SECRET SOCIETIES OF NEDEXODUSE SANGUNE COVENANT

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The Sanguine Covenant grew from a simple religion worshiped in small villages to be the official religion of the Arman Protectorate and the Imperial Alliance. While not a truly universal religion, the covenant is the most widespread, and most powerful, single church in the world of NeoExodus. (For more details on the history of the Sanguine Covenant, see NeoExodus: A House Divided Campaign Setting.)

SANGUINE HISTORY

The origin of the Sangine Covenant can be traced to the Dead Hills in the northeast of Nas. The Rite of Revelation relates that two warriors faced each other in a mortal struggle. One was nearly defeated and bleeding profusely; his opponent strong and fresh ready to keep on fighting.

The first one looked to the Heavens and called out "To whoever listens up there, I offer this victory to you!" The second man scoffed. Through blood almost completely blocked his vision, he saw a regal woman dressed in white. She told him that the Sanguine Lord had received his prayers and that he would be victorious if he vowed to serve The Lord for a year. An oath and a sword blow later, the bloody man stood over his dead opponent.

This event is now called "the Sanguine Duel" and is recognized as the first revelation of the Sanguine Lord in history.

THE SANGUINE CHURCH

Introducing herself as Venerate Laita, the woman took the man under her tutelage and taught him the proper way to worship the Sanguine Lord and the Celestial Order. Quickly, the nascent church was called itself the Sanguine Church. The church grew slowly, but remained a small local establishment.

During this period, often called the early Church or Sanguine Church, many religious documents, called Rites, were written. Their validity now under suspicion, most of them are now relegated to lost libraries and not considered canonical. A few are even considered heretical.

LUCIUS HORST

In 657BU, Chauncey Eland fell ill from the injuries he suffered during the battle of Ravenspont. No magic could cure him and he lay dying for over a year. He went to the north of the empire to convalesce, but his situation did not improve.

At the same time, Lucius Horst, a priest of the Sanguine Church, saw a vision of himself healing the emperor's young brother. In his vision, he drew forth diseased blood from Chauncey Eland's body and cleansed it. Then the blood flowed from his hands and spread across the whole of the Caneus Empire - the whole of Exodus! Thus the blood of the Sanguine Lord covered everything and everyone, bringing peace to the world.

> Lucius Horst was a poor clergyman holding services in a barn. He walked for twenty days through the harshest weather ever seen in the Caneus Empire until he reached the villa where the emperor's brother lay dying. After being refused entry for four days, he was finally shown to Chauncey Eland's room. A few moments later, Chauncey rose, completely healed and wholly devoted to the Sanguine Church.

> > The story spread like wildfire, with new converts flocking to Sanguine churches throughout the Empire. Meanwhile, Lucius returned home where he began to write down everything that had transpired. To foster the spread of the faith, he embarked on a two-year writing project. When the Emperor summoned him, Lucius presented him with the most complete rite, the Sanguine Rite.

When Lucious revived his Lost Liesely, Emperor Gregory was an instant convert. Gregory sponsored the consolidation of the Sanguine Church and assisted its expansion.

The Sanguine Rite united all the small splinter churches into one single entity. After much debate and additions to the Rites, a covenant was signed and the church took its current name, the Sanguine Covenant.

When Lucius accepted the title of Imperial Confessor his writings were being copied by thousands of initiates and new devotees. Over the course of his remaining days, he continued writing and expanding the Sanguine Rite.

THE RISE OF THE COVENANT

When Emperor Vincent rose to power, he had to abandon his priestly pursuits. Initially unprepared, sickly and ill-tempered, the new emperor became convinced that his ascension to power was part of a divine plan of the Sanguine Lord. The Emperor banned paganism in the Caneus Empire and imposed the Sanguine Covenant on all citizens. His rule was marked by mass purges of pagan churches and forced conversions. His tactics were mostly successful because the populace accepted the new faith as their own.

In the years that followed, the Covenant's power increased vastly. As its beneficial teachings expanded throughout Exodus, missionaries left their homes to spread the word, many suffered martyrdom.

THE COVENANT EXPANDS

In 492BU, the Sanguine Covenant got involved in a civil war in the Arman Protectorate. Within a year, the Covenant-backed Babinovish-Kryszkas army had crushed all its opponents and found itself masters of Abaddon. The Archprelate insisted on converting the young sons and daughters of the populace. Within two generations, the Arman Protectorate had massively converted to the worship of the Sanguine Lord.

Two princes of the Kryszkas line, Konstantin and his son Alexei were very influential in both spreading worship and writing important rites and theses. When Alexei crowned himself Tsar of the Arman Protectorate, he had his crown and sacred vestments blessed by the Archprelate. He ordered the construction of the greatest church of the Sanguine Lord outside of the Caneus Empire. The Alexeisdom was built in less than ten years as a palace for the prelate of Mureath.

Come unification, the Covenant was recognized as the Imperial Alliance's official religion. However, worship of the Sanguine Lord is far from uniform and in many places, old, pagan religions still dominate. In those areas – such as the Reis Confederacy – the Covenant actively hunts the Brotherhood of Khayne.

THEFAITH

The Sanguine Covenant is a monotheistic religion that worships a single god, named Tarac. However he is never referred to by name directly and instead is always called by his title - the Sanguine Lord. The Sanguine Lord works through his direct agents (the Venerates), and the avowed (his priests), but rarely acts directly in the affairs of Exodus.

The Sanguine Covenant has two main goals. The first is the elimination of dark powers, which includes (but is not limited to) demons, devils, undead, and evil arcane spell casters. Many consider that to be more important than the second goal of spreading worship of the Sanguine Lord to heathens and unbelievers. Unfortunately, the Covenant sometimes strays too far from this lofty goal, and becomes a force for fear and bigotry. While few oppose the first goal, the zealotry and focus with which the second goal – converting heathens – is pursued in parts outside of the Arman Protectorate has created many opponents to the Covenant, particularly in the Dominion.

THE GELESTIAL ORDER THE SANGUINE LORD

The only true god is Tarac, always referred as the Sanguine Lord. The Sanguine Lord is a militant god that values bravery, order, truthfulness, and defense of the weak. He is the sworn enemy of a class of creatures known as daemons (evil outsiders, evil elementals, evil shape changers, and undead). The Sanguine Lord is the sworn enemy of these creatures, and his followers believe they should destroy them all to bring ultimate peace to the world.

His title comes from the fact that the Sanguine Lord is, in fact, the blood of the universe. Many theorize that the Sanguine Lord is not a being, but the universe itself. And that his blood keeps everyone and everything as it is. This view is very popular and simple to understand for the masses. Many sages, philosophers and scholars have spent their lives pondering about his name, nature and reason for revealing himself. Rarely are the revelations or prophecies given to Exodus by the Sanguine Lord directly.

Direct worship of the Sanguine Lord is heretical because the prayers and requests of mortals are deemed trifling and unworthy of the Sanguine Lord's time. The Sanguine Lord is busy ordering the movement of the stars, the flow of rivers, the speed of the wind, and keeping the demonic hordes at bay. In short, he is busy keeping the world together.

THE VENERATES

There is but one god recognized within the Sanguine Covenant-the Sanguine Lord himself. However, the few very powerful beings who serve the Sanguine Lord are known as the Venerates. Unlike the verb venerate, which is pronounced to rhyme with eight, the noun Venerate is pronounced to rhyme with cat, bat or hat.

Venerates serve as intercessors between the Sanguine Lord and priests, who are in turn intercessors with the faithful masses. The Sanguine Lord is too busy to personally see after every prayer, spell and augury of each worshipper or even most priests. The Venerates serve as personal patrons, looking after the concerns of the devout and empowering clerics to aid in many areas of daily life. Each priest takes a specific venerate as a patron intercessor and devotes himself or herself to one Venerate.

Although all priests worship the Sanguine Lord, there is a lot of competition among the priests. This takes the form of a friendly rivalry. However on occasion this has degenerated into power struggles and internal wars. The patron Venerate of the Archprelate affects the tone of the entire Sanguine Covenant, and the patron of a Prelate impacts the tone of the devout within his area of control.

DHAZVOK

The Warrior, N, Foe of heretics and daemons. Dhazvok is the patron of warriors.

Domain destruction, strength, war Favored Weapon spear Symbol A Red Spear Dress Color Grey

Depicted as a mighty middle-aged man with a spear and a wolf-hide cloak, Dhazvok is always depicted in an active pose. He champions active and decisive action of the faithful and the eradication of heretics.

