): 5 ranks

Knowledge (occult): 3 ranks

Feats: Renown, The Stare

Class Skills

Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Faith (Wis, exclusive skill), Gather Information (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (local) (Int), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Knowledge (occult) (Int), Language (Int), Perform (Cha), Profession (Theology) (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis), Spellcraft (Int), and Tale Tellin' (Cha).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier

Class Features

Armor and Weapon Proficiency: Monster slayers are skilled in all simple weapons and firearms.

Occult References: A witch hunter always carries his store of knowledge with him, a valise containing four volumes of esoteric occult references. Any witch hunter referring to these volumes receives a +2 bonus to Knowledge (occult) rolls.

Keen: Witch hunters must expect the unexpected. Their enemies are trained to hide in plain sight, so the witch hunter must notice little details, sounds, and movements that others may ignore. At 3rd level the witch hunter gains a +2 bonus to all Wisdom, Listen, Spot, and Sense Motive rolls. This covers raw observation, so include only rolls made to hear, smell, taste, or otherwise sense whatever it is the hunter is trying to detect.

Protection from Above: At 5th level witch hunters gain the Magic Resistance gift at no cost.

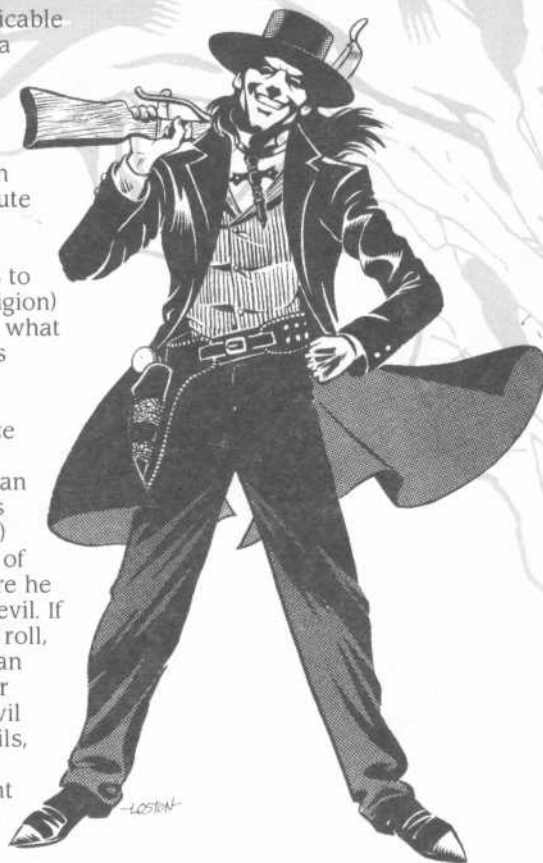
Religious Recognition: There are some mighty strange people out there praying to

some mighty despicable things. At 7th level a witch hunter has been around long enough to spot quite a few of these religions with even the most minute clues. The witch hunter gains a +2 competency bonus to all Knowledge (religion) roles to determine what religious practice is acting in the area.

Sense

Wickedness: Once per week a witch hunter may make an opposed roll of his Knowledge (occult) versus a Will save of a person or creature he suspects of being evil. If he succeeds in the roll, the witch hunter can see if the person or creature is of an evil alignment. If he fails, he gets no clear information to point to the subject being either good or evil, however, if he gets a natural 1 on his roll, the witch hunter gains no information and can never use this ability on this person again.

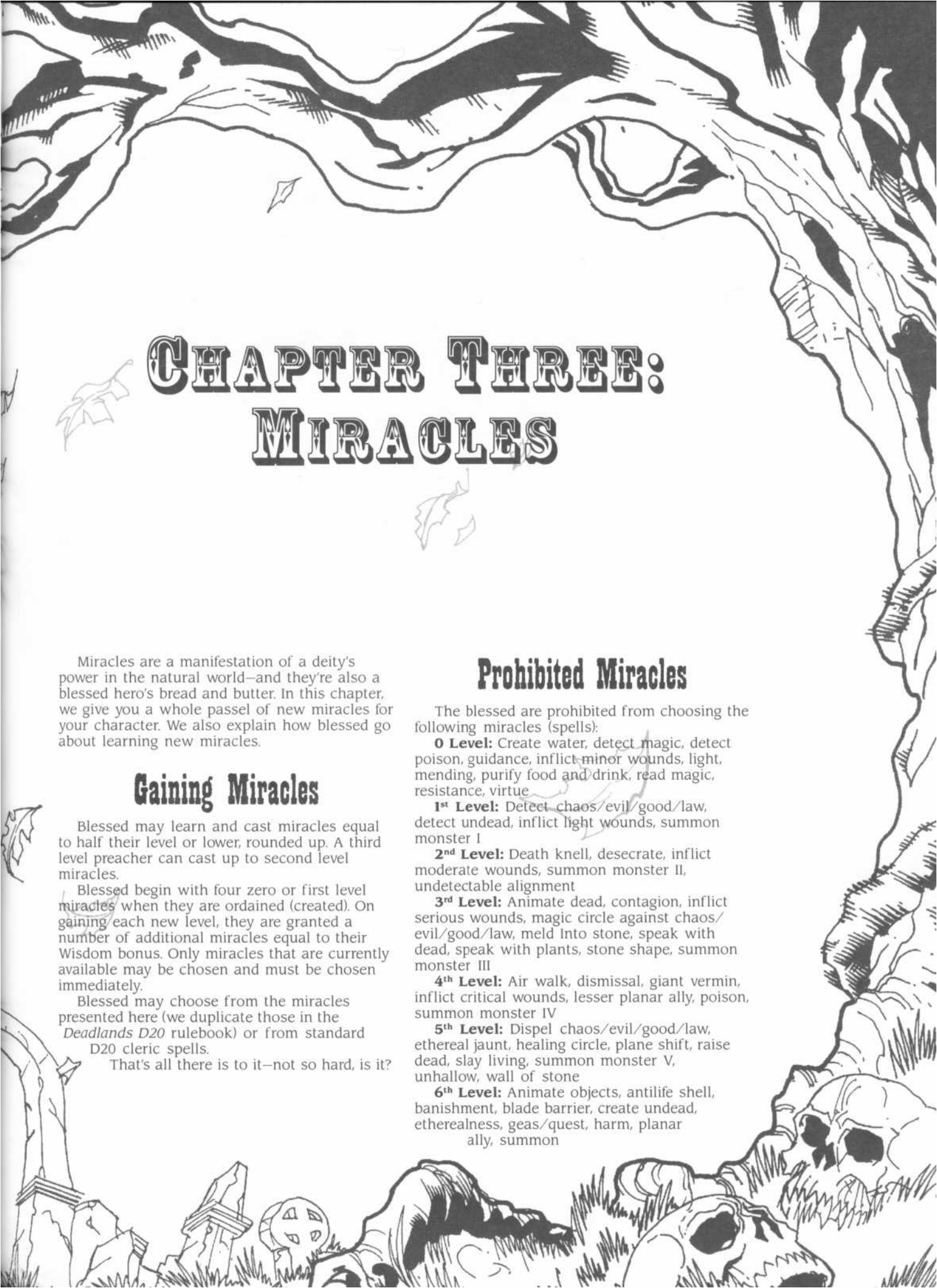
The character and Marshal should note that being of an evil alignment doesn't necessarily mean the subject has done anything wrong (well, at least recently). Of course, to an impassioned group of "upstanding" individuals with torches, pitchforks, and such, this usually doesn't matter. When using this ability on the Harrowed, the presence of the manitou squirming in the character shows up as a shadow of evil if the character is in control. If the manitou is in charge, those pitchforks had best be sharpened.



Witch Hunter

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+0	+1	+2	Occult References
2	+1	+0	+1	+3	
3	+1	+0	+2	+3	Keen
4	+2	+1	+2	+4	
5	+2	+1	+3	+4	Protection from Above
6	+3	+1	+3	+5	
7	+3	+2	+4	+5	Religious Recognition
8	+4	+2	+4	+6	
9	+4	+2	+5	+6	
10	+5	+3	+5	+7	Sense Wickedness





CHAPTER THREE: MIRACLES

Miracles are a manifestation of a deity's power in the natural world—and they're also a blessed hero's bread and butter. In this chapter, we give you a whole passel of new miracles for your character. We also explain how blessed go about learning new miracles.

Gaining Miracles

Blessed may learn and cast miracles equal to half their level or lower, rounded up. A third level preacher can cast up to second level miracles.

Blessed begin with four zero or first level miracles when they are ordained (created). On gaining each new level, they are granted a number of additional miracles equal to their Wisdom bonus. Only miracles that are currently available may be chosen and must be chosen immediately.

Blessed may choose from the miracles presented here (we duplicate those in the *Deadlands D20* rulebook) or from standard D20 cleric spells.

That's all there is to it—not so hard, is it?

Prohibited Miracles

The blessed are prohibited from choosing the following miracles (spells):

0 Level: Create water, detect magic, detect poison, guidance, inflict minor wounds, light, mending, purify food and drink, read magic, resistance, virtue

1st Level: Detect chaos/evil/good/law, detect undead, inflict light wounds, summon monster I

2nd Level: Death knell, desecrate, inflict moderate wounds, summon monster II, undetectable alignment

3rd Level: Animate dead, contagion, inflict serious wounds, magic circle against chaos/evil/good/law, meld into stone, speak with dead, speak with plants, stone shape, summon monster III

4th Level: Air walk, dismissal, giant vermin, inflict critical wounds, lesser planar ally, poison, summon monster IV

5th Level: Dispel chaos/evil/good/law, ethereal jaunt, healing circle, plane shift, raise dead, slay living, summon monster V, unhallow, wall of stone

6th Level: Animate objects, antilife shell, banishment, blade barrier, create undead, etherealness, geas/quest, harm, planar ally, summon



monster VI, wind walk, word of recall

7th Level: Blasphemy, destruction, dictum, resurrection, summon monster VII, word of chaos

8th Level: Cloak of chaos, create greater undead, greater planar ally, mass heal, shield of law, summon monster VIII, unholy aura

9th Level: Astral projection, energy drain, gate, soul bind, summon monster IX, true resurrection

Invoking Miracles

Anybody can call on his savior. That's the easy part. The trick is getting him to listen.

To invoke a miracle, the blessed character must make a Faith check against a DC of 15 plus two times the miracle's level. For example, a 0 level miracle has a DC of 15, but a third level one has a DC of 21. If she succeeds, the deity intervenes on behalf of the blessed and the miracle occurs.

However, if the blessed fails, the deity does not grant the miracle. Nothing happens in most cases, but in a few, like *holy roller* or *lay on hands*, the blessed may actually suffer some misfortune. A little hardship every now and then

can strengthen a cowpoke's faith—provided it doesn't kill him.

Just because a miracle fails, it doesn't necessarily mean the deity considers the blessed unfaithful. The hero may just have been distracted by a ravening Wendigo, or maybe his patron is testing him a little.

Spell Points

Channeling the forces of the divine is taxing on one's mortal coil. In time one learns to weather the strain of wielding these abilities. Blessed characters have spell points to represent this. Blessed have spell points equal to their Wisdom plus their Wisdom bonus for each level. Successfully invoking a miracle costs a number of spell points equal to three times the miracle's level. For example, a first level spell costs three spell points to cast, while a fifth level costs 15. Zero level spells cost 1 spell point.

Spell points are only used when a miracle is successfully invoked. Failing to invoke a miracle costs no spell points unless the blessed suffers Backlash (see below).

Backlash and Spectacular Success

Even the most pious of the blessed can't help but tread on the toes of the Almighty at one time or another. When a blessed rolls a natural 1 on his Faith check to cast a miracle, he suffers Backlash. This isn't nearly as bad as what happens to those heretical hucksters, who suffer considerable damage at the expense of dealing with devils (as it should be). If a blessed suffers Backlash, their miracle fails to

perform, yet he still loses the spell points for attempting it.

Of course, there are times when the good Lord above, sees what you are doing and lends a helping hand dealing with the unnatural forces of darkness. When a blessed rolls a natural 20 on his Faith check, he is given the power to invoke the miracle by the forces of good themselves (it costs no spell points).

Followers o' Other Religions

Divine beings tend to take care of their mortal followers. They don't look too kindly on another deity's servant trying to influence the actions of their own. As a result, it's tougher for a blessed of one religion to affect a believer of another.

Any time a blessed tries to invoke a miracle on a follower of a belief different than the blessed's, he has to subtract the target's Faith skill from his own Faith check.

That means, for example, if the blessed is invoking *falter* on a target with a Faith skill of 3 ranks in another belief, the blessed gets a -3 to his roll to invoke the miracle. This modifier applies even if the miracle is a helpful one, like *lay on hands*.

Conversely, if the subject is of the same religion, the blessed adds the subject's Faith to the skill rolls—unless the subject's trying to resist, in which case the Faith is subtracted instead. The bonus doesn't apply to miracles the blessed invokes on herself.

Folks without any Faith are considered fair game by all religions. There are no modifiers—positive or negative—to affect these individuals.

The Miracles

Let's get to the soul of this chapter.

Armor o' Righteousness

Type: Abjuration
Level: 3
Components: V
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Personal
Target: Caster
Duration: 1 round/level
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: No

Lately, good folks have been in short supply. Part of the problem is the good are always getting picked on by the bad—and the ugly as well. Recognizing it's hard to fight the good fight from six feet under, the divine patrons of blessed heroes have given them a bit of holy reinforcement.

Armor o' righteousness provides the blessed with protection from damage. Once successfully invoked, the hero gains damage reduction equal to one half his level, rounded up. A 3rd level blessed, for instance, has 2 levels of damage reduction.

Any additional effects from an opponent's attack, such as poison or disease, are negated if *armor o' righteousness* reduces the base attack's damage to 0 or less. Attacks that cause

Miracles

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no damage are not affected by this miracle. A touch attack that causes disease but no damage, for instance, is not negated by this ability.

Multiple castings of this spell do not stack their damage reduction benefits.

Babble On

Type: Abjuration
Level: 0
Components: S
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10ft./level)
Area: Circle (Diameter: 25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Duration: 1 round/level
Saving Throw: Will negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

Loose talk has been responsible for a lot of evil. If a fellow could stop all the idle tongue wagging, he'd sure do the world a big favor. And silencing folks already bent on ill will is an even better idea. Plotting mischief is a whole lot harder when the malcontents can't talk.

This miracle makes spoken communication impossible within its confines. The miracle distorts all spoken conversation within its effect, making it sound like so much gibberish to anyone hearing it.

This distortion isn't limited to conversation inside the area. Anything spoken outside the effect is unintelligible to all within the area of *babble on*. Also, words spoken within the area sound like nonsense, even to folks standing outside the area.

This miracle only affects attempts to convey information. The exact game effects are up to the Marshal. Spells or other abilities requiring a vocal component aren't foiled unless they require communication with other characters.

Battle Hymn

Type: Enchantment (Compulsion)
Level: 2
Components: S
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Earshot
Target: Caster + 1 person/level
Duration: Special
Saving Throw: Will negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

There's nothing like rousing music to get a posse of heroes all riled up. With this miracle (and a belted-out song), the invoker gives her listeners more than just good background music.

When successfully invoked, *battle hymn* builds courage in its listeners. Successfully invoking the miracle allows the blessed to choose one of the effects below. For every +4 above the DC the blessed gets on the roll to invoke this miracle, she can choose one more of the effects below. For example, if the blessed

gets a 23 on her Faith check, she can choose from two of the three effects.

First, the *battle hymn* grants a +2 to all Will saves made by characters allied with the invoker. Second, the miracle inspires ferocity in battle, granting the heroes a +2 to all attack rolls. Third, the song lifts the spirits of the heroes above simple physical pain. All characters affected by the miracle can ignore subdual damage effects. This is not cumulative with other such abilities or effects.

The invoker can't select the same effect more than once, so extra successes are wasted.

The miracle affects the invoker, plus one other hero of the invoker's choice per level. Subjects must be able to hear the *battle hymn*. Folks who are hard of hearing must make a DC 10 Listen check to gain the benefits of the miracle, and characters who are stone deaf are just plain out of luck. Although the subjects must hear the *hymn*, they don't have to understand the song.

The effects of *battle hymn* last as long as the invoker continues to sing the hymn. If the blessed is silenced, the miracle ends.

The blessed can maintain the miracle for 5 minutes without any difficulty. For every 5 minutes thereafter the blessed must make a Fort save to continue the *hymn*. The DC begins at 10 and increases by +4 every 5 minutes. If the character fails the roll, her voice falters and the miracle ends.

While singing, the invoker can herself fight or perform any task, which doesn't require her to stop singing the *hymn*. The invoker can't invoke other miracles while maintaining a *battle hymn*.

Note that folks can only be affected by one *battle hymn* at a time. A good song is only so rousing after all.

Benediction

Type: Abjuration

Level: 3

Components: V

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5ft./2 levels)

Target: 1 person/2 levels

Duration: Special

Saving Throw: Will negates (Harmless)

Spell Resistance: Yes

Nothing gives a posse of gun-toting heroes confidence like a good old-fashioned blessing from above. This miracle sends the group on its way with an extra bit of divine assistance.

The blessed can affect one character for every two levels he possesses. All characters to be affected must be within range while he invokes the miracle. The invoker can affect himself with this miracle.

The invoker can only provide a *benediction* for members of his own religion. The miracle simply fails to affect characters of a different

faith, although it still affects any other valid recipients.

When successfully invoked, *benediction* gives each character a +1 to all Will saves until the next sunset.

In addition, the first 1d6 points of damage that are done to the character during the duration of the *benediction* are automatically negated. Treat this exactly as if a Fate Chip had been used to restore the lost hit points.

If more than 1d6 points of damage are done by the first attack to injure the character, the protection still only negates that much damage.

A character can only receive the benefit of a single *benediction* at a time. Any others invoked during the duration of the first miracle automatically fail.

This protection only lasts until the next sunset. If the miracle's effect has not already been used by that time, the protection simply ends.

Burnt Offerin'

Type: Evocation

Level: 0

Components: V

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Touch

Area: 1 square foot/level

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: No

Spell Resistance: No

Throughout history, folks have been setting things on fire for their deities. With this miracle, the blessed's patron returns the favor for the faithful.

Using this miracle, the hero can cause an object to burst into flame. The object can be no larger than 1 square foot for every level of the hero.

The object must also be readily flammable. By this we mean it would ignite if a lit torch were held to it. Wood, cloth, paper, ghost rock, and so on are examples of the types of material affected.

If the blessed gets +4 above the DC on her invocation roll, *burnt offerin'* ignites normally flammable materials that are water-soaked or otherwise treated (even chemically) to prevent them from burning.

Once ignited, the object burns normally. The exact effects of the created fire are determined by the Marshal. The blaze is not magical and can be extinguished by any number of typical methods.

Censure

Type: Abjuration

Level: 3

Components: V, S

Casting Time: Special

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5ft./2 levels)

Target: One huckster

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

Some folks insist on consorting with the servants of the Enemy no matter how many times a person might try to show them the error of their ways. The worst among these

faithless are the modern day sorcerers—the so-called “hucksters.” These stubborn malcontents need guidance from above to halt their descent down the crooked path—whether they happen to want it or not.

With *censure*, the blessed calls upon holy intervention to make it much harder for a huckster to draw upon the power of the Hunting Grounds and successfully cast a hex.

Of course to do so, the blessed must be aware the hexslinger is casting a hex in the first place. Unless the huckster is being fairly blatant in his hex casting, this usually requires an opposed roll of the blessed's Spot versus the huckster's Sleight of Hand.

To invoke *censure*, the blessed must threaten an area equal to the range of the spell. If a huckster begins casting a spell within that area (and the blessed is aware of it), the blessed is allowed to cast *censure* as an attack of opportunity.

The DC to invoke the miracle depends on the level of the huckster's hex. See the table below for all the details.

If the miracle is successfully invoked, the huckster's spell automatically fails. One word of warning—if the blessed gets a natural one on the Faith roll to invoke *censure*, the miracle has the opposite effect. The huckster automatically succeeds at his spell as if he had rolled a natural 20.

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Censure Difficulty

Huckster's Spell Level	DC
2 or lower	10
3 or 4	15
5 or 6	20
7+	25

Chastise

Type: Enchantment

Level: 0

Components: V

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Personal

Target: Caster

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: No

Spell Resistance: Yes

No one wants to go toe-to-toe with a real Hellfire and brimstone preacher when he's berating a sinner. Even the toughest gunslingers are likely to back down under such abuse. And, just to be sure, *chastise* gives the blessed an extra boost in a shouting match.





Chastise allows the blessed to use her Faith skill in place of the Intimidate skill in a test of wills.

When this miracle is invoked, the blessed makes an opposed roll of her Faith skill versus her opponent's Wisdom. Any modifiers she would normally receive to Intimidate apply to this Faith roll as well. If the blessed wins the roll, the subject suffers the effects of Fear. See the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for basic effects, or the *Deadlands Epitaph* #4 for more chaos.

Consecrate Armament

Type: Evocation

Level: 2

Components: V, S, F

Casting Time: 1 minute

Range: Touch

Target: One weapon

Duration: Until the next sunset

Saving Throw: No

Spell Resistance: Yes

In their struggles against the forces of the unholy, the blessed sometimes encounter critters and people whose dark masters have granted them resistance to mundane damage. While certain relics may be able to harm these beings, not every preacher, monk, or nun is in the habit of carrying around the sacred sword of Joan of Arc.

Fortunately, some of the blessed can invoke their patron deity's power to sanctify slightly more handy weapons when they need them. To sanctify a weapon, the blessed character must spend a minute in quiet prayer, perhaps anointing the weapon to be blessed with holy water, oil, or the like. She must spend a Fate Chip and then make a Faith check as per invoking the miracle. The chip spent determines the power of the consecration. It does not affect the Faith check itself, but other chips can be spent to do so.

One Chip: The weapon is consecrated to work versus one specific individual, either a person or a creature. For example, "the hanging judge haunting the trail between Houston and Amarillo" or "the Revenant." It has no supernatural effect on anyone but this particular person or creature.

Two Chips: The weapon is consecrated against one specific class of creature or individual in a specific location. For example, "the vampires inside the crypt under the graveyard just down the road from the Santa Maria Cathedral."

Three Chips: An entire class of creatures are affected if a blue chip is spent. For example "werewolves" or "night haunts."

If the blessed fails the Faith check, the chip is still spent, so it is unwise to go about trying to cavalierly bless every weapon in sight. Prudent holy folks are not in the habit of invoking their patron's power lightly, just in case they might run into something a consecrated weapon would help against.

The consecration affects a single personal weapon, and the effects last until the next

sunset after the weapon is blessed. Keep in mind this means if your hero is consecrating bullets all day long, they're not going to work that same night.

Natural body weaponry, such as hands, feet, and teeth, can't be affected by this miracle. The cowcatcher on the steam wagon that your hero uses to run over that passel of walkin' dead works just fine though.

In the case of firearms, each individual bullet must be consecrated for the miracle to work. A blessed could consecrate a rifle, but it would only work against evil creatures if used like a club.

If the blessed likes, she can try to consecrate more than one weapon at a time, as long as every piece in the group is of a similar type (all knives, all bullets, all shells, and so on). In this case, simply add +2 to the DC for each piece after the first. Consecrating three weapons, for instance, requires a Faith roll of 23 or more. If the roll is failed, none of the weapons are consecrated.

For the duration of this miracle, the blessed weapon or ammunition can damage creatures of evil that are usually immune to normal damage. This includes walkin' dead, hangin' judges, werewolves, and Harrowed, amongst other kinds of nasties.

Those with the Faith skill gain an additional bonus when using consecrated weapons or ammunition. When rolling damage for any hit the weapon scores on a target it's been consecrated against, the faithful may add the ranks of their Faith skill to the damage roll.

A blessed character can have a number of weapons or bullets equal to her Faith skill *consecrated* at any one time. So, Sister Cabrini (with 4 ranks of Faith) could bless up to four weapons or bullets. Blessed characters can consecrate their own weapons and can also add their Faith ranks to the damage roll as normal.

The Marshal should note that this miracle is not intended to create relics. True relics of faith are powerful objects and shouldn't be treated lightly. They certainly can't be created by heroes with something as simple as this kind of miracle. This effect is meant to give the blessed a bit of a quick fix for those situations in which they are confronted with the unholy and must deal with it directly.

Consecrate Item

Type: Evocation

Level: 1

Components: S, V, DF

Casting Time: 1 minute

Range: Touch

Target: One holy item (of the blessed's religion)

Duration: Until the next sunset

Saving Throw: No

Spell Resistance: Yes

Almost every religion in the world has certain items that hold special importance for its followers: crosses, prayer cloths, holy texts, and so forth. *Consecrate item* allows a blessed to bestow such items with a small amount of divine power for a short time.

The types of item that can be consecrated depend on the blessed's religion. Only items of

specific important to the blessed's religion are eligible. Examples of such items are holy water, crucifixes, prayer cloths, oils, incense, and the like.

A character couldn't consecrate barbed wire unless he had a rather, shall we say, unique religion.

Such items are commonly used in worship services or during certain religious ceremonies and rituals. *Consecrated items* provide a +2 to any rolls to invoke the following miracles: *consecrate weapon*, *exorcism*, *protection*, *sanctify*. A hero can only gain this bonus from a single *consecrated item* at a time.

Additionally, the servants of Darkness find this item distasteful and actively seek to avoid it. Direct contact with a *consecrated item* causes a supernaturally evil creature to lose 1d6 hp. Holy water (or oil) splashed on such a creature causes this hp loss for 2 rounds.

Like *consecrate armament*, this miracle lasts only until the next sunset, regardless of the time it is performed. However, *consecrate item* does not require the expenditure of a Fate Chip to invoke.

Dervish

Type: Transmutation

Level: 3

Components: V

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Personal

Target: Caster

Duration: 1 round/level

Saving Throw: No

Spell Resistance: No

Blessed tend to engage their foes up close and personal, rather than taking potshots at them with guns. Apparently, this sort of behavior receives divine approval because this miracle turns a blessed into a fearsome instrument of their deity's wrath.

The blessed character gains an extra attack while in melee combat. There is no penalty to this bonus attack.

Also, for every +2 she gets on the roll to invoke the miracle, the blessed gets a +1 to her attack rolls.

While under the influence of this miracle, the blessed must make every effort to engage her foes in hand-to-hand combat. She cannot choose to perform noncombat options, such as invoking miracles, using a ranged weapon, or the like.

