

Weekly Wonders

Archetypes of the Afterlife

Volume I



The Damned

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*Necromancers
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Introduction

While death of any kind often inspires a sense of dread and contemplation, nothing quite inspires terror or drama like damnation. The threat to the mortal soul, or the belief in that peril, can create dynamic, tragic stories, or powerful stories of redemption or vengeance. Whatever the background, we are proud to present a number of damned archetypes to represent characters consigned to doom.

New Archetypes

The following archetypes are presented in alphabetical order, based on the name of the class that they modify.

Hound of the Underworld (Hunter)

Hounds of the underworld are hunters who are beholden to otherworldly powers, enlisted to drag the souls of the damned into the netherworld. Unlike other hunters, they share a bond with a supernatural hound in the service of one or more lower planes. They lack the ability to augment these hounds' powers, but benefit from their unique skill sets.

Animal Companion: A hound of the underworld must choose a dog for her animal companion.

This ability modifies the animal companion class feature.

Aspect of the Hound (Su): At 1st level, the hound of the underworld's dog animal companion gains special powers. The hound of the underworld's dog animal companion can detect the presence of evil creatures within range of its scent, and can pinpoint the location of evil creatures adjacent to it. At 4th level, the hound can cast *detect evil* at will. Additionally, the hound of the underworld's dog animal companion gains a +1 bonus on attack rolls and damage rolls against evil creatures. At 8th level, this bonus increases to +2, and at 15th level, it increases to +4. The hound of the underworld cannot apply the effects of her animal focus to her animal companion. She can, however, choose to gain these benefits when she assumes the benefits of her animal focus.

This ability modifies the animal focus class feature.

Condemn Soul (Su): At 2nd level, the hound of the underworld can condemn a wicked creature in order to send his soul to eternal torment below. As a standard action, the hound of the underworld can designate a single evil creature within 30 feet as damned. If she does, both the hound of the underworld and her animal companion gain a sacred bonus on attack rolls against that creature equal to the hound of the underworld's Wisdom modifier. If the target dies, he must succeed on a Will save ($DC = 10 + 1/2$ the hound of the underworld's level + the hound of the underworld's Wisdom modifier) or have his soul trapped in the evil-aligned plane of the hound of the underworld's choice, where it is tormented. The creature must remain in this state of torment for a number of weeks equal to the hound of the underworld's level. During this time, the target cannot be brought back to

life except by a creature with 4 or more caster levels than the hound of the underworld's level. After this time, the creature can be brought back to life by normal means, but gains an additional 2 negative levels as a result of the suffering he sustains. The hound of the underworld can use this ability once per day at 2nd level, and an additional time per day at 10th and 18th levels.

This ability replaces the precise companion class feature.

Contract from Below (Ex): At 10th level, a hound of the underworld periodically receives contracts from various fiendish powers to bring the souls of the damned to their perdition. Once per week, the hound of the underworld is made aware of a particularly evil character, which she is contracted to slay. The target's scent is made known to the hound of the underworld's animal companion, and is never located more than 10 miles from the hound of the underworld when this ability is activated. If the target is slain, either by the hound of the underworld or her allies, and committed to a corresponding evil-aligned plane, the hound of the underworld is rewarded with additional power. Each day for the remainder of the week, she can cast an additional spell of each spell level without expending a spell slot.

If the hound of the underworld fails to slay the target within 1 week, she gains 1 negative level, which cannot be removed until she completes this task. If the hound of the underworld dies while having one or more negative levels as a result of this ability, she is trapped in Hell for 1 day per negative level, during which time she cannot be returned to life by any means. At the end of this time, the target is returned to life with a single negative level, which cannot be removed by any means until this contract is fulfilled.

If the target dies by any other means, the hound of the underworld gains no benefits but also suffers no drawbacks, and is immediately presented with a contract to kill an alternate target.

This ability replaces the raise companion class feature.