KOLIAV

The Keeper of the Icy Gates, LN(E), The underworld, the dead and the forgotten

Domain death, knowledge, trickery Favored Weapon Heavy pick Symbol A black book Dress Color Black

Depicted as a bent, cloaked man made of black ice. Feared by many because of his role as the keeper of the icy gates where he watches over the dead. More heretic cults claim to follow Koliav than any other Venerate. Koliav's clergy has a strong leaning towards lawful evil because of their unwavering dedication to the destruction of heretics.

LAITA

The Queen of Rites, The First Venerate, LN, Collection and destruction of forbidden knowledge, rulers and kings

Domain law, magic, protection Favored Weapon Morningstar Symbol Silver scepter Dress Color White or Silver

Depicted as a regal woman in white furs with her left index finger raised in a commanding fashion, she is the patron of many clerics who oppose sorcerers and wizards. Most people call on her to bestow wisdom and fairness to rulers and to deliver them from tyranny. Her title as First Venerate comes from the fact that she was the first to reveal herself to Exodus.

MAKASH

The Green Mother, NG, Family (motherhood)

Domain earth, good, healing Favored Weapon Halberd Symbol A green mountain Dress Color Green

Depicted as a plump woman with long, green hair, she is the patron of families in general and womanhood in particular. She is particularly prayed to when a woman seeks to become pregnant or to ensure a safe delivery. Her worship is most common in rural areas. Some also grant her power over the cycle of the seasons and nature. Her priesthood is almost exclusively female.

THE VENERATES					
Name	Title	Alignment	Domains	Symbol	
Dhazvok	The Warrior	NG	destruction, strength, war	red spear	
Koliav	Lord of the Icy Gate	LN	death, knowledge, trickery	book of ice	
Laita	Queen of Rites	LN	law, magic, protection	scepter	
Meysha	Green Mother	NG	earth, good, healing	A green mountain	
Perun	Stormbrother	TN	air, luck, water	fork of lightning	
Rylos	Lord of Wildlands	CG	animal, plant, travel	evergreen	
Svarog	Father Smith	LG	fire, sun	burning anvil	

PERUN

The Stormbrother, N, Storms and warfare

Domain air, luck, weather Favored Weapon Longbow Symbol Fork of lighting Dress Color Red

Depicted as a young man wearing copper armor with a lightning spear, Perun is the brother of Dhazvok. He always stands in patient thought. His worship focuses on ranged combat and stealth, unlike his brother's fury. His worship is common among many warriors. In larger cities, his worshippers are often viewed as overly thoughtful and lacking the desire for action.

RYLOS

The Lord of the Wildlands, CG, Animals, non-sentient creatures

Domain animal, plant, travel Favored Weapon Battle axe Symbol Evergreen Dress Color Brown

Depicted as a man clad in leather with a belt of evergreen needles, Rylos is the lord of the Wildlands. As he who watches over animals and non-sentient creatures, he is most commonly worshiped by hunters and druids. Many believe he is a recent addition to the Venerates. It is commonly accepted that he was known as the druidic god Rylos who submitted to the Sanguine Lord and was given a place among the Venerates. The Rylosian Heresy states that Rylos is a god in his own right and not a servant of the Sanguine Lord.

SVAROG

The Father Smith, LG, Smiths, builders and crafters

Domain artifice, fire, rune Favored Weapon War hammer Symbol burning anvil Dress Color Yellow or Gold

Depicted as a bare-chested, bearded man with a hammer and flaming anvil, Svarog is always shown creating something on his anvil. A patron of builders and smiths of all sorts, his favor is particularly sought by those who create magic items and golem-crafters. He is very popular in urban areas.

THE EXXLTED

The Exalted are the spirit of the dead who now reside in the Exalted Lands. They rarely interact with the living though they sometimes appear in dreams. Whenever an exalted sends word from beyond, such apparition is reviewed by local priests to determine whether it is genuine of a daemonic plot to lead the believer astray.

DTHER SERVXHTS

The Venerates are served by a number of other celestial beings of varying degrees of power. Those celestial beings are part of a tangled and complex system of lords and heralds.

While there are many such creatures in the universe, not all serve or bow down to the Sanguine Lord. Many are considered pagan and a few heretics.

No daemon was ever been proven to serve the Sanguine Lord. While such creatures have occasionally professed to follow or serve the teaching of the Covenant, their very nature makes it impossible for them not to deform and defile the Holy Rites. To believe and to support such a theory is clearly heretical.

SANGUINE HIERARCHY

There are five official classifications acknowledged by the Sanguine Rite, covering all mortal creatures in existence. These are the devout, the avowed, the detached, heretics, and pagans. What category a creature falls into defines how a member of the Sanguine Covenant deals with them. A character can know the basic classifications of the Covenant with a DC 15 Knowledge (religion) check, and details with a DC 20 check.

THE DEVOUT

Devout is the name given to all the faithful of the Covenant. The devout are expected to follow the Sanguine Rite, follow the guidance of the Avowed and fight against heresy and daemons. The latter is expected, but few without the means ever stand up to daemons. Only the most zealous of Avowed demand this of the devout without giving them assistance (casting of spells).

The devout do not dedicate themselves to a single Venerate for their whole lives. Many pray to all or a few of them but pay at least lip service to all.

THE XVOWED

The avowed are those who have taken oaths dedicating their lives to the Sanguine Lord and one of his Venerates. This includes the priests, but also Covenant Daemonslayers, Purifiers and some Protectorate Peacekeepers. Avowed perform a number of services in the church from reading, copying and interpreting the Rites to teaching the young to serving as guards or warriors of the faith.

Vows can be taken as young as 11 years of age and are usually for one to five years. While most Avowed renew their vows for life, one can leave the Covenant's service when the vow is complete. Many young nobles take on a vow as a youth before leaving the Covenants to pursue other careers.

Breaking a vow is a serious offense and anyone casting divine spells that breaks a vow immediately loses all powers and supernatural abilities until they receive an *atonement* spell.

THE PRESTERS

Certain dedicated avowed take permanent vows – swearing to serve the Covenant for all time – receiving the title of Prester. Presters form the permanent priesthood of the Covenant.

Some presters achieve the title of Confessors. A confessor is considered moral, wise, and learned enough to teach the rites of the Sanguine Covenant, and act as an advisor to powerful nobles and lords. Major nobles have a confessor in their household. Becoming a confessor requires further vows of loyalty and dedication to the Sanguine Lord. By long tradition all prelates (and thus the Archprelate) must be Confessors as well, but no church law actually requires this.

All presters and confessors report to a pentarch.

THE PENTXRCHS

Above the presters and confessors are the pentarchs, senior priests who rule over the devout of small regions or cities. A pentarch is an able administrator and trusted servant of the Covenant. Being a Pentarch is a sign of authority and long-standing loyalty. Pentarchs report to a prelate.

THE PRELXTES

A Prelate is the religious head of a kingdom, large region or major city. Prelates are always experienced, trusted Pentarchs the current Archprelate believes will support his view of the rites of the Covenant. A prelate serves for life unless he willingly retires or is accused and convicted of heresy. Prelates are princes of the Covenant, given the same honors and respect as minor kings and wielding much the same secular and political power. The prelates report to the archprelate.

THE **ARCHPRELATE**

Senior above all the prelates is the prelate of Nyssa, named the archprelate. While the Venerates are the agents of the Sanguine Lord in the outer realms, the archprelate is his servant in the mortal realm. The archprelate declares heresies, approves new rites, appoints Prelates, and declares holy war. The archprelate is selected by the convocation of prelates when the previous archprelate dies. The archprelate is the unquestioned head of the Sanguine Covenant. The archprelate judges heresies and rules on interpretation of the Rites. The archprelate is one of the most powerful people on Exodus. The archprelate is referred to as "Your Divine Holiness".

Although there is no Covenant Law that says so, every archprelate has been human.

The current archprelate is Leonid Kaleri, a stern man who came to power under somewhat mysterious circumstances. Archprelate Leonid is described in greater detail later in this book.

THE DETACHED

The detached are those creatures outside Sanguine Covenant law. This mostly refers to creatures too stupid to be considered people – such as animals. A few other creatures, including elementals, fey, outsiders (other than evil outsiders) and plants, qualify as detached. The Sanguine Covenant gives no particular guidance on dealing with these creatures, other than to ensure such dealings should never put other devout at risk.

Created, mindless creatures (such as golems) are not considered detached.

THE HERETICS

A heretic is someone who engages in worship contrary to the rites of the Sanguine Covenant. This includes anyone making false or incorrect statements about the Rites, the Sanguine Lord, or any Venerates, in any form. By Rite, only the Sanguine Covenant represents the Sanguine Lord and his Venerates on Exodus. Anyone who worships daemons or arcane magic (including gods of arcane magic) is considered a heretic as such worship is specifically forbidden by the Sanguine Rite. All Daemons are considered heretics. Any cleric of Arman origin who does not worship the Sanguine Lord is a heretic.