If there's no enemy in easy smiting range, the blessed must charge the nearest foe. She can make use of cover while covering the distance between her and her target, but she must use every action to move toward the enemy until she reaches him.

Although the blessed can't voluntarily end the miracle, she isn't obliged to attack a foe who has surrendered or is begging for mercy.

Once all her foes are defeated or have surrendered, the blessed can end the effects of the *dervish*.

Devil's Plaything

Type: Abjuration
Level: 3
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 full action
Range: Personal
Target: Caster
Duration: Concentration
Saving Throw: Will negates (Harmless)
Spell Resistance: Yes

Everybody's heard the saying about idle hands—and it seems those confounded mad scientists have nothing but! With all those infernal devices they've invented, sometimes it seems it's only a matter of time before humanity destroys itself! At least this miracle can provide a blessed some defense against their devilish contraptions.

When successfully invoked, *devil's plaything* protects the blessed hero against the effects of any kind of gizmo. Any such device used against a character protected by this miracle automatically fails. Flamethrowers refuse to spray, Gatling pistols don't fire, even owl vision goggles don't function—at least with respect to the hero.

To clear up any confusion before it starts—a gizmo is a device developed solely by the methods of mad science. A Peacemaker or even a Gatling gun is not a gizmo—no supernatural assistance was needed for their designs.

The device simply doesn't work. It doesn't necessarily malfunction. However, even though the gizmo doesn't work, each time its owner tries to activate it he must still check Reliability. If the device fails its Reliability check, it malfunctions as usual.

Add +1 to the Reliability score for each +2 the blessed gets on the Faith roll to invoke the miracle.

Enigma

Type: Enchantment
Level: 1
Components: V
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Earshot
Target: 1 person
Duration: 1 round/level
Saving Throw: No
Spell Resistance: No

Some religions have a mystical component that is pretty much inexplicable to the ordinary person. Often these religions use puzzling riddles to aid their followers in meditations. Common examples of these questions are "What is the sound of one hand clapping?" or "What is the meaning of life?" Contemplating

one of these conundrums is enough to send the common cowpoke into conniptions.

To invoke this miracle, the blessed must be able to ask the subject the enigmatic question. That means the subject must be able to hear and understand the riddle. Language may be a barrier to the miracle, and deaf characters are simply immune. Likewise, invoking *enigma* during combat is difficult if not downright impossible.

The blessed must make an opposed roll of her Faith versus the subject's Intelligence. If the subject beats the blessed, the miracle has no effect. On the other hand, if the blessed wins, the subject loses interest in everything except trying to figure out the riddle. He realizes that the hero's there and has asked him a question, but he's totally absorbed by the puzzle. He ignores his surrounding, and only an actual attack upon him can break his concentration. Once the miracle ends, he acts normally and can remember things that happened meanwhile.

Exorcism

Type: Abjuration
Level: 4
Components: V, S, DF
Casting Time: 8 hours
Range: 10 ft.
Target: 1 possessed being
Duration: Permanent
Saving Throw: No
Spell Resistance: No

Very rarely, an evil spirit, demon, or manitou, finds a way to inhabit a living (or unliving) body. Evicting these spirits from a mortal host is a slow and painful process. Once the ritual has begun, the spirit is wracked by holy energy and begins an appalling display. It speaks in tongues, vomits all kinds of foulness, and curses the blessed up and down a blue streak.

Attempting to exorcise a manitou is a test of the blessed's Faith versus the creature's Wisdom. The manitou's Wisdom is determined by rolling 4d6, throwing out the lowest roll, and totaling the rest—just like during character creation. At the end of the 8 hour ritual, both sides roll.

If the blessed is successful, the manitou is banished and leaves the host body immediately. If the manitou wins, it gets a +2 to resist further *exorcism* attempts by the same exorcist.

A successful *exorcism* puts a Harrowed to rest permanently, by the way.

Falter

Type: Abjuration
Level: 1
Components: Special
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: 10 ft.
Target: 1 person
Duration: Special
Saving Throw: Will negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

With this miracle, the blessed calls on the power of his patron to momentarily stun an opponent. How this power manifests depends on the blessed and his religion. A Hellfire and brimstone preacher may loudly command his opponent to "Repent!" while a follower of a less

flamboyant belief may make a gentle touch or hand motion.

If the miracle is successfully invoked, the opponent is stunned and loses his next action. For each +2 the invoker gets, the opponent loses another action.

Repeated attempts in the same day to invoke this miracle on the same subject aren't as effective. Any attempt after the first to invoke this miracle on the same subject in a single day suffers a -4 modifier on the skill check.

This only works on people or abominations who can understand the blessed's intent.

Feast

Type: Conjuration (Creation)

Level: 2

Components: V, F

Casting Time: 1 minute

Range: Touch

Target: Special

Duration: Permanent

Saving Throw: No

Spell Resistance: No

No matter how bad things get, a man's still got to eat! Dying from hunger is still dying—something a lot of would-be heroes seem to forget. A blessed who knows this miracle can be a lifesaver to a posse lost in the wilderness.

Feast increases the amount of food on hand. To invoke this miracle, the blessed must have at least enough food on hand to feed one person for one meal. If he doesn't, the miracle automatically fails. A success doubles the amount of food on hand. Every +2 above the DC doubles the food again (and no, you may not double created food).

For example, a roll of 23 would turn one meal into enough food for eight meals, and 21 would convert two meals into four.

Unfortunately, food created in this manner can't be saved. It must be eaten that day. Any uneaten food spoils by the next sunrise.

Hinder

Type: Transmutation

Level: 0

Components: V

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5ft./ 2 levels)

Target: 1 person

Duration: 3 rounds

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

No matter how painful it is to admit, there are times when the black hats are, if not more powerful than the white hats, at least more competent. This has led to more than one embarrassing situation in the past, but if a blessed hero's carrying *hinder*, he might be able to even the odds.

When the blessed invokes *hinder*, he chooses a single skill of the subject. If the skill is one with concentrations, like Knowledge or Profession, the miracle affects all the skill's concentrations (such as Knowledge (physics), Knowledge (chemistry), etc.).

Successfully invoking the miracle temporarily lowers the target's skill by one rank. For every +2 above the DC the hero gets on his Faith roll to invoke the miracle, the

subject temporarily loses -1 more level of the chosen skill. The skill ranks cannot drop below 0 (at which point the only modifier to a skill check is from the character's attribute). At the end of the duration, the subject immediately regains all lost levels.

A character can only be affected by one *hinder* at a time. Other attempts to invoke the miracle on the same subject while the first *hinder* is still in effect automatically fail.

Inspiration

Type: Transmutation

Level: 1

Components: V

Casting Time: 1 minute sermon

Range: Special

Target: Caster

Duration: Special

Saving Throw: No

Spell Resistance: No

Evil thrives on fear. Only a few folks know this, but it seems the blessed often find out





quicker than others. Their good-natured tendencies to help those in need usually bring them face-to-face with things that sometimes don't even have a recognizable face.

When the blessed are fortunate enough to survive their adventures, their tales often inspire those around them.

The next part won't make sense until the Marshal lets you read the chapter on Fear in the *Deadlands D20* rulebook, but that's okay for now. Feel free to take the miracle anyway, and know that you should use it after defeating some major villainous presence to relay the inspiring story of your posse's good deeds, nature, and accomplishments to the desperate masses.

Successfully invoking the miracle adds +1 to the blessed's Tale-Tellin' roll to reduce the Fear Level. Every +2 above the DC adds another +1. The blessed has to tell his tale immediately. He can't "save up" an *inspiration* bonus to use on a later sermon.

Last Rites

Type: Transmutation
Level: 1
Components: V, S, DF
Casting Time: 1 minute
Range: 6 feet
Target: 1 dead person
Duration: Permanent
Saving Throw: No
Spell Resistance: No

Once a fellow's been put down, he ought to have the common decency to stay down. All too often lately, the dead have been getting back up to wander around and cause no end of trouble. And it can be downright disheartening to see Aunt Edna as a zombie.

When this miracle is performed, either over the body of the recently deceased or over a fresh gravesite, it removes the usual worries of unexpected resurrections. As long as *last rites* is performed within 12 hours of a character's death, there is no chance of him coming back as any type of zombie, vampire, ghost, Harrowed, or other form of undead.

This miracle can also put down a reanimated corpse or walking dead—if the blessed can somehow convince the creature to hold still for the minute necessary to invoke the miracle. However, against a true Harrowed, it only gives the creature a -1 to all attribute and skill rolls for 1 minute for every rank of the blessed's Faith skill.

Obviously, this miracle is not likely to be used often in combat unless the hero is fighting *really* slow abominations!

Mediate

Type: Enchantment
Level: 1
Components: V
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Personal
Area: 5 feet/level
Duration: 1 round
Saving Throw: No
Spell Resistance: No

Too often, tempers get the best of folks. What starts as a few angry words might end in

a gunfight or in some poor soul swinging on the end of a rope.

Mediate allows a blessed hero to calm a potentially violent situation. This miracle is only effective before the lead starts flying. Once the fight's started, *mediate* doesn't work.

Much like *protection*, this miracle doesn't require a Faith check to invoke it. The hero only needs to announce her intent to use *mediate*, and then spend an action. Once she's spent the action, the effects of the miracle last until the beginning of the next round.

During that time, anyone within the area who attempts to take a hostile action must roll his Wisdom versus the blessed's Faith. If he wins the contest, he's free to do as he wishes. However, if he fails, he's unable to make any offensive moves until the next round.

This effect applies to all characters within the miracle's range, friend and foe alike, and includes the blessed herself. This miracle is granted to help the blessed find a peaceful solution to a problem, not to give her an unfair advantage in a fight!

An unfortunate do-gooder may find himself standing between two thick-headed gunslingers as they begin blasting away at each other. Sometimes it's tough being the good guy.

This miracle is only effective on humans—including those of the Harrowed persuasion. Other forms of undead and all other abominations, including a manitou in control of a Harrowed, are unaffected by *mediate*.

Mighty Fortress

Type: Transmutation
Level: 4
Components: V, S, DF
Casting Time: 1 minute
Range: Touch
Target: Special
Duration: 1 hour/level
Saving Throw: No
Spell Resistance: No

Just as the blessed are the mortar that strengthens a good, God-fearin' society with their unflinching faith in the divine, even the very buildings around them can become stronger. This miracle greatly, but temporarily, strengthens a building against physical damage.

If the blessed succeeds on his Faith roll, the Hardness of the structure increases by +10 points. The AC is also increased by +1 level for every +2 above the DC on the roll.

The miracle can also be used to strengthen vehicles, including gizmos. When used for this purpose, *mighty fortress* only increases the Hardness of the vehicle by +5 points for success. The vehicle never gains any AC bonus from the miracle, no matter how well the blessed rolls.

Mighty fortress does not repair damage to structures or vehicles in any way.

Mysterious Ways

Type: Transmutation
Level: 3
Components: V
Casting Time: 1 round
Range: Personal
Target: Caster
Duration: 1 round

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Saving Throw: No
Spell Resistance: No

There's a well-known saying that goes, "God moves in mysterious ways." This miracle provides proof that certain blessed do as well.

With this miracle, the hero can walk through solid material as if it were thin air. While invoking the miracle, the blessed must concentrate on the area she wishes to pass through.

The miracle doesn't make the blessed intangible, nor does it change the substance she's walking through. Physical attacks of all kinds still affect her while she's under the effects of *mysterious ways*.

If the blessed succeeds on her Faith check, she can walk through wooden walls or structures. With +2 above the DC, she can also do the same with stone structures, and with +4, she can even pass through solid metal. The blessed can use this miracle to free herself from shackles or similar bonds.

The miracle only lasts 1 round. If the miracle ends while the blessed is still within the solid matter, she's become a permanent fixture!

Protection

Type: Abjuration
Level: 1
Components: V, DF
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Target: 1 supernatural evil
Duration: Special
Saving Throw: No
Spell Resistance: No

One miracle used by all western religions is *protection*. This is simply reliance on one's deity or deities to protect the faithful from supernatural evil. Any character with at least one rank in the Faith skill may attempt this miracle by presenting her holy symbol or otherwise declaring the power of her deity. Like we said before, if your character is a follower of the Indian spirits, you can't use this miracle, no matter how much faith you've got. The spirits do grant favors, just not this particular one.

A supernaturally evil opponent must make an opposed roll of their Wisdom versus the hero's Faith. Should it lose, the creature cannot touch the character or otherwise cause her *direct* harm. It could still push over a bookshelf the blessed happened to be standing under, but it couldn't fire a weapon, cast a hex, or use its special abilities on her until it wins the spiritual contest.

Of course, this doesn't do the blessed's companions a bit of good. They're still fair game. Truly valiant heroes who have *protection* often find they can help the rest of their posse by standing directly between the horrific creature and their hapless friends. Be careful, though. This can be a really awkward place to be should the miracle suddenly fail.

Faithful characters shouldn't rely on this miracle too often, since the winner of the contest between the blessed and the beast is likely to waver back and forth. And any creature affected by *protection* probably doesn't need more than one opening to finish the fight. Permanently.

Retribution

Type: Evocation
Level: 2
Components: V
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Sight
Target: 1 attacker
Duration: Permanent
Saving Throw: No
Spell Resistance: Yes

A lot of blessed believe if a fellow slaps one cheek they should turn the other. Sometimes, those trusting folk end up with two red cheeks. Others among the faithful hold to the old law of "an eye for eye, a tooth for a tooth." This miracle fully supports the tenets of the second philosophy.

With *retribution*, the blessed inflicts a wound on an opponent who has just wounded him. The damage suffered by the target is identical to the amount the target inflicted on the blessed.

Retribution may only be exacted for the last wound received, and must be inflicted on the character or creature who dealt the wound. (If multiple wounds were somehow delivered by a single attack, as in an explosion, the miracle does exact punishment for all the wounds.)

The blessed must first suffer damage from the target in order to use this miracle. He must also survive the wound in order to invoke the miracle. *Retribution* can't be cast before damage has been inflicted, even if the character has higher initiative.

After the blessed suffers the "wound," he must then use his next action to invoke the miracle. The holy hero must invoke the miracle in the next round. After that, it's too late.

The miracle inflicts the amount of damage actually received by the blessed. So, if the character reduced the damage with Fate Chips, for example, *retribution* only delivers damage equal to the reduced amount—not the original.

Finally, *retribution* may only be invoked once for each wound.

Safekeepin'

Type: Conjunction (Creation)
Level: 0
Components: V, S, DF
Casting Time: 10 minutes
Range: Touch
Area: Special
Duration: 1 hour/Faith rank
Saving Throw: No
Spell Resistance: No

Even a hero's got to sleep sometimes, and that isn't always a safe proposition nowadays. Sure, if a blessed's got the time, she can *sanctify* a place and make it proof against evil, but since that takes a week, it's not something she can do every time she wants to bed down for the night.

Safekeepin' is a short-term ward the blessed can invoke to protect a small area. The miracle temporarily prevents supernaturally evil creatures from entering the warded area. It's not as effective as *sanctify* and isn't permanent, but it only takes about as long to invoke as the blessed spends saying her bedtime prayers.

The miracle protects an area 15 feet in diameter. Any supernatural creature attempting to enter this area is stopped for 1 round. Creatures summoned or created by magical means are also affected by the miracle. The invoker is immediately awakened and aware of the nature of the threat. No surprise roll is necessary.

After the first round, the creature can force its way through the *safekeepin'* by making a DC 20 Will save. Once the ward has been breached by even one such creature, the miracle ends.

The miracle doesn't provide any defense against mundane threats like angry Indians, rabid grizzly bears, or even black-hearted cultists.

Sanctify

Type: Conjunction (Creation)
Level: 2
Components: V, S, DF
Casting Time: 1 week
Range: Touch
Area: Special
Duration: Permanent
Saving Throw: No
Spell Resistance: No

The blessed are able to ask their deity to consecrate hallowed ground, making it painful for evil creatures to walk upon it.

To work this miracle, the blessed must remain in the place to be *sanctified* for an entire week. Once the ritual is completed, a circle with a radius equal to 10 feet times the blessed's Faith rank (or one temple, church, etc.) is hallowed.

When a supernatural evil creature steps upon *sanctified* ground, it must make a DC 20 Will save every round. If it fails, it begins to smoke and steam as if burning, and it takes the difference in damage. This damage is spiritual and so can actually affect undead as well as other abominations. *Sanctify* only affects a Harrowed if the manitou is in control. Otherwise, while the Harrowed may be evil, she's only humanly so.

Smite

Type: Evocation
Level: 2
Components: V
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Personal
Target: Caster
Duration: 1 minute
Saving Throw: Will negates (Harmless)
Spell Resistance: Yes

With this miracle, the blessed heroes of the Weird West can smite the evils of the Reckoning back into the last century.

When invoked, the invoker's Strength ability score is raised +1. For every +2 above the DC it is raised another +1.

Snake Handlin'

Type: Conjunction (Creation)

Level: 0

Components: V, F

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Touch

Target: 1 stick

Duration: 1 round/level

Saving Throw: No

Spell Resistance: No

No self-respecting blessed should be without a sturdy walking stick. Not only does it help relieve a tired back on long trips across the frontier, but it's also good for showing the unrepentant the error of their ways. This miracle lets the blessed turn her trusty stick into a symbol of divine wrath.

The hero must have a fairly stout stick of at least the length of an ax handle to invoke this miracle. Calling upon her patron, she casts the staff onto the ground. *Snake handlin'* turns the wood into a living snake for the duration of the miracle. The blessed can also end the effect at any time by picking up the serpent.

With a success, the serpent is a simple, nonpoisonous snake with no special abilities. Other than appearing from an otherwise normal piece of wood, that is.

If the hero gets +4 above the DC on the invocation roll, the snake produced is a

venomous one—usually a rattler, although any type is possible. Regardless of the type chosen, the creature's characteristics and abilities are identical to those of a rattler. Blessed heroes should keep in mind poisonous snake bites can be deadly, so they should use restraint when invoking this miracle.

The snake obeys the commands of the invoker to the best of its ability. These commands need not be spoken out loud—the creature can sense the hero's intent. However, the snake has no real intelligence, so it can understand only the simplest of instructions. Unlike many summoned animals, snakes created by this miracle are not afraid to attack supernatural creatures.

Profiles for both types of snakes created by this miracle are listed here.

Non-Poisonous Snake

A medium-sized constrictor snake (like a 6- or 7-foot boa or python) is a good example of this type of snake. See snake, constrictor on pages 200-202 of the *Monster Manual*.



Poisonous Snake

Rattlesnakes, cobras, and asps are all good examples of poisonous vipers. See snake, medium-size viper on pages 200-202 of the *Monster Manual*.

Spiritual Backhand

Type: Evocation
Level: 0
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Target: 1 being
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Fort halves
Spell Resistance: Yes

Most miracles given to the blessed are subtle wonders, and few directly harm a foe. That's because a blessed's patron generally prefers the hero confront the forces of Darkness face-to-face and whip them on her own. Nonetheless, there are times when assistance is needed above and beyond the usual. *Spiritual backhand* is the exception to the subtlety rule. This miracle lets the blessed reach out and touch his opponent in a very real way.

This miracle strikes the subject with an invisible force. Although the force itself can't be seen, its effect on the target is likely to be noticeable.

Spiritual backhand does not do actual damage to the target, but it does cause subdual damage. If the blessed succeeds on her Faith roll, the subject takes 1d4 points of subdual damage. Every +2 above the DC increases this by 1d4. Once a target has been reduced to 0 hp, *spiritual backhand* has no further effect on it.

Two Places

Type: Illusion (Figment)
Level: 4
Components: V, F
Casting Time: 1 round
Range: Special
Target: Caster
Duration: 1 round/level
Saving Throw: No
Spell Resistance: No

Good folks have always been in short supply, but lately they're downright scarce. With all the abominations and other servants of Darkness slinking around the West these days, sometimes it feels like a hero has to be in two places at once. While that may be a daunting proposition to most, the blessed aren't your run-of-the-mill heroes.

This miracle allows a blessed to create an identical spiritual double of himself. When he invokes the miracle, the hero can have the double appear anywhere within range, with one exception—the hero and his double cannot be within eyesight of each other.

The blessed may be separated from the double by a hill, a building, or even a particularly dark night. In fact, the two can be as close as opposite sides of a wall, as long as they can't possibly see each other. If there's ever an unobstructed line of sight between the hero and his double, the miracle immediately ends.

The double created by *two places* looks exactly like the blessed. The blessed can see, hear, and even speak through the image. Otherwise, it's intangible and unable to directly affect the physical world. However, if the blessed gets at least +2 above the DC on his roll to invoke *two places*, he can invoke the following miracles through his double: *falter* and *protection*.

Splitting attention between two different locations is tough—even for an honest-to-God miracle worker. Any ability or skill rolls the hero makes during the miracle's duration are at a -2.

If the action heats up, the blessed rolls initiative as normal. However, on each action he must choose whether to act himself or through his double—he can't do both. It is possible to switch back and forth between the two during a round if the hero has multiple actions.

Finally, the double is immune to all forms of physical attack—even from other insubstantial beings, such as a Harrowed with the *ghost* power. The only magical attacks that can affect the blessed through the double are spells or the like that influence or target the mind.

Walk on Water

Type: Evocation
Level: 5
Components: V
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Special
Target: Caster
Duration: Concentration
Saving Throw: Will negates (Harmless)
Spell Resistance: Yes

Not every servant of Heaven can part the waters of the Red Sea or even the Rio Grande. That doesn't mean they still don't need to cross them from time to time. They just have to find another way. This miracle provides the blessed with just that.

Successfully invoking this miracle grants the invoker the ability to walk on water. The blessed can tread upon water just as if it were solid ground, regardless of whether it's a small pond, whitewater river rapid, or storm-tossed sea.

Also, a blessed who invokes this miracle can enable others of her religion to attempt the same marvel. To do so, each character must make a DC 20 Will save. If successful, he can *walk on water* just as if he'd invoked the miracle himself. The character doesn't gain the actual miracle, just access to it for a short period.

The invoker can affect one other character per rank of the blessed's Faith, and she must be able to see the character at the time the miracle is invoked.

Wrath

Type: Evocation

Level: 3

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Personal

Target: Caster

Duration: 1 round/2 levels

Saving Throw: No

Spell Resistance: No

There's one thing that's true of most higher powers: You really *don't* want to make them mad.

The same can be said of the blessed. Most of the time, they're peace-loving folk, content to preach their creeds from any stump or soapbox they can find. Sometimes, though, they get into situations in which words fail them. Then it's time to set down their scriptures, take up their weapons, and kick some butt.

This is not an ability that should be used too often. After all, many religions discourage harming others, even with good reason. When the blessed runs out of cheeks to turn, though, that's when *wrath* comes in handy.

To invoke the miracle, the blessed needs to make a Faith check and cough up one or more Fate Chips. The number of Fate Chips determines how much extra damage the blessed can do with her next successful attack. This is all explained in black and white on the table below.

The effects of the miracle last 1 round for every 2 levels of the blessed or until the blessed actually hits someone or something in combat, whichever come firsts. Unsuccessful attacks don't cause the miracle to come to an end. The blessed is free to give it another try with her next action (assuming the miracle's duration doesn't expire before then).

Here's an example. Sister Cabrini has finally had enough. She's already turned more cheeks than she even knew she had. Now she's ready to bring the Lord's righteous wrath down on the heads of the fools who've been trifling with her. The good nun pulls the Peacemaker from under her habit and lets loose with it. She rolls to invoke *wrath* and succeeds easily. Since she's got a 6 ranks of Faith, she's got 6 rounds to make use of the miracle.

Cabrini's player decides she wants to make an impression here, so she smiles and spends three Fate Chips. She cocks her pistol and shoots at the villain's chest. Unfortunately, the shot goes wide.

On her next action, Cabrini fires again, and this time she hits. Normally, a Peacemaker does 2d6+1 damage, but this bullet does a full 5d6+1. Yowch!

Wrath

Fate Chips

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4

Effect

- +1 damage die
- +2 damage dice
- +3 damage dice
- +4 damage dice

Miracles

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Creating Your Own Miracles

Despite our best efforts, we've certainly not given the details on every type of miracle that has or can be invoked (or even every kind of religion that could invoke them). There may come time when you want to develop a miracle or two of your own for your character. That's fine. In fact, it means you're putting a lot of thought into your character.

Once you've decided you want to create a new miracle, be sure to check with the Marshal. Remember that he has final say on anything you come up with, so it's best to work with him from the start.

Miracles aren't subject to many other restrictions. After all, they are divinely granted.

Theme & Balance

The powers provided to blessed characters by their patrons are primarily defensive in nature. This isn't so much because the deities can't provide offensive powers. They can. These are divine beings we're talking about. Rather, it's because of free will and choices. Although her patron can help, a blessed has to fight her own battles.

Humanity has to stand up and fight the forces of Evil on its own feet. Heaven is more than willing to help even the odds in that fight, but tipping the scales too much in the favor of humanity defeats the purpose of free will altogether.

For the same reasons that the forces of Good don't typically grant their servants fearsome combat magic, they temper the amount of power they bestow as well.

As a result, most of the miracles granted are either oriented toward defensive or curative purposes. That's not to say other types aren't possible. There are a variety of others already available.

Also, miracles tend to be more subtle than a huckster's hexes or a cultist's spells, no matter what their effect.

