

PT2



# THE WORLD OF PRAEMAL

A Sourcebook By  
MONTE COOK





# PTOLUS™

## THE WORLD OF PRAEMAL

By Monte Cook



[WWW.PTOLUS.COM](http://WWW.PTOLUS.COM)



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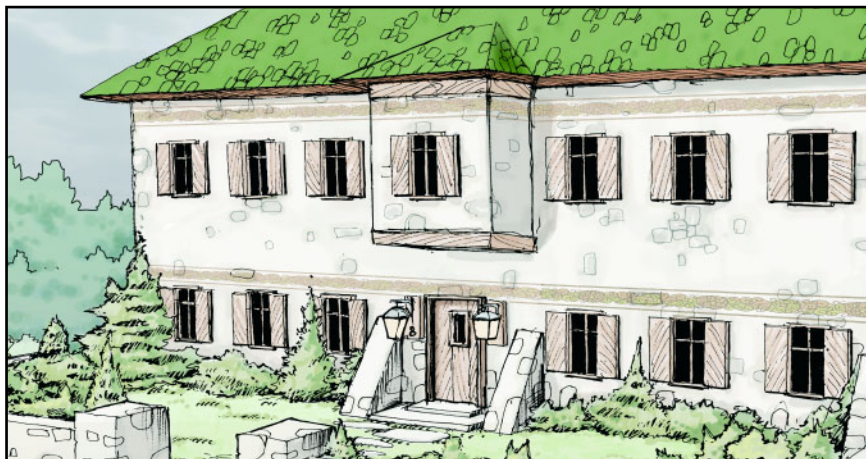
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### GUIDE TO THE PTOLUS PDFS

Throughout this book you will find references in the text and in the side-panels to other books in the PT series of *Ptolus* PDF editions. For your convenience, here’s a listing of all the titles in the series and their corresponding title codes:

<i>A Player’s Guide to Ptolus</i>	PT1
<i>The World of Praemal</i>	PT2
<i>Organizations</i>	PT3
<i>Districts of the City, Vol. 1</i>	PT4
<i>Districts of the City, Vol. 2</i>	PT5
<i>DM’s Companion</i>	PT6
<i>Beneath the Streets</i>	PT7
<i>Adventures</i>	PT8
<i>The Spire</i>	PT9

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# INTRODUCTION

Ptolus is an exciting city, but in order to truly understand the place, one has to understand its context, both in relation to the world around it and to the events that have come before now—even those that occurred before the city existed.



## PAGE NUMBERING TIPS

Two sets of page numbers appear at the top of the pages that come after this introduction. The main page numbers correspond to this book's table of contents. The ones in parenthesis correspond to the page numbers of the Ptolus print book. They are there so you can properly check the side-panel cross-references of important words that you'll find boldfaced throughout this book. These cross-references tell you where to find more information about a given term, character, or place. They direct you to either a page number in this book, a chapter in another book, or a page number and title code of another installment of the PT series. We reference the page numbers from the print book so that, whatever edition of Ptolus you have, you can discuss page references with friends and not risk any confusion. Look for a rundown of all PT title codes in this book's Table of Contents.

Welcome to *The World of Praemal*, designed to introduce you to the larger setting of which the City of Ptolus is a part. The material in this book corresponds directly to Chapters 2–5 in *Ptolus: Monte Cook's City by the Spire*.

This is one in a series of nine Ptolus PDF releases from Malhavoc Press. When used together, they comprise the entirety of the Ptolus print book. Each one is also usable on its own for city-based fantasy d20 roleplaying campaigns.

## WHERE DO I START?

If you've purchased this book as a general sourcebook and you're not sure what *Ptolus* is, check out the sidebar on the next page for a primer on the product and the city it details. If on the other hand you're starting to plan your own Ptolus Campaign, here are a few guidelines on how to get started.

Whether you are a player or a DM, **start by reading *A Player's Guide to Ptolus***. That book—free to download as a PDF at [www.ptolus.com](http://www.ptolus.com)—provides a quick overview of everything else in the book. Of course, it doesn't go into any of the secrets of the setting—

those are for the DM to reveal as time goes on. DMs should **print out a copy for each player**. Let everyone have a chance to learn about the city and get a feel for the setting.

Where you go next depends on how you're going to use Ptolus. If you want it to be your campaign setting, start reading this book and **learn all the basics of the world**.

If Ptolus is destined to become a city in your existing world, jump straight to the **Districts of the City** PDFs and read about the various parts of town.

If you only want to mine the setting for ideas, flip through the various PDF releases that interest you and look at whatever strikes your fancy. You'll find interesting city locales, strange and fascinating NPCs, dungeon complexes, evil fortresses, haunted ruins, complex organizations, a few new races, monsters, prestige classes, spells, and a lot more.

Ready-made adventures for characters of level 1 to 4 are available in PT8, *Adventures*. For those of you who need adventures beyond those offered there, check out the ninety-six-page *Night of Dissolution* Ptolus adventure. It provides an exciting Ptolus-based adventure for 4th- to 9th-level characters.

If you want to read every last bit of information available on the city, look for two Ptolus-related products previously released by Malhavoc Press: *The Banewarrens* and *Chaositech*.

To delve even deeper into Ptolus, check out the official comic book, published by DB Pro, available from Diamond Comics. We're also proud to offer metal miniatures from Paizo Publishing, specialty map products from cartographer Ed Bourelle's SkeletonKey Games, and the *Ptolus Counter Collection* from Fiery Dragon Productions.

## ENTER THE WORLD OF PRAEMAL

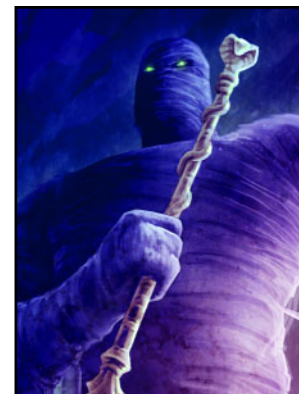
This book contains a wealth of detail to establish the background of Ptolus. In its pages you'll learn about the world of Praemal: the lands around Ptolus, the languages spoken there, and more. You'll discover new facts about the races of the Ptolus Campaign. You'll read about the creation of the world and its relationship to other worlds and planes, as well as about the various gods—especially the most popular, the god Lothian. And finally, you'll delve deeply into the ten-thousand-year history of Praemal, discovering many amazing and significant events.

Much of the information in *The World of Praemal* is of interest to players, but most of it should remain a secret at first. For example, consider the majority of the cosmological details privileged information—facts the PCs might discover as the campaign progresses.

Throughout *The World of Praemal*, all references to spells, feats, and other rules come either from this book or from the v. 3.5 revision of the three Core Rulebooks: the *Player's Handbook*, *DMG*, and *MM*. This book is protected content except for items specifically called out as Open Game Content on the Legal page. For full details, please turn to the Appendix. Open content is not otherwise marked in the text of this book.

Bonus source material and ideas to augment the information in the *Ptolus* PDFs appear on my website. Find the links to these free web enhancements, my campaign journal, and much more online at <[www.ptolus.com](http://www.ptolus.com)>.

Thanks for trying the Ptolus Campaign! I hope you enjoy it as much as I do.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

*These people and things played a significant part in the creation of Ptolus, even if indirectly, and thus they have my thanks:*

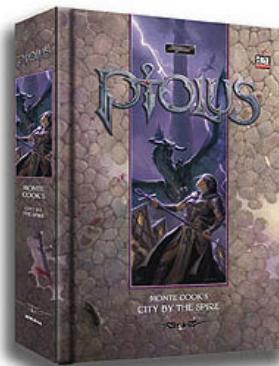
Kelley Barnes-Herrmann, Phil Boule, Ed Bourelle, Dean Burnham, Michele Carter, Mike Chaney, Andy Collins, Sue Cook, Bruce Cordell, Jesse Decker, Denmark (and new friends there), fans of *The Banewarrens*, Red Garland, Gateway Computers, Gen Con, Get Fuzzy, Brian Glass, Godspeed You Black Emperor, Gary Gygax, Conrad Hubbard, everyone working on *Lost*, H.P. Lovecraft, Marley, China Mieville, Matt Milberger, Erik Mona, Monster Energy Drink (lo-carb), Grant Morrison, Chris Perkins, Porcupine Tree, posters on our message boards, Jeff Quick, John Rateliff, Reduced Fat Wheat Thins, Sean Reynolds, Rufus, Charles Ryan, Seattle's weather, Morgan Spurlock, Sony Electronics, Source Comics and Games, Spock's Beard, Stan!, Tortoise, two different ergonomic keyboards and three (optical, not blind) mice, Aaron Voss, Steve Wieck, Stewart Wieck, Fred Yelk, and Yes.

## WHAT IS PTOLUS?

If you were to imagine the most deluxe roleplaying game product ever, what would be in it? More than 600 pages of fantasy source and adventure material from one of the industry's greatest designers? Check. Glorious full-color art? Check. Double-sided poster map? Player handouts? A CD-ROM packed with bonus material? Check, check, and check.

As a book, Ptolus is many things all at once. It is . . .

- The ultimate fantasy campaign in which adventurers plumb the depths of a gigantic underground labyrinth filled with treasure, monsters, and traps—or try to make names for themselves in a city filled with intrigues, politics, and mystery.
- The very first and longest-running 3rd Edition campaign, run by one of the game's designers for industry celebs including two editors of *Dragon*® magazine, two editors of *Dungeon*®, three Wizards of the Coast roleplaying designers and three editors, and even the former D&D business manager.
- A detailed city setting crammed with characters, locations, and enough adventures to take characters from 1st to 20th level.
- A work of unsurpassed usability, featuring extensive indexing and cross-referencing throughout, designed and tested by the author of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* and the "Dungeoncraft" column in *Dungeon* to make play even easier and more fun.
- The most deluxe RPG package ever designed; the 672-page print book includes more than 130 pages of color artwork and maps, three bound-in fabric bookmarks, four tear-out card-stock bookmarks, two dozen handouts, and a CD-ROM containing 700 pages of additional bonus products, Ptolus adventures, reference documents, and source material.
- For our readers who prefer electronic (PDF) versions of roleplaying products, we've made the entire book available as a series of PDFs: the PT series (see page 3). When you buy all nine PDFs, you have the same print items available in the physical *Ptolus* book.



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## THE WORLD

The world of Ptolus is called Praemal, a name that comes from its creator, Praemus—although today only a few people have ever heard the name Praemus. Most don't even know he exists; they believe in the divergent creation myths of their homelands. Folks simply call the world "The World," and leave it at that.



*Vallis, page 47*

### FROM MY CAMPAIGN TO YOURS

*The disappearance of the Vallis moon heralded the change from Second Edition to Third Edition in my original Praemal campaign. For more on this moon, see page 60.*

*Return of the Vallis moon: See Night of Dissolution, page 60*

*Traditionally, people from the east (such as the Prust) believe that nights when Rogue passes in front of Lunas are unlucky. Conversely, those who hail from western lands (such as Cherubar and Rhoth), feel that such an event brings good tidings.*

Praemal is a medium-sized world, just a bit smaller than Earth. (Its circumference is slightly less than twenty thousand miles.) It is cool in temperature, with encroaching ice from the north and the south threatening to consume the rest of the land. About four-fifths of the world is ocean. A major continent lies on the opposite side of the world from Ptolus, but it exists only in rumor and conjecture from the point of view of most people. The continent of which Ptolus is a part, located in the world's northern hemisphere, has had many names but currently is called simply "the Empire," referring to the Empire of Tarsis that has ruled most of it for the last seven hundred years.

Praemal's days are twenty-four hours long, and its year has three hundred sixty-four days. (See the Appendix in this book for a calendar.)

### THE MOONS AND THE STARS

The world of Praemal has three moons, although most people only know about two of them. The largest moon, which appears bluish-white in the sky, is called Lunas. Much smaller, but far too large to be a star in the night sky, is Rogue. Rogue has a strange and erratic elliptical orbit and usually ranges much farther away from the world than Lunas.

The third moon, **Vallis**, disappeared from orbit ten thousand years ago, although it was invisible even when it circled the world. Vallis is the moon of magic and a keystone of the world. Its disappearance changed the way that magic worked on Praemal, cementing the current systems in place today. **Should it ever return**, things would certainly change again.

### THE EMPIRE

For more than seven hundred years, the Empire of Tarsis has ruled most of the known world. Currently, however, it is an Empire in decline. In fact, some say that the Empire has actually fallen, but no one yet realizes it. Three different people claim the Lion-Guarded Throne; the technology that once cemented the power of the Empire is on the wane; and the capital city of Tarsis still rebuilds after a barbarian invasion.

Still, the Empire directs much of daily life. The distinction between Imperial citizens and noncitizens remains important in most lands, with citizens afforded more rights under the law in all cases. Imperial law dominates even in places where it is enforced mainly by non-Prustan peoples. The Empire brought much peace and prosperity to the lands it ruled, so those under its sway seek to hold onto certain

vestiges, even if the winds of political change are indeed blowing strong.

See the History chapter in this book for more information on the Empire.

## GAZETTEER

The following is a brief description of the lands, cities, and major features of the known world. In an all-Ptolus campaign, this information is purely background material. As such, this section offers only the vaguest of generalities.

As you read this section, refer to the map of the Empire in this book's Appendix.

### CHERUBAR

Mountainous Cherubar to the far west of Ptolus is a mysterious place filled with isolated villages and remote settlements. Humans live among the winged **Cherubim elves** here, attempting to keep savage giants at bay. These folk, it is said, consort with spirits of the air to such a degree that cold winds flow through their veins instead of mortal blood. This region is separated from the **Plains of Rhoth** by the Cherubar Mountains.

### THE COLD DESERT

Surrounding the mysterious shaft known as **Mrathrach's Pit**, the Cold Desert is a dry, dead wasteland southwest of Ptolus. The extremely inhospitable area is barren and virtually lifeless—a region of orcs, hobgoblins, and monstrous things with almost no humans, elves, or other civilized folk.

### THE EASTERN HORDES

Long ignored by the peoples of the west, the tribes beyond the Grey Mountains east of **Tarsis** unified under King Oulgas around 700 IA. Assailing the Grey Mountains, they swept across the Plains of Panish in the next few years and fought great battles with the Imperial Army. Due to the barbarians' great numbers and the lack of unity among the Imperial forces (the Empire was pulled in three ways due to the contesting of the Lion-Guarded Throne), the Hordes met with large-scale success. By 709, Oulgas laid siege to Tarsis itself. By 710, he sat in the Imperial Palace.

People expected Oulgas to proclaim himself Emperor, but he did not. Reportedly, the man had nothing but contempt for the more civilized folk of the west. When Oulgas left Tarsis in 714, taking the majority of his people with him back over the mountains, rumor has it someone asked him why he invaded in the first place. Oulgas is said to have answered, "Because I could."

Some of the easterners stayed behind, most of them settling in the Plains of Panish or southern Nall.

### KEM

Antique and shadowy Kem, located south of Prustan lands along the Southern Sea, used to be a place of great magic and sorcery. Now it lies in ruins, brought low by the same spells that made it great almost five thousand years ago.

Blighted by magical conflicts called the Wars of Fire millennia ago, Kem has become a haven for Harrow elves who fled east after their release from Goth Gulgamel. Only the toughest, coarsest of plant life grows in Kem's magically tainted soil, and few natural animals stalk its wastelands. Kem is a land of ghosts and shadows, lost to time.

The few cities that remain in Kem stand upon ruined metropolises of fallen tors. The mixed population includes humans, lizardfolk, gnomes, Shoal elves, Harrow elves, and the occasional dwarf.

### NALL

Said to be haunted by the ghosts of the "first men," icy Nall is a rough northerly forestland trapped between the Dragonsbirth Mountains to the west, the Grey Mountains to the east, and the Endless Sea of Ice to the north. The people of Nall are few but hardy. Most of them live in nomadic barbarian tribes, each ruled by a shaman woman. Some dwell in the depths of the Black Angel Forest or the Great North Woods. The small communities here are isolated, accustomed to living through the long winters without ever seeing anyone from another village or tribe.



### Evil and the World

*The Ptolus setting assumes that evil is a real, palpable thing, not a subjective label pinned on one's enemies. Black magic—meaning supernatural powers that destroy souls, create undead, summon demons, corrupt spirits, and draw upon negative energy—cannot be used without ill effects, either on the user, or upon the world. Many locations in Ptolus are proof of this fact. The Dark Reliquary, Goth Gulgamel, and, worst of all, Jabel Shammar, are so steeped in evil and darkness that the places themselves have become evil. Like a virus, that evil can spread to those who spend time in such places.*

*Cherubim elves, page 51  
Plains of Rhoth, page 43*



*Mrathrach's Pit, page 74*

*Tarsis, page 44*

*When referring to dates, IA means "in the Imperial Age," while BE means "before the Empire."*

*The typical barbarian warrior prefers using a two-handed weapon rather than a weapon and a shield and tends to choose axes over swords. Many wield two weapons, usually two axes. They also use javelins or bows. However, in recent years, elite barbarian warriors have developed a fondness for heavy crossbows.*



*The court of King Anathais and Queen Miaga is fraught with difficulties. A large percentage of the populace is still unsure as to whether they should accept the rule of the monarchy. And even those who are eager to do so fear that the Empire still possesses the might to enact revenge on those pledging allegiance to the king and queen.*

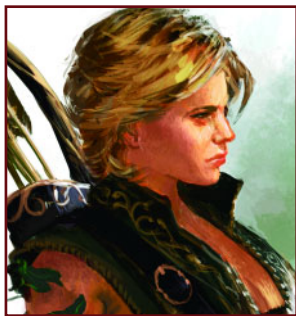
*Viridian Lords, PT3: page 140  
Circle of Green, PT3: page 108*

*Theridae is the ancient name for the land that is now Palastan. Once it was the dominion of the Elder Elves.*



*Dwarvenhearth, PT7: page 460  
Aram, page 50*

*Grailwarden dwarves, page 48*



*Viridian Lord Rechel Pattermon (PT3: page 141) is one of the Commissar's Twelve Commanders.*

## PALASTAN AND THE MOONSILVER FOREST

About a year ago, Palastan's Imperial Governor appointed by the Lion-Guarded Throne died amid chaos and rioting in the capital city of Trolone. Forces loyal to the hereditary monarchy, long exiled from the land, returned order to Trolone. King Anathais and Queen Miaga returned to their palace and took control of Palastan "until the Empire appoints a new governor." With the ongoing problems in Tarsis, this has not happened—nor is it likely to happen in the near future.

Palastan is a verdant land of rolling hills and green fields. The people farm and herd, as well as fish along the southern coast of the Whitewind Sea. Although of late political power has remained in the hands of the monarchy or the Imperial Governor, most would say that the **Viridian Lords** hold the true power in the land. These rangers operate independently from the government, but the populace looks to them for guidance and leadership. The Viridian Lords are said to have physically bonded with plant life in a manner handed down to them by the **Circle of Green**, an ancient group of druids that disappeared long ago.

Technically, the city of Ptolus falls within the borders of Palastan. However, since the death of the Imperial Governor, it has maintained its independence from the monarchy.

Palastan is a realm of rugged individuals. The people are simple and generally virtuous, but not interested in complex, rigid sets of laws. They have never much liked being a part of the Empire. Culturally, Palastani enjoy proclaiming their individuality, and do so through piercings, body art, and distinctive (but not necessarily flamboyant) dress. Besides humans, Shoal elves and centaurs make up most of Palastan's population, although the Stonelost dwarves maintain a few small villages in the hills after losing their city, **Dwarvenhearth**, thousands of years ago. The humans get along equally well with both dwarves and elves, as well as the tribes of **aram** that gallop across the open fields.

While not rulers in Palastan, the Viridian Lords as a group are well respected by all. They patrol the wild lands and the roads, keeping the people safe from orc raiders, bandits, goblins, ogres, giants, wyverns, and worse.

Most of the area's Shoal elves live in the Moonsilver Forest, a place of sylvan magic that retains many secrets even after all these centuries. Non-elves (except for the Viridian Lords) keep strictly to the few roads that pass through these woods. The wood holds many elven communities, most of them small and well hidden—unlike the larger, more prominent elven cities along the coast of Ren Tehoth to the east.



## THE PLAINS OF PANISH

These rolling plains of grassy, fertile fields east of Tarsis stretch for seemingly endless miles up to the foothills of the Grey Mountains. The River Sorenth flows out of the Grey Mountains to empty into the Gulf of Satran at Tarsis. Remote and primitive tribes of humans, litorians, and other races live here. One will find almost no elves or dwarves, however.

## THE PRUSTAN PENINSULA

The Prustan Peninsula, which juts boldly out into the Southern Sea, is home to the **Grailwarden dwarves** and the human Prust. More than a thousand years ago, the Prust took over the lands around the city of Tarsis to the north and eventually established the Empire of Tarsis. As rugged as their mountainous homeland, these industrious people built fabulous roads for their Empire and developed great devices using gears, steam, and gunpowder.

This land has a harsh environment, with strong winds and seemingly unnaturally cold weather. (Some blame the toxic spells unleashed long ago in ancient Kem on the southern tip of the peninsula.) The Grailwarden dwarves and the Prust have worked hand in hand here for as long as either race can remember. The dwarves' Grail Keep, a fortress built into a cliff face in the Hotash Mountains, protects their city, which lies below.

The Grail Temple beneath the city holds the fabled *White Grail*, an object of great power from which the Grailwarden dwarves take their name.

**REN TEHOTH**

Though it was once a fabulous kingdom, most of Ren Tehoth's cities now lie in ruin, proof that nothing lasts forever. Even before the founding of the Lion-Guarded Throne, Tarsis annexed Ren Tehoth, its neighbor that stretched as far west as the Vantaran Peaks. The royal bloodline had long since been extinguished, the people of the kingdom scattered and warring amid tiny, feudal states without an ultimate liege to keep the peace among the vassals. Intimidated by Tarsis' growing strength and eager to live in peace, Ren Tehoth accepted foreign rule with little resistance. The few nobles and thanes unwilling to submit found themselves overrun by the extremely efficient Prustan army that enforced Tarsis' might.

Today, the cities of greatest interest in Ren Tehoth are actually elven. Running from the Dragonsbirth Mountains to the southern tip of the Bay of Ptolus within the Morn Woods are a number of well established elven settlements, larger than those in the Moonsilver Forest. They include Paelinth, Sariush, and Phinothae. The Shoal elves of Ren Tehoth resemble their western cousins but are even less comfortable around humans, due to the region's scarce human population in recent centuries.