Heretics are enemies of the Sanguine Covenant, and it is the duty of all the devout to fight them wherever and whenever they are encountered.

Other heretical groups include the First Ones, the Brotherhood of Khayne, the Khaynites, the Exodites, the Locari and the Quickslavers.

THE PAGANS

Not everyone who worships outside the covenant is automatically considered a heretic. Foreigners worshiping foreign gods not associated with daemons or arcane magic are labeled as pagan. Many groups have been seen as either pagans or heretics depending on the era and how they act. Final say as to who is a heretic is made by the Archprelate.

A pagan is someone who worships a god other than the Sanguine Lord. In ages past, the Sanguine Covenant was reasonably accepting of pagans, seeing them as outside the normal order in much the same way as the detached. In recent decades, the church has become much less accepting or trusting of pagans. Druids were once given more leeway, due to their strong connection to the detached, but in recent decades even druids are not tolerated within the Protectorate (though they may be more acceptable coming from other cultures). However, druids in the Protectorate have sworn allegiance to Rylos.

A pagan should be presented with the benefits and tenets of the Covenant.

THERIDES

The laws of the Covenant are detailed in a number of documents known as the Rites. The first of these, the Sanguine Rite, outlines the universal rules of the religion and is said to have been written by the priest Lucius Horst (who had a vision of the Sanguine Lord's god-blood healing all of the Caneus Empire, and followed that vision to become the first Imperial Confessor.

The **Sanguine Rite** gives a list of the enemies of all faithful followers. This list ranks evil outsiders at the top of the list, with demons, devils, evil elementals, and undead following closely behind. Sanguine priests are to seek out and destroy the influence of such creatures wherever they dwell. Such creatures are defined as heretical by their very nature and existence. Next down the list are evil arcane spell casters, which include the First Ones and the Khaynites. Although not specifically mentioned, the Sanguine Rite frowns on arcane magic and its users, and dissuades its members from using such magic.

The Sanguine Rite names the Venerates, their influence and their attributes. It is considered heretical to offer prayers to Venerates not named specifically in this Rite.

The Sanguine Rite says that it is sacrilegious to speak the true name of the Sanguine Lord out loud.

The Archprelate, with the advice and consent of the prelate's council, can make revisions to the Sanguine Rite (though this has been done very rarely over the centuries). Unless mentioned, everything about the Covenant in this book comes from the Sanguine Rite.

The Arman Rite was written by Prince Konstantin Kryszkas as a philosophical and theological union of Arman history and Covenant theology. This Rite includes unique rituals and customs of the Arman. Chief among those is the importance of one's exalted ancestors. Most of its content and theories are still debated today. The Arman Rite is believed to be one of the most complete works of philosophy to this day.

The **Enlightened Rite** was also written by Lucius Horst shortly after he was named Imperial Confessor. This book states that all sentient races who are not inherently tainted (such as demons and devils), may join the Sanguine Covenant and receive the blessing of the Sanguine Lord. Before the publication of this Rite, the Covenant was almost exclusively human. This rite sealed the debate over whether the Sanguine Lord only blessed mankind or if it included other races as well.

The **Heathen Rite** was written around the time of the formation of the Imperial Alliance. The document tries to reconcile the monotheistic Covenant with the many religions in the world. It classifies all the other deities according to a simple hierarchy. They are either facades of the Venerates, or yet- unrevealed Venerates or fiends that must be fought and destroyed. This Rite is heavily contested in many parts of Abaddon and has caused more schism within the church.

The **Martyr Rite** was written much later. It promises the eternal blessing of the Sanguine Lord to anyone who dies in the service of the church. It also states that anyone who is wrongfully martyred by the church is to be given the blessing in the afterlife. Originally written as a means to promote missionary work among heathens and unbelievers, this Rite has often been used to justify wars, witch trials, genocide and a number of other atrocities.

The **Prophetic Rite** is a unique work because it contains a list of apparitions, auguries, prophecies and messages sent to Exodus by the Sanguine Lord himself (very rare) or his Venerates. The Prophetic Rite is kept away from non priests and anyone who ever reads it is bound by a quest spell to prevent them from joining – or thinking of joining – Kaga or his order. However, specialized scholars are available to research the prophecies for the faithful.

The **Rite of the Exalted** is a massive tome kept in the Sanguine Cathedral in Nyssa. This book lists martyrs and honored heroes of the Covenant. Exalted are fallen who either received martyrdom or who were honored by the Archprelate. Although worship of the Exalted is forbidden, they are believed to serve as messengers to the Venerates for lesser requests. The Rite states that Exalted bring such prayers all at once to the Venerates.

The **Worship Rite** details the proper worship of the Sanguine Lord and his Venerates. It includes heavy warnings against the worship of the Venerates as gods and emphasizes their place and role in the cosmology of the Covenant. The Worship Rite contains most of the history and the dreams sent by the Sanguine Lord.

The Venerate Rites are a collection of Rites each detailing the proper prayers and rituals to gain favor or patronage by one of the Venerates. There is one Rite per Venerate.

Other rites exist, often as scholarly works that analyze the teachings of various other priests of the Sanguine Lord or are philosophical treatises. Some are required by the archprelate to be followed by all devout. Others cover more minor matters, such as acceptable dress and rules for food preparation, and are only enforced in the areas of a specific prelate. Some even detail militaristic orders and their duties.

Heresy of the First Ones, written in 586BU by archprelate Gehrart von Aurstadt, states that all First Ones are heretic by nature and heretic to the very core of their being. It finds them guilty of daemon worship, cavorting with them and the promotion of sins and any acts that leads one to perdition. It names the Aneishi, the Exodites, the Khaynites, the Kobura, the Kroca, the Scythians, the P'Tan and any creature that frequently allies with them. Two years later, the archprelate amended his document and removed the P'Tan from the list. "Heresy" is now included in the Rites of the Covenant, even though it is not actually a Rite as it does not contain any theological rituals of any kind. It is an accusatory book, with clear examples of the horrors perpetrated by the First Ones.

Many heretic Rites exist. These Rites are taken seriously only by minor cults. Possession of a copy is a capital offense with the punishment of death in the Arman Protectorate. One such heretic writing, **The Horned Rite**, claims the Sanguine Lord is actually a demon, and that he demands blood sacrifice.

SANGUINE COSMOLOGY

The faithful believe that at their death, they are to be judged by the Venerates to determine their worthiness. Souls found worthy are allowed into the Exalted Lands and eternal bliss. Souls filled with sin, but not deemed lost are sent for an undisclosed amount of time to the Plains of the Dead. Finally, heretics of all kinds are sent through the Icy Gates, where they are never seen again.

Using magical means, powerful spell casters can travel to the Exalted Land or the Plains of the Dead – no one ever returned from the Icy Gates. Souls there appear as they did in life. They rarely bother with the realms of mortals and focus on their current tasks.

The most common method of communicating with the underworld is through dreams.

The Covenant does not believe in reincarnation for sentient souls and the use of spells that transcend life and death – such as raise dead or resurrection – are uncommon among the faithful, even the very rich. Most seek the eternal bliss they hope awaits them in the afterlife.

THE EXXLTED LXNDS

The Exalted Lands are the Covenant's heavenly paradise. It is a place of plenty where one is reunited with their ancestors, the Venerates and communes with the Sanguine Lord. The Exalted Lands are a place of many delights where a faithful's every desire is catered to. It is a paradise for all.

The Sanguine Lord and his Venerates all dwell within the Exalted Lands

THE ICY GATES

The Icy Gates is the Covenant's place of damnation. Exactly what lies beyond the Icy Gates is not known, but those souls who pass through them disappear forever. Many believe that beyond is the birthplace of daemons and that those souls crossing either become daemon or are daemon food. Travelers to the astral plane feel a strong urge to avoid the area of the Icy Gates. As their name implies, they seem to be made of ice and always appear closed.

THE PLAINS OF THE DEAD

Though called "Plains", this land is all but flatland. It is filled with canyons and deep gorges. Villages filled with souls can be found occasionally. The air is cold and the sky is always a dark gray and heavy with clouds. The Plains of the Dead are a limbo where souls deemed unworthy to ascend among the Exalted are sent.

Souls sent there wander about in the rugged landscape. Here many are tempted by daemons or lured to undeath. Temptation is rampant here, though usually subtle. A soul "killed" in the Plains of the Dead re-appears a short while later somewhere else, without memory of how it was destroyed. Thus daemons try to avoid killing targets to allow them more time to fall to their guiles.