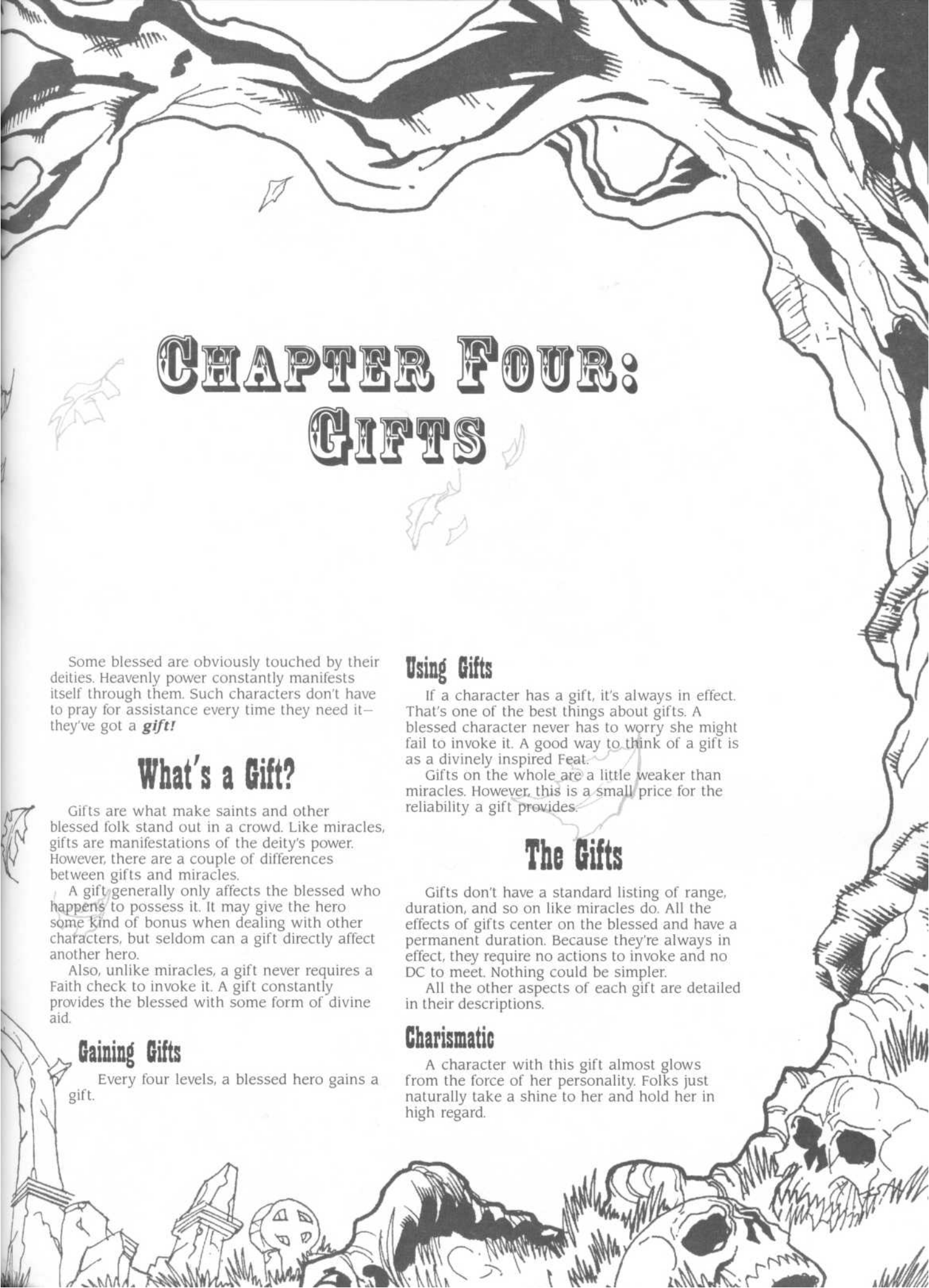
The short of it is a miracle that lets the blessed hurl lightning isn't appropriate. Find a more creative way to draw on the power of the character's divine patron. In the long run, it's not only more fun, but also more rewarding.

Marshals

Your Marshal has an important part to play here because she's got the last word on what's allowed and what's not. If she doesn't like it, you have to work with her to tune the miracle or gift to fit her campaign.

Remember the sacred rule: THE MARSHAL HAS FINAL APPROVAL.





CHAPTER FOUR: GIFTS

Some blessed are obviously touched by their deities. Heavenly power constantly manifests itself through them. Such characters don't have to pray for assistance every time they need it—they've got a **gift!**

What's a Gift?

Gifts are what make saints and other blessed folk stand out in a crowd. Like miracles, gifts are manifestations of the deity's power. However, there are a couple of differences between gifts and miracles.

A gift generally only affects the blessed who happens to possess it. It may give the hero some kind of bonus when dealing with other characters, but seldom can a gift directly affect another hero.

Also, unlike miracles, a gift never requires a Faith check to invoke it. A gift constantly provides the blessed with some form of divine aid.

Gaining Gifts

Every four levels, a blessed hero gains a gift.

Using Gifts

If a character has a gift, it's always in effect. That's one of the best things about gifts. A blessed character never has to worry she might fail to invoke it. A good way to think of a gift is as a divinely inspired Feat.

Gifts on the whole are a little weaker than miracles. However, this is a small price for the reliability a gift provides.

The Gifts

Gifts don't have a standard listing of range, duration, and so on like miracles do. All the effects of gifts center on the blessed and have a permanent duration. Because they're always in effect, they require no actions to invoke and no DC to meet. Nothing could be simpler.

All the other aspects of each gift are detailed in their descriptions.

Charismatic

A character with this gift almost glows from the force of her personality. Folks just naturally take a shine to her and hold her in high regard.



The blessed's personality determines exactly how this gift manifests itself. An amiable, pleasant person becomes even more likable, whereas a Hellfire and brimstone preacher appears more intimidating.

Regardless of the blessed's nature, she gains a +2 to all Charisma checks when dealing with people, including certain humanlike abominations, such as Harrowed and nosferatu.

This bonus does not apply to Charisma checks made against animals or nonhuman abominations.

Comforted

A hero with this gift never seems to break a sweat a lot or suffer goosebumps either—at least from the temperature, that is. Whether it's the blistering heat of the Mojave desert or the bone-chilling cold of a Rocky Mountain blizzard, the blessed's patron eases the ill effects of the weather on him.

The hero doesn't suffer from cold temperatures until the mercury drops below 32° F. Below that, he must make a DC 15 Will save each day. Otherwise he takes 1d4 times the

number he failed the roll by in damage. The DC increases by +1 for every 5° F below freezing (32°).

Likewise, he is immune to the effects of heat until the temperature rises above 110° F. Above 110° F, he has to make a DC 15 Will save. The TN raises by +1 for each 5° Fahrenheit the temperature is above 110°. Failure inflicts the same kind of hp loss as with freezing.

If the hero gets a natural 1 on his Will save to resist temperature extremes, he has to roll a Fort save to avoid suffering either heat stroke or hypothermia, depending on the environment. However, the DC for his Fort save is only 12.

Divine Providence

If a hero has Heaven on her side, she can get away with a whole lot of things that less holy folk couldn't even get a running start at. In *Deadlands*, she can even cheat the fickle hand of fate—a little bit anyway.

A character with *divine providence* can spend Fate Chips even when she fumbles. This means that the hero can reroll 1s the same as with any other roll!

On the other hand, the hero only gets one chance to escape her fumble. If she gets a 1 on her reroll, she is just plumb outta luck.

Favored

Some blessed receive special attention from their chosen deity. These characters always seem to be just a little luckier than those around them.

A character with this gift receives a bonus Fate Chip each session. This chip must be used by the end of the session. It doesn't carry over to the next.

Humility

Most religions hold meekness and humility as virtues worthy of pursuit. A blessed with this gift has learned the value of a humble spirit. She has completely vanquished the vice of Pride from her nature.

A blessed with this gift is completely immune to attempts to Intimidate, Ridicule, and Bluff her.

If the character is the target of such an attack, treat it as if the result of the appropriate opposed test was a tie. In such cases, the opponent doesn't even roll his skill—he just uses up an action!

On the other hand, a character with this gift can't use Intimidate, Ridicule, Bluff, or the miracle *chastise*. Her humble nature simply doesn't allow it.

Insight

Occasionally, a blessed character is granted a divine insight. He sees a little more of the world around him than average folks. The hero can discern more of the true nature of his surroundings than others, or maybe he's just got a divinely inspired intuitive sense.

Whatever the source, the character gets a +2 bonus to all Wisdom skill checks, such as Sense Motive and Spot.

Some folks have a faith so strong others can sense it just by being near. Their confidence and holy aura serves to ease the worries of their companions, even as they walk through the Valley of the Shadow of Death. This isn't going to make much sense until the Marshal gives you the okay to read the chapter on Fear in the *Deadlands D20* rulebook, but read on.

This aura of righteousness lowers the Fear Level by 2 in an area around the blessed. This area has a radius equal to 5 feet for each of the blessed's ranks of Faith. This gift can only lower the Fear Level to 0. If the area is already at a level of 1 or lower, the gift has no effect.

This isn't a permanent change in the surrounding Fear Level of the area. It's only effective as long as the blessed is present.

Because it's not a permanent change, the gift doesn't affect the DC for Tale Tellin' rolls. The DC is figured from the permanent Fear Level for the area, not the temporarily lowered level. However, the blessed's aura of faith does aid somewhat in Tale Tellin'. The sense of security radiating from the blessed provides the character with a +2 bonus to the roll.

Portents

A blessed with this gift isn't exactly a prophet, although he does have the benefit of divine foresight from time to time. This hero's patron gives him a subconscious nudge whenever he's placing himself in harm's way. Some folks seem to get into trouble so often, it may feel like they're getting elbowed in the ribs constantly!

Gifts

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Whenever the hero is about to take a dangerous course of action, the Marshal has him roll a DC 15 Wisdom check. If he succeeds, his character gets a sense he could be in danger. Otherwise, he's as oblivious as the next poor cowpoke.

To keep the hero guessing, the Marshal may have the player roll Wisdom checks at random times throughout a session. That way, he can't automatically know the hero's in danger when he has to make such a roll.

Prophecy

It never hurts to know what's waiting around the next corner. This is especially true nowadays when it might be some monster straight out of someone's worst nightmare! Unfortunately, normal folks have to use a mirror if they want to know what's around a corner.

On the other hand, the blessed's patron is all-knowing, and occasionally the deity grants a blessed with this gift a glimpse of the future.

Once per adventure, the blessed can pray for a prophetic vision. This doesn't require any sort of roll, but it does take 1d8 hours of prayer and meditation. At the end of that period, she is granted a vision of some coming event. The details revealed by the prophecy are always hidden within a cryptic vision.





These auguries may reveal a future threat or even how to defeat it. Exactly what information the blessed learns is up to the Marshal.

It's up to the hero to interpret the meaning of her prophecy. Another blessed can invoke *interpret vision* for her, but remember, a hero cannot use that miracle on her own prophecies.

Refuge o' Faith

All blessed heroes may not have a guardian angel looking after them, but they all have a whole lot of faith their deity will protect them from harm. This miracle goes a long way toward proving that belief well-founded.

This gift lets the character use half (rounded up) his ranks in his Faith skill in place of his Dexterity bonus. However, the character must prove his faith by not actively trying to get out of the way of the danger. If he dodges, he hasn't shown his unswerving belief that his deity will protect him from harm, and must rely on his Dexterity bonus as normal.

Self-Discipline

Followers of certain religions, particularly those of the mysterious East, seek to gain a mastery over their fragile mortal bodies. By doing so, they can ignore the mundane requirements of the world and better focus on the pursuit of spiritual purity. A benefit is the ability to perform some pretty astounding feats!

A blessed with the gift of *self-discipline* has a fine-tuned control over his physical body. He's capable of reducing his need for food, drink, and even air itself to levels far below those a normal cowpoke could survive.

The first benefit is the hero can go without food or water for a fair piece before he begins to suffer the effects of starvation. He doesn't begin to take subdual damage from lack of food and drink until after a number of days equal to his ranks of Faith. At the end of that period, he only needs to begin to eat normally to avoid subdual damage loss.

The second ability a hero gains from *self-discipline* is the ability to control his breathing. Anytime he would suffer subdual damage from suffocation, he takes only half the normal amount. This includes drowning and hanging.

Finally, the blessed can lower not only his breathing but also his heartbeat to such a level as to appear dead to the casual observer. The blessed can maintain this effect for 1 minute for every rank he has in Faith. Anyone examining a hero playing possum in this manner must make an opposed roll of Knowledge (any medicine) versus the blessed's Faith.

Spiritual Giant

Blessed possess tremendous faith and spirit. Unfortunately, the strength of their beliefs often far outstrips the abilities of their physical bodies. This miracle allows the blessed to call upon some of that enormous belief to protect her from her foes.

A blessed with this gift gains +5 hp. Her physical body doesn't actually change in appearance or size. However, her ability to resist damage does increase accordingly.

This gift may be chosen multiple times.

Tongues

One of the greatest obstacles missionaries of any religion face is language. It's disheartening to travel halfway across the globe to save the lost and then end up in a stew pot because you don't know how to say, "I'm not food."

A blessed with the gift of *tongues* has a talent for communication. This gift allows her to communicate on a basic level with almost anyone—as long as the other party is human, of course!

Anytime the hero must convey information to someone who doesn't speak a common language with her, she can make a DC 15 Wisdom check. If she's successful, she can pass along simple information or requests. Examples of the types of communication possible are "I am hungry," "I need help," "Who is in charge here?" and the like.

Conversely, if the blessed is attempting to understand a speaker of a different language, she makes a DC 15 Intelligence check. Success indicates she can grasp the basic idea of the sentence. For instance, if a Sioux brave says (in Sioux), "A devil bat haunts that mesa," the blessed would understand, "That place is dangerous." He might even get that there is some sort of flying horror there, but probably wouldn't get that it's a bat of some sort. Obviously, the general nuances are there, but particular pieces of information can be entirely lost.

Tongues allows only simple information exchange—a blessed couldn't explain the tenets of her religion through this gift. However, the basic comprehension granted by the gift is often enough to avoid a dangerous misunderstanding.

Gifts

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Wisdom

The legend says when King Solomon was offered any one thing he wanted, of all his possible choices he asked for wisdom. Many blessed have made the same choice, and not a one has complained.

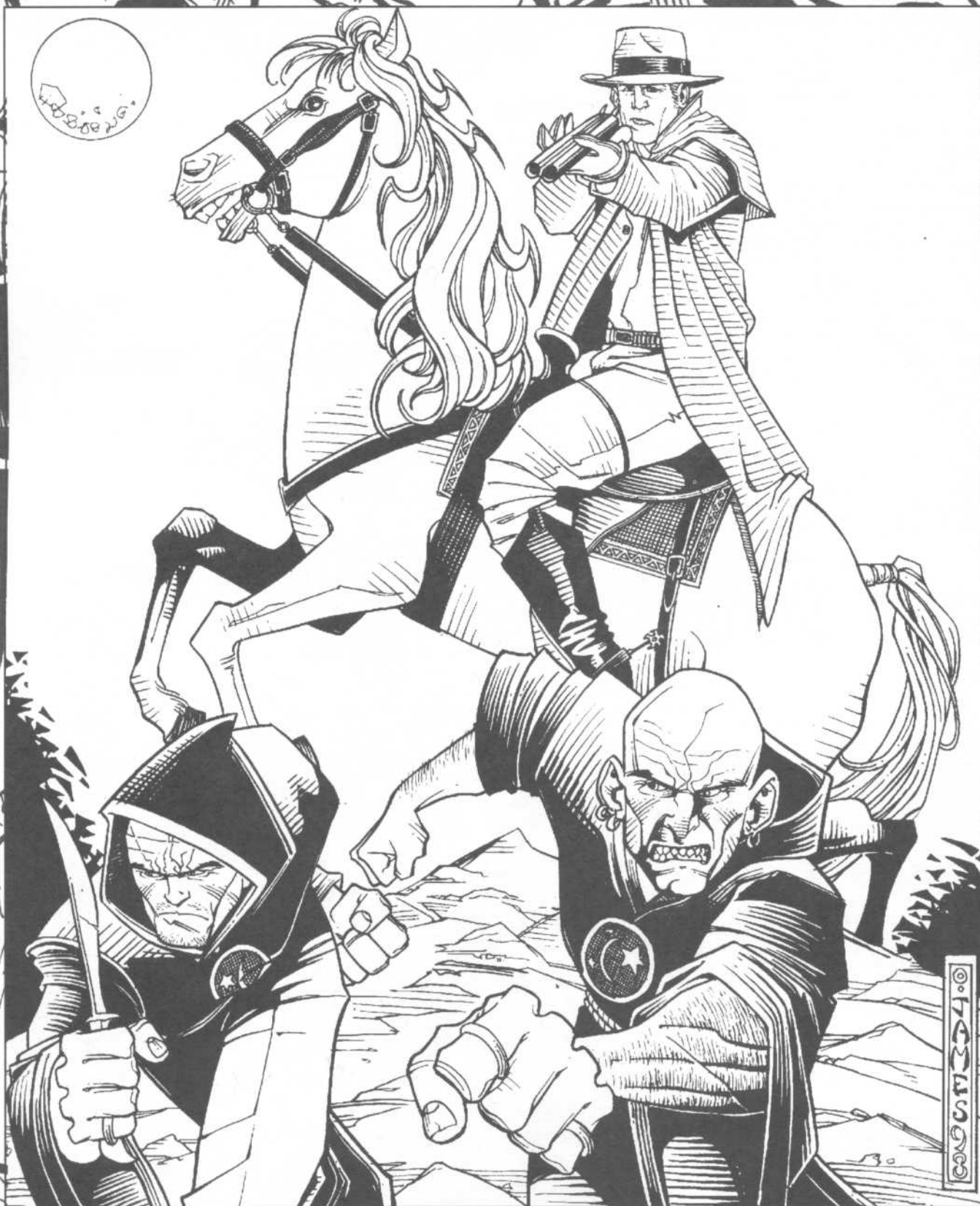
The hero gains a +2 to Wisdom checks. This includes both ability and skill rolls based on Wisdom. Among other uses, it's certainly a good idea for anyone who plans to have a lot of religious debates.

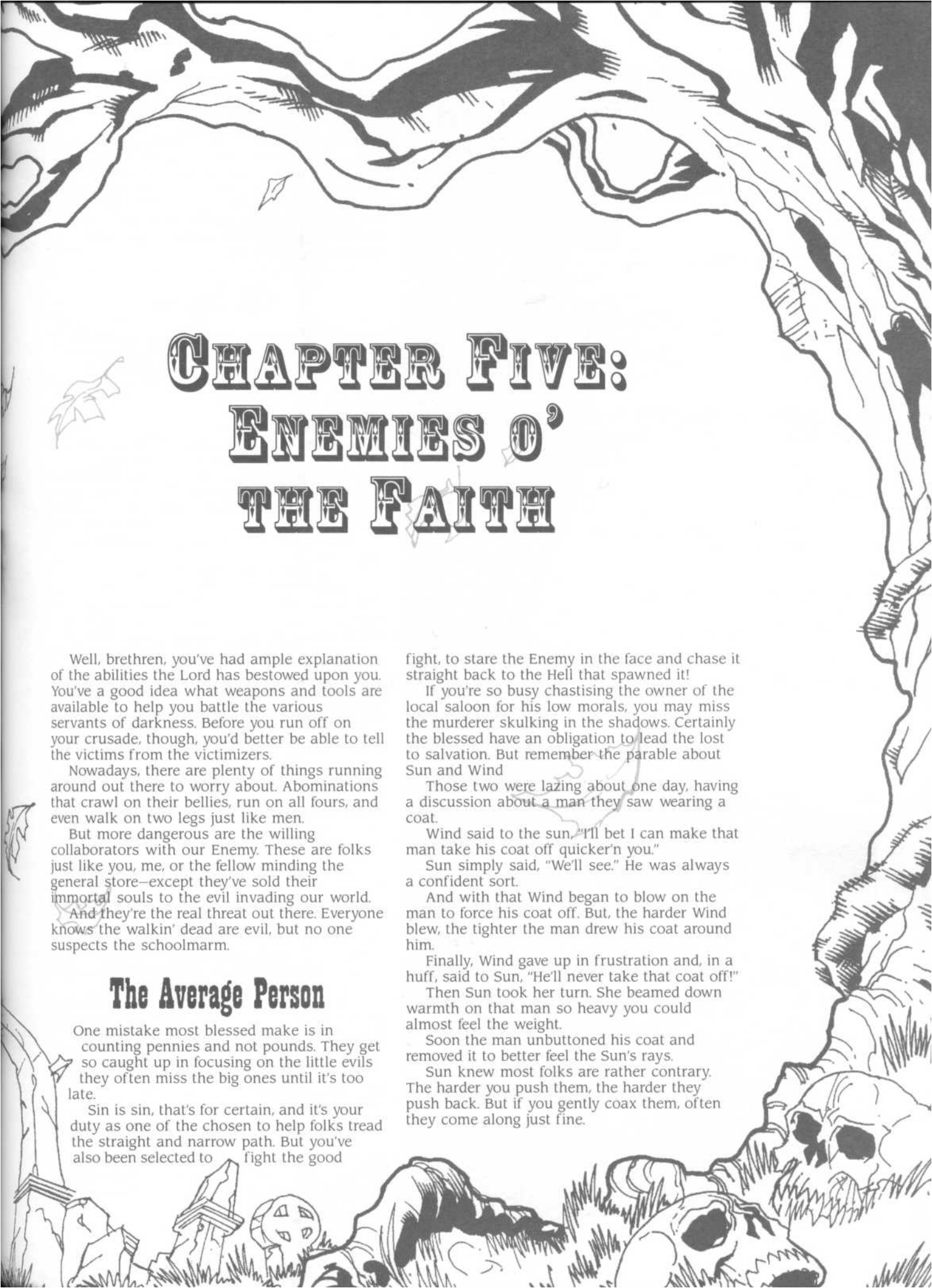
Designing New Gifts

Gifts are slightly different than miracles. Assuming the blessed isn't in hot water with his patron, gifts always work, there's no TN to activate them, and the duration is effectively permanent. They only affect the blessed, so there is no range. Really, the only thing you have to worry about with a gift is the effect itself.

As a rule of thumb, the effects of a gift should be less than those of a miracle with a similar theme. They should be personal as well. The Powers that Be don't mind buffing up their champions, but are hesitant to channel down more overt powers. They do, of course, but such acts require active requests (miracles) and Divine Intervention (coming up next).







CHAPTER FIVE: ENEMIES O' THE FAITH

Well, brethren, you've had ample explanation of the abilities the Lord has bestowed upon you. You've a good idea what weapons and tools are available to help you battle the various servants of darkness. Before you run off on your crusade, though, you'd better be able to tell the victims from the victimizers.

Nowadays, there are plenty of things running around out there to worry about. Abominations that crawl on their bellies, run on all fours, and even walk on two legs just like men.

But more dangerous are the willing collaborators with our Enemy. These are folks just like you, me, or the fellow minding the general store—except they've sold their immortal souls to the evil invading our world.

And they're the real threat out there. Everyone knows the walkin' dead are evil, but no one suspects the schoolmarm.

The Average Person

One mistake most blessed make is in counting pennies and not pounds. They get so caught up in focusing on the little evils they often miss the big ones until it's too late.

Sin is sin, that's for certain, and it's your duty as one of the chosen to help folks tread the straight and narrow path. But you've also been selected to fight the good

fight, to stare the Enemy in the face and chase it straight back to the Hell that spawned it!

If you're so busy chastising the owner of the local saloon for his low morals, you may miss the murderer skulking in the shadows. Certainly the blessed have an obligation to lead the lost to salvation. But remember the parable about Sun and Wind

Those two were lazing about one day, having a discussion about a man they saw wearing a coat.

Wind said to the sun, "I'll bet I can make that man take his coat off quicker'n you."

Sun simply said, "We'll see." He was always a confident sort.

And with that Wind began to blow on the man to force his coat off. But, the harder Wind blew, the tighter the man drew his coat around him.

Finally, Wind gave up in frustration and, in a huff, said to Sun, "He'll never take that coat off!"

Then Sun took her turn. She beamed down warmth on that man so heavy you could almost feel the weight.

Soon the man unbuttoned his coat and removed it to better feel the Sun's rays.

Sun knew most folks are rather contrary. The harder you push them, the harder they push back. But if you gently coax them, often they come along just fine.



A good example and a kind word often serve you better than a blistering sermon. Particularly with those folks headstrong enough to take up their swords and fight Evil incarnate.

Of course, with all the miscreants and malcontents toting firearms and such, there will almost certainly come a time when you've no choice but to act against them. In such cases, a blessed is implored to show as much mercy as possible. If one must use works of faith against fellow men, the blessed should temper his choices.

The Misled

There are a few groups of folks who need special attention from the blessed. These folks are consorting with the Enemy—although they may not even know it!

Hucksters

The first are those modern-day sorcerers who call themselves "hucksters." As often as not, these are innocents who have been drawn in by the promise of easy power, not realizing the danger of the path upon which they tread. It's hard to assign them much blame for this. Out here on the frontier, you need every edge you can get.

Among the less tolerant of the faithful, hucksters have a reputation as willing servants of Evil. However, such is not necessarily the case. To assume so could deny the children of righteousness a whole passel of potent allies.

These hucksters are made of stern stuff. The kind of folks who can wrestle a demon with sheer force of will and often as not whip it are not people to be sneezed at! Those are the kind of people you want on your side in a fight!

Beware, though. These magicians are as slick as the snake-oil salesmen from whom they took their name. Don't be led astray by their honeyed tongues and false words of assurance! No matter what face it wears, sorcery always involves consorting with demons, and that's what they are, even if the hucksters call them manitous.

But with the patient guidance of a wise and faithful teacher, in time even the most jaded huckster can be turned from his misguided path.

Should you face a huckster in battle, beware their magics. They are as tricky as they are foul.

And don't forget, there is no law preventing a sorcerer from pulling a scattergun from under his coat and salting your hide with lead.

Your best bets in a fight against a huckster are a stout piece of hickory and a strong right arm. Few of those card-slipping magicians know enough about fighting to punch their way out of a wet paper bag.

The Harrowed

The second group of folks you should know about are an even touchier subject among the chosen. These are considered abominations by just about everyone: the Harrowed—the dead who walk among us!

Without a doubt, these creatures are an affront to Heaven. Malevolent magic keeps alive a body that nature has declared dead.

Before you pass judgment on these beings, remember, the soul trapped within that rotting shell did not choose its fate. It's an unwilling pawn of the Evil that plagues our Earth.

The servants of darkness may use the Harrowed's body for terrible purpose, but the person inside is trapped, unable to proceed to his just reward. This may seem a horrible fate to the faithful, but remember, it may mean a second chance to a sinner unrepentant in life!

The Harrowed require special attention from us, my brethren. The formerly faithful may feel unjustly punished and need your reassurances. The remorseless sinner may be a lamb to be returned to the flock.

If the revenant is a servant of our Enemy, however, you have no choice but to send him to his final reward—for a second and final time.

Most of these creatures possess powers beyond the pale of normal men and are formidable opponents.

Fortunately, the protections provided by Heaven that specifically affect supernatural beings can also affect Harrowed. These provide the chosen with many powerful weapons against the walking dead.

Perhaps the best defense against such creatures is prevention. If they don't come back, they don't have to be put down again.

Whatever the case, remember all things work to the greater glory!

The Unrepentant

We've told you of the lost souls wandering this worldly domain that need your guidance to achieve salvation. Now it's time to discuss the true tools of the Enemy—those bereft of hope of forgiveness.