**RHOTH**

The Plains of Rhoth due west of Ptolus are known for their farms and vast herds of horses and livestock. Rhothans are a good-natured folk, standing tall and fair. They dwell in small towns and vil-

lages frequented by halfling caravans. Few other civilized humanoid frequent this land (no elves, dwarves, gnomes, or litorians, for example), and the folks there tend to be xenophobic and isolationist. The people do come into conflict with orcs and sometimes even gnolls—the Gnoll War in southern Rhoth three decades back is well known.

**THE SEA KINGDOMS AND DOHRINTHAS**

A federation of once-warring pirate princes, the Sea Kingdoms on the southern edge of the continent earned their power and wealth from fishing and shipping in the Southern Sea. Bounded by two rivers—the Sunwash in the west and the Calathan River in the east—this is a place of politics and betrayals, plots and assassinations. It is also a place of great beauty, for gold and silk flow like water, it is said, and the area has seen little warfare to despoil it for hundreds of years.

Dohrinthas, the Golden City, has prospered greatly in the last few centuries, for ships laden with wealth come to this large port daily from the southern lands. When massing barbarians began to threaten Tarsis in 706 IA, **Empress Addares XXXIV** attempted to move the Imperial capital to her home of Dohrinthas. As a result, she succeeded in splitting the Empire, as **Segaci Fellisti**—an aging councilor who also claimed the throne—maintained the government in Tarsis, until the barbarians sacked the city a few years later.

Dohrinthas is a large and well established city teeming with many races. For the last three centuries it has remained second only to Tarsis in influence and power. Although it remains under the domain of the Lion-Guarded Throne, the Holy Empire was never able to completely

*The White Grail's counterpart, the Black Grail, is said to be in the Banewarrens below Ptolus (see PT7: page 419).*



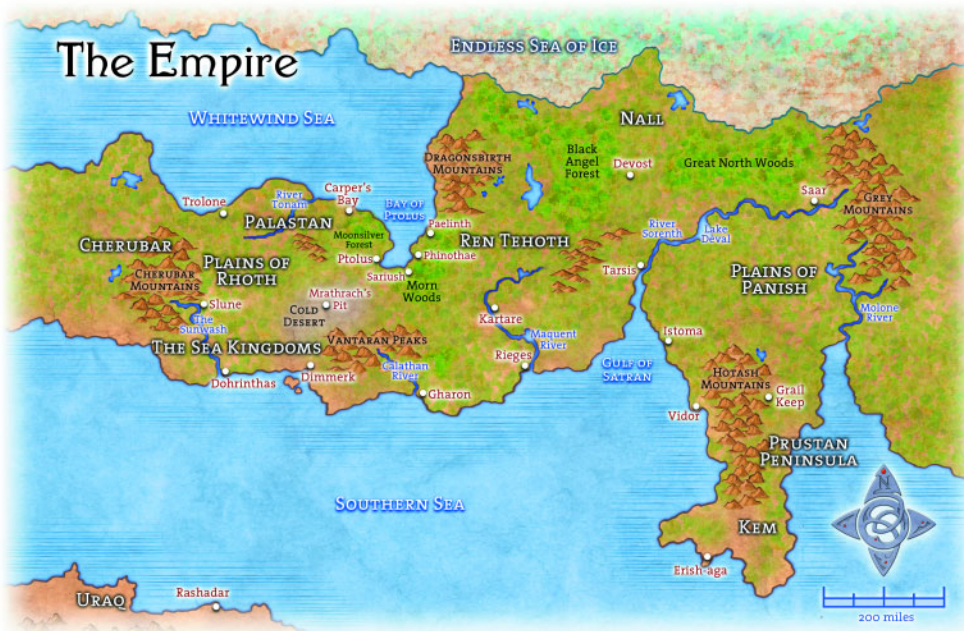
*It is a commonly held opinion that today the greatest artists and writers live in the city of Dohrinthas.*

*Empress Addares, page 79  
Segaci Fellisti, page 79*



*The land of Rhoth is still very much in the grip of a strict, conservative sect of the Church of Lothian. Many residents of small villages still look upon those who revere other gods as demon worshippers, for example.*

*Find a full-page version of this map on a sheet in the Appendix at the back of this book.*



**Ptolus in Perspective**

*In the world at large, there are no “dungeons” to explore. “Adventurer” is not a common career choice. Newcomers to Ptolus from elsewhere will find these aspects of city life very strange. Also odd-seeming are the number of gods other than Lothian that people worship there. Ptolusites also have a casual attitude about danger, evil, and general weirdness when compared to their fellows in other parts of the world.*



*Eslathagos Malkith, page 75*

*Charad Titans, page 77*

*The modern Elvish language builds politeness and decorum right into its structure. This fact grants one a +1 Diplomacy check bonus when speaking Elvish, assuming the target understands the language. This isn't to say that one cannot be rude in Elvish—it just requires more skill and thought.*

solidify its power amid its baroque, pinnacled towers and spired minarets.

The people of Dohrinthas and, in fact, the Sea Kingdoms as a whole, are an odd mixture of jaded, cynical urbanites and rough-and-tumble seafarers.

**TARSIS**

Tarsis, the fading capital of more than half the world, is recovering slowly from the barbarian invasions of a decade ago. Toppled walls and buildings are being rebuilt, and slowly people are returning to the city. The Grand Cathedral here serves as headquarters of the Church of Lothian, despite the fact that the Emperor of the Church remains in the city of Ptolus.

Ancient beyond reckoning, the vast city of Tarsis was merely an important trading center at the mouth of the River Sorenth until the militaristic Prust from the peninsula to the southeast took over the area and eventually founded an empire centered in the quickly growing city. The Prust chose Tarsis as their hub of power because their own cities were remote and trapped within rugged mountains. Some claim that Tarsis was the world's first urban center—another reason the Prust chose to stake their empire there.

At its height, the Empire of Tarsis encompassed all of the Prustan Peninsula and the lands immediately surrounding the Southern Sea, including Uraq, and the northern lands from Cherubar to the Grey Mountains. Today, its control is questionable. To some, the Empire has fallen. To others, it exists in name only. Yet to many proud citizens, the Empire still retains control over its lands, and all owe fealty to the Emperor.

**URAQ AND THE DISTANT SOUTH**

Hundreds of years before the Lion-Guarded Throne rose to power, the land of Uraq held sway over most of the known world. By controlling the Southern Sea, this economic seafaring power also controlled commerce in the surrounding lands.

As the seat of a mercantile empire, Uraq once ruled through economic power. But those days are long past; it fell to the Empire of Tarsis over five centuries ago after a series of bloody wars. Uraq remains a wealthy land of spice, silk, and fertile oases. The Tarsisans have been tolerable rulers—in fact, they usually ruled from a distance. The hot desert sands of Uraq never seemed to appeal to the Prustan overlords, nor did the climate provide a good environment for their guns and machines.

Far to the south of Uraq, past a mountain range called the Scorched Peaks, lie the distant realms of Panogolan and Buneir—kingdoms of savanna and jungle ignored by the Empire. Beyond that is ancient Kellisan, with its own empire, and the Sea of World's End. Even the folk of Uraq rarely travel

to such places except to trade, although thousands of years ago Kellisan ruled Uraq and left much of its culture behind. Most people in the Empire think of all lands south of Uraq as simply the “distant south” and know no details of such places.

**LANGUAGES**

The languages spoken and read in throughout the world of Praemal are numerous and varied. Most of the major idioms appear in the list below.

**Abysal:** The language of Hell itself, spoken by demons and their fiendish ilk. Thousands of years ago the Dread One, **Eslathagos Malkith**, adopted this language and taught it to his creations and servants. It remains common among many aberrations and other monstrous beings.

**Charad:** The **Charad Titans**, who visited the shores of the Whitewind Sea six millennia ago, had their own extremely sophisticated language. It is known only to a handful of elven scholars today.

**Common (Imperial):** A variation of Old Prustan (see next page), this language could be called “New Prustan.” Carried throughout the known world by the men and women who forged the Empire of Tarsis, it is now common in every land. If nothing else, it provides a way for people to conduct trade without the need of translators or spells.

**Draconic:** Vying for oldest language with Elder Elvish and Dwarvish, Draconic has always been spoken by dragons. Many other creatures have since picked it up—some reptilian in nature, others not. Quite a number of magical works are written in Draconic.

**Dwarvish:** Unlike the language of the elves (see below), Dwarvish has remained almost entirely unchanged in the thousands of years of dwarven civilization. A modern dwarf could find an ancient scroll of her most distant ancestors and would be able to understand the vast majority of it. The fact that their mother tongue has for so long remained unchanged says more about dwarves than their language. Dwarvish words are typically short, with many compound word constructions that create new words as needed.

**Elvish:** A newer tongue based on an older version, Elvish is surprisingly different from its parent language, Elder Elvish. Modern Elvish is, in fact, no closer to Elder Elvish than it is to Halfling or Gnomish. It is a lyrical, beautiful language that almost sounds (particularly to humans) like singing when spoken correctly. Elvish boasts a huge and very precise vocabulary.

**Elvish, Dark:** Like Elvish, this language has Elder Elvish as its root, but it has deviated from it so much that today it is not very similar to Elvish. It has many subtly different words for betrayal, but no words for charity or benevolence.

**Elvish, Elder:** Virtually a dead language, the original tongue of the elves may be the oldest

language in the world. With a very few exceptions, no one speaks it any longer. The letters in Elder Elvish also represent numbers, which makes it easy to craft double meanings with words and numbers.

**Gnomish:** Gnomish also derives from Elder Elvish. Some say it has been influenced by Dwarvish, but this is true in only minor ways.

**Halfling:** The language of the halflings descends from Elder Elvish and an ancient language of humans called Westron (see below). It is a far simpler tongue than its predecessors.

**Litorian:** A gruff language, Litorian is interesting because it seems unrelated to any other tongue spoken in the world.

**Old Prustan:** An old language of humans, Prustan sounds harsh when compared to those derived from Elder Elvish. This tongue shares a few similarities with Dwarvish, but not many. Today only scholars speak it.

**Orcish:** Interestingly, this language is a mixture of Westron and Abyssal. Originally, orcs spoke Abyssal, taught to them by their creator, the Dread One. After his destruction, they fled west, where they became heavily influenced by the cultures there.

**Palastani:** A rather simple language, Palastani is once again coming into vogue, after having faded considerably during the height of the Empire of Tarsis.

**Nallish:** This crude, simple language is used by the people of Nall and the barbarian tribes of the east.

**Undercommon:** This derivative of Elder Elvish is mixed with Abyssal and Draconic. Originally, it was the language of the dark elves. It has since become almost unrecognizable as related to any of its roots.

**Uraqi:** Another human tongue, Uraqi is very different from Old Prustan and even Westron, having originated in ancient Kellisan, far to the south. It is spoken almost exclusively in Uraq and along the coast of the Southern Sea (a relic of the fact that Uraq conquered most towns and cities along that coast long ago).

**Westron:** Perhaps the oldest human language—older even than Old Prustan—is Westron. Some scholars believe it was a common tongue of much older times, long before the Empire. Some believe the language was given to humans by the Creator himself.

## SPECIAL MATERIALS

There are a number of valuable, supernatural, or otherwise unique materials found in the world of Praemal. Characters may chance upon items made from these materials or even the substances themselves in their raw form.

## AETHEL

One of the rarest and most valuable substances in Ptolus isn't a drug or a weapon, it's a mineral. Aethel was discovered in this region, named, and experimented upon by the Elder Elves in the time of the titans, five thousand years ago. In many ways, it is the opposite of Vallis (see page 47). While the greenish stone of the absent moon is a natural power source on its own, the clear crystals of aethel absorb magical energy and even light.

Aethel can absorb one to ten spell levels (depending on the size of the crystal). For proper use, one must treat the aethel in a process that requires 1,000 gp worth of special ingredients for every spell level to be absorbed. It takes twenty-four hours. The treatment process must be completed before attempting to use the crystal to absorb of any energy, however. If a character tries to absorb more spell levels than a piece of aethel can hold, the stone bursts, inflicting to all within ten feet 3d6 points of damage plus 1d6 points for each spell level stored within the crystal (Reflex save, DC 20, for half damage).

Spellcasters can use the stored energy within treated aethel to power their own spells, as though the crystal were a *rod of absorption*.

If left in the sunlight, aethel will absorb light rather than spell energy, filling up its capacity. There is no way to discharge the light, once absorbed. Thus, an aethel crystal taken into the daylight stops being a "*rod of absorption*" and becomes instead an "*everburning torch*," so to speak—a waste, to be sure.

Someone who makes a Knowledge (arcana) check (DC 30) can figure out a way to use an aethel crystal full of absorbed energy as a replacement for a spell requirement in a magic item. For example, a bit of aethel with two stored spell levels worth of energy could be used to create a *ring of invisibility* without any need to know the *invisibility* spell (cost to create remains the same, with the aethel costing extra).

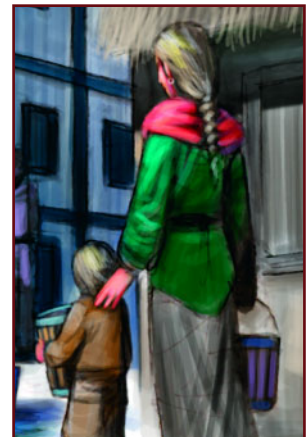
The value of treated aethel stone is equal to the number of potential spell levels absorbed squared  $\times 1,000 + 1,000$  gp per potential spell powered. Thus, a piece of aethel that could absorb and then power one spell level costs 2,000 gp; one with two spell levels is 5,000 gp, three spell levels is 10,000 gp, and so on. Untreated aethel's value is equal to the number of potential spell levels absorbed squared  $\times 1,000$  gp.

## BLACK ADAMANTINE

Black adamantine was only ever found in one place: in a mound located in the region occupied by the Cold Desert today. All the black adamantine that exists has been mined and used—no more can be found occurring naturally. It has the same qualities as adamantine except that it also proves

*Old Prustan sounds a little like German in the real world. This is why many human names in Praemal sound vaguely German, Austrian, or Prussian.*

*Other languages spoken in Ptolus include Aquan, Auran, Celestial, Giant, Goblin, Ignan, Rattish, Sylvan, and Terran.*



*In Ptolus today, children in school learn only Imperial Common. If they know any other languages, they most likely learned them from their parents. The one exception is that wealthy and aristocratic children are sometimes taught Elvish or Palastani.*

Other special materials found in Ptolus include adamantine, darkwood, and mithral (see the DMG, Chapter 7: Magic Items).

Firestone, page 565. See also the create firestone spell in PT6: "Magic" (page 641).



Blessed children, PT6: page 618

Inverted Pyramid headquarters, PT5: page 324

The Banewarrens, a complex of ancient warrens beneath the Spire, is rumored to hold vats and vats of liquid shadow sealed away in vaults.

resistant to spells or magical effects that would damage or affect it (like *disintegrate* or even *pass-wall*) with a spell resistance of 25. Further, those in the know (Knowledge [arcana], DC 30) can use a *wish* spell to make black adamantine completely impervious to physical force or spells.

Black adamantine is worth three times as much as normal adamantine.

### FIRESTONE

The mineral known as **firestone** can be created only through magic. It burns with great efficiency, which causes technologists to desire it greatly to fuel their devices. This small stone weighs 1 lb. and can burn hotly for twenty-four hours. It is used to power some of the equipment described in the "Technology" chapter of PT6.

### HELIOTHIL

Heliolith is a pale violet stone that has negative weight. A stone that should weigh about 1 lb. is in fact 5 lbs. of negative weight. This means that, if a piece of pure heliolith were unsecured, it would fall upward at a great rate and disappear into the sky. However, it also means that securing 5 lbs. of normal material to the "1 lb." bit of heliolith renders the normal material effectively weightless. The heliolith and attached material float in midair.

When dwarven miners discovered heliolith on the floating Mountain of the Sky Kings far to the west, much of it initially was lost—once mined and freed from surrounding minerals, the loosed heliolith floated up into space. Eventually, the dwarves developed safe mining and transporting practices, and engineers began using heliolith to create floating castles, flying ships, hovering (virtually) weightless chariots, and so on. The Mountain of the Sky Kings obviously was a huge source of heliolith, but it was overmined, and the mountain eventually descended slowly to the ground, where it shattered.

Today, the largest quantities of heliolith can be found in the **Inverted Pyramid**, keeping the mage guild's invisible headquarters afloat above the city of Ptolus.

Heliolith is not magical, at least not in the technical sense of the word. It retains its negative weight in an *antimagic field*.

Heliolith is worth 100 gp per negative pound.

### ITHILDIN AND ITHILNAUR

The elves know of many special minerals, materials, and herbs. In particular, they are known for two metals: ithildin (a decorative silver that glows at night but is dull and almost invisible during the day) and ithilnaur (a thin, strong material with the same properties as ithildin). Both metals' glow is equal to candlelight.

Ithildin is like silver but costs twice as much. Ithilnaur is like mithral but costs twice as much.

### LIQUID LIGHT

In the earliest days of creation, when air, earth, fire, and water did not yet possess their final states, sunlight shone into pockets of air that eventually became trapped deep underground. This air turned naturally into liquid light as a result of tremendous good done in the world; the residue seeps up from the depths of the earth and takes on a physical substance. Thus, deep in the earth one can encounter pools of bright sunlight, preserved forever as a thick, milky liquid. One pint of this fluid is the equivalent of a *daylight* spell that never fades.

One can use liquid light to enhance spells with either the light or good descriptor (either way, the spell gains both descriptors when cast). A pint of the material used as a spell component modifies a spell so that it is cast two levels higher than normal, with a +2 bonus to the saving throw DC to resist.

Liquid light inflicts damage to evil-aligned outsiders and undead if used as a splash weapon (one pint inflicts 3d6 points of damage; full immersion inflicts 20d6 points of damage). It heals good outsiders and **blessed children** in like amounts.

Liquid light is worth 1,000 gp per pint and is usually found only in amounts of six to ten pints at a time.

### LIQUID SHADOW

Liquid shadow is a vile substance that pools in the darkest corners of the world—usually at the heartrock of a massive mountain or in a cave at the bottom of the deepest lake. It exists naturally as a result of evil done in the world; the residue seeps into the earth and takes on a physical substance in the deep darkness.

One can use liquid shadow to enhance spells with either the shadow or evil descriptor (either way, the spell gains both descriptors when cast). A pint of the material used as a spell component modifies a spell so that it is cast two levels higher than normal, with a +2 bonus to the saving throw DC to resist.

Liquid shadow inflicts damage to good-aligned outsiders and blessed children if used as a splash weapon (one pint inflicts 3d6 points of damage; full immersion inflicts 20d6 points of damage). It heals evil outsiders and undead in like amounts.

Liquid shadow is worth 1,000 gp per pint and is usually found only one or two pints at a time.

### MARLITE

Marlite shines like blue-tinted iron and can be processed into a metal as hard and resilient as steel. Marlite is far more valuable than steel, however, for its secondary property: Marlite is a

magic-dead material. It has no natural magic within it, and it cannot be affected by spells, magic items, or spell-like abilities. In effect, it has an infinite amount of spell resistance. A sword made of marlite couldn't be affected by a *beat metal* spell, nor could it be magically *disintegrated*. No one could move it with *telekinesis*. This means, of course, that magic can't affect it in beneficial ways, either—it couldn't receive a *magic weapon* or *keen weapon* spell. It could not be given magical properties or an enhancement bonus.

Armor made of marlite gives the wearer no special properties. Spells can still affect the wearer, just not the armor directly.

An item made with marlite instead of iron or steel costs ten times the normal price.

### MOONSILVER

Called "ithilirid" by the elves, this metal is always found in liquid form, looking not unlike mercury. One can use it to coat a solid surface, to which it then adheres, protecting the surface as if it were made of iron. The surface retains all normal flexibility. Thus, one could apply it to a person to grant him the benefits of wearing armor (+4, +6, or +8 armor bonus to Armor Class, depending on how much is available) with none of armor's drawbacks—no armor check penalty, maximum Dexterity, or spell failure chance. The effects of moonsilver are as fleeting as the moon's reign in the night sky, however. The substance fades away approximately four hours after it adheres to a surface.

Moonsilver will not adhere to ithildin or ithilnaur (see previous page), so sealed containers made of these materials can be used to store moonsilver. Moonsilver forms in droplets among the dew of heavily forested areas on nights of the full moon. If no one collects it, the trees, grass, and other plants in such regions sometimes have silvery drops clinging to them after daybreak, as hard as metal. However, they fade by mid-morning.

Moonsilver costs depend on the amount of the substance. Enough for a +4 armor bonus costs 200 gp; +6 costs 400 gp; and +8 costs 600 gp. You cannot use a partial dose or multiple doses.

### VALLIS

Vallis is the name of the mysterious **moon of magic** that once orbited Praemal. In ancient days, meteors of green Vallis stone rained down upon the world from time to time. Vallis stones were raw magical power in solid form and could be used to power spells, magic items, and mighty rituals probably not even possible to conduct today.

The Vallis moon is long gone, and most of the Vallis stone was used up like a squandered commodity. Still, some remains, in the form of sparkling green Vallis dust. With so little of the stuff left in the world, spellcasters have learned to extract as much as they can from the dust. A careful mage can use a tiny mote of Vallis dust to do what a caster of the distant past (with no need to conserve) would have done with a stone the size of a human fist.

One speck of Vallis can power a number of levels of spells cast by any class of spellcaster, as determined by the size of the speck. Most range from one to six spell levels in capacity. (Treat a 0-level spell as the equivalent of a half level.) As the piece of Vallis is used, it diminishes. So, if a bit of Vallis dust with a four-spell-level capacity powers a 2nd-level spell, it still can power either another 2nd-level spell or two 1st-level spells, but it grows noticeably smaller. Exhausted Vallis disappears entirely.

For proper use, one must prepare the Vallis with 100 gp worth of special ingredients per potential spell level of power needed. The entire preparation process takes twenty-four hours. Unprepared Vallis can power spells, but at a less efficient rate. A piece of unprepared Vallis weighing 1 oz. could power only one spell level, while a prepared Vallis stone that same size could power twenty spell levels.

Should one find a piece of unprepared Vallis significantly larger than usual (such as in the **Throne Room of Jabel Shammar** atop the Spire), using it would pose a real danger. Once tapped, the stone literally "leaks" power. Anyone touching it must succeed at a Fortitude saving throw (DC 20) or suffer 1 point of temporary Constitution damage per round. Further, the Vallis loses one potential spell level of power per day as the stone's capacity leaks away.

Someone who succeeds at a Knowledge (arcana) check (DC 30) can figure out how to use a Vallis stone as a replacement for a spell requirement in a magic item. So, for example, a bit of Vallis with three potential spell levels of power could be used to create a *cloak of displacement* without any need to know the *fly* spell (cost to create remains the same, with the Vallis costing extra).