A soul sent here is never aware of the duration of its penitence. After that time, a soul is granted access into the Exalted Lands. Souls who fall prey to the many daemonic lures to be found here are sometimes dragged through the Icy Gates.

THE WILDTYHD2

The Wildlands are a celestial forest where the spirits of animals and non-sentient creatures go after their death. Unlike the Exalted Lands or the Icy Gates, this is not a final resting place. According to the Rylosian Rite, animal souls remain only for a short time before they are reincarnated.

SANGUINE POLITICS

Although the Sanguine Covenant claims to be above all politics, that is far from the truth. With unification, the Covenant has extended its power to an unprecedented

level. However in many areas, the monotheistic view held by the Covenant is not popular.

Being the official religion of the Imperial Alliance, many view the two organizations as one and where one is unpopular. The other frequently is as well.

ARMAN PROTECTORATE

Within the protectorate, the Sanguine Covenant rules supreme. Every town and village has a church at its center. Few in the Protectorate dare to speak against the Covenant. The Covenant has brought a civilizing and unifying influence in the Protectorate in the last six centuries.

The Covenant and the Protectorate are close politically. Both promote traditionalism, duty and honor.

BROTHERHOOD OF KHAYNE

The Sanguine Covenant considers every worshipper of Khayne to be a heretic. As such, it encourages direct and ruthless action against the Brotherhood.

This has led to a number of massacres, heretic burnings and mass slaughters committed in the name of the Sanguine Lord. Those seeking revenge against these atrocities are very likely to be drawn to the Brotherhood.

CANEUS EMPIRE

The Caneus Empire and the Sanguine Covenant have a strained relationship. The Covenant knows that the empire harbors many heretics in its midst.

From the empire's perspective the Covenant has led many purges of those it considers "heretics" and the empire remembers the mad and tyrannical rule of Emperor Vincent Eland. Those in power tend to have a positive view of the Covenant while the lower classes who suffer the brunt of the heretic hunts often have a dimmer and more down to earth view of the Covenant. Few in the Empire would dare to speak against the Covenant.

While relations are cordial and polite, neither side fully trusts the other.

THE DOMINION

The Dominion has a strained relation with the Covenant due to two reasons. First, most of the Covenant missionaries were fanatics from the Arman Protectorate. Second, the Covenant's stand against evil arcane casters does not sit well in the magically gifted nobles of the Dominion.

Unlike in the Caneus Empire, the lower classes have a positive view of the Covenant. Since most of the church's missionary work was done among them, they have acquired a large following, particularly along the borders of the Caneus Empire and the Arman Protectorate.

THE FIRST ONES

The Covenant maintains that all First Ones are heretical and must be destroyed. Daemonslayers travel the land looking for any infiltration by these horrors.

IMPERIALALLIANCE

The Imperial Alliance representatives and servants usually work closely with the Sanguine Covenant and its servant. As the official religion of the Alliance, the Covenant promotes the Alliance and its virtue.

Many powerful senators are strong supporters of the Covenant, so it exerts great power in the Senate. In remote areas of the Alliance, Covenant and Alliance forces are often the same thing.

JANUS HORDE

When the Sametians turned their backs on civilization in the early 60s AU, covenanter priests bore the brunt of the locals' fury. Most avowed suffered martyrdom at the hands of the people. A few renounced their vows and faith, joining the locals in barbarism.

The Covenant has not forgotten and considers most of Sametia to be under the leadership of heretics and daemons. The Covenant supports, both openly and secretly, military operations aimed at destabilizing the rebel province.

In spite of this, a minority in the Covenant – and the Horde – believe that a settlement or arrangement can be reached, one that would ease the tensions. However, the proponents of open conflict are much louder.

THELAWGIVER

The Lawgiver is an enigma to the Sanguine Covenant. He does not preach anything that is against Covenant teachings, but neither does he preach adherence to the Rites. The Covenant keeps quiet as it gathers information on the Lawgiver.

ORDER OF KAGA

To the Covenant, the Kaga robs people of an afterlife by sucking their souls into a false god. This makes the Kaga very unpopular among covenanters. The Covenant keeps many repositories of knowledge and encourages the storing of knowledge in major churches.

While many Covenanters frequently consult with the Kaga, few Covenanters, from devout to prelates, have chosen to join the Kaga. Thus the Kaga's knowledge of the Covenant is mostly from a non-believer's viewpoint, leading to skewed and frequently incorrect information.

This invalid information has occasionally led the Covenant (such as during the final days of Emperor Vincent's rule) to boycott or attempt to close down access to the Kaga. Such action is rare today, but many covenanters speak openly against the Kaga and the danger of its use on the immortal soul of those who have joined the Kaga.



REISCONFEDERACY

The Covenant sees the Confederacy as a haven of pagans in need of the blessings of the Sanguine Lord and his Covenant. Every year, thousand of devoted covenanters head for the Wyldlands of Bal to bring the word and wisdom of the Covenant. Few return. With the naming of the enuka Neck-ripper as prelate of Awenasa, the standing of the Covenant has risen in many parts of the Confederacy.

The Reis Confederacy has no strong opposition to the Sanguine Covenant. Most simply consider the Covenant to be another cult. Rylos has a strong following in the jungles of the north.

Many Covenant leaders have expressed concern about Neck-ripper. But so far, his methods reach the confederates as conversions are increasing.



太上モXモISDロ巾

Mureath, Arman Protectorate

This cathedral built of many cross-domes is best known for its crimson roofs. The inside is highly decorated with colored murals and shrines to each of the Venerates. Avowed preach every day from the many podiums. The high dome gives an ethereal quality to their words. In the central chapel, away from non-avowed eyes, rests the Arman Rite, the rite written by Prince Konstantin Kryszkas. Few are allowed to approach and the rite is guarded night and day.

The catacombs below the cathedral are the resting place for all the prelates of Mureath. Many highranking lay members and those who died in the service of the Covenant are given the honor to rest in these hallowed halls. The catacombs are constantly patrolled by priests to prevent desceration.

The Alexeisdom is surrounded by a lush garden where one can find chapels to each of the Venerates. The garden holds statues of the Tsars and feature plaques with the many additions each one did to the cathedral.

CANEUS CATHEDRAL

Hadensburg, Caneus Empire

The Caneus Cathedral was built to show the devotion and power of the Caneus Empire. It is still the tallest church of the Covenant with its seven spires reaching up to the Exalted Lands. Its importance has waned with the constant construction and expansion of the Sanguine Cathedral.

The Caneus Cathedral is a common pilgrimage destination for it holds a reliquary containing the two swords used in the Sanguine Duel. On the anniversary of the duel, the blood covered swords are shown to the assembled masses.

CHAPELOF THE SANGUINE DUELIST

Laitandorff, Dead Hill, Caneus Empire

This difficultly accessed chapel was built on the site where Laita first revealed herself to the world. The stark white chapel is situated on the plateau where the Sanguine Duel took place.

Every year at the height of summer, master swordsmen compete with each other to gain the favor of the Sanguine Lord and Laita, the First Venerate.

SANGUINE CATHEDRAL

Nyssa, Caneus Empire

The Sanguine Cathedral is the seat of the Covenant. It is the largest church in Exodus.

The Sanguine Cathedral started off as a cavernous church with tall stained glass windows and stone buttresses. As the Covenant's power increased so did the cathedral.

Today, the Sanguine Cathedral is a sprawling city in itself. A high red stone wall surrounds the complex. Over a thousand people call the Cathedral home, from priests to servants to guards. The Cathedral is a small city. Day and night, the courtyards are full of workers, pilgrims, penitents and preachers. In the past hundred years, the cathedral has doubled in size and construction happens day and night.

Within, one can petition to be shown the Rites – which only avowed are allowed to consult and study. There are numerous chapels to now-Exalted priests, emperors and nobles.

Pilgrims come from near and far to pray in the Exalted Chapel of Lucius Horst. The chapel was originally a mausoleum to the first Imperial Confessor, but the high number of pilgrims forced the construction of a larger structure, the Exalted Chapel, built by Emperor Vincent Eland.

IMPORTANT COVENANTERS

ANDRANOV, SERGEI

Male human, NG, Cleric (Svarog) 8/Rogue 3, Prelate of Mureath

The prelate of Mureath in Abaddon proudly wears the gold sash of a devoted of Svarog. Always smiling, the prelate gives the impression of a man who knows a joke no one else does.

The prelate is one of the most approachable men in all of Exodus. He always tries to make time for anyone who seeks an audience with him. He has a particular interest and love of adventurers, whom he regularly hosts at the Alexeisdom.