How can that be? To receive forgiveness, one must ask for it. These misguided souls neither seek nor desire divine salvation. They have chosen their path and walk it without remorse.

They are a cancer on the world. If left to fester, they will spread and devour creation until nothing remains but their foul offal.

Abominations

These creatures are the very spawn of Evil. They exist solely to torment the faithful and promote doubt in divinity. Do not suffer doubt as to the depth of their corruption. It is absolute.

After seeing one of these monstrosities, the average person cannot help but ask, "How can such a horror be allowed to exist?"

There is but one answer: It can't! The servants of good have a responsibility to Heaven to expunge these creatures. Never falter in this goal!

The blessed have been selected above all others to confront and confound these beings, and have been granted power to wield against them as evidenced by miracles and gifts.

The blessed must seek these horrors out and expunge them! To suffer one to live is to damn its victims to Earthly misery and death.

If not the blessed, then who shall the innocent turn to for protection? The blessed have been provided with many potent weapons against these blatant affronts against God and nature. Their most powerful miracles work only against such creatures.

Nonetheless, these beings are mighty—often beyond our mortal understanding. Study them before confronting them in battle. Blindly charging into the lion's den will almost surely lead to defeat.

But when the time comes, do not shirk from battle with Evil, for all of Heaven stands behind you! Fear not, for should you fall in battle with the minions of the Enemy, your place is assured above!

Cultists

Even more distasteful than an abomination to the righteous is a child of light willfully gone astray. Many folks these days have turned to darkness to provide them with powers denied normal folk. They have knowingly given themselves to Evil.





In this they differ from the so-called hucksters, for those card shuffling magicians may not truly understand their transgressions. No, these modern-day Judases have freely cast aside the offer of forgiveness and chosen the path of wickedness. They have joined in an unholy pact with the side of corruption for power in this Earthly realm.

Who are these accursed who seek to tangle the footsteps of the righteous, you ask?

They are cultists, followers of Darkness by their own choice. Willfully, they have aligned themselves with Evil, and they are the greatest threat to the children of Light that exists.

They seek to pervert the understanding of the faithful and guide their steps down the path of damnation. These snakes in the clothing of men hide in plain sight, walking among the righteous folk in broad daylight!

The practitioners of black magic are not horned devils, nor are they scaled bogeymen hiding under beds. They wear no visible mark of the Beast, although their souls are surely twisted and scarred by the evil in their hearts. They're monsters wearing the face of a smiling farmer or friendly storekeeper!

But how to know the innocent from the guilty? Deception has always been the strongest weapon of our Enemy. But it's not our

place to doubt our fellow men, only to serve and guide them.

This is the awful truth, my brethren: The folk you may fight to save may already be lost by their own choice! That is perhaps the most powerful tool of Evil. It has the power to destroy faith in and hope for the goodness of the human soul.

Many of our brethren have taken up an active study of the occult to better identify and purge such evil from the innocent. This knowledge has served them well, as most cults wrap themselves deeply within the trappings of the occult. Books, artifacts, or even the remains left from a ritual may provide the educated with an insight into the workings of a cult.

However, even the truly dedicated acknowledge there is danger in staring too deeply into the Abyss. Those who fear such knowledge know it may endanger their purity. But there are other, less tangible means of investigating the occult. Careful but completely normal observation a community may reveal an underlying influence of evil deeds.

An unusual amount of distrust of strangers may indicate a group has secrets to keep. A servant of righteousness may find herself under stealthy or blatant observation in a town controlled by a cult.

A cult usually has means of clandestine communication within its ranks. This may be as simple as whispers when no one's looking or as complex as coded missives. Often, a careful observer can detect this communication, even if he may not understand what's being said.

Watching the citizens' interactions with each other also may provide clues to a cult's existence. Towns have a hierarchy of respect. Rich folks or those with power sit at the top of the ladder, while the poor and weak cling to the bottom rung.

By observing those commanding the most respect, a wise observer can learn a lot about who holds power in a place. If the source of that power isn't obvious, it behooves you to seek it out. It may be innocent, but then again, it may be sinister.

The most important thing for servants of Heaven to remember is that while they must seek out the Enemy, they must not cause the innocent suffering as a result. Search out the servants of darkness, but do so with wisdom and patience. Do not rush to judgment. False accusations are as damaging to the cause of righteousness as any scheme the Enemy may concoct!

Truly, if we give ourselves over to suspicion and doubt, we've lost before the fight's even begun. Stand with honor and bravery, for that is what darkness fears most. Nowhere does the Good Book say the faithful must be dullards or fools. If a snake bruises your heel, you must bruise its head.

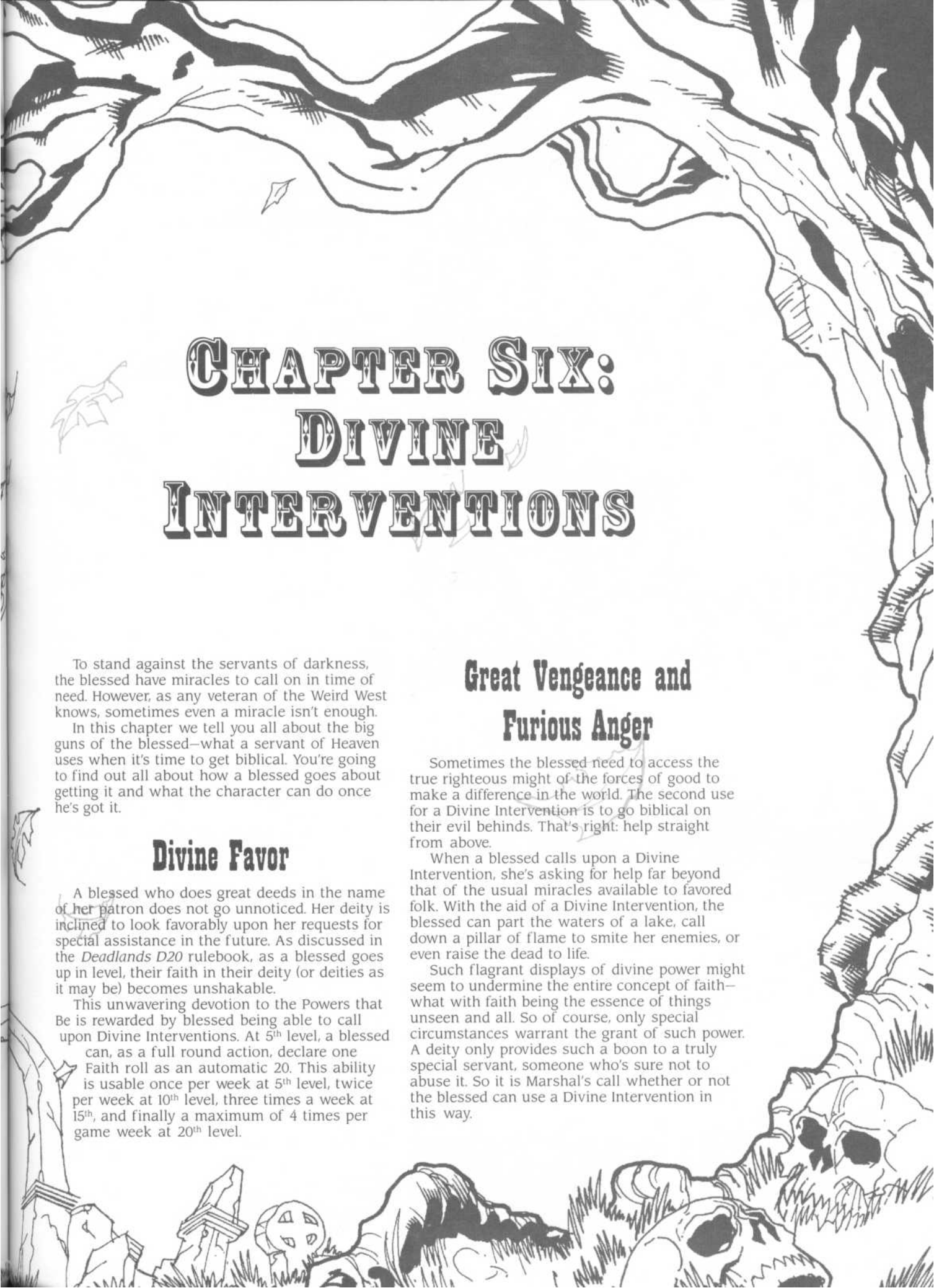
And nothing works better for bruising heads than a good old-fashioned hickory stick!

NO MAN'S LAND





ANDY
PARK



CHAPTER SIX: DIVINE INTERVENTIONS

To stand against the servants of darkness, the blessed have miracles to call on in time of need. However, as any veteran of the Weird West knows, sometimes even a miracle isn't enough.

In this chapter we tell you all about the big guns of the blessed—what a servant of Heaven uses when it's time to get biblical. You're going to find out all about how a blessed goes about getting it and what the character can do once he's got it.

Divine Favor

A blessed who does great deeds in the name of her patron does not go unnoticed. Her deity is inclined to look favorably upon her requests for special assistance in the future. As discussed in the *Deadlands D20* rulebook, as a blessed goes up in level, their faith in their deity (or deities as it may be) becomes unshakable.

This unwavering devotion to the Powers that Be is rewarded by blessed being able to call upon Divine Interventions. At 5th level, a blessed can, as a full round action, declare one Faith roll as an automatic 20. This ability is usable once per week at 5th level, twice per week at 10th level, three times a week at 15th, and finally a maximum of 4 times per game week at 20th level.

Great Vengeance and Furious Anger

Sometimes the blessed need to access the true righteous might of the forces of good to make a difference in the world. The second use for a Divine Intervention is to go biblical on their evil behinds. That's right: help straight from above.

When a blessed calls upon a Divine Intervention, she's asking for help far beyond that of the usual miracles available to favored folk. With the aid of a Divine Intervention, the blessed can part the waters of a lake, call down a pillar of flame to smite her enemies, or even raise the dead to life.

Such flagrant displays of divine power might seem to undermine the entire concept of faith—what with faith being the essence of things unseen and all. So of course, only special circumstances warrant the grant of such power. A deity only provides such a boon to a truly special servant, someone who's sure not to abuse it. So it is Marshal's call whether or not the blessed can use a Divine Intervention in this way.



To request help from above, the blessed must spend a Divine Intervention. This means the blessed must be at least 5th level and consciously choose to use one of her Divine Interventions for this purpose. Once it's used, it is gone until the blessed reaches the next level. There are no exceptions. If the blessed has no Divine Interventions left, she can't petition her deity for help. Once the Intervention has been expended, the character selects the effect she desires.

This use of a Divine Intervention takes a different amount of time to invoke depending on the desired effect. Check the descriptions of the individual interventions on the following pages for the length of time needed to invoke it.

Even once the Intervention has been granted, the blessed still faces an enormous test of faith to invoke its power. The expenditure of the Divine Intervention only grants the character the chance to attempt to use the power. The success or failure of that attempt resides in the force of the character's faith.

The character must make a Faith check against the DC for the intervention—and this is

quite difficult, as most have a DC of 15 or greater. Fate Chips can be spent on the roll to invoke the intervention. However, other effects (like hexes) cannot be used to influence this Faith roll. The blessed must make the roll on the strength of her own faith (and chips).

If the invocation roll is successful, the intervention takes full effect. Otherwise, the intervention also fails.

Should the blessed be unfortunate enough to get a natural 1 on this roll, she loses an additional Divine Intervention for her miserable lack of faith. If she has none remaining, there is no other effect.

In either case, the Divine Intervention has been spent.

The Interventions

In addition to their individual descriptions, all interventions have four entries (making them—at least in this respect—much like the standard miracles that any of the blessed normally have access to):

DC is the Difficulty Class the blessed needs on a Faith roll to accomplish the intervention.

Speed is the number of actions it takes to complete the intervention.

Duration is the length of time the intervention stays in effect.

Range is the maximum distance at which the intervention can take effect.

Atone

DC: 20

Speed: 1 hour

Duration: Permanent

Range: Touch

The Harrowed have a hard furrow to plow. Not only are those unfortunate souls kept from a decent afterlife, they're forced to share their mortal shell with a demon straight from the Pit! They face a constant battle for control of their own wills. And when they lose that battle, everyone suffers for it.

With *atone*, a blessed can help a Harrowed character regain lost Dominion points. This intervention can only be used on a willing subject. It's not likely a manitou would repent any of its awful deeds if offered the chance.

The Harrowed immediately makes a Dominion test against her manitou. The character adds the total the blessed's roll beat the DC to invoke *atone* by to her Wisdom roll. This bonus is in addition to the bonus for the number of Dominion points she currently has. If the Harrowed wins the test, she gains total Dominion!

Unlike a normal Dominion test, if the manitou defeats the hero during an *atone*, it doesn't gain any Dominion points.

A Harrowed blessed can invoke this intervention on herself.

Crusade

DC: 20

Speed: 1 day

Duration: 1 day/Faith rank

Range: 10 feet/Faith rank

The battle against the minions of evil is ongoing, and it's not one to be fought by heroes alone. Sure, a posse can pull a town's fat out of the fire, but a band of gun-toting do-gooders can't always be there when the going gets rough. And there are times when even the toughest band of gunslingers isn't enough. This intervention increases the odds on the side of the righteous.

Crusade lets a blessed give a group of normal folks the ability to better fight for themselves, and the backbone to do it. The intervention only affects members of the blessed's faith, but it affects a whole lot of them—10 for each rank of Faith the blessed has, as a matter of fact! The recipients of the effects must be within the intervention's range during the final hour of its invocation, but after that they may move about freely without losing the benefits. The blessed must be able to talk to the group of soon-to-be heroes to fill their hearts with the divine inspiration needed to accomplish their goals.

For the duration of the *crusade*, everyone affected by it receives a +2 to all ability and skill rolls while pursuing the goal of the intervention.

For the *crusade* to take effect, there has to be a tangible goal for the intervention. The group must have a powerful foe to defeat or another task worthy of divine intervention to complete. Usually, this is a supernatural threat, but it's not unheard of for a *crusade* to be invoked to rid a peaceful town of marauding bandits.

If the blessed invokes *crusade* without a defined purpose, the intervention automatically fails. Otherwise, the effects last until either the goal of the intervention is accomplished or the duration expires, whichever comes first.

Deluge

DC: 25

Speed: 1 hour

Duration: 1 hour/Faith rank

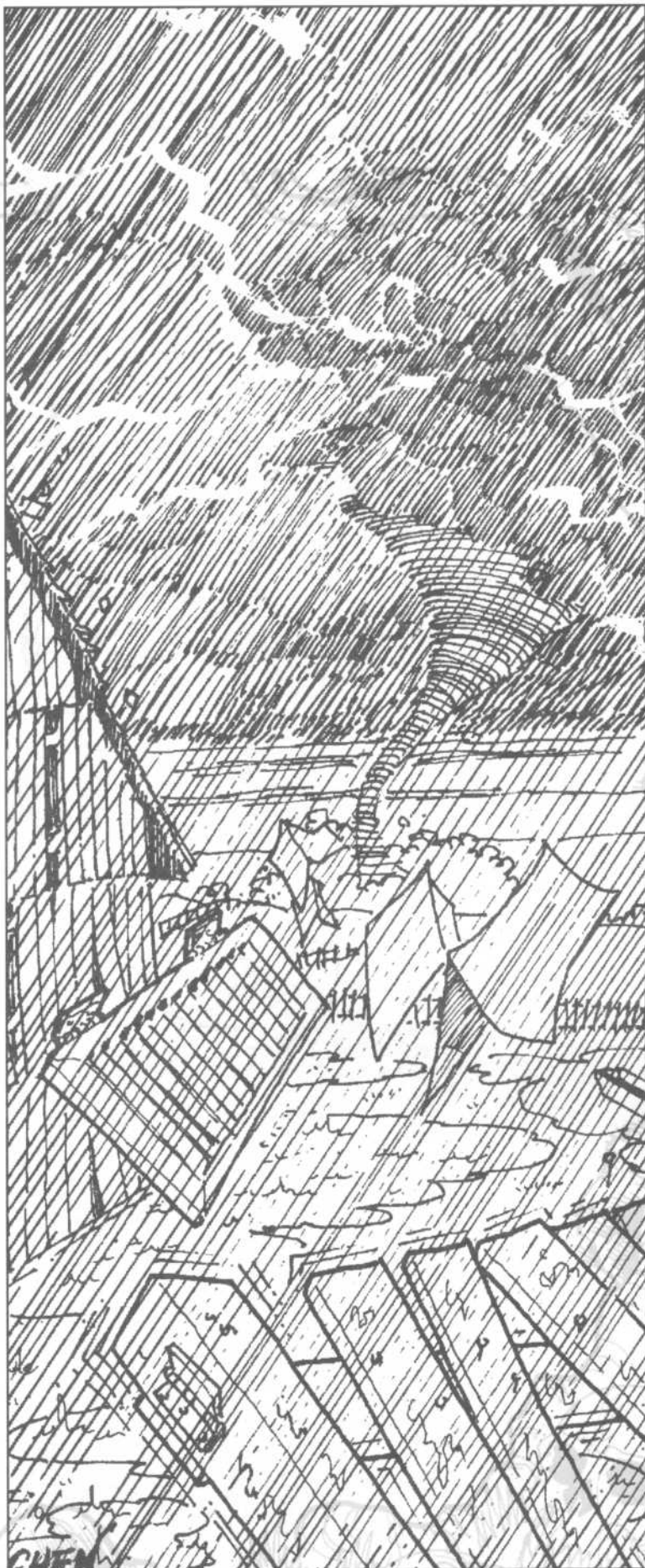
Range: Personal

Water's always been the best remedy for filth and uncleanness. Even the grubbiest cowpoke takes the time to dip himself in the watering trough before heading into town on a Saturday night. But when a place is soiled with the stain of evil, it takes a bit more than a few gallons of water to scour it clean.

This intervention whips up a storm of Biblical proportions to ravage the land. The storm centers on the blessed and has a diameter equal to half a mile for each of rank of his Faith. Within that area, a violent thunderstorm rages, lashing the ground with torrents of rain, wind, and even the occasional lightning bolt.

The rain falls continuously in sheets throughout the intervention, soaking the area with 1 inch of precipitation for each rank of the blessed's Faith every hour. This downpour causes rapidly rising water and flooding in low areas. Unless the blessed's a champion swimmer, invoking *deluge* while trapped in a gully certainly isn't the smartest thing to do.

Wind gusts through the area at 20 m.p.h., plus an additional 5 m.p.h. for each rank of the hero's Faith. This makes it nearly impossible for





flying creatures to take to the air. It's also rough on structures, tearing down tents and clothes lines at 40 m.p.h., and damaging wooden buildings at speeds above 70 m.p.h. Above 100 m.p.h., wooden buildings are flattened, although stone buildings are unaffected by any speed of wind.

Characters exposed to winds over 75 m.p.h. suffer 1d4 damage each minute from the debris flying around. This damage increases by 1d4 for every 5 m.p.h. the wind speed exceeds 75 m.p.h.

With the torrential rainfall and buffeting winds, most folks get inside, but for those fools who don't have the sense to get in out of the rain, there's also a chance of being struck by lightning. For every 10 minutes a character is outdoors, she must make a Wisdom check. There is no DC for this roll, but getting a natural 1 means the drenched cowpoke has caught herself a 3d10 lightning bolt.

Obviously, this is not an intervention the blessed wants to invoke while standing in the middle of the Kansas prairie!

Divine Wrath

DC: 15

Speed: 1 action

Duration: Instantaneous

Range: 10 feet/Faith rank

Some folks are just so downright onerous that a blessed's got no choice but to stop turning the other cheek and do a little slapping of his own. And nothing gets someone's attention like a good dose of righteous fury.

This is one of the simplest of all interventions to invoke. All the hero has to do is spend his Divine Intervention and make the DC to call down the hand of his patron to lay a divine wallop on a single foe within range. Most blessed are rather vocal when invoking *divine wrath*. After all, what's the good of administering punishment if the guilty don't know what it's for?

Although the intervention itself isn't visible, the effects of it certainly are! The target takes the result of the hero's Faith roll in subdual damage. If that's enough to bring the unlucky recipient of the blow to 0 hp, she's knocked out cold.

Also, the victim is instantly stunned, losing all actions remaining in the round. Beginning in the next round, the character may attempt to recover from the stun by rolling her Constitution against a DC of 12.

Even after the subject recovers from the stun, she's still pretty rattled. All her ability and skill rolls are at a -2 for 1 round for every rank of the blessed's Faith. This period of time begins only after she's recovered from the initial stun.

Divine wrath gives the blessed a nonlethal option when folks start slapping leather. Lots of times, the abused fool turns tail and runs—that is if she isn't knocked flat on her kiester!

Healing Touch

DC: 20

Speed: 30 minutes

Duration: 5 minutes/Faith rank

Range: Touch

Heroes have a knack for getting beat up. In fact, most of them are so good at it, a blessed can't usually heal their wounds as fast as they get them. With the current ratio of stalwart heroes to abominations and other servants of evil favoring the forces of darkness, the faster a blessed can get those heroes back on their feet, the better. This intervention turns the invoker into a healer who'd make a sawbones green with envy.

Once *healing touch* is invoked, the blessed can heal wounds with a simple touch and a short prayer. The initial invocation takes 30 minutes, but actually healing the injured takes a lot less time. The invoker can completely heal all damage on one person in only a single minute. The healing takes a minute, regardless of whether the patient has 4 hit points or 40.

In addition to healing all wounds, the intervention cures any normal diseases or poisons which are afflicting the sufferer. Unfortunately, *healing touch* has no effect on poisons or diseases of supernatural origin, nor does it affect spells or curses of any sort either.

Hellfire

DC: 20

Speed: 2 rounds

Duration: Instantaneous

Range: 300 feet

One of a blessed hero's main duties is purifying the world of the unholy filth crawling around in it lately. A good fire and brimstone sermon may scare the Hell out of the congregation, but a dose of real Hellfire does a fair job at burning the devils back to where they came from.

This intervention calls down a holy, cleansing fire to roast any creatures unfortunate enough to be in the area of effect. The area blasted by *Hellfire* is a circle with a diameter of up to 3 feet for every rank of the blessed's Faith skill. The fire erupts spontaneously throughout the area rather than striking it, so cover does not protect against it.

If the *Hellfire* erupts in an enclosed area (like a house or even a coffin), it burns just fine. In fact, *Hellfire* can even burn underwater. It needs no oxygen to burn, nor even any kind of fuel.

The blessed can even control the shape that the *Hellfire* comes in. For instance, it might flow along the length of a bridge, but not spill over the edges. It's all up to the blessed, as long as the *Hellfire* stays within its overall area of effect.

Each creature in the area suffers 1d12 damage for every 3 ranks of Faith the blessed has. So a *Hellfire* invoked by a blessed with 6 ranks of Faith does 2d12 damage to any thing unlucky enough to be in the area. Armor of any sort does not protect against the effects either.

Fires sparked by *Hellfire* burn normally.

Intervene

DC: 15

Speed: 1 action

Duration: Special

Range: Personal

Most blessed heroes feel a strong duty to shield the innocent from harm. Sometimes, the hero needs protecting herself. This intervention provides the ultimate defense for its subject.

Intervene calls on the blessed's divine patron to step in and protect a single character from injury. If successfully invoked, the subject is shrouded from harm by the blessed's patron. No damage may be dealt the character for the next three rounds, no matter what the source.

The character could be shot with a Gatling gun, fall off a cliff while coated with burning oil and holding a bundle of sweaty dynamite, and he'd still walk away unscathed.

Magical effects which are harmful in nature are likewise negated during the duration of the intervention. Exactly what constitutes a harmful effect is up to the Marshal, but spells which immobilize, weaken, or warp the hero's will are generally considered harmful.

This immunity ends after the third round, unless the hero makes a DC 15 Faith roll. The hero can try to extend the intervention for another 3 rounds each time it's ready to expire, but the DC goes up by +2 every time. Once the intervention is over, any effects that inflict continuing damage like acid guns, burning oil,

Divine Interventions

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or poisons are still nullified by *intervene* and deal no injury to the subject.

Part Water

DC: 15

Speed: 10 minutes

Duration: 20 minutes/Faith rank

Range: 25 feet/Faith rank

Given the climate in some of the drier parts of the West, a lack of bridges may not be a pressing issue. However, there are times when a posse is faced with a stretch of water they have to cross and no ferryman to take them.

Part water, not surprisingly, parts water. The intervention affects bodies of water up to 25 feet across per rank of the blessed's Faith. The depth of the water cannot exceed the intervention's width.

Although the intervention begins after its invocation time of 10 minutes, it takes an additional 5 minutes per 25 feet for the water to actually part. The part begins at the blessed and moves toward the opposite shore. The ground underneath the parted water becomes dry and firm and is enough to support even the





weight of fully loaded wagons, although large rocks and uneven ground may prevent this.

The blessed can end *part water* at any time she chooses. At that time, or at the end of the intervention's normal duration, the water begins to flow into the trough, beginning at the same point as the part. The trough collapses at a rate of 25 feet every 30 seconds.

The water fills the area in a tremendous rush, instantly engulfing (and possibly crushing depending on how deep the water is) anything that is unfortunate enough to still be in the parted area.

Plague

DC: 25

Speed: 1 day

Duration: 1 day/Faith rank

Range: Special

Sometimes a town's so set in its iniquitous ways it needs a little reminder. No matter how much a blessed may preach and plead, the townsfolk turn a deaf ear. Or worse, they actively oppose the righteous. There are some places west of the Pecos so foul they string up heroes of the cloth! When a blessed comes across one of these modern Sodom and Gomorrah's, it's her duty to show its inhabitants the error of their ways.

Plague calls down the wrath of the hero's divine patron on a region in a physical and particularly nasty way. The intervention affects an area up to 1 mile across for each rank of the blessed's Faith. The blessed can choose to reduce this area to focus the retribution on only those deserving. She can even select areas within the boundaries of the *plague* to remain untouched by the ravages of the intervention, but this must be done before the *plague* comes. A common way of doing this is to tell those to be protected to place some kind of sign on their homes.

The blessed must spend at least a day at the center of the region she wishes to *plague*. During that time, she must preach against the wickedness and immorality in the locale and warn the inhabitants of the consequences. At the end of that period, the *plague* begins unless the guilty repent or the blessed chooses not to call for the intervention.

Once the *plague* begins, the blessed may end it at any time or simply allow it to run its course. There is no other method to end the effects of the intervention.