Hound of Hell (Su): At 17th level, a hound of the underworld can summon the powers of the underworld into her animal companion. Once per week, as a full-round action, the hound of the underworld can imbue her animal companion with the dark power to hunt down damned souls. For the next 24 hours, the animal companion has its movement speed increased to 100 feet and it becomes immune to the effects of exhaustion and fatigue. During this time, the hound of the underworld's animal companion can track an evil creature with its scent special quality over any distance. Additionally, any evil creature the hound of the underworld's animal companion kills is transported to an evil-aligned plane and cannot be returned to life by any means until the hound of the underworld's animal companion is slain.

This ability replaces the one with the wild class feature.

Oracle of the Damned (Oracle)

While the majority of oracles suffer from some kind of supernatural curse that comes with their extraordinary connection to the divine, a few seek out a particularly dangerous curse in exchange for greater knowledge of what lies below. These doomed oracles can speak with souls trapped in the underworld, and those who delve most into their mysteries can even bring those forever lost below back to life. The price for this power is damnation itself.

Damnation (Su): At 1st level, the oracle of the damned is cursed with eternal damnation. The oracle of the damned suffers a -4 penalty on saving throws against death effects and on Constitution checks made to stabilize. At 5th level, her impending damnation becomes more obvious, and she automatically fails the saving throws of any effect that traps or destroys your soul. At 10th level, if the oracle of the damned dies, she cannot be returned to life by magic unless the caster level of the spell or effect which is bringing her back to life has a caster level equal to or less than your character level.

This ability replaces the oracle's curse class feature.

Detect the Damned (Sp): At 1st level, the oracle of the damned is constantly affected as by the spells *detect evil* and *detect undead*. As a swift action, the oracle of the damned is able to concentrate on these spells as though she had concentrated for 3 rounds.

Revelation: At 1st level, an oracle of the damned can select a revelation from the ancestors, bones, or occult mysteries in place of one of her normal revelations. The oracle of the damned can select only 1 revelation from each of these mysteries unless she chooses one of those mysteries for her mystery class feature and must still meet all the other prerequisites of that revelation.

This ability modifies the revelation class feature.

Speak with the Damned (Sp): At 2nd level, the oracle of the damned can cast *speak with dead* as a spell-like ability once per day. The oracle of the damned uses her class level as her caster level for this effect, and the saving throw DC is Charisma-based. Evil creatures receive no saving throw against this spell-like ability, and can never speak a falsehood in response to a question asked by the oracle of the damned, unless the creature had 3 or more Hit Dice than the oracle of the damned.

This ability replaces the mystery spell gained at 2nd level.

Summon the Damned (Sp): At 10th level, the oracle of the damned can call up the spirit of a long dead character condemned to a lower plane. This allows the oracle of the damned to cast *call spirit*^{OA} as a spell-like ability once per day; however, she can only call the spirits of evil creatures with this ability. If the oracle of the damned uses this spell-like ability in the place where the target was slain, she can use this ability without expending a use of this ability.

This ability replaces the mystery spell gained at 10th level.

Visions of the Damned (Sp): At 14th level, the oracle of the damned can transport her consciousness into the netherworld to consult the damned which dwell there. This allows the oracle of the damned to cast *vision* as a spell-like ability once per day.

This ability replaces the mystery spell gained at 14th level.

Rescue the Damned (Sp): At 20th level, the oracle of the damned can send her spirit into the lower planes in order to switch places with a damned character. This allows the oracle of the damned to cast *true resurrection* as a spell-like ability once per day. When she does, she possesses the target, as with the spell *possession*, except that the duration is unlimited.

This ability replaces the final revelation class feature.

Hell Runner (Rogue)

While many rogues strive to stay ahead of the reaper, hell runners have a lot of extra incentive to avoid death. These rogues have consigned their soul to the lower planes, whether as part of a bargain, possibly for the very powers they use to stay out of the pit, or as a consequence of many ill deeds. Because of the prospect of roasting in the fires of the pit, hell runners will do anything to avoid death, and have supernatural powers to keep them alive.

Death Bail (Su): A hell runner is wanted by one or more underworld entities, and she cannot be released from her torments by normal magical means, but she can negotiate a temporary release from the underworld in exchange for gold. In addition to any cost required as a material component by a spell or effect which could return the hell runner to life, an additional sacrifice of 500 gp per level is required to return her to life. In the case of a spell or ability which must be cast within a certain amount of time of the hell runner dying, such as *breath of life*, the sacrifice of gold can be made within 24 hours of returning the hell runner to life. Failure to pay the sacrifice causes the hell runner to die at the end of 24 hours.