His authority in the Protectorate comes from his natural ability to make friends. Very few in Abaddon – and even elsewhere – do not consider him an ally or a friend.

He spent his youth traveling the world and adventuring, being – of his own admission –a very poor devout. As he recounts it, he accompanied a band of adventurers into a lost ruin just south of Telek. After working on a trapped chest, he thought everything was safe. The whirling blades that swept through the room left only him standing, with a single drop of blood – not his own – rolling down his left cheek. He took that as a sign of blessing from the Sanguine Lord. He walked out, leaving all the riches behind him and entered a seminary.

Behind his friendly exterior, the prelate is a fanatical devoted of the Covenant. His one and only allegiance is to the Sanguine Lord and the Covenant. The prelate is a master of diplomacy who has successfully mediated many conflicts in his short tenure.

CARTEDAU, SELENA

Female Human, LG, Cleric (Laita) 10

Selena spent her youth serving the Covenant faithfully. She did missionary work for three decades in the wilds of Koryth. Two years ago, Selena disappeared for a week and searches could not find her. When one morning she reappeared, she was changed. She no longer has the fire to spread the word of the Covenant, and instead has become cruel and vicious.

Truth is the Selena that currently spreads vile heresies is not the woman that went missing. A Khaynite named Ar'ten replaced her and is trying to lead the flock astray. Ar'ten has no divine powers, but she uses magical devices and arcane magic to simulate them.

Only Ar'ten and her Khaynite allies know where the real Selena is.

GERSHOVITCH, RAJEK

Male Human, LN, Fighter 5/ Ranger 5/ Covenant Daemonslayer 5, Head of the Covenant Daemonslayers

Rajek is a man with many scars. His left hand is missing, he walks with a limp; the left side of his face is missing and is covered with a metal plate. His soul reels from the many years of hunting daemons in the name of the Sanguine Lord. He has no family left, no friends still alive. All he has is his faith and a clear conscience. It is said that Rajek is the only man to ever be subjected to the *rod of sins* and not suffer any pain.

Rajek now spends his days travelling the Imperial Alliance seeking to meet and speak with fellow Daemonslayers, verifying that they are taught the proper ways of the order and that their faith and intentions are pure.

Rajek has serious doubts about Archprelate Kaleri and his tour secretly aims at finding allies if he is forced to remove the archprelate.

KALERI, LEONID

Male Human, LE, Cleric (Koliav) 16, Prelate of Nyssa, Archprelate of the Sanguine Covenant

The current archprelate is Leonid Kaleri, the first archprelate ever dedicated to Koliav, the Keeper of the Icy Gates. Archprelate Kaleri came to power eight years ago, after the previous archprelate died in a hunting accident. The Council of Prelates did not originally choose Kaleri, who was seen as too hard a man to rule the Sanguine Covenant, instead choosing an older, more moderate prelate. However, that choice choked to death on a chicken bone before his ascension could be announced, and many prelates had visions of the Icy Gates the night he did so. Taking this as a sign, the group chose Leonid Kaleri next. Many have since come to regret the choice. Archprelate Kaleri is a firm believer in swift and severe punishment. Using a *rod of sins*; originally crafted by one of his prelates, and quickly becoming common among upper-rank avowed; Kaleri calls forth those who fail him and puts them to quick, magic trial. Those who refuse exposure to the rod are arrested, tried and executed as heretics – not always in that same order.

Kaleri believes he is a test of the Sanguine Covenant, an agent of the Keeper of the Icy Gates to ensure the loyalty of the church and the pureness of the faith. He believes it is the duty of the devout to realize he is turning to darkness, and to stop him by whatever means. As they keep failing his tests, he feels justified in punishing the flock further. He recently ordered a few of his retainers to research rites that will turn him into a lich. He sends Covenant Daemonslayers on crusades against distant evils. Many devout have begun to worry about the archprelate's extremes, but none are prepared to oppose him openly.

ARCHPRELATE LEONID KALERI - CR 15

XP 51,200

Cleric of Koliav 16 LE Medium humanoid (human) Init +0; Senses Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 24, touch 10, flat-footed 24 (+9 armor, +5 deflection); ACP -1 hp 99 (16d8+16) Fort +16, Ref +10, Will +24

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee Judgment of Koliav* +15/+10/+5 (1d6+3 / x4) Melee Rod of sins* +15 touch (see entry)

Special Attacks Bleeding Touch (12/day; 8 rounds; 1d6 damage per round), channel negative energy (8d6; DC23)

Cleric Domains Death, Knowledge

Cleric Spells (CL 16th; concentration +25)

8th – dimensional lock, discern location^D, shield of law

7th – destruction^D, dictum, legend lore, repulsion

6th – find the path^D, greater dispel magic, heal, mass cure moderate wounds, undeath to death

5th – break enchantment, disruptive weapon, flame strike, greater command, slay living^D, true seeing

4th – cure critical wounds, death ward^D, dimensional anchor, dismissal, freedom of movement, order's wrath

3rd – bestow curse, daylight, dispel magic, invisibility purge, prayer, speak with dead^D

2nd – calm emotions, detect thoughts^D, hold person, lesser restoration, silence, spiritual weapon, zone of truth **1st** – bless, comprehend languages^D, cure light wounds, enthropic shield, remove fear, sanctuary, shield of faith **0** – create water, detect magic, light, read magic

STATISTICS

Str 10, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 19, Wis 28, Cha 20

Base Atk +12; CMB +12; CMD 22

Feats Alignment Channel (lawful), Channel Smite, Command Undead, Eschew Materials, Iron Will, Persuasive, Selective Channeling,

Skills Diplomacy +28, Intimidate +23, Knowledge (history) +23, Knowledge (nobility) +23, Knowledge (religion) +26, Linguistics +23, Sense Motive +29, Spellcraft +25

Languages Abyssal, Ancient Arman, Aquan, Auran, Celestial, Common, Cynean, Dalrean (understand only), Enuka, Exodite, Ignan, Infernal, Khaynite, Prymidian, Sasori, Sobeka, Terran, Undercommon

SQ Death Embrace, Lore Keeper, Remote Viewing **Other Gear** Archprelate's armor*, rod of sins*, ring of protection +5, sanguine headdress* *: See Magic Items of the Church

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Death's Embrace (Ex) You heal damage instead of taking damage from channeled negative energy. If the channeled negative energy targets undead, you heal hit points just like undead in the area.

Lore Keeper (Sp) You can touch a creature to learn about its abilities and weaknesses. With a successful touch attack, you gain information as if you made the appropriate Knowledge skill check with a result equal to 40.

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Remote Viewing (Sp) You can use clairvoyance/ clairaudience at will as a spell-like ability at caster level 16. You can use this ability for 16 rounds per day. These rounds do not need to be consecutive.

NECK-RIPPER

Male Enuka, CN, Barbarian 7/ Cleric (Rylos) 4, Prelate of Awenasa

The Prelate of Awenasa in the Reis Confederacy is the first enuka to rise to such a position. His massive build towers over everyone around him. Neck-ripper earned his name after he defeated a tyrannosaurus single handedly. The feat impressed the local population so much that they demanded he be named their prelate. When the previous prelate refused, Neck-ripper earned his name. In the blood of his hated predecessor, the enuka prelate enjoyed life.

Neck-ripper is neither overly intelligent nor very charismatic. But he is big and intimidating. He is wise and usually ponders before acting. Those who thought he would be easy to manipulate found a prelate who was either too dumb to be manipulated easily or too slow to act without thinking.

Neck-ripper spends most of his days either hunting or studying local religion. Many in the Confederacy are asking for his replacement, but nothing has happened so far. However, Neck-ripper's strong arm tactics and bullying ways have gained him many allies within the Confederacy. Whereas a weaker man would fail, conversion is growing because – some say in spite – of him.

UTLAKOVSKA, KARENA

Female P'tan, LN, Cleric (Laita) 7, Confessor of Huda

Karena was found on the steps of the church in Hadu wrapped in a blanket and with a white birthmark on her face in the shape of Laita's silver scepter. The local prester took her in and adopted her.

She received a clerical education of high quality and taking a permanent vow was natural for her. Although many times considered for and offered higher positions, she has always declined them. She says that only by staying near the people can she better protect them from the darkness of the First Ones.

Karena is a driven individual who frequently contacts mercenaries and adventurers to investigate and eradicate any trace of the First Ones and their servants. For her, the First Ones are the creators and the source of all darkness on the world.

VON BRECHT, KATHERINA

Female Human, N, Wizard (diviner) 3

Katherina von Brecht is a stunning woman in her early twenties. She keeps her long blond hair in two pigtails making her seem younger than she is. She is a devout young woman seeking to atone for past sins. To that effect, she works in the archives of the Sanguine Cathedral. She has in-depth knowledge of the many Rites kept there and can easily assist the PCs in getting around the Cathedral, getting appointment with high members of the church and other such tasks.