The value of prepared Vallis stone or dust is equal to the number of potential spell levels powered squared  $\times$  50 + 100 gp for each potential spell level powered. Thus, a piece of Vallis that could power one spell level costs 150 gp; one that could power two spell levels costs 300 gp; three spell levels is 550 gp; and so on. The value of unprepared Vallis is equal to the number of potential spell levels powered squared  $\times$  1,000 gp.

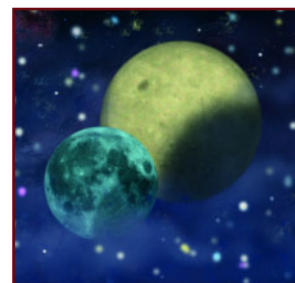
### INFO CHECKS

*With a Knowledge (arcana) check, one can attempt to identify and understand strange substances such as the ones listed here:*

*Aethel (DC 24)*  
*Black adamantine (DC 30)*  
*Heliolith (DC 19)*  
*Ithildin (DC 18)*  
*Ithilnaur (DC 18)*  
*Liquid light (DC 23)*  
*Liquid shadow (DC 27)*  
*Marlite (DC 24)*  
*Moonsilver (DC 20)*  
*Vallis (DC 22)*



*Jabel Shammar throne room, PT9; page 518*



*Moon of magic, page 40*

*Today vallis dust is a substance that carries with it more prestige than actual power. Wealthy mages like to flaunt it more than they like to use it.*



## RACES

The races of Ptolus are in many ways the same standard races found in the Core Rules. However, a few unique aspects to each race, discussed in this chapter, tailor them for the setting. In addition, a few new races and a few “monsters” also make acceptable PC races in Ptolus.



*Dwarf queen, PTg: page 536  
Eslathagos Malkith, page 75*

*In their own myths of ancient times, dwarves are named the “Stalwart Kings of Order” (the Haurdir), and the elves call themselves the “Races of Chaos” (the aduel deaistorm).*

*Prustan Peninsula, page 42*



*Stonelost and Grailwarden dwarves' symbols*

**D**M should decide which races they want to allow into their own specific Ptolus Campaign. For convenience, this chapter divides the races into major races (from the *Player’s Handbook*), minor races (new, alternate, or monstrous races), and NPC races. The latter are races found in Ptolus that are probably not appropriate for player characters without a lot of consideration on the DM’s part.

Use all information that you find about these races in the Core Rules, whether it is in the *Player’s Handbook* or the MM, unless the information here contradicts it. See Part I: Ptolus *Player’s Handbook* for more information as well.

### MAJOR RACES

The so-called major races, otherwise known as the common races, are those found in the *Player’s Handbook*. For the Ptolus Campaign, they require only a few changes, discussed below, from the versions that appear in Chapter 2 of the *Player’s Handbook*. In theory, every DM should allow these races as player character choices.

### DWARVES

Dwarven history says there once were three overlords: the Grailwarden, the Stonemight (now called the Stonelost), and the Earthsingers. Few

know of this third tribe, for no one has heard from them in millennia. Their **greatest queen** was kidnapped by the Dread One, **Eslathagos Malkith**, and never returned, which ended her noble line. The Earthsingers never recovered and eventually died out.

Dwarves almost never belong to any chaotic alignment, although there are exceptions.

### Grailwarden Dwarves

In ages long past, the Grailwarden dwarves settled the **Prustan Peninsula** in the Hotash Mountains. When the Prust spread northward, their dwarven allies came with them and helped establish the Empire of Tarsis.

The Grailwarden dwarves take their name from the *White Grail*, a fabulously powerful artifact they uncovered as they carved their main fortress-city into the side of a mountain. They renamed the fortress Grail Keep and proclaimed that watching over the Grail was their destiny. They have done so ever since.

Grailwarden dwarf artisans are known for their skill with gears, lenses, gunpowder, and other devices. Unlike other dwarves, they also are known for their use of magic—but it is a studious, methodical approach to magic. They treat spells as they would any science. Dwarves in general

are fabulous artisans, and throughout the Empire people prize dwarf-crafted items more than any other.

Grailwarden dwarves are usually fairly serious, dedicated, and hardworking, but not as gruff or unsociable as other dwarves. They get along with humans, but the various types of elves are only tolerable to them. They dislike orcs, but not as much as other dwarves do. They have no general opinions about most other races.

### Stonelost Dwarves

The Stonelost are the displaced builders of **Dwarvenhearth**, their ancient realm below the city of Ptolus. Driven out of their ancestral home by **Ghul** hundreds of years ago, they refuse to go back, and now they live in and around the city of Ptolus. No nondwarf knows, or at least understands, why they will not go back to reclaim their ancient city. To the Stonelost, however, it represents a life they feel they no longer deserve. By deserting their home, they lost the rights to it. Yet they refuse to permit anyone else to go into Dwarvenhearth, either. That would be a defilement of a perfect memory.

The Stonelost have great skill with stone and metal. In the city, they frequently work as artisans, architects, engineers, or merchants dealing in stone or metal. Most dwarves in Ptolus are

Stonelost by a fair margin, although some do not actually call Ptolus home. These actually live in the largest gathering of Stonelost dwarves, **Kaled Del**, a subterranean community beneath Ptolus near one of the entrances to Dwarvenhearth.

### ELVES

In ancient days, halflings and gnomes were considered types of elf. Even though modern people look at those races as distinct, there are still many elven types: Shoal elves, the winged Cherubim, evil dark elves, and the twisted Harrow elves. And of course the Elder Elves, now gone, comprised two more racial types, called the Solarr and the Lunas.

Elves today revere the moon (although not as much as did the ancient Lunas elves, after whom one moon is named). They love good food and wine, and they like both elaborately prepared and served. They prefer silver to gold. Elves in general know a great deal about the stars, the moons, and the world—for example, they know the planet is round and has a circumference of slightly less than twenty thousand miles.

The elves work with many special minerals, materials, and herbs. In particular, they are known for two metals—**ithildin** (a decorative silver that glows at night but is dull and almost invisible during the day) and **ithilnaur** (a thin, strong material with the same properties as ithildin).

*Kaled Del, PT7: page 448*

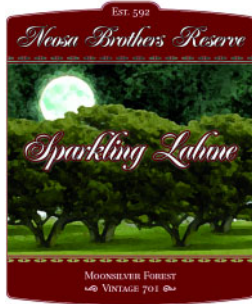
*Dwarvenhearth, PT7: page 460  
Ghul, page 81*

**The Solarr and Lunas Elves**  
*Collectively known as the Elder Elves, these two races once were the greatest and most powerful of elvenkind. Today, however, they are all extinct—or so most people believe. The truth is, members of both elven races survive today as the Urthon Aedar. The Solarr were golden-haired and fair, and stood very tall. The Lunas were usually white-haired, although some had golden hair as well. They stood shorter than the Solarr.*

*Ithildin and ithilnaur, page 46*







*Elven wine, such as this Moonsilver Forest vintage, is popular at Ptolus' more upscale taverns and restaurants.*

*The Elder Elves referred to the Ethereal Plane as the Everwood, picturing it as a silvery forest that went on forever. Many Shoal elves still adhere to this concept today.*

*Dreta Phantas, PT7: page 457*



*Buelow Stridetaker, married to the owner of the Hungry Halfling tavern in the Guildsman District, entertains patrons several nights a week with ethnic table-dancing.*

*A more cosmopolitan city than most, Ptolus boasts more half-elves and half-orcs than probably any other place in the world.*

Unlike what is stated in the Core Rules, elves do indeed sleep, just as humans do. In fact, they place a greater value on sleep and dreams than any other race.

Elves (except Harrow elves) are only rarely of a Lawful alignment.

### Shoal Elves

Dark-haired with deep, smoldering eyes, the Shoal elves have always been just as at home on the sea as on the land. They are, by far, the most common type of elf—in fact, most people simply call them “elves” rather than “Shoal elves.” They typically wear their hair long and favor clothing in shades of blue and green.

If they can't be on or near the sea, the Shoal prefer the forest, the so-called “sea of leaves.” They find open terrain oppressive. Elven cities are fabulous places of slowly twirling towers and curving walls, but sadly, they are few in number now. The most wondrous of these cities was **Dreta Phantas**, the Dreaming City, magically stolen by the dark elves in ages past. Most Shoal now live in small communities or cosmopolitan cities.

Shoal elves often seem aloof and arrogant, but as the centuries pass, they have grown more accustomed to other races. In particular, they respect some of the rarer races, such as the litorian tribes. Humans, as a group, are generally acceptable, but dwarves are a burden. Elves hate orcs.

If this book refers to a character as an “elf,” without specifying subrace, that character is a Shoal elf.

### GNOMES

In most ancient lore, gnomes are considered to have been a race of elvenkind. Rarest of the major races, gnomes love magic and music above all else (an alternate name for them is the “loresong faen”). They dwell throughout the lands of Cherubar, Rhoth, Palastan, and the Sea Kingdoms (see “The World” chapter).

### HALFLINGS

As with gnomes, most creation myths and stories name halflings as an original race of elvenkind. They frequently live among humans, although many halflings wander the plains to the south and southwest as nomads. They do not call themselves halflings, of course, but they no longer find the name derogatory, either. Their own name for themselves is *saelas faen*: “quikklings.”

### HALF-ELVES AND HALF-ORCS

Although understandably rare, these races are more common in Ptolus than many places in the world. Half-elves are always half Shoal elf, since

a Cherubim elf would never pair with a human and Harrow elves always breed true. Half-orcs usually come from the Ornu-Nom tribes of Palastan and Rhoth, although evil half-orcs might be half Toruk-Rul or Sorn-Ulth.

### HUMANS

According to the elves and dwarves, humans are the youngest of the common races. Despite this fact, they are the most prevalent of all intelligent peoples. No changes are required for standard humans in the Ptolus Campaign, but details on the various ethnic divisions of human (Prust, Eastern Hordes barbarians, Uraqi, etc.) are available in the “Gazetteer” of “The World” chapter.

### MINOR RACES

The minor races are named as such not because of their stature, but because of their relative rarity and—from a game point of view—their newness as potential PC races. DMs should consider whether or not these races would make appropriate player characters for their Ptolus Campaigns.

### CENTAURS (ARAM)

Although quite rare elsewhere in the Empire, centaurs—or, as they call themselves, aram—live in great numbers in Palastan, and thus in Ptolus. They have earned the respect of the humanoid folks of the region thanks to their forthright and open manner and because of their help against Ghul and other enemies of the past.

**Personality:** Aram are boisterous, arrogant, and boorish, yet many find them likable nonetheless. Centaurs sometimes refer to humanoids derisively as “sitters.” The biggest difference they see between themselves and most other people is that others are content—or even happy—to sit for long periods of time in the same place. Aram cannot stand to remain in one place for long unless they are eating or sleeping. In their herds, it is the sick, the old, and the infirm who perform tasks that require stationary work, like sewing garments or making tools. In the city, they simply rely on others to do such things.

**Physical Description:** These half-horse, half-human appearing people stand almost seven feet tall. While those who live on the plains prefer to wear minimal clothing and travel with as little gear as needed, city dwellers have adopted the clothing and equipment of their humanoid neighbors.

**Relations:** Aram probably don't look as positively upon humanoid races as those races look upon them. Still, the centaurs have seen that humans, dwarves, elves, and the rest clearly dominate the lands, and so they have made their peace with them and many willingly live among them. There has never been open conflict between the aram and any of the major humanoid races,



although there once were great wars between centaurs and orcs and, less frequently, battles between centaurs and lizardfolk. These are all events of the distant past.

**Alignment:** Centaurs are usually neutral good.

**Centaur Lands:** Aram once roamed the plains to the south and west of Ptolus in huge, nomadic herds. Today, however, the herds have dwindled. Aram in Ptolus find work in physical roles, hauling loads in warehouses or for other businesses. Some work as imposing bodyguards or hired muscle. Still others serve as messengers or even pull small carts for hire, hauling goods or people. They almost never have jobs as merchants, clerks, artisans, or other employment that would require them to remain stationary for long periods.

**Religion:** Again we see a difference between city dwellers and herd aram. While Ptolusites tend to honor a **variety of deities**, most tribal centaurs revere an aspect of Melann, a nature goddess. Some aram also pay homage to Rajek the Wanderer, a god of luck, protection, and travel, or Torskal, aram god of just vengeance.

**Language:** Although they have a fairly complex spoken language, the aram long ago developed a written language that focuses on brevity. Few centaurs have the patience to either read or write a book, so they have their own set of simple symbols for conveying general ideas. Other than that, however, aram rarely know how to read the lan-

guages they speak (generally Elvish, Sylvan, and Common). Most centaurs living in Ptolus learn to read enough Common to get by—enough to understand signs, for example, and things of a very general nature.

**Names:** Aram go by a single name only, with no tradition of surname use. Tribal centaurs may refer to themselves by their name and tribe name: “Carak of the Redhooves,” for instance.

**Aram Male Names:** Carak, Norris, Reddik

**Aram Female Names:** Esthana, Narenth, Susail

**Adventurers:** The aram respect those who bravely face danger to accomplish great deeds. In fact, their culture values heroes greatly. Centaur adventurers seek adventure for its own sake. They want to undertake mighty quests and perform acts of great heroism; treasure and other rewards are secondary.

### Centaurs as Characters

Centaur characters possess the following racial traits.

**Abilities:** +8 Strength, +4 Dexterity, +4 Constitution, –2 Intelligence, +2 Wisdom.

**Size:** Large size grants –1 penalty to Armor Class, –1 penalty on attack rolls, –4 penalty on Hide checks, +4 bonus on grapple checks, and lifting and carrying limits double those of Medium characters.

**Space/Reach:** 10 feet/5 feet.

**Speed:** A centaur’s base land speed is 50 feet.

**Special Abilities:** Darkvision out to 60 feet.

**Racial Hit Dice:** A centaur begins with four levels of monstrous humanoid, which provide 4d8 Hit Dice, a base attack bonus of +4, and base saving throw bonuses of Fort +1, Ref +4, and Will +4.

**Racial Skills:** A centaur’s monstrous humanoid levels give it skill points equal to  $7 \times (2 + \text{Intelligence modifier})$ . Its class skills are Listen, Move Silently, Spot, and Survival.

**Racial Feats:** A centaur’s monstrous humanoid levels give it two feats.

**Armor:** +3 natural armor bonus.

**Languages:** Automatic—Aram and Common. Bonus—Elvish, Gnomish, Halfling, and Sylvan.

**Favored Class:** Ranger.

**Level Adjustment:** +2.

### CHERUBIM ELVES

As ancient as the Shoal elves (and, for that matter, the Elder Elves), Cherubim elves are unknown in many places of the world simply because they have never found comfort living among others not of their kind. Cherubim are winged elves with lightweight frames to help them soar high in the sky. They come to Ptolus only rarely—and when they do, they spend their time almost exclusively among other elves.

*Aram do not take offense at comments or comparisons that relate them to horses. In fact, they take such remarks as compliments.*

*The aram adventurer Turas is well known in Ptolus. He was one of the founding members of the Delver’s Guild and surprisingly skilled at underground and cavern exploration. Unfortunately, Turas disappeared recently while exploring the shores of Umbral Lake (see PT7: page 451).*



*Although the centaur’s favored class is ranger, you will find as many or more aram fighters in Ptolus. Rangers often visit the city, but few choose to live there.*

*List of deities, page 68*

*Most centaurs in Ptolus choose to dwell in the Narred neighborhood of Midtown (see PT4: page 200).*



*Zaetra is a cherubim wizard who spends a great deal of time in Iridithil's Home in Midtown and is a great friend of Doraedian Mythlord.*

*Moonsilver Forest, page 42  
Goth Gulgamel and  
Harrow elves, PT9: page 490  
Zaug, PT6: page 633  
Elder Brood, PT6: page 634*

*Rumors abound that, while Cherubim enjoy the fact that humans and others imagine a connection between them and angels, the angels among the Malkuth resent it and generally do not care for Cherubim.*

*Cherubar, page 41*

*With a few rare exceptions, Cherubim never mate outside their own sub-species. There are no half-Cherubim elves. However, in their native land, many cherubim have creatures of elemental air in their lineage.*



*Gaerioth Shadowhand, a Harrow elf and member of the Company of the Black Lantern*

**Personality:** Cherubim elves are self-absorbed and typically somewhat timid, preferring to fly over or away from danger rather than confront it. Aware of their physical fragility, they know that the best way for them to survive is to stay wary and alert. Their greatest fear is that something might happen to their wings. Introspective and contemplative, Cherubim speak only when necessary and have no time for humor, song, or frivolity. Many Cherubim are curious and investigative, which often clashes with their inherent fear—apprehension usually wins out.

**Physical Description:** Cherubim are thin and frail even by elf standards. Their skin is very pale—almost white—and their hair is typically black, pale blond, or white. The feathers on their wings match their hair color, and their wingspan is usually three times their height. Their eyes are pale grey or silver.

The Cherubim's lifespan resembles that of other elves, but their birth rate is considerably lower. (As a race, their numbers are ever so slowly decreasing, rather than increasing.)

**Relations:** Cherubim feel skittish around non-elves. Humans and other races often mistake them for angels or aasimars, however, so most people seem favorably disposed toward them.

**Alignment:** Cherubim share the outlook of most other elves, although they are perhaps even more aloof and retiring.

**Cherubim Lands:** Cherubim elves hail from **Cherubar**, a land named for them in the distant west. They prefer mountainous regions, particularly places accessible only from the air. Cherubim are not farmers or herders, but hunters and gatherers—mostly gatherers. Their communities are very small.

**Religion:** Cherubim worship most of the same gods as other elves, but also Ahaar and other air-oriented deities.

**Language:** Cherubim elves speak Elvish.

**Names:** Cherubim names are similar to other elfen names, except that they do not use surnames.

**Adventurers:** Cherubim elves rarely adventure, simply because they are a bit timid and physically quite weak. Their ability to fly is such an asset, however, that most Cherubim who do attempt such a dangerous profession find that they are well suited to it.

### Cherubim Elves as Characters

Cherubim characters possess the following racial traits.

**Abilities:** +4 Dexterity, –4 Constitution.

**Size:** Medium size.

**Speed:** Cherubim base land speed is 30 feet. They also can fly with a speed of 40 and average maneuverability.

**Special Abilities:** Low-light vision.

**Racial Skills:** +2 racial bonus on Spot checks.

**Languages:** Automatic—Common and Elven. Bonus—Gnomish and Halfling.

**Favored Class:** Wizard.

**Level Adjustment** +2.

### HARROW ELVES

When Ghul, the Half God, captured many Shoal and Elder elves from the **Moonsilver Forest**, he herded them into the dungeons beneath **Goth Gulgamel**, his dark fortress halfway up the Spire. There, he and his demonic servants (including the **zaug** and the **Elder Brood**) twisted them in body and spirit. While many of the elves received new magical powers, they were dark powers that corrupted their souls utterly. When he finished his awful work, Ghul released the elves—dubbed Harrow elves—back into the world to show his contempt for all that was good and pure, and to demonstrate his ability to unmake anything made.

The Harrow elves, for the most part, left the area, not taking part in the great Ghulwar that followed between the Skull-King and most of the rest of that part of the world. Instead, the majority of the Harrow elves fled east and south.

Shorter-lived than normal elves, many Harrow elf generations have passed in the thousand years since their creation. Since then, their dramatic powers and physical deformities have softened with each new birth, but still the taint of evil remains. Harrow elves are mistrusted and disliked. Occasionally, one is born who displays the power and evil of the original Harrow elves, but such a child is rare (albeit feared). Those characters have spell-like abilities far beyond the norm.

**Personality:** Even after all this time, Harrow elves are as twisted on the inside with bitterness and hate as their flesh is twisted and deformed on the outside. They know that everyone hates and fears them and, truth be told, they hate and fear themselves, at least to a degree. They resent the happy lives of others, and evil Harrow elves often seek to make others as miserable as they. They frequently attempt to disfigure their enemies the way they have been disfigured. Some still seek revenge on those who mutated their forebears.

**Physical Description:** Harrow elves have the same general build as other elves. Their bodies typically bear horrible birthmarks, scars, and various deformities. Their flesh is a pale yellowish-white, and their eyes are red.

Harrow elves have a lifespan of similar length to that of humans.

**Relations:** Harrow elves are disdained by virtually all others, but especially by other elves, who see them as abominations only slightly better than dark elves. Harrow elves share a general wariness for all other races, but beyond that they have no preferences.

### RACIAL AND CULTURAL RELATIONS

Clearly, with so many races and cultures calling Ptolus home, not everyone is going to get along.

Elves, for example, have a reputation, often deserved, of being a little intolerant of others. They believe in the general superiority of their own kind, perhaps not in every field, but in all areas that truly matter (spellcasting, winemaking, woodcraft, and so forth). Halflings have a reputation as being very accepting of others, including their cultural traditions and beliefs—it's not uncommon for halflings living in a human city like Ptolus to take on the mannerisms and outlook of mankind.

Humans, however, remain the most adaptable race, as well as the most accepting. Humans are put off by the perceived arrogance of elves, the bestial nature of half-orcs, and the alienness of lizardfolk, but they can learn to get along with any of them.

Of course, there is a level of inherent deception involved in any discussion that lumps all dwarves, elves, and in particular humans together as if they all thought and felt alike. The table below is strictly one of generalities. Not every elf is going to like every centaur. It's possible for a litorian and a halfling to be the best of friends—but it would be rare and seem strange in the eyes of others.

#### Racial Preferences

	C	D	E	G	Ha	H-O	H	L	Lz
<b>Centaur</b> s	P	T	L	T	T	T	L	L	D
<b>Dwarves</b>	T	P	T	T	L	T	L	L	D
<b>Elves</b>	L	T	P	P	L	D	T	T	D
<b>Gnomes</b>	T	T	P	P	P	D	L	T	D
<b>Halflings</b>	T	T	L	P	P	D	L	T	D
<b>Half-Orcs</b>	T	T	D	D	D	L	T	L	T
<b>Humans</b>	L	L	T	L	L	T	P	L	T
<b>Litorians</b>	L	L	T	T	T	L	L	P	T
<b>Lizardfolk</b>	D	D	D	D	D	T	T	T	P

**Prefer (P):** The race in question enjoys being around this other race. All races prefer their own kind, but some are welcoming to others as well.

**Like (L):** The race in question gets along just fine with this other race; the two are usually quite compatible.

**Tolerate (T):** The race in question can coexist well enough with this other race, but it's difficult to imagine members of the two actually being friends.

**Dislike (D):** The race in question actively does not enjoy the company of this other race and avoids members of it if possible.