Cheat Death (Su): At 2nd level, a hell runner's fear of damnation is such that she can negotiate with the grim reaper to forestall her return to damnation. Once per day, whenever the hell runner would die, she may instead gain 1 negative level, and be placed at -1 hit point and stable. If the hell runner would die due to negative levels, she still dies as normal.

This ability replaces the evasion class feature and the rogue talent gained at 2nd level.

Fear of Death (Su): At 3rd level, a hell runner's terror of damnation is such that she can scare herself into avoiding a magical doom. She gains a +1 bonus to AC against attack rolls made to confirm a critical hit and on all saving throws against death effects. At 6th level, and every 3 levels thereafter, this bonus increases by +1.

This ability replaces the trap sense class feature.

Run from Doom (Su): At 4th level, a hell runner becomes more adept at avoiding her doomed fate. Whenever she has 25% or fewer remaining hit points, she gains a +2 dodge bonus to AC, and a +2 bonus to Fortitude and Reflex saves, as well as a +10-foot enhancement bonus to movement speed. At 8th level, these bonuses double.

This ability replaces the uncanny dodge and improved uncanny dodge class features.

Militant Redeemer (Warpriest)

Militant redeemers are warpriests with a crusader's passion for redemption. They venture into the cruel world of those whose sins have condemned them to damnation in order to redeem them of their wicked ways before it's too late. While the majority of warpriests act as a militant arm of their church, militant redeemers often feel their mission is more of a personal calling and so they are often drawn into the adventuring life.

Redeemer's Blessing: At 1st level, a militant redeemer gains only a single blessing. He can always choose the good blessing, even if he would not normally be able to select it. A militant redeemer can call upon the power of his blessing an additional time per day.

This ability modifies the blessings class feature.

Redeemer's Strike (Su): At 1st level, a militant redeemer gains the sacred weapon class feature, as normal. Whenever he reduces a creature to 0 or fewer hit points using a weapon modified by the sacred weapon class feature, he may choose to knock that creature unconscious rather than killing her, even if the attack is not made with a nonlethal weapon. Additionally, starting at 4th level, whenever the militant redeemer uses the sacred weapon class feature in order to add the *merciful* weapon quality, he deals an additional 1d6 points of nonlethal damage to creatures with an Intelligence score of 3 or higher.

This ability modifies the sacred weapon class feature.

Suggestion of Redemption (Sp): At 3rd level, the militant redeemer gains the ability to implant a suggestion to repent in the minds of those he defeats. Whenever a militant redeemer renders a creature unconscious with his sacred weapon, he can choose to impart a *suggestion*, as the spell, except that there is no saving throw against the effect and the spell effect takes place immediately upon waking from an unconscious state. You may only use this ability to give suggestions that are good in nature.

This ability replaces the bonus feat gained at 3rd level.

Grace of the Redeemer (Sp): At 9th level, the militant redeemer gains the ability to redeem the souls of those he defeats in combat. Whenever he knocks out a creature of a different alignment using his sacred weapon, he can choose to alter the target's alignment, as with the spell *atonement*.

He may also use his suggestion of redemption ability on the same creature. The militant redeemer cannot use the *atonement* spell as a spell-like ability in this way more than once on a specific creature in a 1-week period.

This ability replaces the bonus feat gained at 9th level.

Path of Redemption (Sp): At 15th level, the militant redeemer can use divine power in order to set an evildoer on the path to righteousness. Once per day, when he uses his suggestion of redemption ability on an evil creature, he can affect that creature with a *geas* spell instead of *suggestion*. The militant redeemer's caster level for this effect is equal to his warpriest level.

This ability replaces the bonus feat gained at 15th level.

Redeeming Return (Sp): At 20th level, a militant redeemer can bring those poor damned souls back to life so that they can begin their path to salvation. Once per day, as a full-round action which provokes attacks of opportunity, a militant redeemer can return a creature to life as with the spell *true resurrection*. This ability can even be used to return creatures that cannot be returned to life by any means, such as those whose souls are imprisoned or who are trapped in a lower plane.