There are a number of forms the *plague* may take. Feel free to tailor the examples or create your own to fit the situation. The most common *plagues* are listed below.

The effects of a *plague* are severe and not to be lightly imposed upon an area or its inhabitants. A blessed should carefully consider the results of her actions before invoking a *plague*, especially if there's a chance that innocents might be harmed.

Darkness: A twilight descends on the area for the duration of the *plague*. The sunlight is dimmed for the duration so that even at midday the area is no brighter than just after sundown. Any nonresident must make a DC 15 Wisdom check to enter an area plagued by darkness.

Vermin: The area is overrun with flocks of crows, huge frogs, swarms of rats, nonpoisonous snakes, or toads. These vermin invade every household, business, and building. They find their way into the food, drinking water, and even clothing (empty boots are a special favorite). They spoil 10% of the food supply on hand every day the *plague* persists. They destroy foodstuffs and eat harvestable crops and even may scare livestock. The vermin also tend to run off any visitors to the region.

Locusts: These enormous flying insects descend on the local farmland and devour the area's crops. The locusts destroy 5% of the harvest for every day the intervention continues. The effects of this *plague* are long lasting, hitting the area hardest after the harvest months, when the missing food would be needed most.

Pestilence: The livestock of the region is afflicted by a virulent disease. It has no effect on humans, although the loss of the cattle is severe in and of itself. The illness causes 5% of the animals to die each day of the *plague*. The surviving animals bear open sores for the duration of the *plague*. During that time, no one from outside the area will purchase the beasts. These sores and deaths both persist for the length of the intervention, even if the owners move the animals outside the area of the *plague*. The disease is not contagious outside of the area.

Water to Blood: All the natural drinking water turns to thick, crimson blood. As one might expect, this renders all water in the area undrinkable to normal folks for the duration of the *plague*. Rivers flowing into the area turn foul as they enter and return to normal after they leave. Water can be brought in from outside the area, but it only resists the effects of the *plague* for a single day before turning undrinkable.

Resurrection

DC: 25

Speed: 3 hours

Duration: Permanent

Range: Touch

No matter how good a gunslinger is with her six-shooter, there's always someone better. And no matter how diligent a blessed is at protecting his flock, he can't always be there to guard and heal them. Eventually, someone ends up taking a dirt nap before her time. With all the abominations prowling the shadows, the side of Good can't afford to lose these folks. This intervention gives such heroes a second chance.

Much like the name implies, *resurrection* returns the dead to life. The subject of the intervention comes back from the dead and is as fit as a fiddle. All her hit points are restored to full. The formerly deceased always bears a scar of the wound that killed her, as a reminder of her own mortality and the Lord's blessing.

A blessed can only raise someone who's been dead less than his Faith rank in days. After that, he's better off invoking *last rites* because if his companion gets up out of the grave then—well, let's say the posse better have its guns loaded.

Deities tend to hold on firmly to their most devout—no matter who's asking for them back!

If the subject is undead, his soul is long gone (undead in *Deadlands* are animated by manitous with some of the corpse's memories, but the original soul is no longer present). The intervention has no effect on these unfortunates.

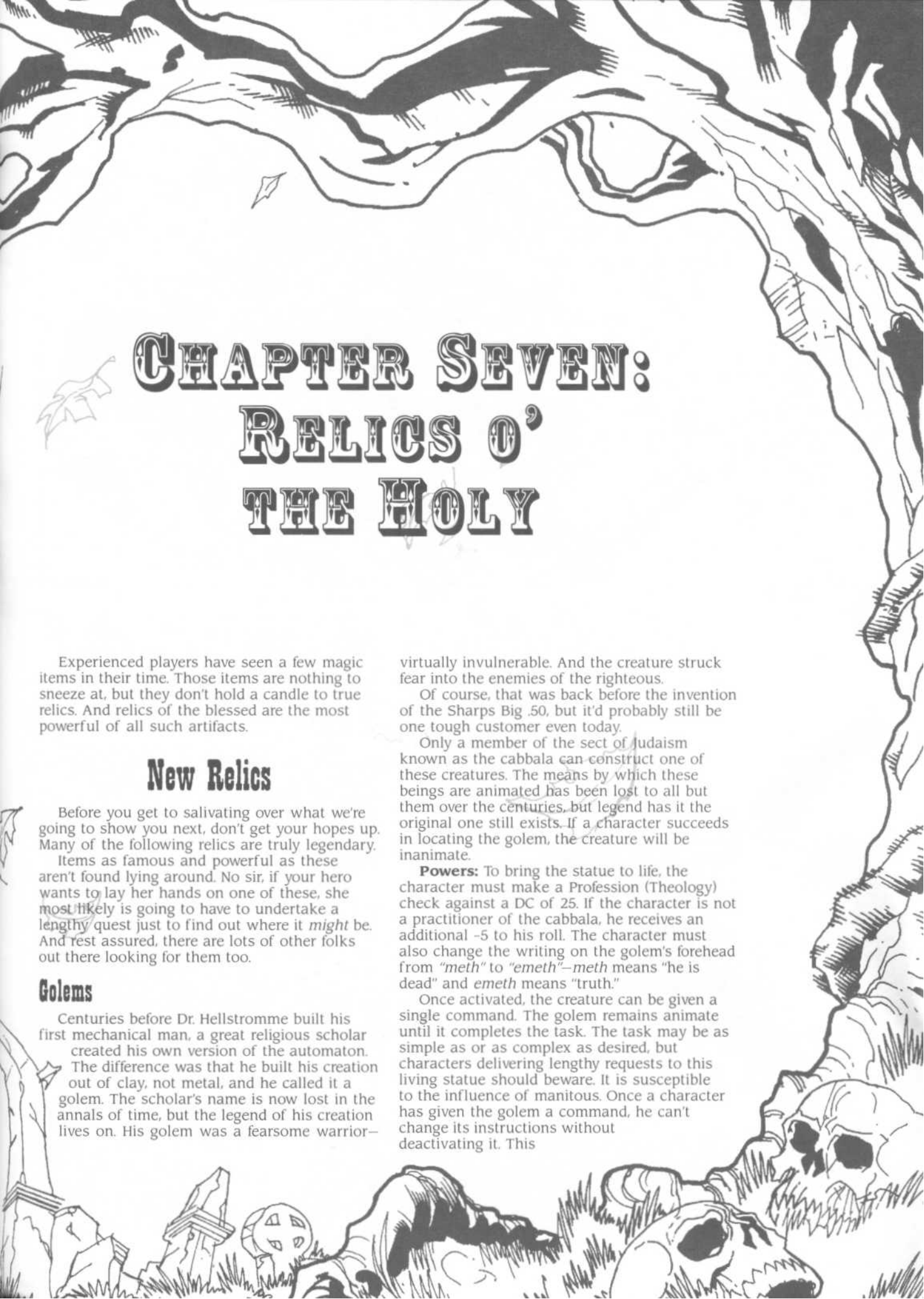
The Harrowed are a bit different because their souls *are* still trapped inside their corpses. If the manitou is first banished (via *exorcism*), this intervention restores the poor sodbuster back to real, breath-drawing life—sans malignant hitchhiker.

Developing New Interventions

If you think of a new intervention or two for your character, that's great. Pretty much the sky's the limit, but consult with your Marshal before you get too involved. This is even more important with interventions because of the power levels the hero's dealing with. Like we've said before: THE MARSHAL HAS FINAL APPROVAL.







CHAPTER SEVEN: RELICS O' THE HOLY

Experienced players have seen a few magic items in their time. Those items are nothing to sneeze at, but they don't hold a candle to true relics. And relics of the blessed are the most powerful of all such artifacts.

New Relics

Before you get to salivating over what we're going to show you next, don't get your hopes up. Many of the following relics are truly legendary.

Items as famous and powerful as these aren't found lying around. No sir, if your hero wants to lay her hands on one of these, she most likely is going to have to undertake a lengthy quest just to find out where it *might* be. And rest assured, there are lots of other folks out there looking for them too.

Golems

Centuries before Dr. Hellstromme built his first mechanical man, a great religious scholar created his own version of the automaton. The difference was that he built his creation out of clay, not metal, and he called it a golem. The scholar's name is now lost in the annals of time, but the legend of his creation lives on. His golem was a fearsome warrior—

virtually invulnerable. And the creature struck fear into the enemies of the righteous.

Of course, that was back before the invention of the Sharps Big .50, but it'd probably still be one tough customer even today.

Only a member of the sect of Judaism known as the cabbala can construct one of these creatures. The means by which these beings are animated has been lost to all but them over the centuries, but legend has it the original one still exists. If a character succeeds in locating the golem, the creature will be inanimate.

Powers: To bring the statue to life, the character must make a Profession (Theology) check against a DC of 25. If the character is not a practitioner of the cabbala, he receives an additional -5 to his roll. The character must also change the writing on the golem's forehead from "*meth*" to "*emeth*"—*meth* means "he is dead" and *emeth* means "truth."

Once activated, the creature can be given a single command. The golem remains animate until it completes the task. The task may be as simple as or as complex as desired, but characters delivering lengthy requests to this living statue should beware. It is susceptible to the influence of manitous. Once a character has given the golem a command, he can't change its instructions without deactivating it. This



requires erasing part of the script on the golem's forehead and changing it back to "meth." Each time a character reanimates the golem, he receives a cumulative -1 for any previous animation attempts.

Use the stats for a Clay Golem on pages 108, 110 of the *Monster Manual* for an activated golem.

Taint: Each day the golem is walking around this green Earth, the activator must make a DC 15 Wisdom check. If the roll is failed, the creature has been corrupted by a manitou. Due to the powers that animate the creature of clay, the manitou does not gain absolute control of the golem. However, it does cause the statue to pervert the instructions given to it. The manitou warps the spirit of any commands in the most destructive ways possible.

Holy Grail

Yep, this the big one: the cup Jesus Christ drank from at the Last Supper. It's the...well...the holy grail of relics.

Word has it King Arthur had a whole bunch of his friends looking for this for years. To this day, there are still folks who spend their whole lives trying to find this cup.

The grail itself varies in appearance. Sometimes it may look gilded and of incredible

Earthly value, while at others it appears to be a simple earthenware vessel. That's probably one reason it's so hard to find.

Powers: Anyone who drinks from the Grail is instantly healed of all wounds, illnesses, or other infirmities, including dementias or phobias. No roll is necessary, the effect is automatically successful.

Taint: The Grail never remains in anyone's possession for long. Each day, the possessor of the Grail rolls a d20. If the roll is a 1, the Grail disappears from wherever it is kept, moving to some new, unknown locale to inspire hope and faith.

Moses' Walkin' Stick

There are a few divine warriors out there who can turn a perfectly normal ax handle into an angry rattler, but nobody does it as well as Moses did. His wood viper gobbled up a whole slew of other ones without even so much as a belch!

Now, it isn't all that likely a piece of wood could last a couple of thousand years or so—but anything's possible. Anyway, one thing's for sure. If this isn't the original snake staff, it sure is a good imitation of it.

The staff is nearly six feet in total length, and over three inches in diameter. Only one of its kind has been reported so far, in the hands of an itinerant preacher last seen near Fort Bridger, Wyoming.

Powers: When cast on the ground, its owner may make a Faith check against a DC 15. If successful, the staff turns into a large, poisonous cobra (use the stats for a Large Viper on page 200, 202 of the *Monster Manual*).

The owner can end the effect at any time by picking the snake up by hand.

The snake obeys the instructions of its owner, and can even perform fairly complex tasks. It has roughly the intelligence of a bright dog. The snake is immune to fear and its effects.

Taint: This relic can only be used by someone of the Blessed character class. Also, if the viper is slain, the relic is destroyed as well.

Samson's Braid

Samson was a famous strongman in the Old Testament. The story goes that the secret of Samson's enormous strength was in his hair. As long as he remained unshorn, he'd keep his power.

And there was a lot of it to keep! Samson was strong enough to kill lions with his bare hands, and his last big feat was to bring down a building by pulling down its marble support columns.

Unfortunately, Samson had a weakness for the ladies, and one of them, Delilah, had an agreement with Samson's enemies. She also had a pretty sharp set of scissors. To make a long story short, she clipped his hair and turned him over to his enemies.

Samson's misfortune is another man's gain. It seems a couple of braids of his hair have been handed down over the years and have turned up again. A hero owning one of these braids is likely to make a circus strongman look like he's wearing lace undershorts, if you know what we're saying.

Powers: A character who owns one of these items gains a tremendous boost in his Strength

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ability. The hero's score is raised by +4. The hero also gains the Sand Feat.

Taint: The character loses the Strength bonus if he loses the braid. Also, the braid is less effective for characters who are not members of the Jewish faith (Samson was Jewish himself). These heroes only gain a +2 boost in their Strength attribute, and they don't receive the Sand Feat.

Spirit Blade

These double-edged swords are primarily found in certain nomadic Muslim tribes across the Big Pond. Fortunately for heroes west of the Atlantic, a couple have found their way across the ocean.

The sword isn't particularly sharp or fancy—in fact, the casual observer would probably pass it over in favor of a good cavalry saber. The true power of the weapon lies not in combat, but rather in its ability to fend off hostile spirits. By performing ritual dances symbolizing combat, the character is able to ward off supernatural evil.

Power: Used as a normal weapon, the *spirit blade* is treated like a falchion except it only does 1d6 damage. Its true power lies in its protective gifts.





The wielder of one of these amazing blades may invoke a short-term *sanctify* miracle with it. This requires the owner to perform a complex dance ritual that takes one hour to complete. To do so, the wielder must make a Dexterity-based Profession (Theology) check against a DC of 15. If the dancer is interrupted, he must start over from the beginning. When successful, the blade invokes the effects of a *sanctify* miracle on a circular area up to 30 feet in diameter. *Sanctify* only lasts until the next sunrise however.

The blade may also be used to perform an *exorcism* like the miracle of the same name. The wielder must make a Dexterity-based Profession (Theology) check against a DC of 20 to perform the dance necessary for this ability. Once the 20-minute sword dance has been performed, the character can invoke *exorcism* even if he doesn't know the miracle. If he does know *exorcism*, he gains a +2 to his Faith roll in the opposed test.

Taint: None, but the ceremonies required to use the blade's abilities aren't exactly common knowledge. If the hero wielding the spirit blade isn't of the Muslim faith, he receives a -6 to his Profession (Theology) rolls to use this relic's

powers. The Powers that Be do allow persons of other denominations to use the sword in exchange for dancing around like wild madmen.

Splinter o' the True Cross

Back in the Middle Ages, just about every square mile had at least one charlatan selling a piece of the cross Jesus died on. Of course, most of those folks were lying, but there are still quite a few of the real ones floating around today.

Most of these so-called splinters are actually little more than small slivers of old, dry wood. There are a few bits that were stained with the blood of Christ as he hung upon the cross, and these ordinary-looking pieces hold wondrous powers.

Powers: The bearer of one of these relics can *cure light wounds* three times per day. The relic works for anyone who is not evil in alignment, and will only heal those who are not evil in alignment.

In addition, a blessed who possesses the shard receives a +2 divine bonus on all Faith rolls when using the *protection* miracle.

Taint: Given the nature of this item, it is only truly effective for members of the Christian faith. If the owner of this relic isn't a follower of Christianity, she can't perform the *cure light wounds* spell using this relic (although she could invoke it on her own if she had already been granted access to the spell). Also, non-Christians gain no benefit from this item when performing the *protection* miracle.

Venerated Censer

Many religions use sweet-smelling smoke to aid in ceremonies and meditation. Some even use the perfumed fumes to protect against evil spirits and the like. These little incense holders provide protection of the latter sort—which is probably a whole lot more useful given the general climate of the Weird West.

The design and appearance of the censer depends on which religion produced it, but all are relatively small and easily portable. There are a fair number of these handy little fumigators around lately.

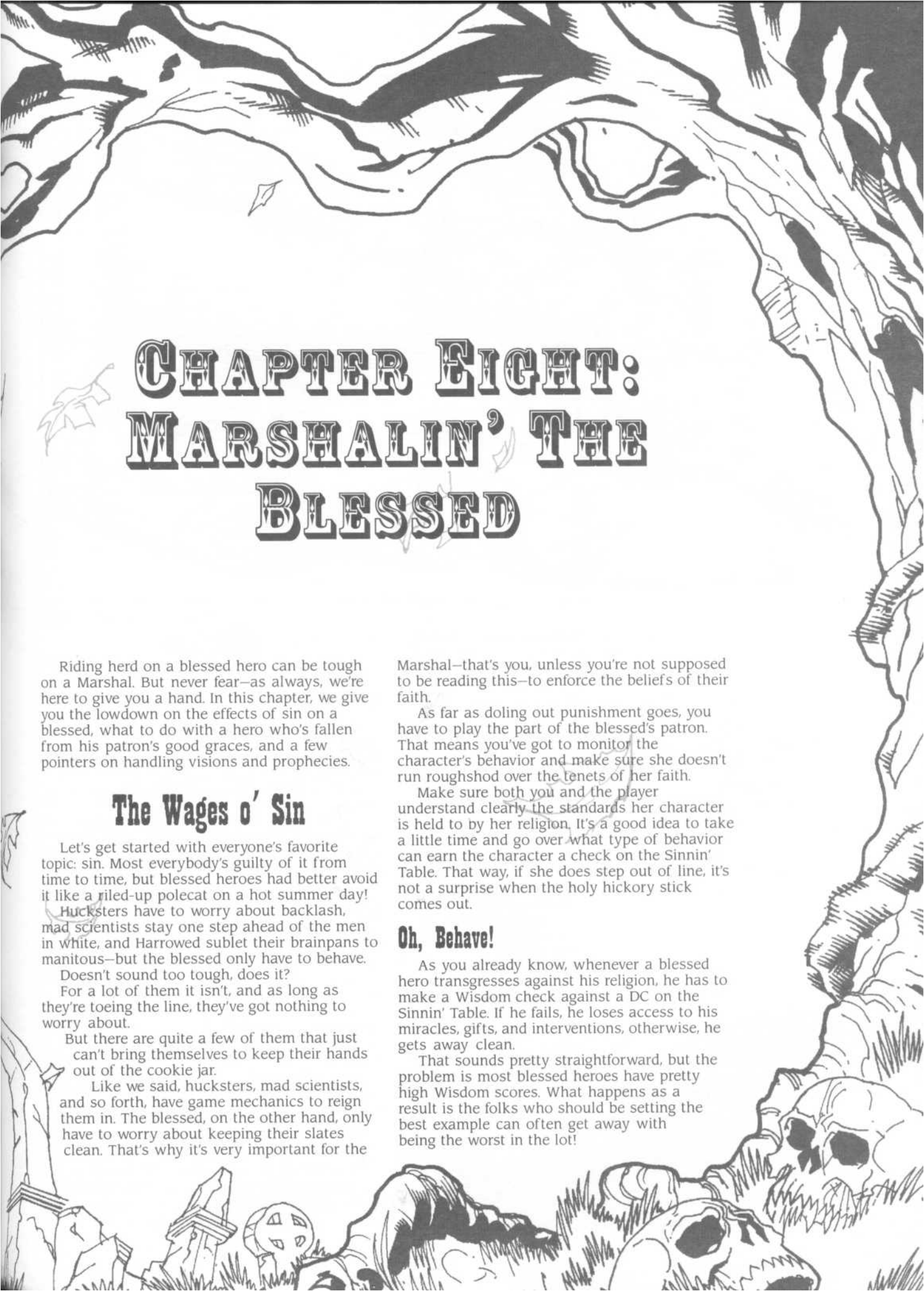
Power: While incense burns in the censer, the sweet-smelling smoke produced duplicates the effects of the miracle *safekeepin'*. The smoke covers a circular area 20 feet in diameter. The censer does not require any special incense to produce this effect—any will do. A single cone of incense can burn for 1d4 hours in the censer.

Taint: None. However, these devices are best used indoors because even a brisk breeze can weaken the effect, allowing any affected creature a +2 on its Will save. A strong wind completely negates the effect of the censer.

THE MARSHAL'S HANDBOOK







CHAPTER EIGHT: MARSHALIN' THE BLESSED

Riding herd on a blessed hero can be tough on a Marshal. But never fear—as always, we're here to give you a hand. In this chapter, we give you the lowdown on the effects of sin on a blessed, what to do with a hero who's fallen from his patron's good graces, and a few pointers on handling visions and prophecies.

The Wages o' Sin

Let's get started with everyone's favorite topic: sin. Most everybody's guilty of it from time to time, but blessed heroes had better avoid it like a riled-up polecat on a hot summer day!

Hucksters have to worry about backlash, mad scientists stay one step ahead of the men in white, and Harrowed sublet their brainpans to manitous—but the blessed only have to behave.

Doesn't sound too tough, does it?

For a lot of them it isn't, and as long as they're toeing the line, they've got nothing to worry about.

But there are quite a few of them that just can't bring themselves to keep their hands out of the cookie jar.

Like we said, hucksters, mad scientists, and so forth, have game mechanics to reign them in. The blessed, on the other hand, only have to worry about keeping their slates clean. That's why it's very important for the

Marshal—that's you, unless you're not supposed to be reading this—to enforce the beliefs of their faith.

As far as doling out punishment goes, you have to play the part of the blessed's patron. That means you've got to monitor the character's behavior and make sure she doesn't run roughshod over the tenets of her faith.

Make sure both you and the player understand clearly the standards her character is held to by her religion. It's a good idea to take a little time and go over what type of behavior can earn the character a check on the Sinnen' Table. That way, if she does step out of line, it's not a surprise when the holy hickory stick comes out.

Oh, Behave!

As you already know, whenever a blessed hero transgresses against his religion, he has to make a Wisdom check against a DC on the Sinnen' Table. If he fails, he loses access to his miracles, gifts, and interventions, otherwise, he gets away clean.

That sounds pretty straightforward, but the problem is most blessed heroes have pretty high Wisdom scores. What happens as a result is the folks who should be setting the best example can often get away with being the worst in the lot!



To address this, we've added just a little to the whole sinning process.

When a blessed sins, his patron denies him access to any of his miracles and gifts for a short while. The amount of time depends on the severity of the sin committed, but even a short time usually serves as a potent reminder.

Only blessed are denied access to their miracles as a result of sinning. Other members of a faith risk running afoul of human law when they stray from the straight and narrow. And perhaps their mortal souls.

Misusing Divine Powers

Hopefully, this isn't a problem in your campaign, but if it is, it can get to be pretty serious. If a blessed hero uses a miracle or a gift to knowingly commit transgressions against her religion, it's always considered at least a major sin.

This applies whether or not the act is committed by the hero herself.

If the hero knowingly uses an intervention to commit a sin like this, it's treated as if the hero had committed a mortal sin. Additionally, the hero loses an additional Divine Intervention, if she has one.

Deities don't take kindly to folks abusing their divine power!

Miracles

While we're on the subject, we're going to let you in on a secret even the blessed don't know: how miracles really work.

Earlier in this book, we talked about how deities avoid directly involving themselves with the goings on here on Earth. Likewise, a miracle or gift doesn't come directly from the blessed's patron, no matter what the blessed might believe.

Rather, the deity simply opens a conduit for the blessed to the Hunting Grounds and then helps the hero channel this energy for the desired effect. This means that the blessed is actually drawing power for his miracles from the same place as hucksters, mad scientists, shamans, and even abominations and black magicians.

Of course, the blessed's patron protects the hero from many of the ill effects suffered by other folks who tap the Hunting Grounds. The deity's influence prevents any chance of a manitou ambushing the blessed while she's performing a miracle.

That's why blessed don't suffer severe backlash, dementia, or similar dangers. Even though they're drawing power from the Hunting Grounds, they're not actually working with manitous—and their respective deities take pains to make sure they stay that way.

By only providing the blessed access to power from the Hunting Grounds, the patron isn't upsetting the balance. Instead, the deity is merely giving the blessed a fair shot against the advantages already enjoyed by her foes.

Does that make the miracle any less "holy"? No, because the magical energy of the Hunting Grounds isn't good or evil, it's just a tool. It's how that tool is used that's important.

Divine interventions, on the other hand, are actually direct works of the deity being called upon. The powers come not from the Hunting Grounds (though such beings do dwell there), but from the higher power itself. That's one reason why they're given out so rarely.

For a divine intervention to work, the deity has to take an active hand in the workings of the world. This is something the Almighty (by whatever name the blessed chooses to call his deity) is generally loathe to do. It's got to do with not wanting to interfere in the affairs of mortals and infringing on their free will.

The Quest

There are a number of reasons for a blessed or other character to go on a quest. A character trying to gain, or regain, the advantages of being a blessed must complete a quest. You, the Marshal, may also want to use a quest as a seed for an adventure.

Whatever the reason, the character has to learn the goals of the quest in order to complete it. There are a few ways to go about this, depending on why the quest is necessary in the first place.

Regaining Lost Grace

A blessed hero who's lost his divinely inspired abilities must undertake a quest to regain the use of them. Before the character can begin the quest, he must have purchased at least 1 new rank of the Faith skill.

Once the hero has gained this new rank of Faith, he has to learn what his quest is. Merely wandering the Weird West hoping to stumble across a quest is just going to wear holes in his boots. He either has to seek out another blessed of his religion (this should be a mentor or someone of Religious Rank level 4 or higher, not just any Bible-thumper) or pray for a divine vision.

If the hero seeks out another blessed of his religion, he can learn of the goal of his quest from this character. The mentor can give him some insight into where he must go and what he must do to accomplish the quest. The mentor also works as a good mouthpiece for you, as the Marshal, to give any last-minute advice.

With this method, another advantage to the blessed character is that the mentor may be able to offer some advice or aid in the quest.

The second way to begin a quest is by divine vision. This is a little tougher on the hero than finding another character to guide him, but a cowpoke can't always find a spiritual guru when he needs one.

For this method, the character has to fast and meditate for three days. If the hero has the skill Fastin' he can use it here. Otherwise, he simply loses 2 hp a day for three days. At the end of that period, he makes a DC 15 Faith check (including the bonus from Fastin', if any). If he's successful, he gets a vision of what he

must do to complete his quest. If he fails, he has to start all over again.

Repentant Quests

Any character despicable enough to receive the mark of Cain from a divine intervention probably sits down to a bowl of rattlesnakes for breakfast. But even an hombre as tough as that eventually has to deal with other folks. To shake off this affliction, she must actually be penitent and then prove it.

It's doubtful any cowpoke low down enough to draw divine wrath onto her head has any Faith skill—but even if she does, she can't pray for a vision to guide her quest.