She may be attracted to a PC with a high Charisma. However, she would not betray the church or her vows.

VON URTOW, FRANZ

Male Human, LG, Paladin 5, Palace Guard

Franz von Urtow comes from a long line of proud Nasian knights. For service to the Covenant, he was promoted to the personal guard of the Archprelate, a position he takes very seriously.

However, he is growing extremely worried about the archprelate. Torn between duty to his liege and his own conscience Franz may be the lynchpin of many plots against the archprelate.

PLAYING & COVENANTER CHOOSING & VENERATE

The Sanguine Covenant is a very large organization with many layers of complexity. The first and most important is to understand the basic celestial hierarchy of the Covenant. No one directly worships the Sanguine Lord, for it is heretical to do so. Similarly asking patronage of multiple Venerates is also heretical – and is only for priests and devoted.

Most worshippers who do not enter the permanent priesthood often chose a Venerate as a patron. Changing one patron in that case is not a big issue – from a religious perspective. Thus anyone who does not gain divine spell casting abilities is free to change their patron Venerate at any time.

Those with divine spell casting abilities are required to dedicate themselves to one of the Venerates. In metagaming terms: choosing a Venerate to serve is choosing a deity. The PC is part of the Covenant but devoted to one of the Venerate. Changing Venerates is exactly like changing deity. It requires an atonement spell and often a period of contrition.

Avowed of the Covenant all favor crimson and reds for their ritual garb. However, each Venerate has a color they favor and those are usually worn on a sash of a belt.

BLOOD HEALING

Blood Healing is a special type of magic displayed by priests of the Sanguine Covenant. By cutting themselves, they can increase the power of their healing abilities. Those abilities are represented in the form of feats. Only a small number of Covenanters have that power.

Certain special powers require the application of blood healing.

NEW PRESTIGE CLASS GOVENIANT DAEMONSLAVER

The Sanguine Rite describes a class of foes known as daemons. This classification includes demons, and devils, but all evil outsiders, evil elementals, evil shape changers, and undead are considered daemons. The Sanguine Covenant believes all such creatures seek the corruption of men's souls and convert good people into heretics, turning them away from the righteous ways taught by the Covenant. They are the primary foes of the Sanguine Covenant, creatures that are heretics through their very existence. Over the centuries special holy warriors have arisen to combat them. These are the Covenant Daemonslayers, the holy warriors of the Sanguine Lord.

Under the guidance of a pentarch, an applicant learns about daemons and their strengths and weaknesses before taking a vow to seek and destroy them. This eternal vow, witnessed by a high-ranking priest, gives the Covenant Daemonslayer the ability to resist many of the daemons tricks and powers. Daemonslayers vow their soul to the Covenant for all eternity.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a Covenant Daemonslayer, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Alignment: Any good or lawful alignment

Base Attack Bonus: +4

Base Saves: Will +2

Skills: Knowledge (religion) +4, Knowledge (the planes) +4

Special: Must take a vow of service to the Sanguine Lord, witnessed by an avowed of at least a Pentarch's rank. Failure to remain loyal means a character no longer qualifies for this class, and immediately loses all its special benefits.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the Covenant Daemonslayer.

Hit Die: d10

Class Skills: The Covenant Daemonslayer's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Acrobatics (Dex), Climb (Str), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (history) (Int), Knowledge (planes) (Int), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Perception (Wis), Ride (Dex), Sense Motive (Wis).

Skill points at each level: 2 + Int Modifier

Weapon and Armor Proficiency Covenant: Daemonslayers gain no armor or shield proficiency. They are proficient with the favored weapons of all of the Venerates (battle axe, halberd, heavy pick, morningstar, longbow, spear and war hammer)

Daemon Lore (Ex): A Covenant Daemonslayer adds his class level to any Knowledge skill for the purpose of monster lore. At 4th level, the Daemonslayer can make untrained Knowledge rolls for the purpose of monster lore.

Favored Enemy (Su): At 1st level a Covenant Daemonslayer gains a preternatural ability to harm daemons. This comes in the form a favored enemy, like a ranger. However, a Daemonslayer may only choose between outsider (evil), humanoid (shape shifter) or undead. This ability is identical to that of the ranger, and the level in both classes stack to determine the number and bonus.

Smite Evil (Su): At 2nd level, a Covenant Daemonslayer gains the ability to smite a daemon. This ability function exactly like a paladin's Smite Evil and the levels in both classes stack to determine effect.

Sworn Duty (Ex): At 3rd level the Covenant Daemonslayer gains spell resistance against mind affecting spells and effect. This spell resistance is equal to 10 + Covenant Daemonslayer's character level. At 5th level, the sworn duty applies to all spells and spell-like abilities used by daemons.

COVENANT PURIFIER

The Covenant Purifier is a zealot dedicated to serving the Sanguine Covenant. The purifier is the left hand of the archprelate, the assassing of the faith. Whenever they appear in public, they wear masks to hide their face.

Purifiers have formal garb when taking rest in a Covenant temple, but conceal their identity behind the dreaded Purifier masks.

Most purifiers take up a common or innocuous profession as a secret identity. Some pose as soldiers, priests, merchants, servants, criminals or even prostitutes. No deception is considered too base or embarrassing to a Purifier – their pride comes only in service. They know they will be greatly rewarded for this complete obedience when they reach the Exalted Lands.

Many in the Covenant dislike the purifiers, debating that the Covenant should remain above such underhanded methods and serve as a beacon of light. However the effectiveness of the purifiers cannot be denied.

In Abaddon and eastern Cordel, the purifiers often make demonstration of their presence by making short pilgrimages to local churches and shrines. However, such pilgrimages usually hide or cover another secret mission. Few openly speak against the Purifiers, and those few who do so outside the Covenant quickly find themselves at the end of a blade, or suffer an unfortunate accident.

COVENANT DAEMONSLAYER						
Level	Bonus	Base Attack Save	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Special	
1	+1	+0	+0	+1	Daemon lore, favored enemy	
2	+2	+1	+1	+1	Smite evil	
3	+3	+1	+1	+2	Sworn duty	
4	+4	+1	+1	+2	Daemon Lore	
5	+5	+2	+2	+3	Sworn duty II	

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evel	Bonus	Base Attack Save	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Special
	+0	+0	+0	+1	Secret Identity, soften blows, vow
	+1	+1	+1	+1	Sneak attack +1d6, vow of death I
	+2	+1	+1	+2	+1 level of existing divine spell case
	+3	+1	+1	+2	Sneak attack +2d6, swift death I
	+3	+2	+2	+3	+1 level of existing divine spell cas

2	+1	+1	+1	+1	Sneak attack +1d6, vow of death I
3	+2	+1	+1	+2	+1 level of existing divine spell casting class
4	+3	+1	+1	+2	Sneak attack +2d6, swift death I
5	+3	+2	+2	+3	+1 level of existing divine spell casting class, quick strike I
6	+4	+2	+2	+3	Sneak attack +3d6, vow of death II
7	+5	+2	+2	+4	+1 level of existing divine spell casting class
8	+6	+3	+3	+4	Sneak attack +4d6, swift death II
9	+6	+3	+3	+5	+1 level of existing divine spell casting class
10	+7	+3	+3	+5	Sneak attack +5d6, quick strike II, vow of death III

REQUIREMENTS

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To qualify to become a Covenant purifier, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Alignment: must be lawful

Feats: Devoted Covenanter*, Quick Draw

Skills: Bluff +5, Knowledge (religion) +1, Stealth +5

Spells: must be able to cast 1st level divine spell

Special: At least 1d6 of sneak attack. Also, when the applicant takes his vows of obedience he must purchase a purifier mask (see new magic items).

CLASS FEATURES

The following information pertains to the Covenant purifier prestige class.

Hit Die: d8

Class Skills: The Covenant purifier's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Acrobatics (Dex), Climb (Str), Disable Device (Dex), Disguise (Cha), Escape Artist (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Perception (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Stealth (Dex).

Skill Points at each level: 6 + Int modifier.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Covenant Purifiers gain no proficiency with weapons or armor.

Secret identity (Su): Whenever they appear in public, a purifier wears a mask that conceals his true identity. A purifier gains a sacred bonus to any check or roll that could reveal his identity. If forced to reveal their identity through magic, the purifier is entitled to an immediate saving throw to negate the effect.

of service

Soften blows (Ex): When a purifier wields a light weapon, he may use it to inflict non-lethal damage without taking the -4 penalty.