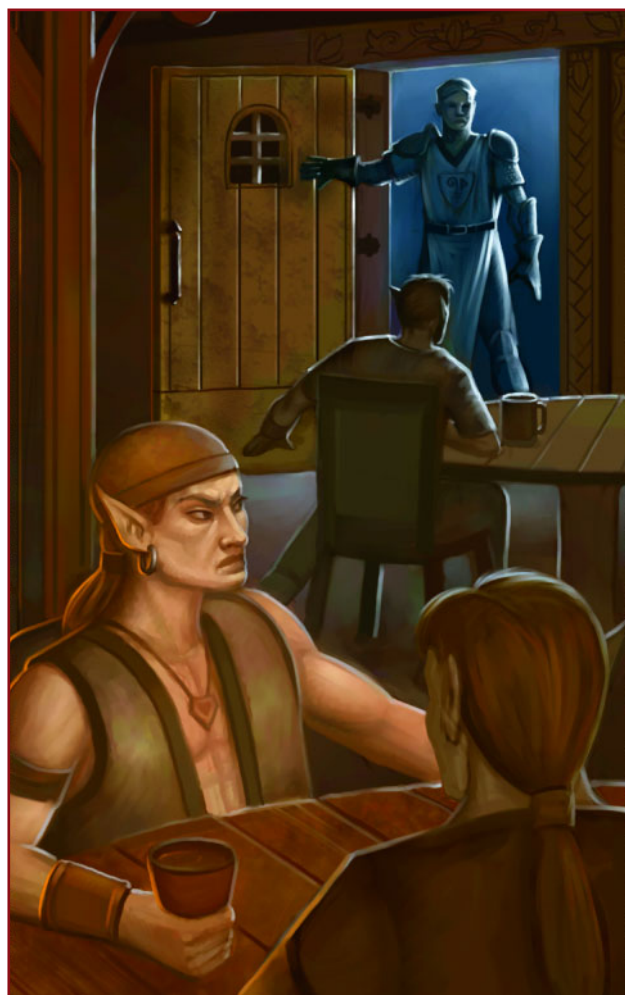
Culturally, things get even more complicated. The cultures within the Empire today are shaped by the Imperial conquest of more than seven hundred years ago. It's important to realize that the Empire took control with little bloodshed. Thus, there is less resentment for Tarsisans—and, by extension, the Prust—than one might think. This is one reason why the Empire has lasted so long.

Still, it's obvious that even today most people of pure Prustan descent look upon other cultures, like the Palastani or the Rhothans, with some disdain. The Palastani are a fiercely independent people who proclaim their individualism by decorating their bodies with paint and piercings. Many think that Rhothan folk are simple farmers, perhaps even backward or unsophisti-

cated. Just about everyone looks upon people of Kem with some manner of distrust, as if there's something not quite right about them. The northmen from Nall and the folk from beyond the Grey Mountains are both dismissed as uncouth barbarians, despite the fact that those two cultures actually have little in common any longer.

In Ptolus, however, social class means more than race or culture. The nobles of the various houses (who, despite their Palastani origins, have fully adopted Imperial modes of dress and manner), as well as distinguished individuals in the government or certain elite organizations, clearly stand at the top of a tall social hierarchy. Beneath the actual nobility are the very wealthy, and beneath them are government officials and clerics of Lothian. Next come the middle class merchants and craftspeople, a level of the strata currently growing faster than any other. At the bottom come the low-class laborers and tradesmen, who themselves are above the beggars, criminals, and other so-called "riff-raff."

Of course, many have found interesting ways to detach themselves from the social hierarchy altogether. Mages of the Inverted Pyramid, for example, do not truly fit into the structure, and most of them do not care. Adventurers would normally fit into the lower classes, except those who strike it rich or gain heroic reputations are sometimes accepted into the upper classes.



Many Harrow elves use Disguise to help pass themselves off as Shoal elves. This isn't too difficult, so Harrow elves gain a +2 racial bonus to do so. All elves get a +2 racial bonus on their Spot checks to see through a Harrow elf's disguise, if he's trying to pass as another type of elf. (This essentially negates the Harrow elf's racial bonus.)

*Kem, page 41*

Most Harrow elves in Ptolus live in a North Market neighborhood called the Zar'at (PT5: page 310).

While visiting in Ptolus, most litorians prefer to stay at the Mane, located in Midtown (see PT4: page 200).

One familiar tribe to the litorians of Ptolus is the Clan of Malethar, located about a week's hike to the southeast of the city. Local litorians believe that young Charnoth (below) is destined to become the chieftain after Malethar.



The most well-known litorian in Ptolus is arguably Rastor, owner of Rastor's Weapons in Delver's Square (see PT4: page 218).

**Alignment:** Harrow elves lean toward evil, but some have overcome this predilection. Unlike other elves, they are not typically limited to non-lawful alignments.

**Harrow Elf Lands:** The Harrow elves have no lands of their own. Most live in **Kem**, in isolated communities. Typically, Harrow elves find mates only among their own kind, but sometimes they take mates through violence from among Shoal elves or even humans. Offspring from such rapes are always Harrow elves.

**Religion:** Harrow elves generally are too bitter to find much solace in religion. They have very few clerics, but the few that do pay homage to a deity often worship one of the demon gods or perhaps Kran, Goddess of Faults.

**Language:** Harrow elves speak Elvish.

**Names:** Harrow elf names are similar to other Elvish names.

**Adventurers:** Harrow elves make excellent adventurers, given that most of them feel they have little to live for—many have a death wish. They are fierce combatants, often quite ruthless. Usually, however, they do what they do more to prove themselves than to gain riches or even fame.

### Harrow Elves as Characters

Harrow elf characters possess the following racial traits.

**Abilities:** +2 Dexterity, –2 Constitution, –2 Charisma.

**Size:** Medium size.

**Speed:** A Harrow elf's base land speed is 30 feet.

**Special Abilities:** Low-light vision.

**Racial Skills:** +2 racial bonus on Craft (alchemy), Intimidate, and Use Magic Device checks.

**Spell-Like Abilities:** 1/day—*detect magic*, *ghost sound*, *mage hand*, *prestidigitation*, and one 1st- or 2nd-level spell chosen by the player or DM

**Languages:** Automatic—Common and Elvish. Bonus—Elder Elvish, Gnomish, and Halfling.

**Favored Class:** Monk.

**Level Adjustment:** +1.

### LITORIANS

Litorians are bestial, honorbound hunters. Usually found roaming open grasslands far from civilization, litorians only rarely separate from their tribes. Unlike members of the common races, only the unique individual litorian interacts with other species.

**Personality:** Litorians are thoughtful and quiet until provoked past their limit. Once angered, they become savage and brutal, almost incapable of showing mercy.

Litorians love the outdoors, good food, and long, well-considered stories (not boastful or exaggerated ones). They have a deep sense of personal honor—personal in that it's not about “saving face” but about being true to oneself. A litorian will not compromise her morals for fear of losing her own self-value, even if this makes her appear strange or foolish to others, and even if it means making a choice others might not consider the best one. All litorians develop their own sets of morals and ethics, although some principles remain true across most members of the race.

### ROLEPLAYING LITORIANS

Litorians are impressive in stature and in their honorbound nature. Anyone who calls them “cat people” doesn't understand them at all. With due respect to cats, these are not self-interested, aloof felines, but proud warriors and hunters who are principled and thoughtful in their actions. They ascribe high importance to the well-being of their allies, their families, and their people.

Also, do not dismiss them simply as primitive hunters. The litorians have been around as long as the elves and know much about the major races and the cities they build. The litorians, however, have rejected the ways of the other races to embrace their own. These noble people value personal honor very highly. They also closely guard their image in society. Litorians teach their children that to be caught in a lie, to be seen as a failure, or to be called a coward are all fates as bad as death. Taking this ideal to the extreme, some litorians almost never speak, attempt only what they are good at, and never turn from a fight, no matter what the odds. Most litorians, however, realize that intent matters more than action. Abandoning a fight is not cowardly when one has no chance of winning. There is no shame in failing at an impossible task. And a statement is never really a lie if you believe it when you say it.

Other things, however, can shame a litorian as well: associating with honorless people, betraying a friend, dishonoring one's parents, failing to repay a debt—or worse, failing to recognize when one is in someone's debt. Anyone who saves the life of a litorian usually finds that litorian swearing to aid him in a great task. Litorians have a strong sense of lifedebt and will go to great lengths to repay their saviors. When you play a litorian, carefully consider your actions. When you make a friend, stick by that friend no matter what. When you make an enemy, strive against that enemy with all your might. And thus do neither lightly.

Because they highly value both honor and life, for example, their need to repay those who save their lives—a *lifedebt*—is very strong.

**Physical Description:** Litorians are taller and more muscular than humans. Their bodies are covered in light brown hair, and their faces are clearly feline in appearance with a pronounced snout, a flat, catlike nose, and sharp teeth. They have dark eyes with narrow pupils. Manes of brown hair surround the heads of males. Most people notice a thick, almost musky scent around litorians, but few think it unpleasant.

Litorians mature much faster than humans, but have a similar lifespan.

**Relations:** Litorians have little history with most other races except aram, whom they respect (but do not entirely understand). In Ptolus, they get along best with halflings, who surprisingly share many of their sensibilities regarding loyalty (this may come from their similar nomadic lifestyles). They get along with the Ornu-Nom tribes of orcs in Palastan and Rhoth fairly well, but not with the Toruk-Rul or Sorn-Ulth.

**Alignment:** Litorians lean toward chaos rather than law simply because of their tribal upbringing. They believe in only a very loose organizational structure. Litorians organize their tribes by strength and respect, not by law. Litorians find the concept of delineated parameters of right and wrong difficult to understand; they are much more likely to judge situations on a case-by-case basis. Bound by their sense of honor and respect for others, far more litorians are good or neutral than evil. They are very rarely selfish or cruel and hold concepts of personal freedom quite dear.

**Litorian Lands:** Litorians are nomads, but to call their wandering “random” shows a profound misunderstanding of their culture. They subtly control the open grasslands upon which they wander: Their power and cunning makes them clear masters of the region they inhabit. No one passes through the plains where they live without their knowledge—and, therefore, their leave.

**Religion:** Litorians have no concept of worship and see little need for ritual. They simply do not understand or crave the need to trust in a higher power. When confronted with proof of a powerful being’s might, a litorian grants respect, but not reverence.

**Language:** The complex litorian language proves difficult for humans and many others to speak. It is a tongue full of deceptive subtlety, and few nonlitorians attempt to master it. Litorian has an alphabet of its own, but by the standards of other races, its written form is fairly crude and basic.

**Names:** The tribe gives all litorians names that carry a special meaning in their own tongue. These names are then transliterated into Common



for use by others who have difficulty with Litorian speech. Here are some sample names:

**Litorian Male Names:** Charnaset, Chron, Malethar, and Rastor.

**Litorian Female Names:** Marel, Rann, Sorret, and Yintra.

**Adventurers:** Litorians away from their tribe are usually hunters, mercenaries, or members of another profession that allows them to use both their outdoor instincts and their natural strength and agility. Frequently shunned by members of other races (because they find the “lion-people” intimidating), litorians often find acceptance and friendship among adventurers—many of whom are loners or wanderers themselves.

### Litorian Racial Traits

**Abilities:** +2 Strength, +2 Constitution, +2 Dexterity.

**Size:** Medium size.

**Speed:** Litorian base speed is 30 feet.

**Special Abilities:** Low-light vision, scent (as described in Chapter 7: Glossary of the MM).

**Languages:** Automatic—Common and Litorian. Bonus—Gnoll, Goblin, and Orcish.

**Racial Skills:** +2 racial bonus on Intimidate, Search, Spot, Listen, and Survival checks.

**Favored Class:** Ranger.

**Level Adjustment:** +1

### LITORIAN KEY DATES

#### 1. Time of the Gathering

*One day a month each litorian warrior and hunter must rest from all activity, commemorating the time of the Great Movements, when the tribe would remain in one area so that the elderly and the young could rest from their long journey. The tribe often would celebrate such gatherings with song and dance.*

#### 2. Days of Memory

*For three days each year (the 12th to 14th of Toil), warriors of the tribe honor those who were killed by their enemies. For the litorian, the greatest way in which to honor those who have died in battle is to offer their own victories to the memory of the fallen. During these days, the litorian penchant for ferocity in battle is heightened. Any spoils of battle they earn during the Days of Memory are sacrificed to the spirits of those who have fallen.*

#### 3. Winter Fast

*In preparation for the lean hunting of winter, and as a sign of a warrior's dedication, strength, and tenacity, every blooded litorian undergoes a four-day fast from the 2nd to 5th of Moons. Fasting litorians may consume only water. At the end of the fast, each litorian must hunt its own prey and consume the meat raw.*

#### 4. Great Feast

*At the height of midsummer and midwinter (the 21st of Growth and of Newyear), litorians of particular tribes gather for a great feast, in which warriors contend with each other in bouts of drinking and the fine art of storytelling. Tribal elders preside over many of the contests, awarding the winner a weapon of distinction and proclaiming the victorious litorian Chieftain of the Great Feast.*

*An assarai named Salsan was taken prisoner by slavers and wound up in the employ of the Balacazar family. For more on this character, see PT8: Adventures (page 588).*

*A lizard man former slave named Ssethenus hopes to rule the Slave City (see PT7: page 422).*

*There are actually more lizardfolk in the city of Ptolus than most people think. This is because, to nonlizardfolk, they all look so similar, that those of other races think they are seeing the same assarai on multiple occasions, when in fact they are seeing two or three different individuals. In addition, many lizardfolk steer clear of the other races and thus are rarely seen in public.*

*Despite the fact that their ancestors were riverfolk (and many assarai outside the city still make their homes along riverbanks), the lizardfolk of Ptolus would never swim in the highly polluted King's River.*



### LIZARDFOLK (ASSARAI)

The real truth of the matter is, few people in Ptolus use the word “lizardfolk.” To the ignorant, they are “lizard men,” whether the individual is male or female. To those in the know—and of course, to actual members of the race—they are assarai.

**Personality:** The common perception of the lizardfolk is that they are sneaky, slippery, and most likely thieves and liars. These are unfair characterizations. In fact, most assarai are as honest as most humans—as likely to be good as evil and, in reality, usually a complex web of both.

**Physical Description:** These reptilian humanoids stand a little taller than a human, and their tails can measure up to 4 feet in length. Their scales range in color from green to grey to brown. City-dwelling lizardfolk dress in standard human clothing: shirts and pants, often including hooded cloaks to help disguise their forms when they venture into certain districts. Their clothing often looks worn, as its condition matters little to most assarai.

**Relations:** Lizardfolk are primitive in the eyes of most other humanoids, but they do not have the litorians’ inherent culture of savage nobility

and honor. Instead, one can characterize them most easily as folk with simple goals. Few assarai seem ambitious by human standards. Most are content when they simply have enough to eat and can stay relatively safe from harm. They aren’t even that demanding about shelter; many are happy enough without it, as long as the climate never turns very cold. They sleep at night along the docks or sometimes in alleys or in parks with fountains or pools. In a city where they are tolerated, like Ptolus—a place known for its tolerance, relatively speaking—the assarai’s needs are easily met.

This fact of urban life results in copious free time for lizardfolk, which their people never enjoyed in the past, when they dwelled in small villages and had to hunt and cultivate their own food. Over the years, however, non-assarai have decided that most lizardfolk are lazy, shiftless thieves, for how else could they get along without jobs or homes?

The truth is that lizardfolk in the city are very resourceful. They often perform menial tasks for those who will hire them on a temporary basis, earning just enough money to tide them over for a time. Others catch fish in the bay or even down by the river. Still others forage through trash to find food or something to sell. And of course, some do steal—but even then, only enough to meet their simple needs.

The thing to remember is that most assarai in Ptolus do not find their state of indigence and homelessness an undesirable situation. They don’t need more than a little food to eat, and most don’t want permanent shelters like other humanoids. On warm days, it’s not uncommon to see them sunning themselves in a city square or on a rooftop. The City Watch routinely clears them out of these places, but they always come back. In fact, some assarai have grown so accustomed to the Watch that they have learned to migrate through the city from one favored location to the next, keeping just ahead of the guards. Others have found it easier to remain in lairs below the city, living near the underground pools or streams, just to stay out of the way.

**Alignment:** Lizardfolk are usually neutral.

**Lizardfolk Lands:** In a different world, the assarai would have been a more prominent race. At one time, they dominated much of the western portion of the continent, particularly the lands near the coasts, although they rarely trod regions north of Ptolus. However, their territorial culture, as well as their physical nature, brought them into frequent conflict with mammalian races that assumed—particularly long ago—that all lizardfolk were evil.

Though still common in most lands, lizardfolk find little welcome in all but the most cosmopolitan cities.

**Religion:** Many lizardfolk in Ptolus choose to worship **Harredda** in her animal and protection aspects, although they revere her in reptilian form rather than in raven form.

**Language:** City-dwelling assarai almost always speak Common as well as Draconic. In fact, more and more lizardfolk are forgoing Draconic altogether. Only about one in three can read, and most of those read Common, not Draconic.

**Names:** Lizardfolk do not distinguish between male and female names. Assarai names are often quite sibilant sounding, such as Slaathan, Ssethenus, and Thessisth.

**Adventurers:** Not all lizardfolk are transient and poor, of course. The exceptions often become mercenaries or adventurers. Every once in a while in Ptolus, assarai warriors attempt to inspire their people to rise up and fight for a better place in the city's culture, but this never works, because the lizardfolk are generally satisfied with their lot. The "rabble-rousers," while trying to look out for their people's well-being and pride, have been overly influenced by the cultures of other races—ones that look down on the lizardfolk.

Because they are both homeless and hardy, slavers in the city frequently make use of lizardfolk. This is a situation the assarai do not accept, and many an assarai's adventuring career has begun with a quest to rescue enslaved friends or family. Many lizardfolk carry weapons to protect themselves and their comrades from abduction. Sadly, sometimes the City Watch looks the other way in this situation, believing it better that the slavers take the assarai than members of other races.

### Lizardfolk as Characters

Lizardfolk characters possess the following racial traits.

**Abilities:** +2 Strength, +2 Constitution, -2 Intelligence.

**Size:** Medium size.

**Speed:** A lizardfolk's base land speed is 30 feet.

**Racial Hit Dice:** A lizardfolk begins with two levels of humanoid, which provide 2d8 Hit Dice, a base attack bonus of +1, and base saving throw bonuses of Fort +0, Ref +3, and Will +0.

**Racial Skills:** An assarai's humanoid levels give him skill points equal to  $5 \times (2 + \text{Intelligence modifier, minimum } 1)$ . His class skills are Balance, Jump, and Swim. Lizardfolk have a +4 racial bonus on Balance, Jump, and Swim checks.

**Racial Feats:** A lizardfolk's humanoid levels give him one feat.

**Weapon and Armor Proficiency:** A lizardfolk is automatically proficient with simple weapons and shields.

**Armor:** +5 natural armor bonus.

**Natural Weapons:** 2 claws (1d4) and bite (1d4).

**Special Qualities:** Hold breath.

**Languages:** Automatic—Common and Draconic. Bonus—Aquan, Goblin, Gnoll, and Orcish.

**Favored Class:** Druid.

**Level Adjustment:** +1.

### NPC RACES

The following races are typically reserved only for NPCs in Ptolus, although a DM may consider allowing one to be used as a player character race. For full details and game information on these races, please see the MM.

#### AASIMARS

These holy-blooded planetouched are rare but more common in Ptolus than elsewhere, mainly because of the presence of the angelic **Malkuth**. Aasimars, when recognized as such, are viewed with awe and respect. Most aasimars aid this reaction by furthering their kind's reputation for benevolence and heroism. Virtually all aasimars are good-aligned. They typically live among the Malkuth in the **Pale Tower**, although some keep to themselves and develop independent lives among humans or elves.

**Zophas Adhar** is a well-known aasimar paladin and Knight of the Pale.

#### DARK ELVES

In ages long past, it is said, an evil goddess—one of the **Vested of the Galchutt** named **Gorgoth-Lol**—corrupted a tribe of Shoal elves, taking them deep underground to revel in their wickedness and rage against the sun and moons. The dark elves, as they soon became known, became the bane of all elvenkind, much to the shame of the Shoal. They speak of them only in tones of utter disgrace.

Dark elves are born with an inherent corruption. Although it's certainly possible for them to overcome their evil natures, they almost never do. Dark elves hate the sun and all bright light. Wide open spaces make them uneasy, but they feel at home in the subterranean passages deep below the surface.

These elves are sinister and crafty. They value deception and guile and scoff at honesty. They love poison and see betrayal as a fact of life. Dark elves typically dress scantily. They lack the sense of decorum and modesty that their surface-dwelling brethren have, and would favor provocation over practicality in any case.

Dark elves who dwell in a large community in **the caverns** hate and fear the **zaug** perhaps more than any other creature. This sentiment has led them to ally with other subterranean peoples at times. They hate dwarves almost as much as they hate surface elves.

*Harredda, page 69*

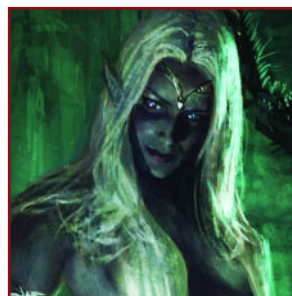
*Most aasimars in Ptolus work in the Temple District or serve in knightly orders.*



*Malkuth, PT3: page 129  
Pale Tower, PT5: page 329*

*Zophas Adhar, PT6: page 577*

*Vested of the Galchutt, page 60  
Gorgoth-Lol, page 74*



*Dark elves make poor player characters in the Ptolus Campaign. Theirs is the only race whose very existence is illegal in the city. If found, they are arrested and imprisoned or executed simply for being dark elves.*

*Dark elf caverns, PT7: page 454  
Zaug, PT6: page 633*



The types of orc found in the Ptolus Campaign are (from left):

Toruk-Rul (“closing fist”), Ornu-Nom (“howling axe”), and Sorn-Ulth (“bleeding breath”). The Toruk-Rul and Sorn-Ulth races were created by Ghul in centuries past.



Madame Kaethea, PT5: page 408



Canabulum, a minotaur arcanist, is a member of the Runewardens.

Shibata, PT5: page 397

The Fallen, page 110

The Vai, page 139

Forsaken and Urasta, page 114

Prison and Odsen Rom,

PT7: page 436

The Vladaams, PT3: page 96

In the Warrens, the dark elf **Madame Kaethea** runs a sanctuary for her kind.

### MINOTAURS

More than simple monsters, some minotaurs—usually outcasts from their own kind—are quite intelligent and sophisticated. These individuals choose to live among other intelligent and civilized creatures in such places as Ptolus. Even in the city, though, they are barely tolerated. Many look upon them with disdain and distrust.