Repentance quests can only be started by seeking out a blessed (of any religion). As above, this blessed can't be a hero.

The blessed automatically knows why the questing character has sought him out. The blessed has all the necessary details of the quest—where, when, and what. Beyond that, the blessed is likely to give little advice.

A character on a repentance quest has to prove herself and the sincerity of her sorrow, so there are no freebies. Even if the hero completes the quest, if she isn't truly regretful of what she's done, then the quest is a failure.

The Almighty can't be fooled.





Other Quests

If you decide to use a quest for no other reason than to spark an adventure, either a vision or a blessed extra can start the hero on his way.

Another use for quests is to gain a special form of divine intervention, even one that's not listed in this book. Say, for instance, the blessed's companion has contracted lycanthropy. After praying for help from above, the hero could learn of a specific quest the heroes must undertake to lift the curse. If they're successful, the companion is cured—if not, they'd better invest in a good muzzle!

On the Quest

The quest itself should center around the hero learning more about virtuous behavior (and—in the case of a repentant quest—exactly why what he did was wrong). The specific lines between right and wrong vary from religion to religion, but certain acts are almost universally accepted as good. Selfless sacrifice, defense of the helpless, and wholehearted honesty are all safe bets here.

While the quest should focus mainly on a hero's conduct, it doesn't have to be strictly an exercise in character roleplaying. Just focus the plot around some noble act that the hero's

going to eventually have to get around to committing to get closer to the Almighty.

Lots of times, the quest that the hero's sent on is just a plot device to get him into situations that let him prove what a good guy he is. This is especially true for repentant folks, since they've got the most to prove.

For example, a hero may be directed to help a young widow and her child make a difficult trip through the mountains to a frontier home left by the late husband. There's plenty of opportunity for thrills in the scenario, but also lots of chances for the hero to prove his honor and virtue.

To continue with our example of the young widow, the hero may learn the widow isn't really a widow, she's just fleeing her violent and abusive husband—and he's just caught up with the group. It's time for the hero to do the right thing.

Once the quest is completed (and any required lessons learned), the hero should somehow be made to realize this. In some cases, the hero may simply be mistaken, in which case the blessed that sent him out on the quest sends him out again (or the visions return).

Repentant characters can return to the blessed who sent them on the quest and have their slate cleared. Those folks who were suffering under the mark of Cain have the mark removed, and they're as good as new.

Heroes seeking to become blessed gain the blessed class, and those who've fallen regain their status. In both cases, the heroes receive one miracle or gift in addition to *protection* (or another miracle or gift if the hero is of certain faiths). The hero then gets one miracle each week until she has a number of miracles equal to the amount she is supposed to have at her level.

Prophets & Visions

Planning a good vision for a character is always tough. A well-designed one can add depth and suspense to your game. Players can use them to get a vital hint to solving a difficult adventure. They help you to enhance the feeling of mystery and the supernatural. You can even plug one into your game as a cryptic dream if none of your posse has any supernatural connections.

But you have to be careful. If you give away too much, you spoil the mystery of the adventure you've spent so much time preparing, and if you are too stingy, the player is liable to feel cheated.

Fortunately, you never need to be surprised by a character needing a vision. Whether it's a blessed with the gift of *prophecy*, a shaman on a *vision quest*, or just a huckster playing a *hunch*, you're likely to be aware the character may seek a vision during the course of the adventure. You can prepare the vision at the same time you prepare the adventure.

Get out the Crystal Ball

If you have a hero in your posse with a means to call on supernatural knowledge, you should always make allowances for that.

Some abilities, like *prophecy*, can only be used once per session, so you only need to prepare a set vision or two to be ready for these requests.

On the other hand, the huckster's *hunch* and shaman's *vision quest* can be used repeatedly during a single session. There are a few ways to handle this.

The first is to simply repeat the original vision, informing the hero that until the future plays itself out, he has to work with what he's got. For now, there just isn't anything else to learn this way. This is the easiest method, and it can really hammer home the point to a hero who's being more than a little stubborn.

The second way is to build on the first vision, adding a little more detail. This works well from the Marshal's standpoint, as it doesn't run a great risk of compromising the adventure, and it can help lend a sense of mystery to the whole affair when the visions are doled out properly.

The final method is to give the character an entirely new vision. This is the hardest one for a Marshal. It requires you to devise a new vision for the character without revealing too much about the scenario.

Preparing the Vision

First, let's talk about how to prepare for ambush prophets—those persistent cowpokes with *hunch* or *vision quest* who're likely to throw a request for a vision at you more than once in a session. If you've only got a one-shot fortune teller in your posse, your job's pretty easy anyhow, so we're going to cover how to handle that later.

The important thing about a vision is to keep it cryptic. If you tell the character the answer to his question outright, you're spoiling your hard work and probably his fun.

Despite what the players might want you to believe, they really don't want you to spill the beans about the adventure all at once. Make them think a little, and the hero with the second sight should get a whole lot more fun out of the ability.

You should think of the vision as a coded message. It tells the character important information, but if she can't crack it, it's useless to her.

Determine what the vital elements of the scenario are. These parts include the major threat in the scenario, its weaknesses, and the posse itself. You may also want to consider other elements such as locales, special times or events, and past or potential victims.

Once you've determined these elements, assign each one a symbol. This is the most important part of developing the vision. These symbols form the core of the cryptic message you're going to impart to the hero.

For example, your posse is about to enter a town plagued by a werewolf. You decide the important elements are the type of abomination (a werewolf), his weakness (silver), and when he strikes (the full moon).

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Symbols

Symbols are the key to a good prophetic vision. The best way to choose a good symbol is to consider the element you want to represent. Think about what makes it unique. Then come up with a good image to represent that element.

If you're expecting to have to do more than one vision in a single scenario, it's best to stick with things to represent the elements. Getting too creative and using actions or events as symbols can cause problems if you have to do

The Surreal Enchilada

Now that you've determined all the important elements of the scenario and selected your symbols, you're ready to build the vision. Putting all the elements together, you come up with the following vision to tell the hero.

You see a number of people at a feast. All of them are in fine clothes. Some are dining neatly with fine silverware, while others use only crude wooden utensils. All the diners have large round glasses of white wine in front of them. Several waiters circle the table at regular intervals, simultaneously refilling the almost spherical glasses.

A man wearing a wool suit enters the room, his face covered by his long, tangled hair. He walks slowly around the table. Whenever the waiters refill the wine glasses, he stops at a diner who's using wooden utensils. Then he rudely seizes the plate from in front of the person and ravenously devours the food on it. The diner immediately collapses sobbing onto the table. Finally, a waiter (who looks like the next victim) steps up to the man and says, "Sir, who will be paying for this?" The man in the wool suit replies with a snarl and lunges for him as the vision ends.

In the vision, the rude newcomer represents the werewolf. He wears wool clothing and hungrily devours his food—a wolf in sheep's clothing.

The man only victimizes those diners with wooden utensils (who the group may recognize if they've seen the bodies). The silver in the silverware protects the other diners.

Finally, the moon is represented by the drinking glasses. When the orb-like glasses are full, the man makes his attack. Now this last one is pretty obscure, but there's no such thing as a free vision!



more than just one vision, unless you're comfortable making up entirely new ones on the fly.

Don't make their meanings too obvious, otherwise you might as well not bother trying to hide the message. On the other hand, if you make it too hard, the posse may never be able to figure out the vision.

Every posse is different, and it's a matter of striking the balance between intrigue and frustration that your players enjoy. It's okay to go to one or the other extreme occasionally, but you don't want to make a habit of sticking to either one.

Putting the Pieces Together

Now that you've got your symbols set up for the scenario, all that's necessary is to fit them together in a short sequence of events. Since *Deadlands* has a strong horror element, the creepier you can make the events of the vision the better. Not only does this provide the posse with clues (if they're clever enough to figure them out), but it adds to the atmosphere of the game as well!

Here's the best part about creating a vision: The events don't really have to make sense! As long as the underlying message does follow its own sort of logic, the vision can run its course—not unlike a dream. This makes it easy to set up a vision to satisfy the pesky huckster who deals himself a *hunch* when you're not expecting it. The course of events should work together to reveal the message you're trying to convey. Other than that, you've got a free hand.

One-Time Visions

Back at the beginning, we said we'd tell you how to set up for one-shot visions. Well, guess what? If you've read this far, chances are you already know all you need to make a cryptic vision for your posse.

However, since you've probably got a bit more planning time available, you can be a little more elaborate than is possible with an off-the-cuff vision. Your symbols can include actions or events (and people as well as things) much more easily than those which have to be produced at the drop of a hat. You can even use synonyms, puns, or a play on words to hide your message. But you want to make sure to not get too caught up in all the riddles. It's most important to keep the whole experience as eerie and surreal as possible.

The trickier the vision, the more rewarded the heroes are going to feel when they work it out. No one really appreciates a gimme—well, not in the long run.

New Black Magic

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Up until now, we've told you and your players all about the blessed. What with all the new miracles, gifts, and so forth we've given them, you're probably getting a little worried about how your poor villains are going to fare against these holy rollers. Never fear, because we've given the bad guys a couple of new tricks too.

Here are two new black magic spells to unleash on your heroes when they least expect it. These follow the rules for black magic presented in the *Deadlands D20* rulebook.

Curse

Type: Evocation

Level: 3

Components: V, S, F

Casting Time: 5 minutes

Range: Special

Target: One person

Duration: Varies

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

Few cults use blatant means to deal with their enemies. Some prefer a more subtle, if somewhat slower, method of removing the competition. This draws a lot less attention.

Curse inflicts a slow wasting on the target represented by a daily loss of the victim's hit points. Hit points lost to this black magic cannot be recovered by normal means. Once the victim reaches 0, he becomes bedridden, and he begins to suffer damage as usual when his hit points reach low negative numbers.

The caster must see the target or have an item belonging to the victim in order to cast the spell. After that, there is no range restriction, and the spell has a virtually limitless duration.

The caster can freely release the *curse* at any time, and killing the cultist who invoked the *curse* ends the spell as well. The spell *dispel magic* is also an effective means of lifting a *curse*. While magical cures can restore some of the lost hp, they don't prevent further losses.

The hp loss is based on the caster's level with the spell.

Curse

Level	Hit Points Lost Each Day
5-6	1
7-8	1-2 (d4/2)
9-10	1-3 (d6/2)
11-12	1d4
13+	1d6

Sendin'

Type: Illusion

Level: 2

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 hour

Range: 5 miles/level

Target: One person

Duration: 1 night

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

When a character gets on the bad side of a cult, it may seem like there's nowhere left to hide, and no place she can run. *Sendin'* lets the unholy servants hound their prey, even in her sleep.

This spell allows the cultist to inflict horrible nightmares upon the character. Although each casting lasts only a single night, the cultist can cast the spell on the victim each night to get a sustained drain on his prey's will. The DC for the victim's Wisdom roll to resist the nightmare is 15.

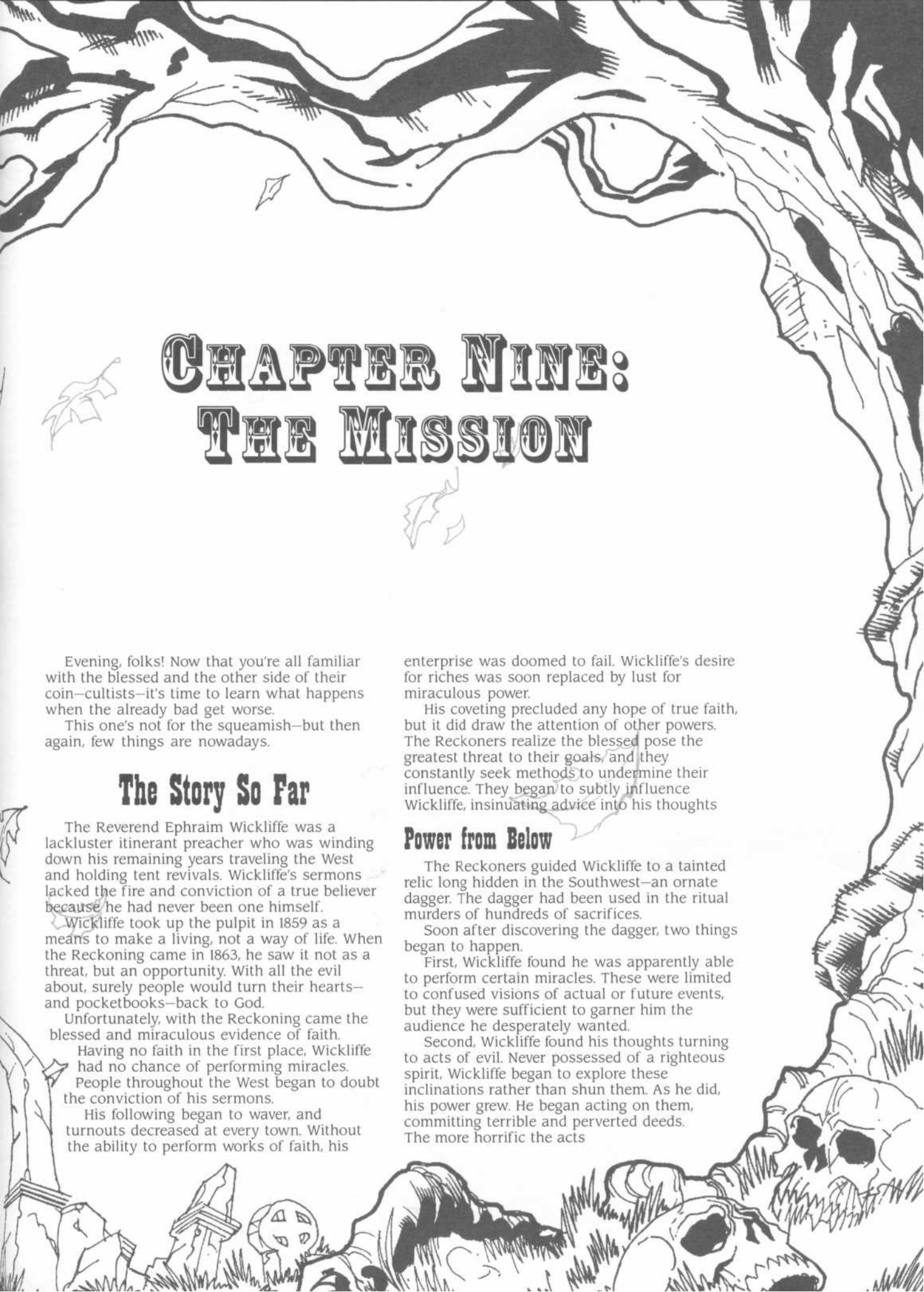
The Marshal should tailor these nightmares to fit the scenario or campaign rather than simply telling the character she's having bad dreams. The upside for the dark dreamer is that such nightmares *might* have some useful information in them—at least symbolically. See the previous section on visions for some ideas.

The spell has a range of 50 miles times the level the caster has in the spell. The spell caster must possess an item that belongs to the intended victim to invoke the spell.

Dreamcatcher relics provide their usual bonuses against this spell.







CHAPTER NINE: THE MISSION

Evening, folks! Now that you're all familiar with the blessed and the other side of their coin—cultists—it's time to learn what happens when the already bad get worse.

This one's not for the squeamish—but then again, few things are nowadays.

The Story So Far

The Reverend Ephraim Wickliffe was a lackluster itinerant preacher who was winding down his remaining years traveling the West and holding tent revivals. Wickliffe's sermons lacked the fire and conviction of a true believer because he had never been one himself.

Wickliffe took up the pulpit in 1859 as a means to make a living, not a way of life. When the Reckoning came in 1863, he saw it not as a threat, but an opportunity. With all the evil about, surely people would turn their hearts—and pocketbooks—back to God.

Unfortunately, with the Reckoning came the blessed and miraculous evidence of faith.

Having no faith in the first place, Wickliffe had no chance of performing miracles. People throughout the West began to doubt the conviction of his sermons.

His following began to waver, and turnouts decreased at every town. Without the ability to perform works of faith, his

enterprise was doomed to fail. Wickliffe's desire for riches was soon replaced by lust for miraculous power.

His coveting precluded any hope of true faith, but it did draw the attention of other powers. The Reckoners realize the blessed pose the greatest threat to their goals, and they constantly seek methods to undermine their influence. They began to subtly influence Wickliffe, insinuating advice into his thoughts

Power from Below

The Reckoners guided Wickliffe to a tainted relic long hidden in the Southwest—an ornate dagger. The dagger had been used in the ritual murders of hundreds of sacrifices.

Soon after discovering the dagger, two things began to happen.

First, Wickliffe found he was apparently able to perform certain miracles. These were limited to confused visions of actual or future events, but they were sufficient to garner him the audience he desperately wanted.

Second, Wickliffe found his thoughts turning to acts of evil. Never possessed of a righteous spirit, Wickliffe began to explore these inclinations rather than shun them. As he did, his power grew. He began acting on them, committing terrible and perverted deeds. The more horrific the acts

he performed, the more power he gained.

He was careful to keep his heinous acts hidden. If anything, his reputation as a pious religious leader grew during this period.

It wasn't long until he wrongly associated his newfound power with the strange dagger he possessed. Actually, his own black heart had drawn the attention of the Reckoners. Whatever the source, all Wickliffe desired was more power. He began to search occult texts and books of forgotten lore for other forbidden sources of magic.

The Disciples o' Obedience

Wickliffe learned of a rite, called the Ritual of Opening, which would create a gateway to another plane and grant him access to unlimited power. Although he didn't know it, what he had actually discovered was a method of creating a portal that would allow the Reckoners greater access to our world.

However, such a gateway would need more than simple incantations. The portal required a physical construction on our world, as well as the sacrifice of many lives to the Reckoners.

He knew the undertaking would take more resources than he had ready access to, so he began to cultivate a following. He named his followers the "Disciples of Obedience" and preached adherence to the guidance of Heaven.

Of course, Wickliffe, who was now calling himself the Prophet, was the sole translator of this guidance, which was delivered to him each night by "a holy messenger of the Almighty Himself."

Within a few years, his cult had grown to include members from all walks of life, from simple laborers to wealthy Eastern businessmen. Wickliffe knew the time had come to complete his task.

The Mission

Locating a remote spot in the eastern Arizona desert, Wickliffe moved the truly dedicated among his following, now numbering over 40 men, women, and children, to a permanent compound, one where they would "be insulated from the temptations of the material world." Actually, he wanted to remove them to where he could practice his abominable rites in private.

There he had the members construct a "mission" to a strict set of plans. Wickliffe had designed these blueprints based on magical formulae he had uncovered in the occult texts he was studying. Few, if any, of the members understood they were actually constructing a huge portal to the Hunting Grounds, and none knew the implications.

Sacrifice

Once the "mission" was completed to his satisfaction, Wickliffe began the final steps to his enormous Ritual of Opening. Using biblical references out of context, he began to brainwash his followers to believe that not only was human sacrifice an accepted means of worship, it was actually the expected!

Within months, these acts began in earnest. He used only children at first for these heinous acts, but was eventually forced to begin drawing upon the older, more useful Disciples. Soon, however, Wickliffe realized he would deplete his following too quickly were he to continue to sacrifice Disciples, even if he attempted to limit his choices.

Given the lawless region he had selected as a site for the mission, finding another supply for victims was relatively easy.

He contacted a group of bandits using the region as a hiding place. Their leader, Emile Bouchard, was a deserter from the Foreign Legion and had less scruples than a drunken Gila monster. Bouchard agreed to provide the Disciples with slaves for suitable payment in gold coin.

Wickliffe had not only amassed a sizable treasury since finding the dagger, but he also still had numerous followers in the outside world sending contributions, so he readily accepted Bouchard's offer. Greed had long since been replaced by his lust for unnatural power.

For nearly a year, Bouchard supplied Wickliffe with a steady flow of victims, and Wickliffe's power grew to incredible levels. With the aid of Bouchard, the cult eventually came within reach of Wickliffe's goal.

Then the bandits made a mistake.

Retaliation

Bouchard's men, on a raid, unwittingly seized the daughter of the Apache war chief Anais. The Indians tracked the band of cutthroats to Wickliffe's mission, where the bandits had dropped off their human cargo.

There they observed the Disciples for a short period of time. They never saw the chieftain's daughter, but the war band's shaman had a vision revealing that the cult had already sacrificed her.

Anais' shaman also identified Wickliffe as a man of unnatural power. He told the war chieftain that Wickliffe must be slain and that his only weakness was what he held most dear.

That night, the Apaches crept into the mission and slew the Disciples, every man and woman, as they slept.

Wickliffe, warned by a vision from his evil magics, attempted to hide in his treasury, but the Indians soon found him. Unfortunately, Anais, seeing the surrounding riches, misunderstood his shaman's vision and believed material wealth was Wickliffe's passion.

The Apaches melted down most of the cult's treasure and forced Wickliffe to drink the molten gold. Believing him dead, they then departed the mission.

The mission still sits in the Arizona desert, apparently devoid of life, a burned-out adobe shell.

But Wickliffe is not dead. Although the pain inflicted upon his body by the Indians was unimaginable, the Reckoners had long ago identified him as a favored servant, and they had no intention of letting him pass on so easily with his task incomplete. With the sacrifice of Anais' daughter, Wickliffe needed only three more victims to complete his Ritual of Opening and create a Deadland in the desert.

Like a spider in its web, he awaits the arrival of his prey.

The Setup

A cult representative normally made a monthly trip into Tombstone, an almost four-day ride to the southwest to receive and reply to any correspondence from the group's backers in the East. Almost two months have passed since the last contact was made with the mission.

The posse can be drawn into this adventure in a number of ways.

A blessed hero in the posse can be contacted by influential members of his religion who want him to investigate the cult and its aims.

The characters can be hired by a former member of the cult to track down a missing loved one. Or a current member of the cult can enlist them to regain contact with the mission. Even better, a relative or loved one of one of the posse could be involved with the Disciples.

If all else fails, the posse could even come upon the mission during a ride through the wilderness.

Although the adventure is set in Arizona, little effort is needed to place it in virtually any other western locale. All that you've really got to have is a place to put the mission that's fairly isolated from civilization.

Reverend Ephraim Wickliffe

Ephraim Wickliffe should, by all rights, be a dead man. Having molten gold poured down the throat has that effect on most folks, even the really stubborn ones. However, Wickliffe's ties to the Reckoners unnaturally preserved his wicked life.

After the Apache war band slaughtered the remaining cultists and "killed" Wickliffe, they hurriedly departed the cursed ground of the mission. They rode off so quickly, in fact, they didn't notice Wickliffe wasn't actually dead. The cult leader dragged his broken body back into his unholy chapel, where he hid until he recovered.

Now he lurks in the tunnels beneath the mission, waiting for the few victims he needs to complete his Ritual of Opening and open the path to the Hunting Grounds. The posse's arrival leads them right into his hands.



Wickliffe particularly despises blessed characters, and he focuses his more insidious black magic on them whenever he gets the chance to do so. These characters are the first targets of his curse and *sending* spells (see below).

Once a handsome middle-aged man, Wickliffe's body now bears the scars of the horrible vengeance Anais wreaked upon it. His face, throat, and torso bear the terrible burns the gold inflicted, and some of the metal remains embedded in his skin and teeth. The rest of the cult's treasury sits heavily in his burned and distended belly!

Wickliffe is now truly a creature of Evil. By all rights he should be a rotting corpse, but his obsession and the power of the Reckoners have continued his unnatural existence. Regardless of his appearance, he is not Harrowed—although the posse may mistake him for such. The Reckoners have made Wickliffe much more than simply undead.

Wickliffe: Abomination; CR 10; Medium-sized humanoid; HD 8d8+32 (69 hp); Init 0; Spd. 30 ft.; AC 10; Atk +9/+4 melee, +8/+3 ranged; AL CE; SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +8; Str 12; Dex 10; Con 18; Int 13; Wis 14; Cha 14.

Skills & Feats: Diplomacy +5, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (occult) +5, Profession (theology) +3, Sense Motive +3, Speak Languages (Latin); Endurance, Leadership.

Special Abilities: Immunity: Wickliffe is immune to all damage, and magical attacks only do subdual damage to him. He can only be slain by the very dagger which he believes gives him his unholy power. Any wound inflicted by the weapon puts him down, and his body begins to decay rapidly; Dagger: 1d6.

Black Magic Trappings:

Bolts o' Doom: In addition to granting him virtual immortality, Wickliffe's masters have given him an additional power as an abomination. Wickliffe can pull pieces of molten gold and flesh from his torso and hurl them at his foes. Each of these *bolts* contains about an ounce of gold (if the victim cares to keep the disgusting mass) and does 1d8+8 points of damage.

Curse: The victim is overcome by a strange disease. Sores begin to break out on the character, but the ailment defies any attempt at diagnosis. The character takes 1 point of damage each day until he is healed. Only magical healing can cure this disease.

Forewarnin': Wickliffe's eyes roll unnaturally far back into his head, and he babbles incoherently for the duration of the "prophecy." This is a chance for the Marshal to bestow upon the players any information of the future he deems necessary, but it should always be very unclear and filled with uncertainties.

Scrye: The caster must hold the eyes of a victim of the dagger while working this spell. Over the years, Wickliffe has collected quite a

few pairs for just this purpose. This spell acts as the *clairaudience/clairvoyance* spell from page 184 of the *Player's Handbook*.

Sendin': The caster can send terribly graphic nightmares to the victim. (See the upcoming sections on Wickliffe's nightmare.)

Stun: The naked blade of the dagger must touch the victim. The caster must make an opposed Fort save against the target. If successful, the target takes 1d8 points of subdual damage. This spell may be combined with a normal attack with the dagger.

Zombie: The dagger can animate its victims. At the start of the adventure, all of these are in the bottom of the well.

The Dagger

Wickliffe's dagger is a strange piece, but it has no magical value in and of itself. Originally, it was a simple piece of flint used in primitive sacrifices, but over the centuries, a sequence of owners have spruced it up a bit.

Now its flint blade, stained with the blood of hundreds, is set in an ornate gold handle. Small jewels are embedded in the pommel and guard.

Wickliffe is completely convinced his powers spring from the blade. For years, he has kept the dagger in his possession, disguising it and its sheath as an ornate crucifix which he wears around his neck.

Chapter One: Leaving Civilization

The settlement nearest the mission is Pueblo Viejo, a small town on the eastern border of Arizona. It's 50 miles south of the mission, so it's over a day's ride from the town to the mission.