Vow of obedience (Ex): A purifier is oath-bound to speak only the truth to any prelate. Failure to do so results in the immediate loss of all class abilities until the purifier receives an *atonement* spell.

Sneak attack: This is exactly like the rogue ability of the same name. The extra damage dealt increases by +1d6 every other level (2nd, 4th, 6th, 8th, and 10th). If a purifier gets a sneak attack bonus from another source, the damage bonuses stack.

Vow of death (Su): When given a target to capture or eliminate, you gain a +2 sacred bonus to attack and weapon damage rolls against that target. This bonus increases by 2 at 6th and 10th level. The target must be given to you by a prelate and requires a ten minute ceremony during which the purifier's vow of death is blessed by the prelate.

Spells per day: At the indicated levels, a Covenant Purifier gains new spells per day as if he had also gained a level in a divine spell casting class he belonged to before adding the prestige class. He does not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained, except for additional spells per day, spells known (if he is a spontaneous spellcaster), and an increased effective level of spell casting. If a character had more than one arcane spell casting class before becoming a purifier, he must decide to which class he adds the new level for purposes of determining spells per day.

Swift death (Ex): At 4th level, a purifier can increase his speed by +10 feet per round for a number of minutes equal to the purifier's class level. However, when doing so, the purifier takes a -4 penalty to AC. At 8th level the penalty drop to -2.

Quick strike (Su): At 5th level, a purifier gains a +4 sacred bonus to initiative. At 10th level, this bonus increases to +8.



ARMOR OF FAITH

By channeling your faith, you gain increased awareness to attack.

Prerequisite: Channel energy class feature,

Benefit: By spending one of your channel attempts, your armor or body gains a dodge bonus to Armor Class equal to the number of d6 of your channel energy for a number of rounds equal to your Charisma modifier. When active, your armor or body glows with divine light (or a profane aura) with a radius of 10 feet.

ATTACHED SOUL [COMBAT]

Your soul is strongly attached to life, granting you the ability to fight on much longer

Prerequisite: Toughness

Benefit: You may be reduced down to an additional -5 hit points before you die.

Normal: Without this feat you die when you reach your Constitution below zero.

BLOOD HEALING [METAMAGIC]

You may increase your healing power by providing some of your own blood.

Prerequisite: Must follow the Sanguine Covenant, ability to cast at least one *cure* spell, Devoted Covenanter **Benefit:** When you cast a *cure* spell, you may cut yourself and increase your caster level by 1 for every 3 points of damage taken. This damage cannot be healed by a spell increased through Blood Healing. It may be healed by a subsequent spell however.

BLOOD HEALING, GREATER [METAMAGIC]

You may increase your healing power by providing some of your own blood.

Prerequisite: Blood Healing, divine caster level 5th **Benefit:** When you cast a *remove curse, remove disease* or *remove poison* spell, you may cut yourself and increase your caster level by 1 for every 3 points of damage taken. Paladins with a mercy that mimics these spells may use this feat with their lay on hands.

Special: Some curses, diseases and poisons can only be cured through blood healing. They are very rare, but this makes blood healers with this feat highly sought-after and frequently given additional deference.

DEVOTED COVENANTER

You are completely dedicated to the Covenant and will not be swayed by the powers opposed to your faith. **Prerequisite:** Must follow the Sanguine Covenant **Benefit:** You gain a +3 sacred bonus to any saves against any mind-affecting spells and abilities from servants of any other divine powers and daemons.

DIVINE AWE

You can channel energy to shake the resolve of those attacking you.

Prerequisite: Channel energy class feature, one skill rank in Intimidate.

Benefit: By spending one of your channel attempts, you surround yourself with an aura of awe. This effect lasts for a number of rounds equal to your Charisma modifier (min 1). Anyone who succeeds at a melee attack against you must make a Will save DC ($10 + \frac{1}{2}$ your level + Charisma modifier) or be shaken for one round. This is a mind-affecting fear effect.

DIVINE FLAME

You can channel energy to sheath your weapon with divine energy.

Prerequisite: Channel energy class feature, Smite class feature.

Benefit: By spending a channel attempt, you imbue your weapon with divine flame. The flames remain for a number of rounds equal to your Charisma modifier. The weapon deals your Charisma modifier in additional damage. The energy generated by this feat resembles fire, but it is not fire.

Special: the additional damage is discharged only one time per round. Energy that is not discharged is lost.

DIVINE WEAPON

You channel your faith to guide your weapon in battle. **Prerequisite:** Channel energy class feature, Power Attack, Base attack bonus +5

Benefit: As a swift action, spend one channel attempt, to add your Charisma modifier to your to hit roll on your next attack.

SECRET SOCIETIES OF NEDEXODUS: SÄNGUINE COVENANT

FANATICAL COVENANTER

Your devotion to the Sanguine Covenant is total and unwavering.

Requirements: Devoted Covenanter

Benefit: When opposing enemies of the Covenant, you may make a short prayer as a swift action and gain a +1 sacred bonus to hit and weapon damage until the end of your next turn against the enemies of the faith. You must know the target to be an opponent or a heretic to the Covenant to use this feat (and the target must actually be), otherwise the feat has no effect.

FULL THRUST (COMBAT)

You have mastered the arts of delivering deadly blows with the lightest of weapons.

Requirements: Base Attack +5, Dex 15, Power Attack

Benefit: You may use the Power Attack feat with a light weapon. However, you cannot use a light weapon two-handed.

Normal: You cannot use the Power Attack feat with a light weapon.

HERETIC

You hold the views deemed heretical by your church, but you still gain spells from your god.

Prerequisite: Must be a divine spellcaster and part of an established church.

Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus to all Knowledge checks involving orthodox and heresies of your parent church. You also gain a +2 bonus to all Bluff checks to deny your involvement in any heresies.

SANGUINE CHANNELING

Your faith naturally eliminates any daemons that might benefit from your power.

Prerequisite: Channel energy class feature, Devoted Covenanter, Selective Channeling

Benefit: All Daemons are automatically excluded from any effect that could be beneficial to them. This functions in addition to the Selective Channeling. Targets thus excluded do not count towards your limit for selective channeling. Daemons are not excluded from effects that hurt or hinder them.

SANGUINE FURY

Your channeling attempts hurt daemons more than normal.

Prerequisite: Channel energy class feature, Devoted Covenanter

Benefit: Against outsiders with an alignment opposed to your deity's, your cleric level is counted as being two levels higher. This has no effects on targets whose alignment is not opposed to your deity.

Special: Neutral deities and their worshippers gain no benefits from this feat (as neutral has no opposites).

UNDEAD SLAYER

You can channel energy to ignore the damage reduction of undead opponents.

Prerequisite: Channel energy class feature.

Benefit: By spending one of your channel attempts, you can ignore the damage reduction of all undead opponents for a number of rounds equal to your Charisma modifier.

WEAPON FINESSE, GREATER

You have mastered the art of precision strikes without relying on brute strength.

Prerequisite: Base Attack +6, Dex 15, Weapon Finesse. **Benefit:** You may add your Dexterity bonus, rather than your Strength bonus, to damage done with a melee weapon. The melee weapon must be one that can be used with the Weapon finesse feat. This additional damage is considered precision damage, is not multiplied on a critical hit, is negated by concealment and may only do non-lethal damage if the weapon yielded inflicts non-lethal damage. If a target is immune to sneak attack, it takes no additional damage from this feat.

NEW MAGIC ITEMS

The following magic items are only found in the possession of Covenanters. Any non-avowed found in possession of one of these items can be arrested and prosecuted. Penalties vary from imprisonment (where the Covenant is not very powerful), heavy fines including confiscation of all magical property (most places in the Imperial Alliance) to even death (Arman Protectorate). Local priests decide on the sentence and approach the authorities with recommendations.

ARCHPRELATE'S ARMOR

Aura strong abjuration; CL 13th Slot armor; Price 70,900 gp; Weight 15 lbs.

DESCRIPTION

This silvery breastplate features the symbol of the Sanguine Lord and that of each of the Venerates on the breastplate. Upon getting sworn in, the Archprelate is presented with the armor. The Archprelate is never seen wearing the armor except when he rides out to war.

The Archprelate's armor is a +3 glammered heavy fortification mithral breastplate. The glammered ability allows the Archprelate to wear the armor at all times.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *limited* wish or miracle, disguise self; must worship the Sanguine Lord; **Cost** 35,450 gp

JUDGMENT OF KOLIAV

Aura moderate conjuration; **CL** 12th **Slot** armor; **Price** 75,008 gp; **Weight** 3 lbs.