This ability replaces the aspect of war class feature.

Tamo-Yogyas (Witch)

A tamo-yogyas is a rare individual whose ill karma is so bad that they bypass the entire cycle of reincarnation. While a tamo-yogyas' karma marks her as so irredeemably evil such that she alone faces a period of damnation and suffering, she accumulates this karma over a period of several lifetimes. As a result, some tamo-yogyas spend their lives desperately and hopelessly trying to escape their damnation.

Broken Cycle (Ex): A tamo-yogyas' wicked karma prevents her from ever being returned to life by a *reincarnation* spell or similar effect. In order to return the tamo-yogyas to life using any spell or ability, the tamo-yogyas must first receive an *atonement* spell.

Hellish Karma (Su): A tamo-yogyas has terrible karma from many lifetimes of wicked deeds. She gains a +2 bonus to her caster level whenever she casts a spell with the evil descriptor. Additionally, whenever she is subject to a spell with the chaotic, good, or lawful descriptor, she is treated as a character of the opposite alignment for the purposes of how the spell affects her. Finally, whenever she rolls a natural 1 on an attack roll, saving throw, skill check, or ability check, she suffers 1d6 points of damage for every 4 witch levels (minimum 1d6).

This ability replaces the hex gained at 1st level.

Damning Karma (Su): At 2nd level, a tamo-yogyas can pass her hellish karma onto her enemies, condemning them to the same hell fires she is doomed to. As a standard action, a tamo-yogyas can force her ill karma against a single creature within 30 feet. The target must roll all attack rolls, saving throws, skill checks, and ability checks twice and take the worse result. Additionally, the target gains the negative effects of the tamo-yogyas' hellish karma ability. This effect lasts for a number of rounds equal to the tamo-yogyas' witch level. A successful Will save (DC = 10 + 1/2 the tamo-yogyas' witch level + the tamo-yogyas' Intelligence modifier) reduces the duration to one round. The tamo-yogyas can use this ability at will, but can affect a specific creature with it only once in a 24-hour period.

This ability replaces the hex gained at 2nd level.

Hellish Rise (Su): At 6th level, a tamo-yogyas' connection to an unreachable hell allows her to rise as a powerful undead creature. Whenever the tamo-yogyas is returned to life as an undead creature, either as a result of the create spawn ability or because she was returned to life with an *animate dead* or *create undead* spell, she retains her free will as an undead creature so long as her alignment was evil at the time she died. Otherwise, she may make a Will save (DC = the spell's DC, or 10 + 1/2 the Hit Dice of the creature using the ability + the Charisma modifier of the creature using the ability) at the end of each day in order to regain her free will; once she succeeds on this save, she retains her free will indefinitely. The tamo-yogyas can be returned to life using a spell like *raise dead* while in this state without need of an *atonement* spell, though doing so destroys the undead creature. At the GM's discretion, certain forms of undead may be deemed inappropriate for the campaign.

This ability replaces the hex gained at 6th level.

Cast Down (Su): At 10th level, a tamo-yogyas can hurl her enemies into a secret hell from which there is no easy escape. Once per week, whenever a creature within 30 feet of the tamo-yogyas dies, the tamo-yogyas can infuse him with her terrible karma. The creature cannot be brought back to life by any means for 24 hours per witch level of the tamo-yogyas, and during this time the tamo-yogyas ignores the negative effects of her hellish karma.

This ability replaces the hex gained at 10th level.

New Phantom Emotion

There is no class that is quite so intrinsically connected to the afterlife as that of the spiritualist, and, even more to the point, the spiritualist's constant companion, the phantom. For each installment of *Archetypes of the Afterlife*, we present a new emotional focus for phantoms that is thematically linked to the aspect of the afterlife that that installment explores. Although not emotions in the traditional sense, these new emotional foci provide exciting new flavor and mechanical options for phantoms, giving more breadth and depth to these spiritual companions.