Pueblo Viejo

Pueblo Viejo, AZ—Fear Level 0

With a total of 42 inhabitants, Pueblo Viejo is unlikely to be mistaken for a metropolis. The town's one hotel is "The Grand." The only saloon is in the hotel. There's a local sheriff's office, but it is only manned part-time.

The posse can find common items at the town's general store, but exotic items are unavailable. For such purchases or to find a telegraph office, the heroes must travel to Tombstone, almost 80 miles to the southwest.

The townsfolk know little of the Disciples or the mission itself. The Disciples divorced themselves from civilization over a year ago and only occasionally passed through on their way to Tombstone to pick up packages or messages from followers back East.

Overland

As the posse leaves Pueblo Viejo, the surrounding wilderness quickly closes in around them. It soon becomes evident Wickliffe chose this region for its isolation and remoteness. Within an hour, the town

disappears from sight, and the heroes are alone in the wilderness.

The journey to the mission is rather uneventful, with one exception. At around mid-afternoon on the first day, have each posse member make a DC 20 Spot check.

Any character who's successful gets the feeling the posse is being watched. A +2 on the roll reveals a small band of Indians, most likely Apaches, are shadowing the group.

The Indians are members of Anais' band who've been tracking Bouchard's outlaws. They are curious about the heroes and follow them from a distance. From here on out, whether the heroes know it or not, Anais and his warriors watch them. Any attempt to parlay with the Indians fails. The warriors simply disappear into the wilderness before the posse gets near.

Chapter Two: Arrival

The Mission of the Disciples of Obedience—Fear Level 3

By mid-morning on the second day of travel from Pueblo Viejo, the posse reaches its destination.

The Mission

The mission is an adobe compound composed of five main buildings inside a circular outer wall. It remains much as Anais' warriors left it almost a month ago after their raid on the Disciples.

Directly opposite the gate stands the chapel, with the other four buildings spaced evenly around the 8-foot walls of the compound. In the center of the yard stands a stone-ringed well. A

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dry and dusty breeze gently blows tumbleweeds through the courtyard.

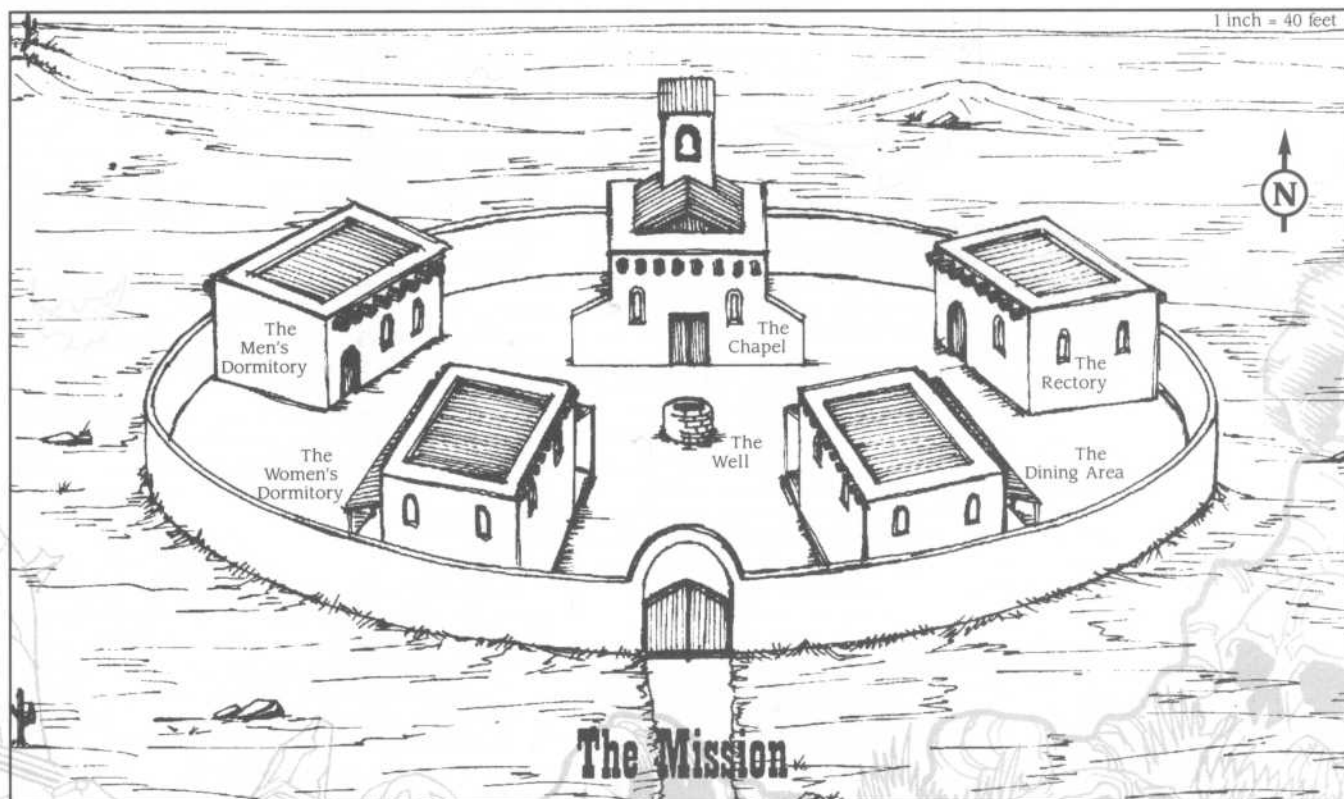
Most of the buildings stand open, with windows broken and some fire damage evident. The buzzard-picked remains of four Disciples lie scattered around the compound. The reasons they shuffled off this mortal coil (bullet wounds, and lots of them) are still obvious.

The Murder Weapons

A few of the bodies have remnants of arrows still stuck in them, not to mention bullet wounds. A DC 20 Intelligence roll recognizes them as Apache arrows in style. Also, a DC 10 Heal check reveals that many were many killed with other primitive weapons, such as tomahawks or knives. A character who makes a DC 15 Heal check learns the bodies have been dead for nearly two months.

The Bonfire

A DC 10 Spot check locates the remains of a large bonfire near the entrance to the chapel, discernible even after nearly two months. Anyone examining the area more closely should make either a DC 15 Spot or Wilderness Lore check. If successful, the character finds a few globs of gold. These are droplets spilled during Wickliffe's "murder."



Countin' Corpses

If a hero is clever enough to compare the number of victims found to the number of beds in the compound which were occupied just before the massacre (as shown by the beds appearing unmade), she notices a discrepancy. One body remains unaccounted for: Wickliffe's, although the posse isn't likely to know the identity of the elusive "corpse."

The Wall

Any character inquisitive enough to want to examine the top of the compound wall must first make a DC 10 Climb check. Failure means she must look for another means up. Once on top of the wall, she should make a DC 15 Spot check. If successful, she detects symbols lightly carved into the top of the wall. These symbols run the entire length of the surrounding wall.

A character studying the symbols who makes a DC 10 Knowledge (occult) check realizes they are part of a protective circle, meant to prevent supernatural beings from crossing once it's activated. However, it takes a single person a full day's effort to transcribe and translate all the symbols carved along the top of the wall.

The Well

The well is long dry, if it ever actually held water. Any hero inspecting the well notices there is no equipment nearby to allow water to be drawn.

The well descends into dark shadows after only about 25 feet. Any light source dropped in the well sputters and dims, revealing nothing.

A cowpoke brave enough to descend the well is advised to use a rope. Although the walls are rough and provide ample handholds, a fall could lead to broken bones at the least.

If a hero descends into the well, after about 30 feet the temperature drops 10°, and it continues to fall as the character descends. At 50 feet, the hero finds it difficult to see the opening above him, and the walls of the well seem to be made of some slick, smooth stone. Finally at 60 feet, the character reaches a pile of bones and rotting remains of all Wickliffe's sacrificial victims, requiring the hero to make a DC 20 Will save or come scurrying back up the rope. Anyone stern enough to sort through the remains finds over 50 victims.

Underneath the pile of carrion, a large rune is inscribed in the rock of the floor. Of course, this is buried under more than 15 feet or so of decaying corpses, so it's going to take some really determined heroes to find it. A hero who sees the rune and makes a DC 15 Knowledge (occult) check recognizes the rune as marking a mystical portal or gateway of some sort.

The well is the physical location of the gateway Wickliffe seeks to open in the center of

his mysterious mission. Until the ceremony is complete, however, it is only an empty hole in the ground.

The Men's Dormitory

The door to this single-story building swings freely in the wind. Most of the dormitory's few windows are broken from the outside. Propped on the southern wall of the building are a number of tools, including picks, shovels, an ax, etc.

The interior is sparsely furnished. The building is divided by a hallway, with a large room to both the north and south of the entry. A potbelly stove stands in both rooms, and a number of oil lamps hang along the walls for light. Ten bunks also line the walls of each room.

At the end of each bed stands a foot locker. Inside each is a meager collection of personal belongings, mostly work clothes. Each also contains a small booklet detailing the beliefs of the Disciples. These can be simply stated as being obedient to the will of Heaven as translated by the Prophet Ephraim Wickliffe. There are also numerous passages about releasing all ties to material goods and the "corruption of the physical body."

The evidence of the massacre the posse discovered outside continues within the dormitory. The remains of eight bodies lay about the building, some still on their beds—obviously slain in their sleep.

Although there are 20 bunks in the dormitory, only 11 appear to have been slept in. The others are neatly made, and they appear to have been so for some time. These are the bunks of Disciples Wickliffe sacrificed before making his deal with Bouchard. Any character examining the contents of the dusty footlockers at these bunks finds the belongings neatly stacked and ordered.

Any posse member who looks closely at the potbelly stove in the northern end of the building should make a DC 25 Search check. Or if the character has the Wilderness Lore skill, she can instead attempt a DC 20 Wilderness Lore check. If she's successful, the hero notices a set of dust-covered scuff marks centered around the feet of the stove.

Experimentation reveals that the stove can be slid forward. Doing so requires the character make a DC 20 Strength check, although each other character helping gives this roll a +2 bonus. After the stove has been moved, any hero making a DC 15 Search check finds a concealed trap door where the stove had stood. The trap door is an opening to the tunnels which run under the entire complex.

The Rectory

This adobe house is the smallest of the buildings in the compound. It was the private home of Wickliffe prior to the massacre. Now he hides in the tunnels underneath the mission.

There are only two rooms: a sitting room/library and a bedroom. Although the windows to this building are broken like most others in the compound, the door to the rectory is closed.

In keeping with Wickliffe's doctrine of separation from material desires, the house is Spartan in decor. A few throw rugs are in each room, but there is no other attempt at decor.

The sitting room contains a reading desk and a few simple chairs. Bookshelves line the walls, containing books on a variety of theological subjects. A long-ago overturned oil lamp lies broken on the floor, the oil thickened and dried.

In the bedroom, the bed is disturbed as if its owner was startled awake by the attack. The rest of the room is in order, however. A number of suits hang within a standing closet, and a dresser in one corner contains a few other personal items.

No amount of searching in either room reveals anything of much material value.

Underneath the closet in Wickliffe's bedroom is a small, coarse rug. Nothing distinguishes it from a number of other similar rugs throughout the house. If the rug and closet are moved, any hero examining the area underneath should make a DC 15 Search check. If he's successful, he locates another entrance to the tunnels.

Wickliffe's Library

A cursory examination of the books on Wickliffe's shelves gives the impression the Prophet was a well-read theologian. However, if any character peruses the actual contents of the books, he finds fully a quarter of them are actually occult texts with the covers replaced by ones from standard religious texts. The majority of these tomes deal with the summoning and control of otherworldly creatures.

In the center drawer of the reading desk, a character can find Wickliffe's leather-wrapped journal. However, Wickliffe began encrypting his journal long ago with a code of his own devising, making it nearly impossible to read. The writing appears to be nothing more than sequences of numbers covering each page.

Actually, the numbers are references to specific words indexed by position in a particular verse in the Old Testament. A hero can decipher the code by making either a DC 25 Knowledge (occult) check or a DC 15 Profession (theology) check.

Even if the hero is successful, decoding the journal requires three days of dedicated effort. The information within is divided into three sections, one of which can be decoded each day. (Of course, if several heroes have the appropriate skills, they can each work on a separate section at the same time.)

This book details the decline and eventual total corruption of Ephraim Wickliffe in several entries scattered throughout the past several years. He encoded the journal to prevent others from stumbling on his terrible secret. His entries cease shortly before meeting Bouchard. His obsession with his plan no longer left any time for such trivialities as the painstaking encryption of his thoughts.

See the end of this book for details on the contents of the mad reverend's journal. Excerpts from each section are presented chronologically from oldest to newest. However, it is entirely possible that the posse may start from the end

of the journal and work backward. In that case, simply reveal the contents of each section as it is read.

The Women's Dormitory

This building is virtually identical to that of the men's dormitory, which stands not too far away. (Of course, none of the buildings are very distant from each other.) As with the men's dormitory, the door to this building stands wide, barely on its hinges, and most of the windows have been broken out.

A hallway bisects the building into two main rooms. Inside these sleeping areas, there are a total of 22 bunks. Potbelly stoves stand in the both bunkrooms. Dusty foot lockers sit at the end of each bunk.

Victims of the Apache massacre lie scattered about the building. A total of seven bodies are in this building, all slain by methods similar to the other victims.

Of the 22 bunks in the dormitory, only eight appear to have been slept in. The others appear undisturbed. (Wickliffe sacrificed a larger number of women to complete his plan.) Just as in the men's dormitory, the belongings in the footlockers at these unused bunks are well-organized, and the chests are dustier.

The northern stove in this building is similar to the movable one in the men's dorm. The only difference is this stove is slightly easier to move, requiring only a DC 15 Strength check to push aside.

The Dining Area

This building, slightly smaller than either of the dormitories, served as both a kitchen and dining hall to the Disciples. (God knows what Wickliffe was feeding them.) Although the door is open and many of the windows are broken, this building actually suffered little in the attack by the Indians.

A long table with benches dominates the center of the largest room of the building. At the northern end is a small kitchen area containing an open fireplace. Two small food preparation tables, a large cupboard, and a few food storage bins are also in this area. The powerful odor of stale and moldy foodstuffs emanates from the bins.

In the northwestern corner of the kitchen is a hand-operated water pump. Unlike the well in the center of the compound, this pump provides water if primed and pumped.

A false bottom is hidden under the ashes of the fireplace. Any cowpoke digging through the soot should make a DC 20 Search check. If she's successful, she finds the seams of a trapdoor leading to the tunnels.



The Chapel

The chapel is the largest building in the compound, standing over 20 feet tall. The adobe front of the building rises even taller and holds the mission's large bell. The doors to this building stand closed, unlike most of the other buildings.

The chapel's double doors enter a small foyer. Off to the right of the door, the bell rope hangs through a hole in the ceiling. To the north, an archway leads to the main room of the chapel. Three small prayer rooms, each containing only a small candlestick and bench, also let off the foyer—two to the left and one to the right.

The majority of the building is devoted to the large meeting area. Broken, red, stained-glass windows give the room an unhealthy crimson tint. The room's ceiling is vaulted, with rafters crossing the area 10 feet above the floor. Pews face a pulpit at the north end of the church and are divided by an aisle running from the door to the pulpit.

Heavy red drapes line the back wall, hanging from ceiling to floor. Any blessed may note that religious symbols of any kind are conspicuously absent from the building.

Any hero searching the small prayer room to the right of the chapel foyer should make a DC 10 Search check. If he's successful, he finds a \$20 gold eagle wedged under one of the interior walls. Experimentation shows him the candlestick isn't as firmly attached to the wall

as it appears. Pulling the holder opens a hidden door in the room's wall, letting the character into the cult's treasury. Unfortunately, Anais and his braves have already fed most of the wealth to Wickliffe, so only a few gold eagles remain laying about the floor. All in all, a total of \$120 in gold can be recovered, although torn burlap bags indicate more gold was hidden here in the past.

The pulpit conceals the entry from the chapel into the tunnels. Any character closely examining the pulpit itself (and who makes a DC 15 Search check) finds scuff marks around the base of the pulpit. To move it, the hero must turn it in a counterclockwise direction. Doing so releases the pulpit from its position and opens the trap door beneath it.

The Surrounding Wilderness

If the heroes decide to search the area immediately around the mission, they soon discover what appears to be an outdoor worship area about 150 yards directly to the west. The area rests on a slight hill and overlooks the mission itself. It consists of four pews and a crude pulpit.

Any hero observing the worship area should make a DC 10 Intelligence check. If he makes it, he realizes the pews face the opposite direction of the pulpit. Both pulpit and pews face the mission itself.

If a member of the posse explores the area to the west of the mission, she discovers a footpath if she makes either a DC 10 Search or Wilderness Lore check. The path leads to a cave in the hills about 1 mile to the west. The cave contains several sets of shackles attached to the rocky walls.

Further investigation reveals the tracks of a number of horses at the cave entrance, if the hero makes a DC 20 Wilderness Lore check. Too much time has passed for anyone to determine the number of horses or the direction of travel. (This is where Wickliffe and Bouchard conducted their exchanges.)

The Tunnels

Wickliffe had his followers construct a network of tunnels under the mission, taking painstaking care to ensure they followed his plans for the place to the letter. The arrangement of the tunnels is the most important feature of the compound's design. Here the Disciples conducted the unholy rites necessary to complete Wickliffe's plan.

Each building has an entrance to a small room directly beneath it. Each room, in turn, has two steeply descending passageways leading out of it. The tunnels are rough hewn from the surrounding dirt and rock, with no visible wall supports, and each has a rough cobblestone floor. The passageways slope sharply downward until intersecting at the bottom of the slope. There, the tunnels form a pentagon surrounding the well in the center of the courtyard (which is basically unreachable from here).

The northernmost room in the tunnels (the one under the chapel) contains a central altar. A candelabra stands on each altar, but no other

items are in the room (Wickliffe's dagger is the only blade used to perform the Ritual of Openings).

A hero who makes a DC 10 Search check notices a spigot at the bottom of the altar. It appears the blood of the sacrifice filters from drains at the top of the altar, down to the pipe.

The floor of each tunnel is coated with a line of blood. A character making a DC 10 Wilderness Lore check follows the continuous blood stain from the altars all the way into the pentagon at the bottom of the slope. The porous nature of the rocks in the floor (and a little help from the Reckoners) have caused the blood to seep deeply into the very floor. No amount of cleaning can remove the blood stain.

Imposing a map of the tunnels over the compound reveals the image of an enormous pentagram. A character with any ranks of the Knowledge (occult) skill or three or more ranks in Profession (theology) automatically recognizes this, no roll necessary. The circle is used for summoning supernatural creatures or opening otherworldly portals. The hero also knows the pentagram created by the mission's layout is incredibly large. Most such symbols reflect the size of the gate being opened—and the creature they are meant to summon. This is definitely not a good sign for the good guys.

Chapter Three: Days 1 & 2, The Waiting Game

It's likely the heroes are going to spend the first day or two investigating the massacre and giving the dead decent burials. Allow them to explore as much as they wish.

However, if the heroes don't tend to the dead, remind any blessed or character with a friend or relative in the cult how unsettling it is to leave the bodies lying in the compound. Burying the dead properly should take the whole posse an entire day. (This is hard ground.)

When the posse first arrives, Wickliffe hides in the tunnels and clandestinely observes them. He refuses to risk discovery this early, so much of his spying is done with *scrye*. Still, allowing the group to notice signs of his existence—brief glimpses of movement and the like—might help to keep the posse's interest centered on the compound.

With the numerous intersections in the tunnels, he can easily elude the posse until he is ready to confront them. He is careful to keep the existence of the tunnels secret during this time. Until the posse opens the entrances in the dormitories and rectory, the chapel and the dining hall provide him the best routes in and out of the tunnels. He can close these trapdoors from below.

The first night, Wickliffe begins using *sendin'* on any blessed hero in the posse. (See the section on Wickliffe's nightmare below.) If there is more than one such character in the group, he lays a curse on the other.

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If the heroes sleep outside the mission, Wickliffe still uses *sendin'* as long as they remain within range.

Even if the heroes remain in the mission the first few nights, it's possible they may later move to a campsite outside the walls. If so, Wickliffe continues to torment his targets. Later events may lure the heroes back into the mission as Wickliffe seeks to trap his final few sacrifices. Although he prefers to make his moves at night (it's creepier than daytime), Wickliffe can freely move about in sunlight, so even high noon isn't safe for the posse.

If the heroes get bored at the mission, be sure to do something to intrigue them. Maybe they hear Wickliffe scuttling about in the middle of the night. Or maybe a brother of one of the Disciples shows up looking for her. This could help the heroes set the tragedy of the massacre into a larger picture.

The Nightmares

Even now, deep within his twisted soul, the Prophet covets the abilities of the blessed. He lusted after their divine power for years before gaining his own corrupted sorceries. As a result, he takes particular pleasure in tormenting blessed characters.

At first, the nightmares are only intended to torment the hero. But as time goes on, Wickliffe begins to use *sendin'* to give the character the impression that her dreams are actually visions of the future. By doing so, he hopes to confuse the character and cause her to falter at a critical moment or, better yet, lead the posse away from his only weakness.

The nightmare runs in continuous sequence. The first night in the mission, the hero receives the first part of the nightmare. The second night, the *sendin'* is composed of both the first and second parts. The third night, it contains the first three parts, and so on. Feel free to move up the time table if your posse starts getting anxious about moving on.

Read the italicized text aloud to the dreamer.

Nightmare One

You awaken in one of the dormitories to the sounds of a child giggling softly. Moving cautiously to the door, you step into the courtyard. Flickering light from fires burning in spots around the compound cast eerily moving shadows. Occasionally, a dark shape darts across an open space. You never see its source, but you know these are the Disciples' murderers.

The murdered Disciples are scattered about the courtyard. Their fresh blood glistens in the firelight.

The laughing comes from behind, startling you. Turning around, you see a young Indian girl in a dress running away from you, clutching a doll. (This is Anais' daughter.)



The girl stops at the body of a murdered Disciple and crouches down beside it. Still giggling, she touches the fresh blood.

You snap out of your paralysis and rush to the child. Grabbing the back of her dress, you pull her away from the corpse.

The child turns around to face you. Her throat is deeply slashed, yet she keeps giggling. Her skin is pale, as if she has been drained of most of her blood. In her red-stained hands, her doll bears an identical wound, and its head lolls to one side.

Nightmare Two

The child pulls free of your grip and skips away across the courtyard toward the chapel, ignoring your pleas to stop.

There, she once again kneels in the dirt and begins to sing a children's rhyme. You walk across the courtyard, oblivious to the carnage around you. At first, you can't hear what the child's saying, but as you get closer, the song becomes clear.

"Here is the church and here is the steeple." The little girl rises from the ground and turns to the chapel doors.

"Open the doors, and see all the people!"

With that, she flings the doors wide. You gaze into the chapel, which is lit by the firelight passing through the red stained-glass. In the crimson glow, you see dozens of bodies hanging on hooks from the rafters. Most of the victims are still alive, their legs thrashing as they convulse on the hooks.

Chapter Four: Day 3, Company's Coming!

Emile Bouchard and a few of his gang arrive at the compound about the middle of the third day. (Remember, you can move this part of your timetable up to as early as the second day if your heroes are acting like they've got ants in their pants.)

There are two bandits in his group for each posse member. He immediately realizes the compound is no longer unoccupied—assuming the posse has made at least a token effort to clean up after the carnage.

Bouchard believes the posse is another band of looters. He and his men approach the compound cautiously, but openly. He attempts to start a conversation with the group, distracting them while his men casually surround them. If the posse won't allow his gang inside, he tries to sneak a few men around the back to climb the walls while he keeps the posse occupied at the gate. If that plan fails, he stages a stealthy attack after dark.

Once Bouchard feels his gang has gotten the upper hand or the posse has simply gotten wise to his plan, he signals the attack. Have each hero roll a DC 10 Spot check to avoid surprise, unless the character was actively suspicious of Bouchard's intent, in which case the character is automatically not surprised.

As soon as the fight breaks out, the bandits rush to any open buildings, taking cover in doorways and windows and blasting away at any exposed parts of any heroes. During the course of the battle, Wickliffe seizes one of the bandits alone in one of the buildings. (It doesn't matter which as long as he's still alive. A wounded one would be fine.) He drags the unfortunate into the tunnels and sacrifices him on the altar, bringing his goal that much nearer.

The outlaws, much like any bullies, can't take a hit nearly as well as they can dish one out. Any outlaw must make a DC 10 Will save each time he's wounded to avoid losing his nerve and running away from the fight.

If the bandits win, they aren't likely to kill the heroes outright. Although Bouchard's gang isn't usually merciful, he attempts to take the posse alive if possible. He believes they may know where Wickliffe hid the cult's treasure.

In this case, allow the posse ample chances to make an escape and turn the tables on their

captors. A well-planned escape attempt should be successful, but don't make it too easy for the heroes.

On the other hand, if the fight is going against his outlaws, Bouchard throws himself on the mercy of the posse. He promises to tell the group about Wickliffe's treasure if they'll spare his hide. The rest of his gang loses their taste for the battle at that point, scattering into the wilderness.

If the posse captures Bouchard, he offers to help them search for the cult's treasure. Bouchard is certain the Disciples had a large amount of gold hidden somewhere in the compound, but he's not certain exactly where. He believes Wickliffe may have kept the money secret from the other members of the cult.

He tells them Wickliffe paid him \$200 in gold for each live captive the bandits brought him. The Prophet met them at the cave to the west and made the exchange. Although the bandits sold Wickliffe about 30 slaves, Bouchard neither knew nor cared what the cult used them for.

If the posse releases Bouchard, he leaves with the intention of rallying his men and returning with the rest of the gang, 20 in all. This time, he has no plans to take any prisoners!

If the posse keeps Bouchard captive, Wickliffe plagues Bouchard with a *sendin'*. As time goes on, the man becomes paranoid, believing the ghosts of his victims are coming for him. Then he does everything he can to escape.

Emile Bouchard

Convicted of murder and robbery by the French government, Bouchard faced a minimum of life imprisonment on Devil's Island. Totally bereft of any semblance of honor, loyalty, or pride, he took what seemed the best option available. Bouchard volunteered for the Foreign Legion.

The Legion's strict regulations chafed him, but he bided his time, waiting for an opportunity to escape and begin a new life—one with more opportunities for personal advancement. Finally, stationed on a border outpost in northern Mexico, Bouchard got his chance. He slipped off during a raid on the Ghost Trail and made his way north to the virtually uninhabited desert in eastern Arizona and western New Mexico.