City-dwelling minotaurs wear clothing like humans and take on other human affectations. They retain their carnivorous appetites but do not eat their meat raw. Most civilized minotaurs are neutral or evil. Almost all are chaotic.

**Shibata** is a powerful minotaur cleric of Niveral, God of Secrets. **Canabulum** is a mighty minotaur wizard.

### ORCS

Orc myth contends that these creatures were originally birthed by an evil demon god, although some ancient texts claim they were actually created by an evil wizard. It is impossible to dispute, however, that the orcs who dwell in the area around Ptolus were modified and bred by the evil lord Ghul. The Toruk-Rul orcs are large, bestial, and ferocious. Their name means “closing fist,” and they typify everything that people think of when they say “orc.” The Sorn-Ulth (“bleeding breath”) orcs are dark skinned and smaller than the Toruk-Rul orcs, bred for evil magic and stealth. Both of these greater orc tribes live along the coast of the Whitewind Sea.

The orcs who call themselves Ornu-Nom (“howling axe”) never suffered Ghul’s manipulations. They dwell in the wilderness throughout

Palastan and Rhoth. The Ornu-Nom have a sense of savage nobility to them, but they remain the deadly enemies of humans and most other races.

A prominent Ornu-Nom orc chieftain named Radik (male orc barbarian8) lives just outside the city with his consort Narlu (female orc adept6) and his hunting tribe.

### TIEFLINGS

Just as asimars are found in Ptolus because of the Malkuth, tieflings live here primarily because of the **Fallen**. Many live and work among the demonic Fallen and the undead-loving Forsaken, while others abandoned these obvious ties to make lives for themselves. Individuals work as mercenaries, assassins (such as among the **Vai**), or clerics of evil gods. Most tieflings retain their ancestors’ evil outlook, and a great many are also chaotic.

Urasta, leader of the **Forsaken**, and Odsen Rom, warden of the **Prison**, are both tieflings. The members of the noble **Vladaam** family also are all tieflings.



## COSMOLOGY AND RELIGION

A god known to most simply as the Creator, but more specifically to some as Praemus, created the world and everything in it. He called it Praemal. This was no ordinary world, however. Praemus created it for a purpose: He devised it as a trap for evil beings: the Galchutt, known to some as the Lords of Chaos and to others as the Nathar'l'nacna.



Praemus knew the Galchutt would come to this world in its early moments to taint it with the seeds of evil and chaos. They brought with them foul artifacts and banes to sow across the surface of the newborn world to wreak havoc in coming millennia. What the Galchutt did not realize when they entered Praemal was that it was created with no exit.

Upon the **Vallis moon**, Praemus placed the soul of his new world, anchoring it there with seven enchanted golden chains. While they remained intact, the creator's magic would prevent any escape from the world. To guard this treasure, the god called forth seven solar angels. He bade these **Lords of the Seven Chains** to remain on guard to prevent the dissolution of the magical bonds.

Now creatures, objects, and energies from other planes could come to the world, but they could never leave. Like rats caught in a trap, the Galchutt were stuck.

Praemus knew, however, that the Galchutt would struggle within their prison, doing whatever they could to break out. No prison by itself is perfect, no matter how high or sturdy the walls. A prison needs guards. It needs wardens. So Praemus filled the world with life, and granted these creatures the sentience and free will to operate perfectly in that regard.

Of course, the wardens did not know they were guards of a prison. They only knew that, for their own continued survival, they had to protect the world from the forces of evil and destruction.

### ELDER GODS

The deities known now as the Elder Gods are the children of Praemus. Most of the time, they work in concert, and thus are worshipped collectively—when they are worshipped at all anymore. When the children of Praemus saw what their sire had done, they rebelled against him on behalf of his creation. It was unjust, they felt, to create the mortals of Praemal only to trap them unknowing in a prison with the most horrible creatures in all of existence. The War of the Gods began.

The Elder Gods warred with their father for many years in the early days of creation. While the gods were thus occupied, civilizations grew and prospered. And mortals encountered the Galchutt. Some were tempted away to help the Lords of Chaos, while others fought them.

Eventually the war in Heaven came to an end. Praemus and his children made peace. Working together, they helped mortal heroes prevent the Galchutt from destroying the soul of the world by corrupting the Lords of the Seven Chains guarding it on the Vallis moon with a magical virus.



*Symbol of the Elder Gods.*

*Vallis moon, page 40  
Lords of the Seven Chains,  
page 62*

*The so-called War of the Gods is said to have created some of the mountains, valleys, and other physical landmarks found in the world of Praemal. That active presence of the gods in the world also imbued various artifacts with their power.*

*Praemus created all living creatures at a place called the Mountain of Making. This mystical place still exists in the frozen northland of Nall. However, its magical protections allow no one to find it unless Praemus wants it found (or in other extraordinary circumstances).*

*Elder Brood, PT6: page 634  
Zaug, PT6: page 633*



*Rhodintor, PT6: page 628  
Chaositech, PT6: page 566*

*Seven Jewels of Parnaith,  
PT9: page 526*

***The Night of Dissolution**  
Upon the return of the Vallis moon, the Lords of Chaos will awaken, the Galchutt's followers know. With the magical moon high in the sky, the Galchutt will marshall their evil forces and finally dissolve the Seven Chains, destroy the soul of the world, and lay waste to Praemal. This is what is known as "the Night of Dissolution"—and it may be nearer than anyone supposes.*

When, in their vengeance, the Galchutt rent the veil between life and death to snuff out all that lived, the gods split off a portion of the Vallis moon, and those same legendary heroes used it to seal the fissure. In so doing, they sent the Vallis moon—and the soul of the world it guarded—hurtling away from the Praemal, out of the reach of the Galchutt.

With the world now safe, the Elder Gods and Praemus struck a deal. Only the Creator has the power to allow creatures to leave the world, and then only if he himself is within the plane. The gods all agreed to depart Praemal together. Before leaving, however, the children of Praemus left behind a secret legacy: a hidden vision that contained the secret of subverting this world-prison by ridding Praemal of the Galchutt. You see, the Elder Gods had never stopped believing it was wrong to trap innocent people alongside the epitome of evil. Their plan embodied in the vision required the return of the Vallis moon, and so it would have to wait—for when the Vallis moon returned, the Galchutt would surely attempt to destroy the world again, and every living thing in it. And without the Elder Gods to stop them, how could they fail? (See “Calista, the Dreaming Stone, and the Cask of Frozen Dreams” on page 578 of PT6 for more details on the secret plan of the Elder Gods.)

Interestingly enough, Praemus knew what his children had done. In fact, he permitted it—perhaps on some level he agreed with them. He even went a step further and created a legacy of his own. In secret, Praemus left behind a conduit so he could continue to observe and communicate with his creation, even transfer some of his own power to his wardens from time to time. He called this conduit Esh (see the “The **Seven Jewels of Parnaith**” in the Jabel Shammar chapter of PT9).

## THE GALCHUTT

Even before the world existed, the Galchutt *were*. The foulest of demons, the darkest of gods, these beings were masters of destruction, chaos, and oblivion. They had no interest in the small concerns of lesser demons, such as pain, misery, temptation, lust, and so on. They sought the apocalyptic end of all that is, everything beyond the boundaries of Praemal. Of all worlds that exist, all worlds that will exist, and all the spaces in between.

The Lords of Chaos destroyed one world after another, their foul touch causing entire planes to crumble. Finally, the god Praemus saw that one day they would succeed at destroying all of creation. So he forged a plan. He crafted a world as hardy as he could fashion, and then waited for the Galchutt to appear. This world, Praemal, was in fact a trap.

The Lords of Chaos found themselves caged in this prison-disguised-as-a-mortal-world—and they were not pleased. Kept from the wanton destruction and multiversal corruption they desired, they focused their energies on trying to slip the bonds that trapped them here and kept this world from being destroyed by their formidable power. First, the Galchutt sought to corrupt the wardens of their new prison. To a few, they granted great personal power. These they named the **Vested of the Galchutt**, for they were invested with the Lords of Chaos’ own essence. These first Vested were called Baalhazor, Gorgoth-Lol, Mrathrach, Thoggidrum, and Vladaam. With their help, the Galchutt learned of the Seven Chains that held the soul of the world upon the Vallis moon. They sought the destruction of the chains but were thwarted.

After the disappearance of the Vallis moon, the Galchutt turned on each other for a time, which led to great and evil wars. During this period, the Galchutt moved away from destruction and toward creation. Some spawned new creatures, called the **Elder Brood**. Ranking just above them were the **zaug**, who eventually rebelled and struck out on their own. Some of the Galchutt tried to summon demons to the world, and when they did not come in the vast quantities they desired (the new rulers in Hell who supplanted the absent Galchutt forbade it), they created “earthbound” demons called the **rhodintor**. Still other Galchutt developed a new craft called **chaositech** to create devices powered by chaos and corruption.

Eventually, the Galchutt decided they could do nothing to escape until the Vallis moon returned. So they crawled into hidden holes and seeped

## RUNEBEARERS

In ancient times, before history books were written—indeed, before there was any writing at all—many people were born with runes upon their faces or hands. In those days, about one person in four was a so-called “runebearer” and thus enjoyed some intangible quality that set him or her apart from others. Each rune hinted at the bearer’s talent: skill with arms, with arcane magic, with divine magic, and so on. All the great mythic heroes were runebearers.

Without the Vallis moon, however, fewer and fewer runebearers were born, until one day they were gone completely. Today, however, a small handful of children are once again born with the ancient marks. Many see this as a presage that the Vallis moon is returning. And they are correct. (See PT6, “Campaign Advice.”)



The major Galchutt, clockwise from upper left: Abthoth, Dhar Rhyth, Kihomenethoth, and Shallamoth Kindred.

Before coming to Praemal—prior to being ensnared by its bonds—the Galchutt were much more powerful than they are now. Due to the mighty magic woven throughout the very fabric of the world, their present power is limited. Thus they must come up with schemes and plots to escape, rather than simply using brute force.

For more on the secret dwelling place of the sleeping Lords of Chaos, see “Caverns of the Galchutt” in PT7: page 453.

*Gates of Delirium, PT9: page 499*

Eslathagos Malkith, page 75. For more about the Dread One's Path, see The Banewarrens, Chapter 10. For more on the antithesis stone, see the Banes Appendix of that book.



You can find descriptions for some of the Galchutt in “Monsters” in PT6 and for others in the separate Chaositech sourcebook.

down deep into the bowels of the earth to sleep near a fortress they had made called the Black Spike. Unbeknownst to virtually everyone, this is the location of modern-day Ptolus—although it is no coincidence. Instead, it is all a part of their diabolical plan.

### PRAEMAL AS A PRISON PLANE

No one can leave the world that Praemus created. Its boundaries include portions of the plane known as the Ethereal Sea—the portions that occupy the same metaphysical space that Praemal occupies. Essentially, creatures and objects can become ethereal, but they cannot use the Ethereal Plane to leave Praemal. No amount of magic can do that—and no special loopholes exist.

This means that the spells *astral projection* and *plane shift*, as well as anything like them, do not function. It also means that spells like *banishment* (or similar effects, such as those found in *holy word*) do not send creatures away from the plane involuntarily, they only stun affected targets for 1d6 rounds. Spells that summon creatures, like *summon monster*, work normally because the summoned creatures don't truly, physically come here, so they can disappear at the end of the spell. Spells that *call* otherplanar entities, however, are another matter. They exist, but are rarely used. The call is rarely heeded and, when it is, the called creature usually doesn't know that it can never leave again. Casters who make such calls find themselves with a particularly irate outsider on their hands—one with all the time in the world to mete out its revenge. Some self-sacrific-

ing being may heed the call willingly: usually a celestial who sees that the caster is in real need or requires someone to perform a truly vital task (see “The Malkuth” on page 63).

Lastly, it is not uncommon for extremely powerful casters to create gates that draw energy or creatures into the plane, like Eslathagos Malkith's *Gates of Delirium*. These gates are always one-way, of course.

There are exceptions to the prohibition against leaving, after a fashion. **Eslathagos Malkith** created something called the Dread One's Path, for example, which allowed him to pierce the veil around the plane in his search for an artifact called the *antithesis stone*. Even this was imperfect, however, as all the Path really did was extend this plane out into other planes—he never really left it.

In theory, other structures such as the Dread One's Path could exist, provided they were backed up by fantastic sources of power. The idea of reaching out into the multiverse to bring something back, or even expanding the plane's interdimensional area, is not inconceivable. Yet these methods still do not provide escape. If there were a means of escape, the Galchutt would have discovered it and used it by now.

The only instance of a creature actually being able to leave the plane occurred very early in the world's history. This being, the Gilded Angel, was sent by a higher power—higher than Praemus—to judge the god's creation and ensure that it was good and proper. The angel managed to leave either by force of her own power, that of the

*Night of Dissolution, page 60*

***There's Chaos, and  
Then There's Chaos***

*Long ago, "chaos" just meant the opposite of order. At its best, it represented freedom and individuality; at its worst, disharmony and destruction.*

*To most people today, references to "chaos" suggest only its darker side. The Cults of Chaos, for example, are uniformly evil as well as chaotic.*

*"Chaotic good" and "Chaotic neutral" are still perfectly fine alignment choices, but in actual conversation, no one would be likely to use those terms.*

*The Lords of the Seven Chains, all solars (below), are Ambriel, Jeduthon, Machidiel, Matikon, Shamdan, Thel, and Zuriel.*

power she served, or perhaps through some special contingency Praemus set up at the very beginning. That early on, the Galchutt were too slow to take advantage of the angel's escape in some way, although they did try to murder her while she was here, hoping to bring negative judgment upon Praemus and his creation and, as a consequence, see them both destroyed.

**BREAKING OUT OF THE PRISON**

The crux of the magic that prevents exit from this plane is represented metaphysically by seven golden chains of mystical energy. These chains manifest on the moon of magic, called Vallis. These Seven Chains bind together a force known as the "soul of the world." To break out of the prison, one must destroy the prison, and the only way to accomplish that is to break the Seven Chains and destroy the soul of the world.

Each chain, however, is protected by a celestial lord—a solar angel. Collectively, these angels are called the Lords of the Seven Chains.

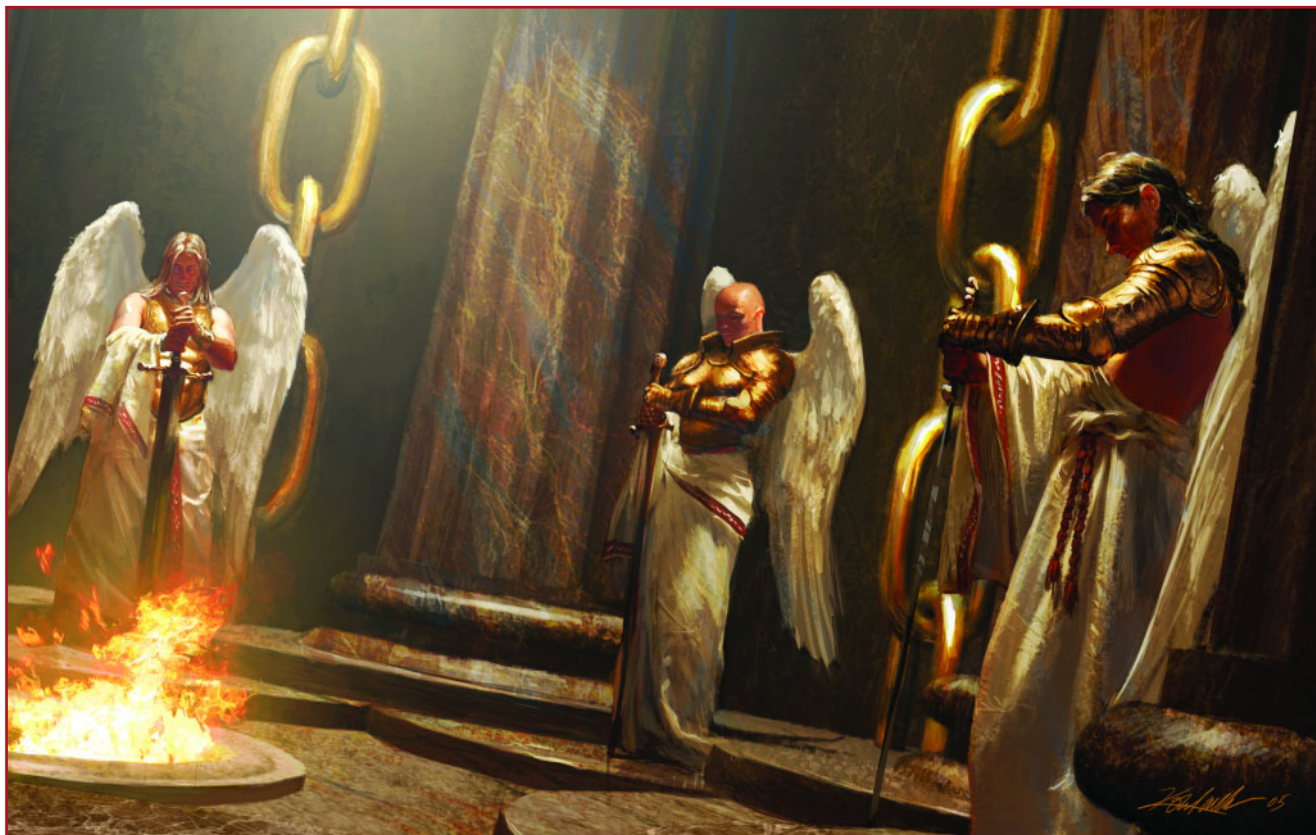
And of course, in order for one to reach the Citadel of the Seven Chains at all, the Vallis moon must once again hang in the skies above the world, floating invisibly and providing the world with magic as it did in the early days of creation. But this moon has been gone for more than ten thousand years. Virtually everyone has forgotten that it exists. Except for the

Galchutt—they never forget. And its return shall herald the **Night of Dissolution**, when the Galchutt break the chains holding this prison shut around them.

**HELL WITHOUT ITS MASTERS**

In their capacity as the lords of evil, the Galchutt once ruled over the hellish planes. When they left and did not return, the dark realms were thrown into chaos. In order to quell the upheaval, two of the children of Praemus named Nathrak and Dien gave birth to a divine child. But as it was being born, they thrust its essence out of the boundaries of the plane—a task only a being of their power could accomplish, and even then only with the help of their own father, Praemus. It was an ordeal that only a divine being could survive.

This child, born as a fully formed adult, was called Raguel. His god-parents placed him in the Hellish realms to rule over the demons. Raguel, not a demon himself nor even an inherently evil being, found this task quite onerous. Further, having never known his parents, he failed to truly comprehend his role. He immediately appointed lieutenants and magistrates from among the demonic hordes to whom he could delegate most of his duties. Thus, new lords of evil rose to take the place of the old. Demons with names like Demogorgon and Orcus reigned in Hell now. Raguel kept to himself for the most part, leaving the minions of



## DEMONS AND DEVILS

In Ptolus, only the most pedantic of sages makes a distinction between demons and devils. These beings, while different in their outlooks (demons being chaotic and devils lawful), remain wholly evil. They may have originated in different planes, but once they find themselves stuck in this world, those distinctions mean little. They work together with an acceptable amount of betrayal and backstabbing to seek escape—ultimately the goal of their ancient masters, the Galchutt, as well. Thus, even some devils work for the “forces of chaos.”

Put simply, the distinctions that some campaigns place on these beings do not matter here. Evil or chaotic, they’re all called demons. The evil planes are all lumped together as “Hell.” Because the inhabitants of Praemal cannot leave, their understanding of other planes is greatly limited and somewhat simplistic. Only the very wisest mages or sages who specialize in esoteric lore might ever learn the difference. And in the end, from the point of view of this world’s inhabitants, the differences are meaningless.

darkness to their own devices, but always maintaining order among his appointed magistrates and keeping the demonic hordes from invading mortal worlds or other overtly destructive acts.

This created an interesting situation. The new demonic magistrates liked their positions, so they did not want the Galchutt freed. Thus, when the Galchutt attempted to summon enough demons into the world to make it literally burst from within, the new lords of evil forbade it. Some demons came, to be sure, but not nearly as many as the Galchutt wanted. This only made the Lords of Chaos seethe with even greater anger and curse the metaphysical walls of their prison all the more. (In fact, they began creating their own native, earthbound demons. See “rhodintor” in the “Monsters” chapter of PT6.)

Still, because they can never leave, there is no real shortage of demons on Praemal. In fact, if you’re a Ptolus resident, you probably think of demons as quite commonplace. This is because most demons in the world live in the **Dark Reliquary** of the Necropolis or around Ptolus somewhere—drawn there by the power of the sleeping Galchutt.

## THE YOUNG DEMONS

Metaphysically speaking, the demons who dwell on Praemal are quite young, in that they were

spawned after the Galchutt’s imprisonment, when Raguel ruled in Hell. (The Galchutt and their kind are “old demons.” No old demon from the Galchutt’s time would enter into the trap to which their old masters had fallen victim.) The young demons call themselves the **Fallen**.

The leader of the young demons in this world is none other than Raguel, onetime ruler of Hell. Growing ever more dissatisfied with his lot and not understanding why his parents would consign him to Hell for all eternity, he left. Raguel came to Praemal seeking his parents, but found them gone. Now the god does not know what to do. Trapped here with the rest of the young demons, should he attempt to help the Galchutt and destroy the world to gain his own freedom, or should he help protect the world created by his grandfather and nurtured by his parents?

## THE MALKUTH

The Malkuth are the Fallen’s opposite number: angels and celestials who have come to the world willingly, even knowing they could never leave, in order to perform some vital task. A small handful are related to the Lords of the Seven Chains, solars who willingly devoted themselves to the task Praemus asked of them. These are beings of supreme duty and sacrifice, and their legacy inspires younger angels to do likewise if the need is great. Once they have performed their task in the world, the Malkuth gather in Ptolus, as it is clear that this city is where the battle lines are being drawn. They live in a place called the **Pale Tower**. See Oldtown in PT5 for more information.

## THE ETHEREAL SEA AND ETHEREAL ISLANDS

Planar lore contends that a single plane, the Ethereal, occupies the same metaphysical space as all other planes, and thus joins them all together. However, this is not true of the world of Praemal. Those in this world have access only to the portion of the Ethereal that directly intersects with the material plane their world occupies. In other words, Praemal intersects with the Ethereal, but one cannot pass from such intersection points into portions of the Ethereal that intersect with another world.