DESCRIPTION

This heavy pick is decorated with symbols of Koliav. For generations it has been wielded by the high priests of Koliav. It is said the weapon has seen a thousand wars and drank the souls of a million demons. The Judgment of Koliav is a +3 outsider (elemental, evil) undead bane mithral heavy pick.

Note: The Judgment of Koliav is said to have more power than described here. It is generally assumed the weapon is intelligent, but such allegations were never substantiated.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *summon monster I*; must worship Koliav; **Cost** 37,504 gp

PURIFIER MASK

Aura faint abjuration and illusion; **CL** 3rd **Slot** head; **Price** 12,000 gp; **Weight** 1 lb.

DESCRIPTION

A purifier mask covers the face and identity of a purifier. Each is uniquely decorated allowing one to recognize a given purifier. This decoration depends on the purifier, not the mask itself.

Only someone who has taken the vow of service can wear a purifier mask. The mask does not hold on anyone else.

When worn, the wearer is affected by both a *misdirection* and an *undetectable alignment* spell. The *misdirection* points to a random person.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *misdirection and undetectable alignment*; must worship the Sanguine Covenant; **Cost** 6,000 gp

ROD OF SINS

Aura strong evocation; CL 15th Slot headband; Price 126,000 gp; Weight 1 lb.

DESCRIPTION

A rod of sins is made of hard polished oak. It is unadorned. At the top end, symbols of the Sanguine Covenant distinguish it.

A rod of sins forces a creature touched to relive his worst sins; as he himself defines them; and suffer extreme pain and emotional anguish as a result. In theory, this allows the target to be punished by his past sins. In practice, the rod summons forth whatever sins it can, and attempts to punish the target equally for them regardless of their severity. The rod functions three times a day. Using a *rod of sins* requires a touch attack. On a successful hit, the target must make a DC 25 Will save. On a successful save, the target takes 5d4 points of nonlethal damage and is shaken for one round. On a failed save, target take 10d4 points of nonlethal damage and is affected at though hit by a *dictum* spell (caster level 15).

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Rod, *dictum, greater scrying*; **Cost** 126,000 gp

SANGUINE HEADDRESS

Aura strong transmutation; CL 12th Slot headband; Price 90,000 gp; Weight 1 lb.

DESCRIPTION

The Sanguine Headdress is worn by the Archprelate and many of the highest authorities of the Covenant. Headdresses are only handed to loyal followers. Anyone caught with one obtained illegally is often prosecuted by the church. The Sanguine Headdress functions as a *headband of mental prowess* +6 (skill bonus to Intimidate).

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *eagle's splendor*, *fox's cunning* and *owl's wisdom*; must worship Koliav; **Cost** 45,000 gp

USING THE COVENANT THEMES OF COVENANT ADVENTURES

Adventures with a Covenant focus have a few common themes. The most common themes include heresy, hierarchy, the mad archprelate and expansion.

HERESY

Heresy is a common theme. All daemons, First Ones and their followers are heretics. Anyone who preaches about a deity other than the Sanguine Lord can be branded a heretic.

Determining what constitutes heresy is rarely that clear. Finding out the difference between true heresy and a heresy of ignorance forms the core of many adventures.

The Covenant deals mercilessly with heretics, sometimes discreetly – calling upon the purifiers – sometimes more openly – through the daemonslayers and inquisitors. Adventurers are used as additional, generally expendable, resources.

All that matters is that heresy is stamped out and that its influence is removed.

HIERXRCHY

Opponents of the Covenant often accuse it of being overly rigid in its hierarchy – which it is. However, that hierarchy

has proven remarkably versatile in the Covenant's many expansion phases: under Lucius Horst, after the rise of the Kryszkas in the Protectorate and more recently when it became the official religion of the Imperial Alliance.

THE 巾太D 太RCHPRモL太TE

Were he not Archprelate, Leonid Kaleri could easily be branded a heretic. He considers himself to be one. He pushes the Covenant towards heresy, hoping the faithful will discover and stop him. His position is one that demands absolute obedience from his subordinates. Opposing the archprelate is something few in the Covenant dream of doing.

EXbYUZION

The Covenant seeks to expand its power and influence, and through it, the worship of the Sanguine Lord. This constant need for expansion brings the Covenant to areas where few would dare to tread. It seeks heretics wherever they dwell, protects its flock gathers lost or forbidden knowledge and explores strange locations and ruins.

The Covenant seeks to expand its influence in a number of places, such as Gavea and the Reis Confederacy.

ATTIEZ COASULTEZ

In many places on Exodus, the Sanguine Covenant is the only trace of civilization one can find for days. The Covenant makes a great patron for a group of adventurers. It constantly seeks to destroy monsters, daemons and heretics, frequently requiring adventurers to assist its priests and missionaries.

OPPONENTS

The same reasons why the Covenant makes great allies makes them great opponents. It seeks to prevent the spreading of knowledge it considers dangerous or heretical. It burns opponents to its policies as heretics. It has agents and spies almost everywhere. It is intolerant of other people's religions or seeks to destroy or encompass it into its own system of beliefs.

The Covenant supports and utilizes many fanatics ready to do anything to gain the favor of the Sanguine Lord. These fanatics can be found anywhere on Exodus. This is in addition to its daemonslayers and purifiers, perhaps the most devoted and fanatical of all.

Fighting the Covenant is not an easy thing to do. It is an official religion, supported by the authorities and wielding immense resources. Not every Covenanter is evil, but most would support their own hierarchy over non-devout or known heretics.

CATALOG QUEST

While doing research in the Sanguine Cathedral's library, Katherina von Brecht finds information about a new class of outsiders. She seeks to find more information about them so they can be catalogued. She contacts the PCs to learn more before contacting her superiors.

THE CONVERT

In a remote area of Exodus, a Kroca is captured and brought to a small village. Before it is to be executed by the local authorities, it claims that it seeks redemption. It seeks atonement and conversion to the Sanguine Covenant.

The Covenant authorities have a problem. If they do not accept the Kroca's conversion, the local populace's opinion may turn against the Covenant. If they do accept the Kroca, they stand to become heretics. The local priest asks the PCs to escort the Kroca to a larger town to meet with the prester.

But the road to the city is long and dangerous. Is the Kroca truthful? Will its brethren try to rescue it? Will Covenant forces seek to force the issue by killing it when it leaves the village?

THE FALSE HERETIC

A local heretic was recently burned on a pyre. Before he suffered his fate, he confesses the names of his accomplices. One of them has the same name as a PC. Shortly after the party walks into town, a group of citizens gather to take care of the heretic. The PC and his friends have to find a way to clear his name before he is sent to the pyre.

THE MISSIONXRY

A young fanatic has taken it upon himself to convert a local tribe of Dalreans. However, the plants think that to honor the Sanguine Lord, they must shed as much blood as possible, so they begin a rampage of devotion. The authorities think this is a heretical cult that must be eradicated. How will the PCs sort out this situation?

PATERNAL DREADS

A local boy claims to have had dreams of his long dead grandfather. The local populace is split about the situation and the local priest needs time to research and investigate the claim. To give him time to do so, he needs a group of devout to maintain the peace when half the locals believe the boy and the other half believe he is a heretic. It is up to the PCs to sort out who is right and who is wrong.

PILGRIMAGE

While on the road, the PCs encounter a procession of pilgrims heading to a nearby shrine. The pilgrims welcome the PCs as fellow devout and invite them to travel together.

The pilgrims have no combat experience and the road they take is full of bandits and dangers.

THE RITE

A recently deceased priest wrote a new Rite. In his last will, he asked that his Rite be sent to Nyssa to be added to the library. As the PCs take possession of the Rite, a local crime boss approaches them, offering a lot of money for the PCs not to complete their mission. If the PCs proceed, they are constantly hounded by bandits and misfortune.

THE STING

While in a big town, the PCs get tailed by a group of nondescript commoners. The commoners believe the PCs will be the target of a group of heretics, but they are unsure if the PCs deserve the protection of the Covenant. So they only observe.

If they determine the PCs are heretic, they send for a purifier to take care of them, while the rest of the group merely tries to keep the PCs busy and generally interfere with whatever they do.

THE WILL

Time has caught up to an old beloved nobleman. He now lies comatose in his bed. His son, a member of the Order of Kaga announced that before losing the ability to speak, his father asked to be added to the Kaga.

Being a known devout, the local Covenant is up in arms, accusing the son of trying to steal his father's soul. The situation quickly escalates, leading to skirmishes in the streets, beatings and intimidation.

The PCs are brought in to enter the old man's dreams and ask him what his wish is. With that information, the true will is to be revealed.

Retrieving the information is but one part of this challenge. Getting both sides to agree to his will is not easy. The situation is quickly degenerating.



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