The Damned

Some creatures condemned to perdition instead flee their horrific fate and haunt those sensitive to their presence. Damned phantoms are often creatures of sin, but are occasionally born of those who sold their souls or fell victim to the attacks of powerful outsiders. These phantoms are full of the gloom and rage that accompanies damnation, bringing the wrath of the hells they escaped with them. The ultimate goal of these phantoms is to escape their fate by sending the souls of the wicked in their place.

Skills: The phantom gains a number of ranks in Intimidate and Sense Motive equal to its number of Hit Dice. While confined in the spiritualist's consciousness, the phantom grants the spiritualist Skill Focus in each of these skills.

Good Saves: Fortitude and Reflex.

Damned Soul: The phantom is immune to negative levels and death effects.

Damning Strike (Su): When the phantom hits a creature with its slam attack, that creature suffers a -1 penalty on saving throws for 1 round. This penalty is increased to -2 against fear and death effects. A successful Will Save (DC = 10 + 1/2 the phantom's Hit Dice + the phantom's Charisma modifier) negates this effect. A creature who succeeds on this save is immune to the damning strike of that phantom for 24 hours. The effects of this ability do not stack.

Aura of Doom (Su): When the spiritualist reaches 7th level, as a swift action the phantom can emit a 10-foot radius aura of doom. All creatures within the aura suffer an additional 1d6 points of damage whenever they suffer damage. This damage is untyped and not subject to any form of damage resistance or reduction. The phantom can end this ability as a full-round action.

Hellish Wounds (Su): When the spiritualist reaches 12th level, the damage from a phantom's slam attack cannot be healed by magical means, though extraordinary and supernatural healing abilities (including regeneration and fast healing) still function normally. A creature that dies while still having damage dealt by the phantom's slam attack is condemned to perdition, and cannot be returned to life by any means unless their soul is restored using a *wish* or *miracle* spell.

Damnation (Su): When the spiritualist reaches 17th level, whenever the phantom hits with its slam attack, the target does not receive a saving throw against its damning strike.

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Unleash the Powers of the Damned!

Adventurers have a special relationship with death in the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game*. While for many, death is one of the few things in this world that is both certain and final, for an adventurer, especially at higher levels, it is more of an inconvenience than anything else. Some characters may even find themselves dying and being brought back to life with magic multiple times in a single fight. The *Weekly Wonders: Archetypes of the Afterlife* series explores some of the ways that a brush with death might affect PCs, with a variety of new afterlife-themed archetypes.

For this book, we focus on the damned, those poor souls who know for a certainty that their soul is doomed to one of the lower planes once they finally die and stay dead. Some characters might react to this revelation by desperately trying to change their ways, others by attempting to flee from death and the infernal and demonic agents eager to collect their soul. Still others in this book are not themselves damned, but gain special powers to interact with the damned, either to save them from eternal torment and steer them back to the right path, or to hunt them down and bring them to justice. This book includes the following archetypes:

- The hound of the underworld, a hunter archetype with the power to condemn souls, who hunts down the damned at the behest of infernal masters.
- The oracle of the damned, an oracle archetype whose own damnation allows her to speak to, conjure, and eventually even save the spirits of others who have been condemned to an afterlife of suffering.
- The hell runner, a rogue archetype whose soul is claimed by a powerful evil outsider, and who has learned to better avoid death, because any time he is slain may be his last.
- The militant redeemer, a warpriest archetype that focuses on finding the damned and redeeming them with a merciful, yet strong, hand.
- The tamo-yogyas, a witch cursed by powerful negative karma from this life or a past one. Although this karma is harmful to her, she can also pass along its ill effects to others.
- The Damned, a new emotional focus for spiritualist phantoms, representing phantoms who have been damned for their misdeeds in life.

Whether you're about to embark on a campaign where the afterlife features prominently (such as the official Paizo Adventure Path featuring an undead tyrant), or you just want to play a character touched by the grave, this book has lots of tantalizing options to offer. Even GMs can get in on the fun, as several of the archetypes here are perfect for deathly NPCs as well, and can make for exciting and memorable encounters.



*Necromancers
of the Northwest*

PATHFINDER
ROLEPLAYING GAME COMPATIBLE