In Praemal, the portion of the Ethereal that one can reach is called the Ethereal Sea. To most, it seems like either an infinite expanse of grey mists or a void of darkness punctuated by distant swirling colors. But some perceive it as a literal sea, with a liquidlike substance that one can swim in or sail upon in a magical craft. It is interesting that the Ethereal Sea takes on such different qualities at different times for different people,



*The Malkuth, PT3: page 129  
The Fallen, PT3: page 110*

## DM TIPS

*Obviously, since Praemal is a “world of no return,” the difference between summoning and calling is huge. Summoned creatures from other planes aren’t physically here, so they disappear when slain or when their time is up. Called creatures, however, physically come to this plane and can never leave. This makes spells like planar ally or planar binding much harder to use, because convincing a creature to come here means convincing it to leave its planar home forever. Even when its task is done, it must dwell permanently in this world.*

*The Pale Tower, PT5: page 329*

*Dark Reliquary, PT4: page 238*



*The ancient tribes of Palastan knew the Ethereal Sea as “The Goodland.”*

*The Elder Elves called the Ethereal Sea the Everwood. Rather than seeing it as an ocean with islands, they saw it as an endless forest of silver trees punctuated with clearings.*

*The Quaen, PT3: page 131  
Seven Jewels of Parnaith,  
PT9: page 526*



*When Delian Von Tessel was Emperor of both the secular and religious aspects of his domain, he often relegated religious matters to his wife, Addares, a notably spiritual woman.*

*The Grand Cathedral in Tarsis serves as the headquarters of the Church of Lothian, despite the fact that the Emperor of the Church has resided in Ptolus for some years now.*

although individuals in a group always perceive it the same way. On the rare occasion that one encounters fellow ethereal travelers, they perceive it the same way.

Floating about this limitless expanse are solid masses of ether, the intangible stuff of the plane somehow solidified to resemble normal matter. These masses, called Ethereal Islands, are sometimes inhabited. Ethereal Islands are always small and self-contained (in other words, finite). They have their own governing laws and conditions. Many seem to have been created by spontaneously congealing ether. A few were crafted intentionally by powerful magic. The former all have the characteristics of islands (bits of “land” surrounded by an “ocean”), but the latter only occasionally do; more often they seem like entire worlds unto themselves. These are commonly called half-worlds.

The **Quaan** is an example of a half-world, while the **Seven Jewels of Parnaith** are examples of natural Ethereal Islands—albeit ones shaped for specific purposes.

Inhabitants of Ethereal Islands either come from Praemal or else are outsiders now trapped in Praemal. The Ethereal Sea has no known native inhabitants. Even creatures that rely on the Ethereal or spend great amounts of time there, such as phase spiders or ethereal marauders, originated in the normal physical world.

## TWO KINDS OF RELIGION

The two kinds of religion presented here are very different. On the one hand, the Church of Lothian is monolithic, powerful, widespread, and fairly thoroughly described. On the other hand, the various other religions are myriad, extremely specific (some intentionally a little off-the-wall), and only sparsely detailed.

As the DM, you can choose which type of religion you want to focus on, if any, in your campaign. You also can direct your players to the type most appropriate to their needs. Players who want to explore their religion in depth (particularly those running clerics or paladins) probably should choose to worship Lothian, while those who don’t care about that level of detail might want to stay out of something so campaign-centric. Of course, regardless of such concerns, some players will find themselves drawn toward the Church of Lothian because of its temporal power, while others will be turned away from being a part of “the establishment.”

## RELIGION IN PTOLUS

Religion, like so many things in Ptolus, is based around a set of apparent contradictions. On the one hand, Ptolus is a part of an Empire that has long been a true monotheistic culture centered around the worship of Lothian. On the other hand, the world around Ptolus is very old and full of many different cultures, each with its own gods. In fact, theologically speaking, Praemal has seen successive generations of gods, with ancient “elder gods” no longer worshipped or even—in many cases—remembered.

In over ten thousand years, there has been time for many new gods and faiths to rise and, in some cases, fall—more than any one person can track. The cosmopolitan meeting of all these cultures and various religious faiths in Ptolus has created an atmosphere where people take polytheism to new extremes.

When the Imperial Census came to Ptolus in 633 1A, the administrator wrote this in his journal:

*“The number of outlandish, unnerving, unknown (mayhap unknowable) gods that gazed down upon me from graven images and idols atop temple doorways and pagan shrines assaulted my very sense of being. Most of these deities are so minor that they watched over only small aspects of life, like laughter, fire, sex, or mathematics. Each possessed its own bizarre appearance, its own unique dogma, ritual, and sacraments. Has anyone ever cataloged them all? Could one? It would seem that as soon as it was done, a thousand new gods would spring up, unbidden, into the hearts of men and into this place they call ‘the Street of a Million Gods.’ It is almost as if, as soon as a person supposes a god, it exists and becomes available for adulation. A worse place I cannot conceive.”*

## THE CHURCH OF LOTHIAN

The Church of Lothian, often just called “the Church,” has been inextricably entwined with the Empire of Tarsis for as long as the Empire has existed. When Delian Von Tessel was crowned Emperor and ascended the Lion-Guarded Throne in Tarsis, the act granted him both secular dominion over the Empire and spiritual leadership of the Church. Even when the Emperor and Emperor of the Church split into two different positions (and thus lineages), Lothianism remained the official religion of the Empire.

The Church of Lothian is based around a martyred saint named Lothian who rose from his own grave and ascended into Heaven, becoming the most powerful of the gods, according to his followers. In fact, the harshest of



Lothian doctrines maintains that Lothian discovered that all other beings claiming to be gods were actually demons in disguise; this belief teaches that he rose again to bring order to the previously disordered, godless universe.

Throughout the first five centuries of the Empire, in fact, other religions were outlawed. People could practice their “pagan” faiths only in secret or in remote areas. However, in recent years, as the power of the Empire has waned, so too has the influence of the Church. Other religions are now permitted, and newer, more liberal doctrines allow that not *all* the other gods are demons. Some are in fact true deities—albeit lesser gods than Lothian.

### CHURCH HIERARCHY

Like so many Prustan organizations, the Church has a strict structure. It is set up like the Empire’s hierarchy, with an Emperor, a Prince, and a council of accomplished elders called archbishops. From there, each major community in the Empire looks to a bishop who operates out of a cathedral. The bishop usually consults directly with the community’s Commissar or local governor and wields a great deal of influence and power. Every cathedral has a dozen or more satellite churches, each managed by a high priest who answers to the bishop. One normally finds these satellite churches in surrounding settlements, but large cities sometimes have a handful of community churches in addition to the cathedral.

Other than Holy Emperor, Holy Prince, archbishop (or elder), and bishop, priests of Lothian

have three ranks. The aforementioned high priest is a special rank indicating charge of a church—a building, a congregation, and probably a number of attached priests. Clerics who are not high priests are either acolytes or curates, the latter being a rank of distinction earned through time and accomplishment. The faithful often address acolytes and curates as “Brother” or “Sister.”

A further distinction is that all priests of Lothian are either *bespoken priests* or *itinerant priests*. Bespoken priests are assigned official duties and belong to a specific congregation or organization. Itinerant priests have no specific role within the church hierarchy other than to perform good works, obey Lothian’s will, and spread the word of Lothian (“adventuring” clerics are virtually always itinerant priests). Itinerant priests function as missionaries, wandering caregivers, or spiritual consultants tied to another organization. For example, a number of itinerant priests work among the **Keepers of the Veil** as healers, support troops, and even accountants and administrators. There is also the title *priest errant*, which is a cleric who still has spellcasting ability but has violated Church law. Such priests wield no authority (secular or spiritual), but their faith and power still allow them some respect.

### SECULAR AND HOLY EMPIRE

Since the Church is tied directly to the Imperial government, all official members of the Church hierarchy are also Imperial officials. This not only affords them a **special status under the law**, but it

**Lothian’s Law vs. Church Law**  
On rare occasions, the Church recognizes that someone can violate Church law without actually committing a crime against Lothian. For example, a curate might violate a high priest’s direct order but still retain his spellcasting abilities. Clearly, Lothian continues to reward and appreciate the curate’s faith, even if he has violated the temporal authority of the Church hierarchy. In such an instance, the curate might be rebuked but not defrocked—for who are the Church authorities to challenge what is obviously Lothian’s will? At worst, he could be removed from Church hierarchy altogether to become a priest errant. Far rarer is the case where a lay person might violate Church law but not contravene Lothian’s will. For all intents and purposes, to nonclergy, Church law is Lothian’s law.



*Keepers of the Veil, PT3: page 119*

*In Ptolus, Lothianism accounts for about 60 percent of the city’s religious belief.*

*See “Crime and the Law” in PT6, starting on page 551.*





*Adlam Theobold, archbishop of Lothian in Ptolus, never gets involved with politics and rarely interacts with either the bishop, the Emperor, or the Prince of the Church. Instead, he focuses on caring for his flock. For more on him, see PT5: page 377.*

*The Prince of the Church holds an honorary position in the Tribunal of the City Council.*

*The current prince, Kirian Ylestos, often neglects this duty, however—much to the chagrin of his father.*



*St. Valien's Cathedral,*

*PT5: page 376*

*Holy Palace, PT5: page 292*

*St. Gustav's Chapel,*

*PT4: page 219*

*Lothian grants the following domains to his clerics: Good, Law, Protection, and Sun. His clerics normally wear white and blue, although on high holy days they wear golden garments. Lothian's favored weapon is the longsword and his holy symbol is the ankh crucifix.*

grants them some measure of authority. A cleric or paladin falls somewhere between an Imperial soldier and an Imperial captain in terms of rank—not unlike the level of most low-ranking Imperial bureaucrats, such as an inspector. A cleric of Lothian can make a request of an Imperial soldier and expect it to be granted. Even private citizens are required by law to carry out the simple, short-term orders of clerics of Lothian.

Most clerics are careful not to abuse this power, else they be reprimanded by their superiors in the Church hierarchy. And as long as they do not abuse it, the secular Empire does not burden them with onerous Imperial duties and responsibilities to go along with this authority.

### THE CHURCH IN PTOLUS

Of all large cities in the Empire, Ptolus is probably the least devoted to Lothian, a fact made all the more ironic because this has become the traditional home of the Prince of the Church. Since 657 IA, the heir apparent to the Holy Throne has lived in Ptolus, with the idea that the heir should not live in the same city as the current Emperor of the Church. However, since the sacking of Tarsis by barbarians in 710, the Holy Emperor, Rehoboth, has lived with his son in Ptolus. Although Rehoboth's stay has been officially declared a "visit," he has now dwelled in Ptolus for eleven years.

Ptolus has a bishop—a man named Nireus Pard (human male cleric<sup>12</sup>)—but he does not enjoy the power of most bishops in a city the size of Ptolus. In fact, he has almost no power at all. His traditional roles are filled instead by the Prince of the Church and the archbishop, Adlam Theobold (male human cleric<sup>20</sup>). And now, with the Holy Emperor himself living in Ptolus, the bishop is virtually ignored, except for issues dealing directly with **St. Valien's Cathedral**. And even St. Valien's prominence comes into question when the temple within the **Holy Palace** is becoming a more "important" church than the cathedral; when the city's powerful and influential elite need to visit a Lothianite church for any reason, they go to the Holy Palace more often than St. Valien's.

In addition to St. Valien's Cathedral, Ptolus has various satellite churches: **St. Gustav's Chapel** at Delver's Square in Midtown, Daykeeper's Chapel in Midtown, St. Daris' Church in the Guildsman District, Church of the Lawgiver in the North Market, Church of Lothian the Redeemer in Oldtown, St. Chausle's Chapel in the South Market, and the Chapel of St. Thessina in Rivergate. With the temple inside the Holy Palace, that makes nine churches altogether.

### CHURCH HISTORY

Obviously, it all begins with a man named Lothian. Lothian was seemingly a simple man, a wanderer. At that time, folk in his homeland of Prust worshipped a god of life called Castain. His clergy was powerful and held great influence in the land. Lothian, however, preached that Castain was no god at all, and certainly no deity of life. Instead, he told the people, Castain was a demon posing as a god, and his priests were devil worshippers more concerned with political power than with truth. As he wandered and preached, Lothian worked great miracles and, in time, revealed that he knew whereof he spoke because he, himself, was on his way to becoming a god.

Not surprisingly, none of these things pleased the clerics of Castain. Eventually, with the blessing of the King of Prust, the clerics captured and crucified Lothian on the symbol of their god, the ankh. On that day, a great earthquake shook the land and mighty waves engulfed the shores.

These cataclysms killed more than a thousand people, including the King and most of the high-ranking clergy of Castain. When they were over, Lothian had returned to the world, alive but not alive—a martyred god risen of his own power.

The Kingdom of Prust collapsed that day, although the peninsula where it once lay still bears its name.

Lothian continued to wander and perform miracles, only now those he spoke to bowed down in worship. The engine of

Castain's church aligned itself with the adoration of Lothian, the true god. Lothian's new clerics took the symbol of the false god Castain and added Lothian's crucified form to it to show the lengths to which he would go to achieve his victory. Never mind that the new church of Lothian used much the same hierarchy, priesthood, temples, and even dogma as in the old church of the "false" Castain.

Although the catastrophes that surrounded Lothian's demise certainly broke the kingdom, the Prust remained strong. Eventually, they pushed north and west to the city of Tarsis, and not long after founded an Empire that continues to this day. For more information on the creation of the Empire of Tarsis, see the "History" chapter.

After a time spent walking the world, Lothian took his seat in Heaven as the one true god, according to his early followers. His very presence there revealed to his worshippers the falsehood of all other gods. Thus, during the height of the Empire, the Church applied Lothian's statements regarding Castain to all other gods, claiming that only Lothian was a true deity. Furthermore, not



**THE SAINTS OF LOTHIAN**

In the first days of Lothian’s church, the god commanded a number of extremely devout, extremely influential followers. Early Emperors of the Church granted these people sainthood posthumously. The rituals of granting sainthood are very complex but, as a result of them, the spirits of the saints possess special powers channeled from Lothian himself. Faithful worshippers can pray to the saints and are sometimes answered with aid or a vision. The saints are said to watch over the Holy Emperor, his family, and other powerful clerics of Lothian. Relics left over from the lives of the saints—from objects they used to portions of their bodies—are powerful holy talismans. Most of these relics remain in Tarsis, although the Hammer of St. Daris is kept in the Holy Palace in Ptolus. Many other relics have been stolen or lost. According to the *Ninth Holy Book of Lothian*, the current list of saints includes the following:

Saint	Title	Area of Influence
St. Chausle	Guardian of the Temple	Churches, gatherings
St. Colosom	Keeper of the Dominion	Animals, farms
St. Daris	The Swift Avenger	Justice
St. Dayra	Giver of Mercy	Children, mothers, the poor
St. Feldin	The Faultless Rock of Faith	Warriors, knights, defenders of all sorts
St. Gustav	Protector of the Just	Protection of the innocent and the helpless
St. Thessina	The Provider	Food, necessities
St. Valien	The Hands of the Host	Clerics, church hierarchy, the Holy Emperor
St. Yessid	The Judge	Punishment of sins, authority figures

only were worshippers of other gods the servants of devils, but those who practiced the arts of magic (or were born with such skills) consorted with the legions of Hell and should be eliminated. The Edict of Devilry in 560 IA made all use of arcane magic illegal. The reverence of gods besides Lothian technically had always been illegal in the Empire, and now that law also saw strict enforcement. During this time, called the Days of Blood, Church inquisitors and soldiers murdered thousands in the name of stamping out diabolism.

Almost one hundred years later, the Edict of Devilry was repealed. The harsh teaching that all other gods are demons has softened in recent years, particularly among the more liberal, urban congregations, but some remote parishes still preach this doctrine.

**ORDER OF THE DAWN**

Originally formed to be the Holy Emperor’s royal guard, the Order of the Dawn has grown to become the martial arm of the Church, serving congregations throughout the Empire and protecting the faithful from all manner of darkness and danger. The core members of the knighthood are paladins, although such support personnel as clerics, fighters, and even wizards play other roles.

For the most part, the Order of the Dawn is a defensive knighthood, there to protect the temples, holdings, and interests of the Church. Only occasionally are they sent on quests, and then only with the direct blessing of the Holy Emperor or

Prince. In Ptolus, one finds the Knights almost exclusively in the Holy Palace and St. Valien’s Cathedral.

Sir Kabel Dathimol (male human paladin16), leader of the order locally, is also one of the Commissar’s **Twelve Commanders**. He operates out of the Holy Palace, where the Knights are barracks. In Ptolus, there are about fifty Knights, with eight on duty at St. Valien’s at any given time. The order’s Imperial head in Tarsis and Lothian’s mightiest paladin is named Tagel Unergart.

**ORDER OF DAYRA**

The Order of Dayra, sometimes called the Sisterhood of Dayra, is an all-female order dedicated to tending the sick, clothing the poor, and generally helping the helpless. They run soup kitchens and charitable services throughout the Empire and in particular manage orphanages—over the years, they have become more and more focused on the well-being of children.

The children in the orphanages of the Sisterhood are not all actual orphans. People—particularly the very poor—sometimes sell one of their children to the Church for about 50 gp (almost a year’s wages for a laborer). These children, called *oblates*, are raised to become clerics, paladins, or other servants of the Church. A great many people associated with the Church started as oblates, and thus have a special affection for the Order of Dayra, looking upon the sisters as mother figures.

The sisters are celibate clerics or paladins who live in convents, usually attached to an orphanage and oftentimes a school.

*Lothian is not a creator god. In fact, the dogma of Lothian teaches that to ask questions about the origins of the world is fruitless and, if dwelled upon, evil.*



*The Order of the Dawn symbol*

*Twelve Commanders, PT4: page 148*

**Lothianite Weapons**

*These notable weapons are meant to be wielded by the devout of Lothian.*

*Ankh of Justice: This +2 lawful greatsword has an ankh-shaped hilt. Once, and only once, it can bring the wielder back to life as with a true resurrection spell.*

*The wielder need only be holding the sword when he dies in order for the resurrection to take place. It happens immediately.*

*Strong evocation; CL 17th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, order’s wrath, true resurrection; Price 40,000 gp*

*Mara’s Mace: This +1 heavy mace adds +2 to the Difficulty Class of all divine spells cast by the wielder.*

*Moderate transmutation; CL 7th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, imbue with spell ability; Price 58,312 gp*

**Sacraments**

*Every temple service includes the following Sacraments of Lothian:*

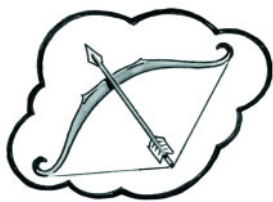
*Air: Burning incense represents the breath of Lothian and the efforts of his followers to do good in his name.*

*Earth: A stone or a bag of dirt represents the body of Lothian and his sacrifice for truth.*

*Fire: A burning candle or brazier represents the soul of Lothian and the fires of life, emotion, and action.*

*Water: A flask or bowl of water represents the blood of Lothian and the restoration of all injustice.*

*Jabel Shammar history, PT9: page 501  
Cults of Chaos, page 71  
Chaositech, PT6: page 566*



*Symbol of Ahaar*



*Symbol of Danace*

**THE CONCILIATORS**

The Days of Blood are, for the most part, a time of shame for the modern Church. However, within the hierarchy are those who still believe in the principles of the Edict of Deviltry and still see in modern society much evil that must be suppressed. Most of these clergy have found their way into the Conciliators. This somewhat ironically named branch of the Church formed in order to enforce the Edict of Deviltry—these were the inquisitors who put many wizards, sorcerers, “heathen” clerics, and others to the sword in the name of Lothian, often torturing confessions and sometimes repentance out of them. They “made peace,” as the order’s name implies, by rooting out and destroying any who would oppose the Church. Conciliation by force.

Today, the Conciliators are not nearly so bloodthirsty. Most who join the order are some of the more reactionary members of the clergy, to be sure, but they no longer hunt arcane spellcasters or other enemies of the Church to place on the torturer’s wheel or burn at the stake. Their fervent devotion to the goodness of Lothian and the holiness of the Church makes them adamant hunters of evil, however, seeking in particular to root out darkness that slithers too close to the light. In Ptolus, that means one thing, although it is something of a secret.

Since its creation, the Church has been keenly aware of the history of the Ptolus region. (In fact, it opposed the founding of the city.) Somewhere in the Grand Cathedral Library in Tarsis lie ancient tomes that speak of primordial history. The Church not only knows the full history of **Jabel Shammar** but has at least some clues regarding the existence (and general whereabouts) of the Galchutt. It is the Conciliators, then, who lead the effort to root out the **Cults of Chaos** and to destroy all **chaositech** they find. On orders from on high, they also oppose any exploration of the areas beneath the city, as they fear that delvers will find more chaositech and stir up more ancient evils.

**NEW GODS**

There is one religion, and there are a thousand. Beyond the Church of Lothian, there are myriad gods, some newer, many older. Collectively, they are called the New Gods, but only when doing so in contrast to the Elder Gods. Aside from a few throwbacks (the Knights of the Golden Cross among them), no one reveres the Elder Gods today. More than any other city, Ptolus has become a gathering of these different religions. See the Temple District in PT5 for more information.

The New Gods did not create the world, nor did they create much of anything in it. They have no existence beyond the world itself. This sug-

gests that the so-called “New Gods” are less the truly metaphysical, conceptual beings that the term “god” evokes, but instead just very powerful individuals. But ultimately, the difference seems purely academic.

Like everyone else, the gods are trapped in this world. However, none of them (or at least very, very few of them) actually live on the world of Praemal. Instead, they dwell in the heavens (the physical heavens—the sky far above the world) or in the Ethereal Sea. The only exception to this statement are the demon gods, actually powerful demon princes and the like who dwell still in Hell.

Some gods worshipped in or near Ptolus include the following (an asterisk [\*] refers to a new domain defined in “Magic” in PT6):

**Ahaar, Lord of the Air (CG).** Air, Good, Protection. An elemental sky god of some popularity.

**Aldinach, Goddess of the Moons (NG).** Good, Future\*, Sleep\*. Aldinach provides insight into the future on full-moon nights. Her worship is all but forgotten today.

**Ardaen, Dead God of Light (NG).** N/A. Once a powerful elven god of light, Ardaen is dead, tricked and slain by evil gods (including Gorgoth-Lol).

**Asche, God of Cities (N).** Civilization\*, Knowledge, Protection. A major god of civilization and sophisticated living.

**Baalhazor, Demon God of Technology (CE).** Chaos, Evil, Technology\*. Originally one of the “Vested of the Galchutt,” this minor deity/demon lord is the lord of chaositech.

**Blurrah, Goddess of Comfort in Sadness (CG).** Good, Protection, Sun. A very minor goddess turned to occasionally but rarely attracting lifetime followers.