There he began assembling a group of cutthroats and thieves. Most of his gang was composed of criminals too incompetent or deviant to join with "Chuckles" Ryan and his Laughing Men to the north (see the *Canyon o' Doom*). Bouchard had hoped to build a bandit empire that would rule over the Arizona wastes, but his band of outlaws hasn't amounted to much more than an unusually bloodthirsty group of highwaymen at the moment.

Then Bouchard stumbled across the Disciples of Obedience. Wickliffe and Bouchard struck a bargain. The bandits would provide the Disciples with human "merchandise," and Wickliffe would, in turn, reward the outlaws with gold from the cult's coffers.

Although he was many things, Bouchard wasn't a stupid criminal. He knew his gang could likely massacre the Disciples and empty

the treasury, but that would be killing the goose that laid the golden eggs.

For almost a year, the arrangement worked to both groups' benefit. Then some of Bouchard's band raided an Apache village for captives. His outlaws were successful in eluding the Indians, but not before being tracked to the Disciples' mission.

Bouchard has learned about the slaughter of the cultists and has decided it's time to make a final withdrawal from the mission's treasury if there's anything left.

Bouchard: Male Human Gns 6; CR 5; Medium-sized human; HD 6d8+6 (31 hp); Init +2; Spd. 30 ft; AC 12 (Dex +2); Atk +6/+1 melee, +8/+3 ranged; AL NE; SV Fort +3, Ref +7, Will +2; Str 10, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 13.
Skills & Feats: Climb +1, Intimidate +3, Ride +2, Ridicule +2, Sense Motive +1; Dead Eye, Dodge, Greased Lightning +4, Grim Servant o' Death, Leadership, Quick Draw, The Stare, Weapon Specialization (Peacemaker).





Description: Emile Bouchard is a scruffy man of average height and weight, but his appearance belies the dangerous killer he is. He has one vanity: his thin, waxed mustache. He believes it makes him look roguish. His clothing is the remnants of his Legion uniform mixed with bits he's taken from victims over the years.

Gear: 2 Peacemakers, Spencer carbine, .44 Derringer hidden in small of back, knife.

Typical Laughing Man: Warriors 3; CR 1; Medium-size Humans; HD 3d8; hp 14; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (+2 Dex); Atk +5 ranged (various sidearms); AL NE; SV Fort +6 Ref +3 Will +1; Str 13, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +3, Gamblin' +3, Hide +5, Intimidation +4, Move Silently +6, Ride +5, Spot +2; Firearms, Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot, Simple Weapons, Weapon Focus (chosen firearm)

Possessions: A variety of rifles, pistols, and shotguns.

Chapter Five: Day 3, A Bad Night

By the third night, Wickliffe becomes concerned. He decides to take a little more drastic action to convince the group that remaining at the mission is bad for their health.

Nightmare Three

The church bell tolls as you stare into the chapel. You are drawn into the charnel house as the bell sounds a second time. On the third ring, you step into the foyer.

You slowly turn to the right, where the bell rope hangs. The rope has been turned into a hangman's noose. From the noose, a dead body hangs, slowly rotating in the shadows.

You cautiously approach the dangling corpse. As the body turns toward you, a shaft of scarlet light strikes its face. You recognize the body as that of one of the bandits from Bouchard's gang.

Suddenly, the corpse's eyes snap open, and its hands reach out toward you!

The Nightmare Made Real

Using *zombie*, Wickliffe reanimates the bandit he captured and sacrificed earlier. He then uses *sendin'* to insinuate a vision of the corpse into the dream of the character he's been tormenting (as described above). His plan is to further terrify the hero by making his horrible dreams come true!

The Prophet waits until his *sendin'* has taken effect that evening before releasing the walkin' dead outlaw from its hiding place in the tunnels. The *zombie* leaves from an exit in one of the unoccupied buildings. If all the buildings are occupied, Wickliffe waits until one is empty before sending the *zombie* out. It uses an exit as near the chapel as possible, without revealing the tunnels.

If unable to exit via the chapel's means into the tunnels, the creature climbs to the surface by means of one of the other secret exits and then moves as stealthily as possible to the building above ground instead. Once inside, it ties the bell rope into a crude hangman's noose. Then, the *zombie* slowly tolls the chapel bell three times and hides in the prayer room on the right (the one concealing the treasury).

It then waits until the most opportune moment and bursts out of the small room, attacking the nearest character. Don't forget surprise checks! All posse members should make a DC 20 Will save upon seeing the walkin' corpse or flee in terror. The character suffering from Wickliffe's *sendin'* gets a -2 modifier to this roll.

Although the corpse is carrying a pistol in a holster, its first attack is bare-handed, as it attempts to bite and bludgeon the nearest hero.

After the fight, any hero who examines the *zombie* and makes a DC 10 Intelligence check recognizes him from the bandit attack earlier that day.

During the commotion caused by the fight with the undead, Wickliffe slinks out of the

tunnels and attempts to nab a lone victim. If Bouchard is being held captive, the bandit leader is his preferred victim. Using *stun*, he tries to incapacitate the victim and drag him into the tunnels for a sacrifice.

Wickliffe may attack a lone hero left guarding Bouchard, but he still refuses to attack more than a single member of the posse yet. If he overcomes the guard, he takes Bouchard and leaves the posse member behind.

On the other hand, if the posse was unfortunate enough to be captured by Bouchard's gang, the zombie's actions provides them with an excellent chance to escape.

The Dead Outlaw

The reanimated bandit is a particularly unpleasant looking customer. Wickliffe's sacrificial rite inflicted terrible slashes on his chest and throat. The one on his throat is so deep, it seems only the spine stopped it from cutting his head clean off! The creature is also deathly pale. Wickliffe drained almost all its blood for use in his magics.

Use the stats for a Walkin' Dead on pages 190-191 in the *Deadlands D20* rulebook, but give the zombie an Army .44 with six bullets.

Chapter Six:

Day 4,

The Enemy o' my Enemy...

Early on the fourth day of the posse's investigation, a small band of Apache warriors approaches the gates. Just after sunrise, have each hero make a DC 20 Spot check. If any succeed, he sees the warriors rise up from hiding places among the low scrub surrounding the mission. Otherwise, the Indians appear at the entrance from out of the surrounding wilderness as if by magic.

If the posse was captured by the bandits, the Apaches steal into the mission and free the heroes. They then help the posse rout the bandits from the compound, establishing a friendship with the heroes.

The war party is composed of Anais and five of his best warriors. The war leader steps forward and calls out:

"Enemies of my enemies, I would talk with you! I bear you no ill, nor will you come to harm at my hand! I bring you words of warning which you must hear! The time is running short, and the evil one must be stopped."

The Apaches have watched the posse since its arrival at the mission. Anais is certain the heroes aren't more Disciples returning to begin their evil deeds again. After the battle with Bouchard's gang, the Apache war leader realized the posse wasn't part of the outlaw band either.

Anais knows the posse faces an evil transcending petty human rivalries, so before he continues with his pursuit of the remaining

bandits, Anais passes on to them the warning his shaman told him.

Briefly, Anais tells the posse of the bandits' raid and the Apaches' revenge. He has come to warn the heroes that his shaman has been plagued by visions telling him the evil inhabiting the mission still lives. He tells the posse:

"These are the words of the shaman of my tribe. He has powerful medicine, and he knows what has happened at this cursed place. You must listen to his words and consider their meaning. I failed to understand them, and the evil here still persists."

"He has told me, 'The serpent which once crawled on this accursed ground still writhes beneath it. If it is not slain, its evil will spawn and the whole world will sicken."

"You have been chosen to battle the snake in this place. Our own failure forbids us from helping you beyond mere words. But treasure these words as you would water in the desert."

"Like all snakes, this one will try to deceive you—distrust that which it reveals to you. Its





secrets it holds dear, but its lies it shows to any. To slay it, you must kill it with its own fang. If you fail, all will suffer for your weakness.'

"We can offer you no more. Our disgrace in failing to purge the evil the first time dooms us to defeat should we confront the evil again. Now my warriors and I follow the trail of the men who brought my blood to this accursed place.

"To you, the enemies of my enemies, I say, may the spirits grant you victory in the coming battle. If not, may they at least grant you a warrior's death."

With that, the Apaches depart the mission, fading into the wilderness like shadows.

Anais

The proud leader of a band of Mimbres Apaches, Anais knows the evil in the mission still lives. His shaman has told him, however, it does not fall to him to defeat it.

The war chief is full of self-loathing for allowing his daughter to be stolen from his camp. It matters little to him that he and his

braves were far from their home when Bouchard's gang raided his home. The responsibility was his.

Worse yet, Anais had the chance to make his daughter's killer pay, and he somehow failed. He has no idea how Wickliffe survived the horrible fate Anais inflicted upon him. He only knows that the man still lives.

Anais wears his grief on his face like a brand, and the shame of his failure burns like a livid scar. He has led his best warriors back to the mission under the pretense of picking up Bouchard's trail again. He hopes somehow to strike back against Wickliffe, but he is reluctant to stay long for fear of ignoring his shaman's prophecies. His misunderstanding of the man's words have only brought him grief.

Anais: Male Human Brv 10; CR 8; HD 10d10+10 (74 hp); Init +2; Spd. 30 ft.; AC 12 (Dex +2); Atk +13/+8 melee, +12/+7 ranged; AL LN; SV Fort +10, Ref +7, Will +4; Str 16, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 11, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Skills & Feats: Climb +2, Hide +3, Indian Sign Language +2, Intimidate +4, Listen +3, Move Silently +3, Ride +3, Spot +3, Wilderness Lore +3; Dead Eye, Dodge, Guardian Spirit (Eagle), Improved Initiative, Leadership, Mounted Archery, War Cry (3), Weapon Specialization (Bowie knife).

Description: Anais is a tall man, in his late thirties. He bears the scars of many battles and moves with the grace of a warrior in his prime. He prefers to face his foes with his knife, but he isn't foolish enough to pass up a good rifle shot.

Gear: Winchester '73, Bowie knife.

Anais' braves: Warrior 3; CR 2; Medium-size Human; HD 3d8; hp 20; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (+2 Dex); Atk +5 ranged; +5 melee; AL CN; SV Fort +6 Ref +3 Will +1; Str 14, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Climb +4, Handle Animal +3, Hide +6, Move Silently +6, Wilderness Lore +6; Mounted Archery, Simple Weapons, Track

Possessions: Winchester '73, Bowie knife.

Nightmare Four

Dodging the grasp of the dead bandit, you stumble back into the courtyard.

A powerful voice commands your attention. "Behold! I show you the deceit of your feeble belief!"

Near the well stands a golden figure with its arms upraised. From within the well comes a low rumble that shakes the ground like an earthquake.

"There is time yet to repent your false loyalty and follow the true Masters! Obedience is salvation!"

The rumbling increases in volume until it reaches a crescendo. A fountain of blood begins to boil out of the well, spilling onto the courtyard. Within the torrent, you can see bones and other remains rise and fall beneath the surface of the flood.

You suddenly notice a golden dagger on the ground in front of you.

"No!" cries the man.

Heedless of the warning, you grab the knife.

Holding the blade, you turn from the figure. Beside you, you see the other members of the posse. You smile evilly as you move toward the nearest figure. Your friend recoils from you in horror as you raise the knife.

Laughing, you plunge the blade into your screaming friend!

Chapter Seven: Showdown

Eventually, the posse and Wickliffe are going to encounter each other. This can happen in one of two ways. Either the posse tracks down and corners the Prophet, or he decides the time is right to complete the Ritual of Opening.

If the heroes get onto Wickliffe's trail, he uses all means in his possession to evade them. The tunnels are rather extensive and easy to lose pursuers in—the central pentagon has 10 exit halls! Also, there are numerous hiding places on the surface that could conceal him for long enough for the posse to give up its search. Under no circumstances does the Prophet flee farther than the cave where he and Bouchard conducted their exchanges.

If the posse seems resolved to find him, Wickliffe uses *zombie* and animates 1d6 bodies in the well. It takes the walkin' dead five minutes to climb out of the well and begin their attack. None of them are armed, and they should be easy work for the heroes. However, Wickliffe uses the distraction to get away.

In the event the posse does manage to corner him, Wickliffe seeks to get away. Although he may be nearly invincible, Wickliffe is not a fighter. His first plan is always to escape. He uses *stun* to break free, so intent on gaining freedom that he doesn't even consider taking a victim for sacrifice. If all else fails, the Prophet fights like a cornered rat, lashing out wildly at any character within reach.

On the other hand, if Wickliffe's plans come to fruition, on the fifth night the posse is in the mission he only needs one last victim to complete the Ritual of Opening.

Just after completing the *sendin'* for the night, Wickliffe uses *zombie* to animate 4d6 prior victims. Three quarters of these zombies are badly decayed and should be treated as a special kind of walkin' dead (see the next page). It takes the abominations five minutes to climb out of the well.

When the walkin' dead attack, Wickliffe creeps out of the tunnels and makes a grab for his last victim. The near completion of the ritual gives him more courage than normal. He attempts to *stun* a character and drag her off to the nearest tunnel entrance.

This is a fight to the end for Wickliffe. He commits himself to defeating the posse and completing the ceremony tonight. The heroes must kill him to prevent this.

If the posse defeats Wickliffe, before dying (which he takes a dramatic moment doing) he cries pitifully for forgiveness to any blessed character in the group. If the character offers him a final solace, she earns a Fate Chip. Regardless of the blessed's response, Wickliffe crumples to the ground and begins to decay.

The Mission

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In moments, all that is left of the Prophet is a pile of bones and goo—and a small fortune in gold where his torso used to be. Retrieving the gold requires a hero to make a DC 20 Will save. If he fails, the miner has lost only his nerve and his lunch! If he makes the roll, he recovers almost \$500 worth of gore-covered gold.

However, if Wickliffe is successful and completes the Ritual, no immediate effect is evident—much to his disappointment. Then a rumbling like distant thunder rolls from within the well, and Wickliffe rushes to the hole.

From within the well comes a deep, booming voice:

"Well done, good and faithful servant. Now you will have your reward."

Wickliffe goes silent and straightens, a smile of anticipation spreading across his face. To his demented mind, everything he's worked so long for has finally come to fruition.

Suddenly, an enormous, four-fingered, mottled hand belonging to a creature which is easily four times the size of a human reaches out of the well and grabs Wickliffe by the torso.



Witnesses must make a DC 25 Will save or flee in terror.

With a muffled yelp, the hand jerks the Prophet into the well lengthwise, snapping him in half. (He is unsavable.) For several minutes, the posse hears Wickliffe's screams from deep within the well—farther away than the depth of the well should allow. His screams are then abruptly ended.

The mission and the surrounding wilderness immediately increase in Fear Level to 6, a Deadland. Any hero remaining after the ritual is complete suffers *night terrors* for as long as she is within 10 miles of the mission.

Wickliffe's Walkin' Dead

The walkin' dead in the *Deadlands* rulebook are fairly fresh from the world of the living. However, the servants of Darkness aren't always lucky enough to have newly departed "material" for their magics.

Wickliffe's walkin' dead are zombies that have been dead for quite a while before being animated by black magic. Their skin is dried up and paper-thin, bones poke out everywhere, and where the eyes once were are now empty sockets. No self-respecting manitou would allow itself to get saddled with one of these swaybacks, so the only way that they can be brought back is by the *zombie* spell.

Use the stats for Walkin' Dead on pages 190-191 of the *Deadlands D20* rulebook, but lower their ability scores by -2 each, lower the hit points to 12, and give them a +2 melee claw attack at 1d4+1. Because they're little more than dried-up husks, these undead also take double damage from fire-based attacks.

Boot Hill

Anais

Attack:
Melee +13/+8
Ranged +12/+7
AC: 12
Hit Points: 74

Apaches

Attack:
Melee +3
Ranged +3
AC: 10
Hit Points: 27

Bandits

Attack:
Melee +1
Ranged +1
AC: 9
Hit Points: 14

Emile Bouchard

Attack:
Melee +6/+1
Ranged +8/+3
AC: 12
Hit Points: 31

Undead Outlaw

Attack:
Melee Slam +2
Ranged +1
AC: 11
Hit Points: 16
Special Abilities:
Undead

Wickliffe's Walkin' Dead

Attack:
Melee Claw +2
Ranged N/A
AC: 10
Hit Points: 12
Special Abilities:
Undead
Flammable

Wickliffe's Journal

Section 1

January 18, 1865. Attendance at today's revival was the lowest ever. This was easily the least money I have yet received. Ever since 1863, people demand proof of Providence. If only desire were enough to work miracles, I'd give them all they asked for and more!

May 2, 1865. As if it weren't injury enough to deny me the audience I deserve, word reaches me of men and women throughout the frontier performing acts unheard of since the Apostles. What must I do to gain such power?

July 13, 1866. Hardly 10 people showed for my meeting in Dodge City! Half those had the gall to leave when they learned I could not heal the sick or do other such nonsense. I didn't garner enough to buy dinner. How I despise those lucky enough to hold true power!

Section 2

February 3, 1868. I took shelter in an old ruin this evening. Of course, if I'd not had to butcher my horse for food, I could have made Albuquerque two days ago. I can't believe I have been reduced to such abject poverty!

But it seems Providence has finally smiled upon me. Just moments ago I found an ornate dagger concealed under some rubble. The knife is easily worth its weight in gold. Now, maybe I can start a new revival and afford to invest in some stage illusions to create those damnable "miracles" everyone cries for!

December 12, 1869. Once again, I must thank the wisdom that guided me to keep that knife. I can't imagine letting it out of my sight. However, I must conceal it—a "prophet" can't be seen to carry a knife of this sort.

Of course, if those first visions had been false, I would have had to sell the blade. Thank Heaven—or whomever—they were true. My visions draw crowds from miles to see the "Prophet" Wickliffe. My only wish is to be able to squelch my own horrid imaginings.

June 13, 1870. And to think, I hesitated

Truly the dagger is a gift. From where, I'm not certain, but a gift nonetheless. As to the occasional debt I must pay—the gain is well worth the cost. The charlatans who work simple healing miracles will learn to fear me!

Section 3

September 28, 1871. My research tells me I must expand my activities. Lukewarm practice doesn't suffice. I need a ready source of "material" and a safe location. I cannot imagine being thwarted by simple Earthly authorities when I hold such power.

March 12, 1872. The Disciples grow in number daily. Soon I shall have a flock large enough to shear. I must begin preparation of the site. The members Back East hope to buy their eternal reward with donations. Fine. I can use their gifts to obtain a sanctuary from prying eyes. The world deals in currencies of gold—so be it. For now.

June 9, 1874. I fear I underestimated the resources needed. I cannot cull the flock further, or I risk endangering the endeavor. I must look elsewhere.

November 3, 1874. Once again, Providence (or its darker cousin) has smiled on my enterprise. An enterprising gentleman (by the name of Bouchard) and I have reached an agreement. He should serve nicely as a procurer of the much needed "resources."

Miracles

Name	Type	Level	Range	Summary
<i>Armor o' Righteousness</i>	Abjuration	3	Personal	Subtracts roll from all damage received this round.
<i>Babble On</i>	Abjuration	0	Medium	Distorts all spoken language to gibberish within range.
<i>Battle Hymn</i>	Enchantment	2	Earshot	Boosts courage of allies.
<i>Benediction</i>	Abjuration	3	Close	Blesses those of the same religion.
<i>Burnt Offerin'</i>	Evocation	0	Touch	Ignites flammable objects.
<i>Censure</i>	Abjuration	3	1 huckster	Increases the difficulty of casting a hex against the blessed.
<i>Chastise</i>	Enchantment	0	Personal	Use Faith in place of Intimidate.
<i>Consecrate Armament</i>	Evocation	2	Touch	Empowers a weapon to harm unnatural creatures.
<i>Consecrate Item</i>	Evocation	1	Touch	Gives an object divine power.
<i>Dervish</i>	Transmutation	3	Personal	Gives great fighting abilities.
<i>Devil's Plaything</i>	Abjuration	3	Personal	Gizmos don't work on the blessed.
<i>Enigma</i>	Enchantment	1	Earshot	Confounds the subject with a riddle for the duration.
<i>Exorcism</i>	Abjuration	4	10 ft.	Banishes spirits from mortal hosts.
<i>Falter</i>	Abjuration	1	10 ft.	Stuns an opponent.
<i>Feast</i>	Conjuration	2	Touch	Increases the amount of food.
<i>Hinder</i>	Transmutation	0	Close	Reduces a single Aptitude of an opponent.
<i>Inspiration</i>	Transmutation	1	Special	Boosts Tale-Tellin' vs. Fear Levels.
<i>Last Rites</i>	Transmutation	1	6 feet	Keeps the dead from coming back.
<i>Mediate</i>	Enchantment	1	Personal	Helps the invoker to calm a potentially violent situation.
<i>Mighty Fortress</i>	Transmutation	4	Touch	Strengthens structures, gizmos and vehicles.
<i>Mysterious Ways</i>	Transmutation	3	Personal	Allows passage through objects.
<i>Protection</i>	Abjuration	1	Close	Shields from supernatural evil.

Miracles

Name	Type	Level	Range	Summary
<i>Retribution</i>	Evocation	2	Sight	Returns similar damage to a foe.
<i>Safekeepin'</i>	Conjuration	0	Touch	Creates a temporary boundary against supernatural evil.
<i>Sanctify</i>	Conjuration	2	Touch	Creates hallowed ground.
<i>Smite</i>	Evocation	2	Personal	Increases the strength of the invoker for the duration.
<i>Snake Handlin'</i>	Conjuration	0	Touch	The invoker can turn a large stick into a serpent.
<i>Spiritual Backhand</i>	Evocation	0	Close	Strikes an opponent of the hero with an invisible force.
<i>Two Places</i>	Illusion	4	Special	Allows the blessed to create a double of himself.
<i>Walk on Water</i>	Evocation	5	Special	Walk across water like ground.
<i>Wrath</i>	Evocation	3	Personal	Damage boosted by Fate Chips.





...And We're Spent!

Way of the Righteous is the last of the "class books" for Deadlands D20. If you're hungry for more—and we hope you are!—you'll find dozens of articles, adventures, prestige classes, new feats, and the like in our quarterly *Deadlands Epitaph*. Issue #4, for example, contains a new Fear system for D20, how to add in Hindrances, using cards for initiative, new rules on how to make the D20 system a bit more deadly, and a complete D20 conversion of all the characters, creatures, and rules from the classic *Deadlands* product, *The Great Maze*!

As if that's not enough, you'll also find great articles for our sister games *Hell on Earth* and *Lost Colony*, and the continuation of our awesome award-winning Dime Novels!

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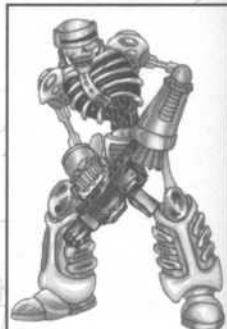
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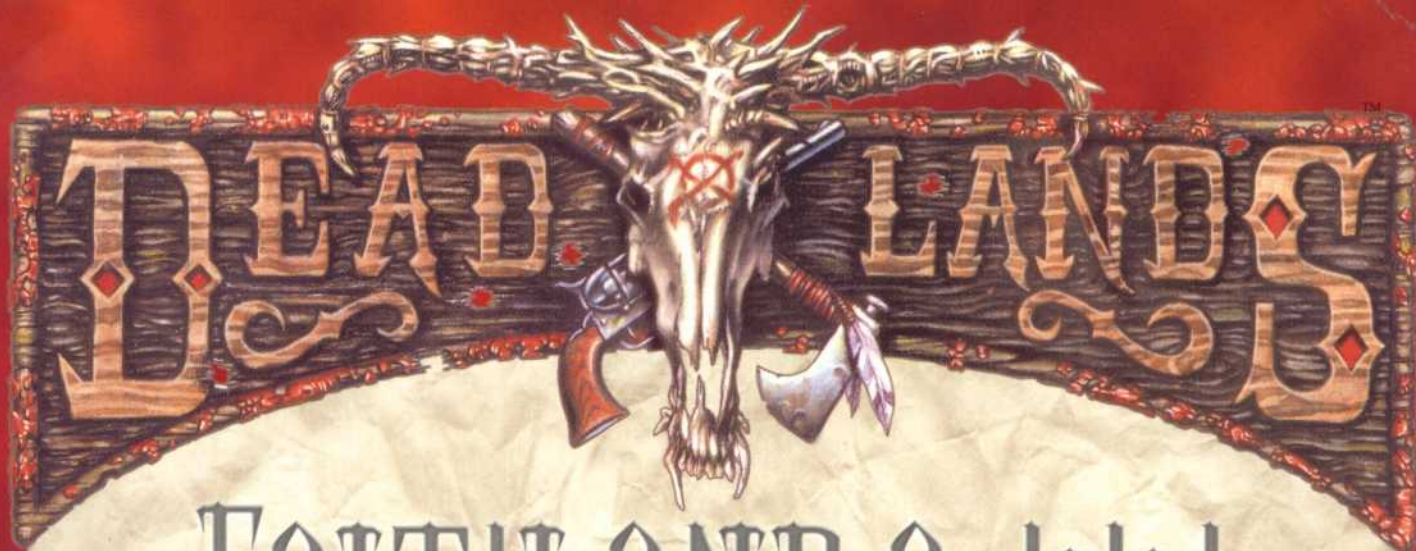


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FAITH AND A .44!



That's what the blessed use to overcome the forces of darkness. Those with true faith and the blessing of the Almighty can walk on water, call down holy fire from the Heavens, and sometimes even raise the dead!

Of course a .44 is handy for dealing with more mundane threats—such as the followers of the Enemy.

Way of the Righteous is the class book for the Blessed. Inside you'll find new gifts and miracles, and the most powerful arcane powers in *Deadlands*—Divine Interventions. You'll also find two new prestige classes—Monster Slayers and Witch Hunters, as well as detailed information on the enemies of the righteous, prophetic visions, and just how to sort the black sheep from your hero's flock.

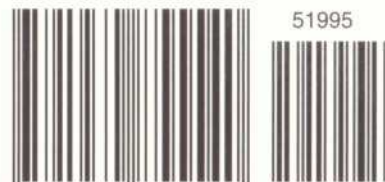
As if that weren't enough, *Way of the Righteous* contains a full-length adventure—*The Mission*, one of the creepiest encounters ever written for the Weird West!

Way of the Righteous requires *Deadlands D20™*, and the *Player's Handbook®* from Wizards of the Coast®.



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