**Castain (LG).** Healing, Law, Protection. Old Prustan deity of life, supplanted by Lothian. No longer worshipped.

**Celestan, Lord of the Silver Moon (NG).** Earth, Good, Protection. Celestan is the main elven deity. Ithildin, ithilnaut, and ithilirid (moonsilver) are said to all be his gifts to his people.

**Charlathan, God/Goddess of Retribution and Reward (CN).** Chaos, Protection, War. This capricious god has few worshippers today. Offering alternatively banes and boons, the deity has both male and female aspects at different times.

**Danace, Master of the Thousand Pains (LE).** Evil, Trickery. A god of torture, sadism, and masochism.

**The Demon Gods (Demogorgon, Orcus, countless others; CE).** Chaos, Destruction, Evil. This is a catch-all for all the many powerful demons (which may or may not be true gods) worshipped in small numbers throughout the lands.

**Destor (CE).** Chaos, Evil, Luck. A god of cruel fate who sends the ill fortune that should befall his worshippers onto others. Destor's religion was outlawed under the Empire.

**Engelan, God of the Present (N).** Healing, Protection. Unconcerned with the past or the future, this religion is based on the immediate present and in living in the moment. Many halflings worship Engelan.

**Father Claw, the Serpentine Lord (CE).** Chaos, Destruction, Evil. Worshippers of the draconic Father Claw, one of the oldest gods, are very rare in Ptolus.

**The Fifty-Three Gods of Chance (CN).** Chaos, Luck, Trickery. A religion of chaos and randomness, but not directly tied to the chaos cults.

**Frega (LG).** Animal, Good, Law. This very minor dwarf goddess is revered only by Stonelost dwarves. She watches over all animals, but in particular goats and boars.

**Gaen, Goddess of Light (LG).** Good, Law, Light\*. A popular and powerful religion. The Temple of Gaen is one of the largest and most impressive temples on a street of large and impressive temples. Gaen's clerics are proactive and struggle against evil at every turn. Gaen is the sister of Mirresh.

**Gorgoth-Lol (CE).** Chaos, Destruction, Evil. Originally one of the "Vested of the Galchutt," this deity is the goddess of the dark elves.

**Hannan, Lord of the Sun (NG).** Good, Healing, Sun. The worshippers of Hannan have recently rejected Gaen and her faith as not the true path to see the sun's light. There is a strange rivalry between these two faiths now, with the religion of Hannan much less prominent than that of Gaen.

**Harredda, Mistress of Ravens (N).** Air, Animal, Protection. Brought originally from the northern reaches of Nall, this goddess has a fair number of worshippers in Ptolus.

**Heiran and Nareis, the Sisters of Death (LE and CE).** Death, Evil, and either Chaos or Law. These twin death goddesses are feared, but revered for what they might do to one in the afterlife if not appeased.

**Herkan, Goddess of the Stones (CG).** Good, Earth, Healing. A rare chaotic dwarf goddess, Herkan represents the healing energies of the earth.

**Inurath, Mistress of War (CN).** Fire, Strength, War. The most popular of many war deities, Inurath was originally a goddess of the people of Nall.

**The Iron God (LN).** Earth, Fire, Technology. A mysterious deity of the old Prustan humans and Grailwarden dwarves. No image of this god is ever seen. He is the patron of all things iron.



**Jode, Guardian of Song (CG).** Air, Luck, Protection. Goddess of music and creativity, her worship in Ptolus centers around the **Knights of the Chord** and the Jodan Templehall in Oldtown.

**Juranis, God of the Open Sea (CN).** Chaos, Travel, Water. God of the sea fearfully worshipped by sailors and sea creatures.

**Kharos, God of Magic (N).** Knowledge, Magic. An old Prustan deity, Kharos is lord of wizardly magic.

**Kran, Goddess of Faults (NE).** Evil, Knowledge. Another old Prustan deity, Kran has a very small following.

**The Lady (N).** Luck, Protection, Trickery. This deity is one of luck and to some degree, fate. Her shrines are numerous, although she has few worshippers devoted strictly to her. She is a goddess of long shots and last chances.

**Locharit, the Goddess of the Written Word (LG).** Knowledge, Law, Magic. A religion of wizards and scholars favored by gnomes.

**Maleskari, God of Shades (NE).** Evil, Death. An evil god of undead spirits and ghosts.

**Melann, Goddess of Farming (NG).** Animal, Good, Plants. A very popular goddess. Melann's temple is frequented more by visitors than locals.

**Mirresh, Goddess of Laughter (NG).** Good, Protection, Trickery. A minor goddess, Mirresh is popular among entertainers and children. Mirresh is the sister of Gaen.

**Mocharum, God of Dwarves (LG).** Civilization\*, Good, Law. This is the main dwarven deity, popular in particular among Grailwarden dwarves. Brother of Morachon.

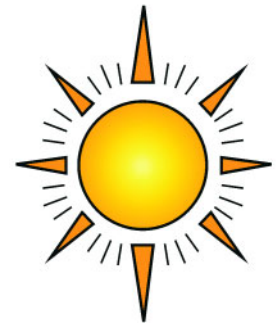
**Morachon, God of the Forge (LN).** Earth, Fire, Law. A religion centered around a craftsman deity

### How to Become a God

All the current gods in the world were either mortal creatures who ascended to godhood, or—in far rarer cases—they are concepts given life by worshippers. All gods require worshippers. Without them, they eventually fade and die.

Many gods owe their deific existence to the trials they endured passing through the Seven Jewels of Parnaith (see PT9: page 526).

All followers of Father Claw put the prefix "Ni-" in front of their names to designate their devotion. (The god Ni-Gorth was himself once a follower of Father Claw.)



Symbol of Gaen

Knights of the Chord,  
PT3: page 123

The dread god of death called Maleskari reportedly achieved divinity when one thousand people all committed suicide at once in his name. These are known as the "Thousand Martyred Souls of Maleskari."



Symbol of Navashtrom

*In ancient history, Ni-Gorth used an artifact called the dragon-chain to shackle Father Claw to the side of a mountain. Father Claw eventually escaped.*

Balacazars, PT3: page 100



Symbol of Phoeboul

Dreta Phantas, PT7: page 457

*Unnom, Lord of the Caverns, is often depicted as a rocklike being covered in mineral deposits, his huge arms dripping with stalactites.*



Symbol of Ynchabolos

revered mostly by dwarves. He is the brother of the god Mocharum.

**Myliesha, Mistress of the Wind's Path (CG).** Air, Good, Travel. An elven elemental deity popular particularly with displaced elves living among humans.

**Navashtrom, God of Strength and Harmony (NG).** Good, Protection, Strength. A popular religion in Ptolus. The followers of Navashtrom are often warriors and adventurers.

**Ni-Gorth (N).** Magic, Strength. Once a priest of Father Claw, Ni-Gorth betrayed the dragon and imprisoned him. Eventually, he ascended to godhood. First of the New Gods, he is no longer worshipped.

**Nival, God of Secrets (N).** Fire, Future\*, Knowledge. Also known as the Master of the Five Lost Lores (one of which is the Lore of the First Fire), Nival is a minor god worshipped only by those who seek forgotten secrets and knowledge no longer known.

**The Old Man (LN).** Knowledge, Law, Trickery. A strange religion based around a brooding figure known only as "the Old Man" who watches over yet disdains virtually everything.

**Ollom, God of the Keg (CN).** Chaos, Civilization\*, Water. A minor god of alcohol and brewing popular among a handful of gnomes and humans.

**Phoeboul, God of Dreams (CN).** Chaos, Knowledge, Sleep\*. An elvish god, Phoeboul is the patron of **Dreta Phantas**, the Dreaming City, which is now lost.

**Raddashin's Eye (CG).** Healing, Plants, Water. Raddashin was a god of rain, slain by evil beings long ago. The god's eye survived and still carries out his will. Many people in Ptolus revere Raddashin's Eye.

**Rajek the Wanderer (N).** Luck, Protection, Travel. Originally worshipped in the far south, Rajek is a god favored by adventurers and those down on their luck. The aram also like Rajek.

**Ravvan the Beast God (CE):** Animal, Evil, Strength. A minor god and demon prince who rules over an extradimensional hell of savagery and beasts.

**Sylvanae, the Woodland Shaper (N).** Animal, Magic, Plants. God of the fae, the elves, and the woods, this androgynous deity is rarely revered in Ptolus except by gnomes.

**Taeshandra, Elvish God of Travel (NG).** Good, Plants, Travel. Watches over travelers, particularly those who pay homage at her roadside shrines, usually found only in the woods. Also worshipped by halflings.

**Tardeshou, Goddess of Truth (LG).** Good, Knowledge, Law. Sister of Navashtrom, this deity is overshadowed in Ptolus by the worship of her better-known brother.

**Teun, Mother of All Machines (LN).**

Civilization, Law, Technology\*. Another old Prustan deity, Teun is the goddess of machines and technology. She is revered by Grailwarden dwarves as well as humans.

**Tevra, the Clockwork Goddess (LN).** Healing, Law, Technology\*. Still another Prustan deity, Tevra is the daughter of Teun. She is thought to sleep now, but will awaken one day to help restore order to the world.

**Thamus (NG).** Good, Healing, Protection. God of protection and defense.

**Torskal (LG).** Good, Strength, War. This aram god of just vengeance has no temple in Ptolus.

**Twenty-Four Gods of the Hours (varies).** Domains vary. These two dozen minor gods each represents one hour of the day, but they are all quite different in nature, reflecting how most people view the different times of day.

**Unnah, Mistress of the Blades (LN).** Strength, War. A minor goddess of swordfighting and skill. Her extremely devout followers are called the Hussar. See the "**Balacazar Crime Family**" in PT3: *Organizations* and "The Hussar" in PT8: *Adventures* for more information.

**Unnom, Lord of Caverns (N).** Earth, Protection. This dwarven god is also revered by other subterranean dwellers.

**Watcher of the Skies (N).** Air, the Future\*, Knowledge. A religion based around a deity that "knows all and sees all," including the future. The Watcher of the Skies is an impassive observer most of the time and may be related somehow to the Old Man. A resurgence in this faith has occurred in the last year.

**Ynchabolos, God of Numbers (LN).** Knowledge, Law. A god of logic, numbers, and order. His religion is small but wealthy and supported by influential people in the city.

**Yurabbos, Goddess of Supreme Devotion (LN).** Law, Strength. A very minor dwarf deity of sacrifice and unswerving devotion to a cause.

Even this list is only a small sampling of the New Gods. Many people pick one deity and revere him or her above all else. Others honor many, although it can be difficult to remember them all. Because of this fact, many religions recognize two or more "levels" of faith: one that acknowledges a god as superior to most or all others and another that views him or her as an equal peer among many. Some religions group various deities together as ad hoc pantheons, families, or gods with some sort of relationship, while other deities seem to fit only into a mutually exclusive worldview, despite the fact that other gods are worshipped in the temple next door.



*There are many symbols of chaos, some of which are shown on the robes of the cultists here. Despite the fact that many individual cults embrace one symbol over the others, in actuality, all the cults use all the symbols. Cultists particularly like to spread these symbols as anonymous bits of graffiti or even printed on a single page of paper and sent to a random person in the city. The cultists see the spread of the awareness of these symbols as analogous to the spread of their faith. The more chaos symbols they use and see, the more powerful they feel they have become. This explains why adventurers who discover hidden chaos temples find symbols inscribed everywhere within them.*

### CULTS OF CHAOS

This catch-all term refers to a hundred or more tiny cults all worshipping chaos, usually in the form of ancient dark gods called the **Galchutt**. It is technically incorrect to refer to the “Cult of Chaos,” for, in fact, there are many cults. While they are unified in overall belief, the groups are actually quite fractured. The different Cults of Chaos do not necessarily compete but often work together, trade members, and occasionally wholly subsume one another.

The following short descriptions cover each of the main cults.

### BROTHERS OF VENOM

The Brothers of Venom, like the Deathmantle cult on the next page, have a taste for murder. Unlike the Deathmantle, though, these worshippers of chaos like their death slow and their murders subtle. These cultists are perhaps the most clandestine and guileful of the Cults of Chaos. Both patient and careful, they never let the authorities know they exist but sow chaos and dissolution in secret. They consider slow erosion and disintegration just as valuable as dramatic, sudden destruction.

This cult rarely operates in cells larger than a half-dozen members. Most members of the cult know the identities of very few other members. They seek to infiltrate high levels of society to murder important individuals. The more influence a person has over law and order, the more desirable a target he or she represents.

In their small cells, the Brothers of Venom practice unholy ceremonies and take part in all manner of vile activities, including drug abuse, sexual perversions, and acts of cruelty and violence.

The Brothers of Venom’s symbol is that of a shadowy, coiled serpent.

### CRIMSON COIL

In some lands, the typical chaos cultist carries torches, axes, and scythes and wears blood-red robes covered in various symbols of chaos: spirals, demonic faces, many-pointed arrows. In these lands, the cult of the Crimson Coil has spread like a virus.

Members of the Crimson Coil wear hooded red robes and do not believe in showing their faces. They do not mix into normal society, preferring instead to spend their lives cloistered in remote temples, often established within the ruins of an older structure for symbolic purposes. The only time these cultists make an appearance is *en masse* to carry out some act of terrible destruction. The Crimson Coil chooses a target seemingly at random, then shows up to burn down a building, set fire to a field, slaughter a family, or deface a monument. They are neither subtle nor gentle. They show neither mercy nor fear. Usually, their raids come so suddenly and unexpectedly that they meet little resistance. They usually appear in numbers so great, they simply cannot be stopped—a hundred cultists to burn down a

*The Galchutt, page 60*



*The Brothers of Venom work with the Ebon Hand cultists (see next page) to develop a toxin that mutates its victims before killing them. For details, see The Night of Dissolution adventure.*



*The Deathmantle cult has close ties with the Forsaken.*

*The Vai, PT3: page 139*



*Order of the Blooded Knife symbol*



*Cult of the Ebon Hand symbol*

*See the "Temple of the Ebon Hand Cult" in PT5: starting on page 379 for a detailed layout and description.*

single house, a dozen to murder a merchant walking down the street. They disappear quickly, often using spells to cover their escape.

Authorities sometimes mobilize militias to hunt down Crimson Coil cult members and root them out of their secret temples. Usually such attempts result in failure. When the hunters do find a Crimson Coil temple, the cultists and priests put up a vicious fight. They battle to the last man in their defensible, trap-laden temple, and cost the attackers many, many lives. Worst of all, however, it takes little time for the cult to reappear in the area, stronger than ever.

### THE DEATHMANTLE

The Deathmantle cult, known also as Death's Grimace, reveres death, and obviously so. Each cultist wears a death's head mask, usually of copper or bronze but occasionally of iron painted skull-white. However, the Deathmantle is no simple death cult. Its members worship murder, specifically mass slaughter. The slaying of a whole town, a whole city, or a whole nation or race—these are their ultimate goals.

The Deathmantle cult associates closely with an assassin's guild called the **Vai**. The Vai are not simply killers for hire but a quasi-religious group that revels in slaying. Each member of this elite guild must kill every day. They believe the only path to true power and enlightenment is found through taking the lives of others. The Deathmantle cult and the Vai, in fact, may be different arms of the same group.

The cult frequently associates with undead. Some of their leaders and priests, for example, are vampires. Others specialize in necromancy. They frequent graveyards, holding evil rites there and even establishing hidden temples in mausoleums and crypts.

### EBON HAND

The cult of the Ebon Hand worships physical deformity. If a member is not deformed naturally (many are), he or she seeks magical mutation. The cultists refer to mutation as "the touch of the Ebon Hand."

Cells of this cult operate in cities, usually within chapels hidden underground. Somewhere within it the chapel always features a large stone hand, palm exposed and painted black. This is the heart of the cult. Cultists of the Ebon Hand kidnap adolescents and magically deform them. Many children die in these horrid rites, but others become mutated slaves of the cult. Upon hearing of a rash of missing children, those in the know understand they must start looking for an Ebon Hand chapel.

Of all the Cults of Chaos, this is one of the most insidious, because it proves the most

resilient. Its cells are small, its chapels often insignificant and difficult to find. The cultists are quick to flee if discovered and ready at a moment's notice to abandon their chapel to move to a new location. Enemies of the cult of the Ebon Hand liken them to cockroaches.

Cultists of the Ebon Hand have no distinctive garb but usually bear a black hand symbol: a tattoo, a charm, a small embroidery on their clothes, and so on. And of course, many of them are physically deformed in some way, ranging from a prominent birthmark to a withered leg to ritual scarring to a magical mutation, like an extra eye or oversized arms.

### ORDER OF THE BLOODED KNIFE

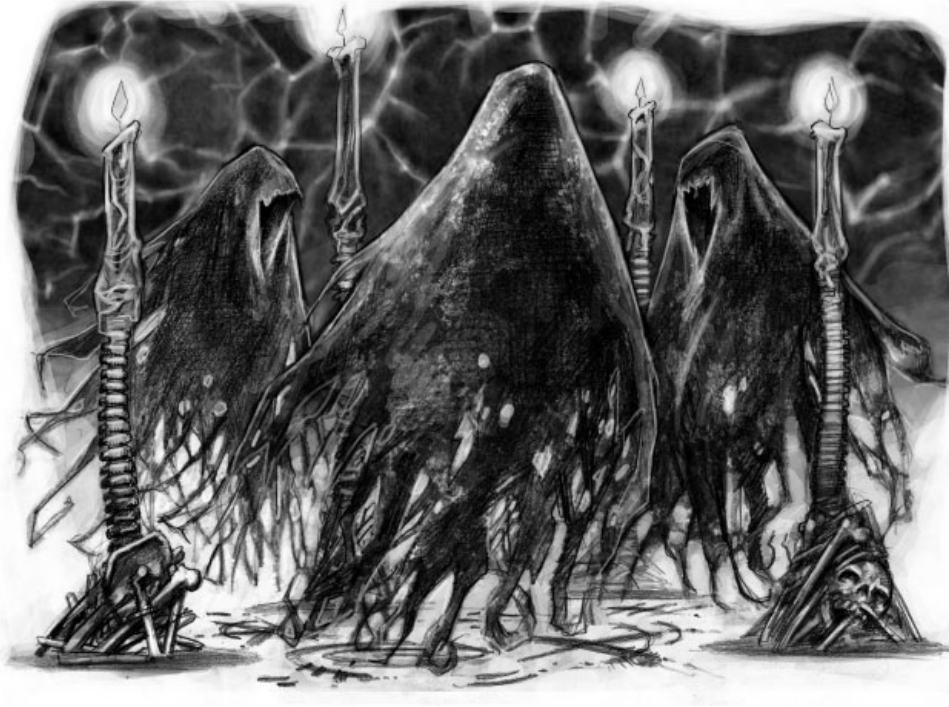
In prehistoric times, before most organized religions of today, a bloodthirsty human cult sacrificed people in honor of a moon goddess whose name no one remembers any longer. After a fashion, this cult exists today in the form of the Order of the Blooded Knife. Gone is the reverence for the moon, but this newer religion preserves many of the same rituals involving human sacrifice. But such sacrifice is not enough to distinguish this cult from other followers of chaos. The Order's main identifying trait is that it poses as other religions to establish itself secretly in society.

Often, the order chooses some vague, innocuous-sounding deity, like "the Snake God" or "Jellig, god of slime"—something that sounds fairly harmless but distasteful enough that most people leave them alone. Other times, the cultists choose an existing god and pose as worshippers who establish a temple that appears normal, at least on the outside. Actual followers of that deity may choose to join them, usually to their dismay; the cult uses threats of violence and enchantment magic to force these honest churchgoers into their terrible rites of chaos.

The Order of the Blooded Knife applies its infiltration abilities to make money for the cult, using its temples as dens for gambling, prostitution, black marketeering, centers for extortion, and simple thievery.

Sometimes a few cultists infiltrate another religion and use force, blackmail, magic, or simple persuasion to sway its members into secretly worshipping chaos with them, a process that can take years. Eventually, the cult eats the other religion from the inside out, consuming it until the temple of the great sun god Errad is entirely a front for the secret temple of the Order of the Blooded Knife concealed in the church basement.

The members of the order usually carry or bear a symbol of a curved knife dripping blood. Other than that (usually secret) symbol, they dress like the members of the religion they use as a front.



### THE PLAGUEBORN

The cultists known as the Plagueborn seek to achieve the elegance and artistry of destruction through disease and pestilence. They attempt to harbor diseases within themselves (often using the *deadly carrier* spell or such chaositech implants as *disease incubators*). The Plagueborn also promote the accumulation of filth, rot, and decay that harbors disease.

Not surprisingly, Plagueborn temples are found in sewers, trash heaps, waste pits, and other places of filth and decay. Taking the rat as their totem, they bear rat symbols and even wear the skins of rats and dire rats.

The Plagueborn sneak contaminated food into marketplaces. They steal the bed linens of the ill and slip them into the beds of children. They dump filth into wells and do whatever else they can think of to spread disease. When they cannot encourage illness, they help foster infestation of vermin—rats, insects, spiders, and so forth—into cities and homes.

Unlike most chaos cultists, the Plagueborn often do not bear standard chaos symbols. They do, however, leave hunks of rotten meat on hooks to mark their lairs and to claim credit for their crimes.

All of the *ratmen* in and below Ptolus worship “*the Rat God*.” This, however, is merely a front for the worship of Abthoth, Lord of the Unclean and one of the *Galchutt*. Thus, technically, all ratmen are members of the Plagueborn. Humans that associate with ratmen are nearly always Plagueborn as well.

### TOLLING BELL

In certain ancient books, the end of the world is described as coming like the “tolling of a bell.” The members of the Tolling Bell cult take their name from this fact and seek nothing short of the eschaton—the end of the world.

Individual cults of the Tolling Bell are rare and usually small, but its members usually wield great skill and power. It seems that members of other cults sometimes “graduate” to this one, as though it were one of the inner mysteries of a general Cult of Chaos.

Cultists of the Tolling Bell wear tattered blue cloaks and carry large hand bells. Their symbol is a bell with cracks in its surface.

In order to fulfill their goal of imminentizing the eschaton, the cultists research powerful spells and artifacts that they could use to trigger some type of cataclysm that could itself trigger an even bigger cataclysm. Ultimately, however, the cultists of the Tolling Bell revere the *Galchutt* and the destruction they will bring when they claim this world as their own on the *Night of Dissolution*.

Of all the Cults of Chaos, the Tolling Bell cult is most aware of the *Galchutt* and their true nature. While other cultists might simply revere chaos in general or the unknown and unnamed “Lords of Chaos,” the members of the Tolling Bell are very deliberate in their actions as they apply themselves to the ultimate liberation of the imprisoned *Galchutt* and the resulting destruction of the world.

### Chaos United?

*In Ptolus today, the only reason one can refer to “the chaos cults” collectively is due to the efforts of the Tolling Bell cult. This group serves as an overarching chaos cult and has taken it upon itself to do what some might consider unthinkable: to organize and unify the various other chaos cults.*

*The leader of this effort is a half-demon named Wuntad. He recently has assumed the title “shigmaa” to appeal to the Forsaken who have joined his cause. For more on him, see The Night of Dissolution adventure, Chapter 6.*

*Deadly carrier spell, PT6: page 641  
Disease incubators, PT6: page 572*



*Tolling Bell cult symbol*

*Night of Dissolution, page 60*

*Ratmen, PT6: page 625  
Temple of the Rat God, PT5: page 390  
Galchutt, page 60*





## HISTORY

The history of Praemal extends back more than ten thousand years, with many amazing and significant events. DMs will want to become familiar with this information, because it is rife with possible adventure hooks. What if the ghost-lich Kagrissos rose again, or someone found the secret to unleashing the Utterdark once more?



The history of the world is vast and complex, stretching back almost eleven millennia. The information presented here (timeline on the left, historical discussion on the right) is heavily skewed toward events important to the city of Ptolus, however. Whole civilizations rose and fell in some of the gaps left blank.

### TIMELINE

BE = Before Empire; IA = Imperial Age

- c. 10,000 BE Praemus creates the world as a trap for the **Galchutt**, the main purveyors of evil, chaos, and non-existence in the multiverse at the time.
- c. 9,900 BE Praemus' children revolt in order to free the intelligent races he created from servitude. The War of the Gods ensues. An evil goddess—one of the **Vested of the Galchutt** named **Gorgoth-Lol**—corrupts a tribe of Shoal elves, taking them deep underground.
- c. 9,800 BE The Galchutt—through one of their Vested servants, Mrathrach—attempt to destroy the world by imprisoning the Gilded Angel, an envoy from another plane sent to visit and judge Praemus' creation. Mrathrach is thwarted by runebearer heroes. The Gilded Angel leaves safely (the last being to come to the world physically and then leave). The magical energies released at the time of the Vested's death create the Pit of Mrathrach, which begins to convert any matter that seeps into it into ether that leaks out into the Ethereal Sea.  
The Galchutt then send a strange, magical virus to the Vallis moon to corrupt the **Lords of the Seven Chains** and destroy the soul of the world that they guard. Again they are thwarted. Finally, they rend the veil between life and death, allowing the dead to return to the world as undead creatures (which had never happened before). The gods, aided by heroes, seal the breach with a huge piece of the Vallis moon, but in so doing they catapult the moon into the distant reaches of space.
- c. 9,700 BE The War of the Gods ends, with Praemus and his children coming to an understanding; Praemus reveals the purpose of the world to them.
- c. 9,600 BE What was once the Sinking Swamp around the Pit of Mrathrach, now entirely drained, has become a desert. The land mass begins to shift southward. The waters of the Southern Sea begin draining away, and the Northern Sea—eventually called the Whitewind Sea—moves southward.

*Continued on page 42 (76)*

## PREHISTORY

The early days of creation are more a matter of myth than history. It is widely accepted that a single creator god forged the world out of nothingness. In this primordial age, evil creatures known as the Galchutt waged war against man and god to destroy the world, but were thwarted at every turn. Eventually, the Galchutt turned on each other and ultimately retreated into a state of aeons-long sleep to await a time when they could better wreak their chaos and destruction. (For more information, see the “Cosmology and Religion” chapter.)

History, according to most scholars, starts with Eslathagos Malkith. But even then, the details of a time more than eight millennia prior to the present day are sketchy at best. Most history books have little to say about it, and most historians know little else. One must find truly arcane texts to learn the truth of his story.

## ESLATHAGOS MALKITH

After the Galchutt retreated into their hibernation, the balance tipped in the favor of light and order. A wizard-priest named **Ni-Gorth** put the great and mighty **Father Claw** in chains.

Goblins, undead, and other fell creatures retreated into shadowy holes to hide. Cities grew, civilizations prospered, and new gods came to light to fill the void left by those who had retreated. For fourteen hundred years, the forces of evil were quelled, and during most of that time, the world knew relative peace. Then, a powerful and benevolent cleric set upon a well-intentioned plan.

With malevolence on the wane, the cleric Danar Rotansin sought once and for all to rid the world of its remaining evil influences. This powerful figure began to gather up all the evil artifacts, objects of dark power, trapped essences of vanquished fiends, demonic relics, and even the last vestiges of particularly horrible diseases. Condemning all of these things as “banes,” Danar imprisoned them. He believed that, if destroyed, the banes would simply release their evil into the world to wreak more havoc and bring about other darkneses. Destroying banes began new banes.

So Danar used powerful spells and magical items to accomplish his task, working tirelessly to bind these legacies of evil. As his collection of banes grew, he began to bury them beneath his tower, Mosul Pearl, located near the sea. Danar constructed a vast catacomb, well warded and sealed, deep underground, and he called it Tremoc Korin, the **Banewarrens**. He also found allies to aid him in his cause. Among them were the dragon known as **Saggarintys the Silver King** and a number of celestials.

But Danar’s goal was folly. Concentrating so much raw hatred and despise—so much darkness and evil power—in a single place was a terrible mistake. The earth itself, no longer able to tolerate the concentrated evil that the banes represented, thrust Tremoc Korin away from it, creating a tall, impossibly high and narrow spire atop which Mosul Pearl stood.

Danar’s actions also drew the attention of sleeping Galchutt. These secretive forces manipulated events (perhaps even time and space) to ensure that the *Book of Inverted Darkness* fell into the hands of this well-meaning cleric.

The *Book of Inverted Darkness* is an artifact older than the world itself. Scribed by gods and demons, its pages contain vast lore (only *The Book of Eldritch Might* contains greater lore, it is said), all of it dreadful. Unfortunately for Danar Rotansin—and the world—the book presented this horrid knowledge using supernatural techniques that gave it an irresistibly seductive quality.

While he intended to seal the book away with the rest of the banes, Danar lingered over its pages for an instant too long. Its cunningly crafted words beguiled him to keep the book by his side. Soon, he read more. And more.

And still more.

The book consumed Danar. He neglected his quest to gather the remaining banes. He withdrew



*Book of Inverted Darkness, PT9: page 531*

*Ni-Gorth, page 70*  
*Father Claw, page 69*

*To this day, priests and scholars still debate whether Eslathagos Malkith, at the height of his power, was truly mortal or had become divine.*

*Adventurers battle in Tremoc Korin at left.*

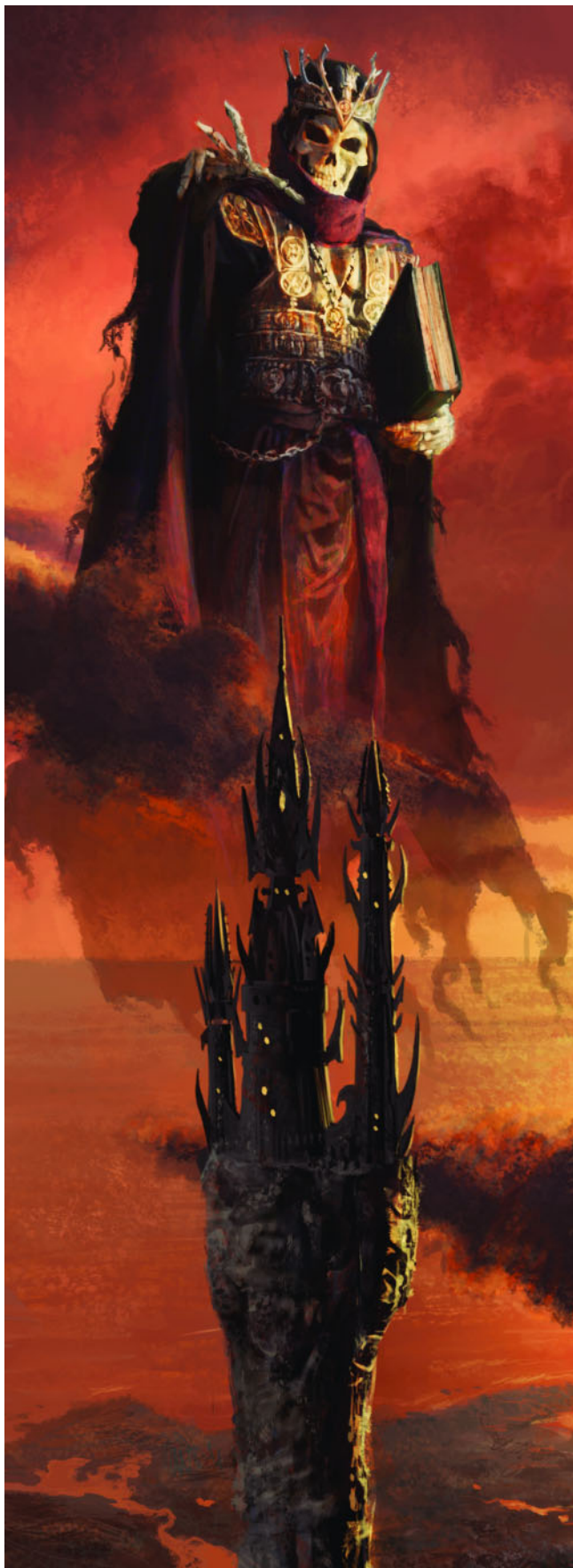
*Galchutt, page 60*  
*Vested of the Galchutt, page 60*  
*Gorgoth-Lol, page 69*

*Lords of the Seven Chains, page 62*

*The Banewarrens, PT7: page 419*

*Saggarintys appears in The Banewarrens adventure Chapter 8.*





- c. 9,500 BE The first city of Ptolus is founded, named after a scholar who originally explored the area. It is ruled by a number of noble families, and the **Knights of the Golden Cross** defend the city against evil. At this point, Ptolus is not yet a coastal town (the Northern Sea continues to shift south).
- c. 9,000 BE The Galchutt provide their servants with chaositech and begin to attack all areas of civilization. They assail Ptolus with the aid of the traitorous **House Vladaam** and destroy it all—except for the mysterious **Castle Shard**. Eventually, the Galchutt's forces turn on themselves and destroy each other.
- c. 8,900 BE Their schemes thwarted, the Galchutt sleep beneath what once was Ptolus, hoping that time will be their ally in their bid to escape this prison-world.
- c. 8,000 BE Ni-Gorth, a priest of the evil Father Claw, rises up against his master in the hidden city of Shoggoth. He fetters Father Claw with the *dragonchain*.
- c. 7,900 BE Ni-Gorth is killed by other priests of Father Claw but ascends to godhood, the first of the New Gods that one day would supplant the children of Praemus.
- c. 7,500 BE A good cleric named Danar Rotansin builds a vault called Tremoc Korin in order to safely store all the evil artifacts and “banes” of the world, including any chaositech that has survived the centuries since the Galchutt went to sleep. He constructs this “**Banewarrens**” beneath his own fortress of Mosul Pearl. Danar's wife, Parnaith—a powerful sorcerer in her own right—anchors the Seven Ethereal Islands around this fortress. These become known as the **Seven Jewels of Parnaith** and, along with the Wizard-Priests of Ni-Gorth, she builds great wonders upon each of the islands.
- c. 7,450 BE By now, the evil stored within the Banewarrens has grown so repugnant that the earth itself thrusts it away, forming the Spire. Danar repairs the damage done to Tremoc Korin by this upheaval. Mosul Pearl now rests atop the **Spire**.
- c. 7,420 BE Danar grows corrupt thanks to the proximity of the Galchutt and the influence of the banes—particularly the *Book of Inverted Darkness*. He becomes the Dread One, taking the name Eslathagos Malkith. He calls forth the former servants of the Galchutt and many other evil beasts and demons from the depths of the earth. He changes the name of his castle to **Jabel Shammar** and begins using the banes he once strove to keep out of evil hands to create more wicked servants.

Continued on page 46 (80)

from his family and comrades. The book's dark lore corrupted his spirit and twisted his mind. The allure of the dark power and forbidden knowledge was too much, even for him. Danar Rotansin became Eslathagos Malkith—the Dread One. With the vast resources of the banes he had gathered and the knowledge he had gained from the *Book of Inverted Darkness*, the Dread One withdrew into his tower, also renamed: **Jabel Shammar**.

He emerged only a few years later, launching an attack so devastating, it threatened to tear the world asunder. His might knew few bounds, and with his magical aid, the armies he created or summoned conquered the surrounding lands with ease. From his fortress atop the Spire, its former pearly hue now turned black as night, the Dread One could survey the world—a world he desired to conquer or crush entirely.

Only the actions of all the mortal races, led by powerful and stalwart heroes—many of whom had been friends and companions of Danar—stopped the forces of Eslathagos Malkith. It is said they carried the battle into the halls of Jabel Shammar itself. When it was over, the Dread One lay defeated, the world's greatest heroes sprawled dead and dismembered all around him. Most of them had lost not only their lives but also their souls to their foe's magic and the banes he wielded.

Some bit of Danar—the good and true man he had once been—still remained, however. His spirit, now free of corruption, managed to seal the Banewarrens once again. Although his quest remained uncompleted, and some of the banes were released again when he became Eslathagos Malkith, Tremoc Korin still contained vault upon vault of evil artifacts, foul creatures, and vile relics that must be kept away from the world at large.

## THE AGE OF THE ELDER TITANS

Almost two millennia later—over six thousand years ago—strong, powerfully built sailors calling themselves the Charad arrived on the shores of Theridae north of Ptolus in huge vessels made of wood and, curiously, stone. The Charad looked much like muscular, regal humans, but on a grander scale: The shortest stood over eight feet tall, the largest at least twice that height. The Charad, called the Charad Titans by the Lunas elves they first encountered, wielded powerful magical might as well as physical puissance. Their vast lore far outstripped even that of the Elder Elves.

The Charad never told their new elvish allies exactly where they hailed from, although they clearly came from across the sea. Speculation at

the time suggested that they originated in the north, in the area now known as the Endless Sea of Ice. In those days, the theories profess, the ice did not cover that entire land, and the Charad thrived in those cold climes. If this is true, their homeland was long ago swallowed by ice as the world grew colder and is now forever gone.

A few years after arriving and conducting the first trade and information exchanges with the elves, the titans built the fortress Ar-Nampur on an isolated cape north of present-day Ptolus, near the site of their landing. The huge structure's existence remains unknown to most people in modern times. Most sailors simply call the area the Fogbottom, because it is perpetually shrouded in mist. Due to the rocky coastline, ships always avoid it.

Eventually, after spending more than thirteen hundred years in Ar-Nampur and interacting with the native elves, most of the Charad decided to return to the sea. Presumably they sailed for their homeland—a homeland, of course, they had never seen, for this was not the same generation of titans that had come to Theridae originally. Truth be told, the Charad sensed a slowly growing evil in the land and wished to leave its presence. A small number would remain, having grown accustomed to the area and developed an affection for it.

They never told their brethren, as they waved good-bye to the departing Charad fleet, but those who stayed were drawn to the Spire and the lands around it. They built large fortresses surrounding it, and from them delved deep below the surface. The titans had no idea at the time, but they were compelled by the Galchutt, drawn to their immense power like moths to a flame. Through eldritch processes, they tapped into the sleeping Galchutt's power and siphoned it into themselves. But such potent energies come at a price. The Galchutt's evil nature tainted the power the Charad took, corrupting them into aberrant mockeries of the noble beings they once were.

Today those few who even know of the existence of the so-called Elder Titans think of them only as terrors and evil beings that lived in the area around the Spire for a thousand years. But because this time was almost four thousand years in the past, their very existence is hardly ever mentioned in today's history texts. The corrupted titans spent most of their time underground. For a time, a small number of them conquered and ruled over the dark elves. Another group lived among the **zaug**. Still others spent their lives hoarding **chaositech**. It is unknown whether any of them still survive today.

*Knights of the Golden Cross, PT3: page 124*

*Jabel Shammar, PT9: page 501*

*House Vladaam, PT3: page 96*  
*Castle Shard, PT5: page 285*

*Of course, it is entirely possible that the Charad came from some other, still undiscovered land to the east or west, accessible only by sea. Elvish sailors, however, will tell you that no such land exists.*

*The Banewarrens, PT7: page 419*  
*Seven Jewels of Parnaith, PT9: page 526*  
*The Spire, PT4: page 159*



*Kadavalus, the Ageless Titan, dwells in Goth Gulgamel and guards the entrance to the Gates of Delirium and the Entropy Sphere (PT9, page 499). He allied himself with Ghul long ago and exists today in undead form. For details, see PT9, page 497.*

*Zaug, PT6: page 633*  
*Chaositech, PT6: page 566*

**THE IMPERIAL LINE**

When Delian Von Tessel established the Lion-Guarded Throne in 9 BE, he forged a dynasty that lasted more than seven hundred years. Only until very recently, with the death of Empress Addares XXXIII, did the line come to an end—of course, Addares XXXIV claims that it never died but continues in her.

Delian Von Tessel was a Prustan noble and general with a distinguished career. He used his reputation and political clout to get himself named Emperor, promoting the idea that a true Empire would bring peace and prosperity to the known world under his guiding hand. His wife, Addares Von Tessel, was a strong woman well suited to serve as Empress next to her husband. It was Delian who decided that Tarsis, long considered the oldest city in the world, would be the seat of Empire rather than some city deep in the Prustan Peninsula. Tarsis was also where he had been born and raised; his Prustan ancestors took control of the city long before his birth. Delian enjoyed the deep respect of the Grailwarden dwarves, which ensured that they would support the Empire with their fantastic innovations in technology and that Imperial soldiers would be backed by dwarven cannon.

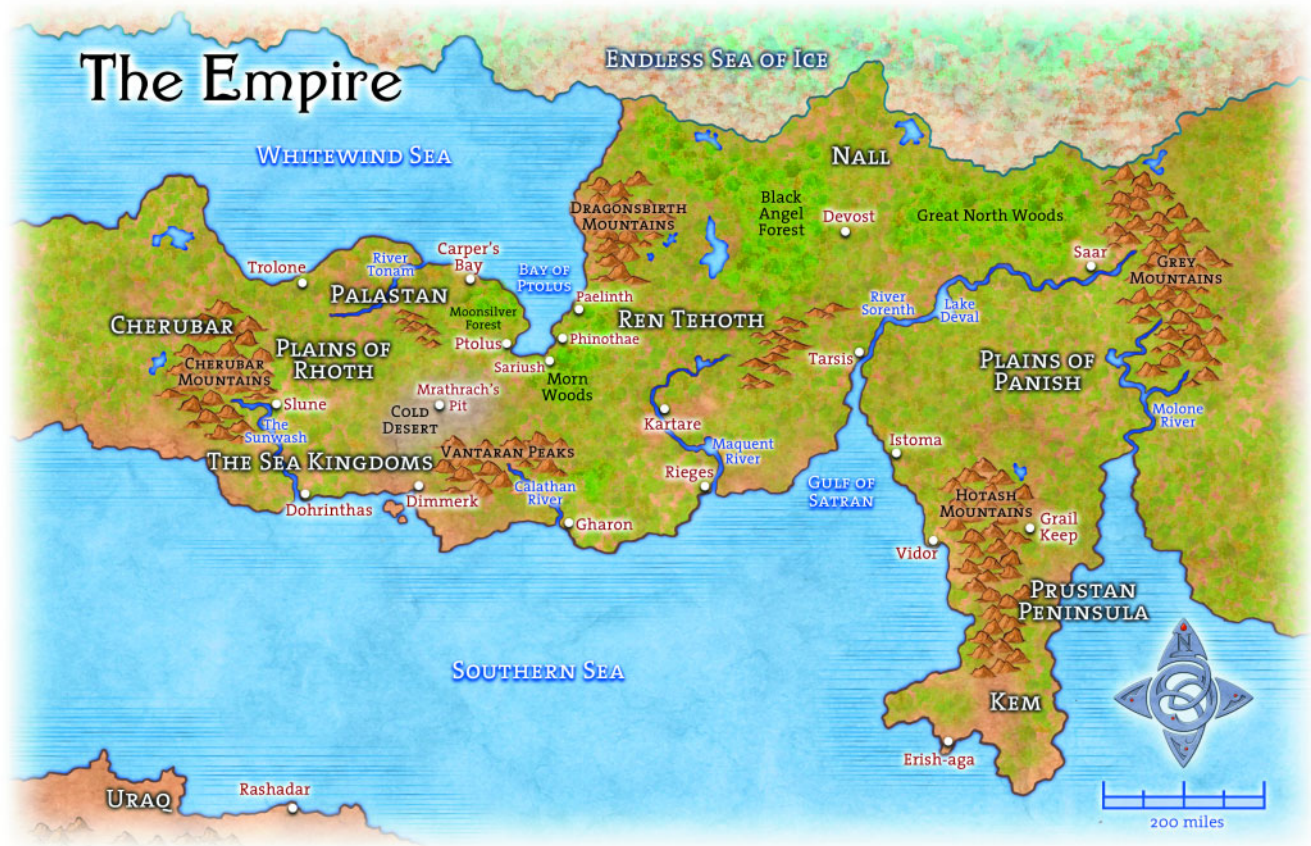
**The Succession**

Delian lived a very long life, enhanced by all the magical aids the Empire could provide. He died at the age of one hundred forty-three, after outliving his wife and even his children. Though she died nineteen years before he did, and thus never actually ruled

directly as Empress herself, his wife Addares accomplished much for the Empire and its citizens during her life. She was so influential, in fact, that by the end of her rule it had become commonplace for parents of the Imperial line to name their girls Addares. Later it became tradition for any woman actually ascending to the throne to take the name, even if it was not hers to begin with.

Further complicating the naming convention is that one distinguishes the Empress' name both by the number of Addareses that came before her and the number of prior Addareses that actually ruled as Empress (as opposed to being the wife of the ruling Emperor). Thus, each Addares has two numbers associated with her name. The most recent fully accepted Empress was Addares XVIII and XXXIII, meaning that she was the thirty-third Addares of the Imperial line but only the eighteenth to sit upon the Lion-Guarded Throne. Males in the Imperial line have no parallel; each male emperor has a different name.

Delian was not only the ruler of the Empire but the spiritual leader of its official religion as well. Serving as the head of the Church of Lothian, he directed all matters of the Church, interpreting and creating holy doctrine as easily as he interpreted and created Imperial law. When Delian died, his heir—an elderly nephew, Radlov Von Tessel—abdicated the position as head of the Church and created a position known as the Emperor of the Church. In theory, this individual would be a co-ruler, handling all spiritual and Church matters while the secular Emperor dealt with more worldly concerns.



In truth, the Emperor wields a great deal more power than the Holy Emperor. But that is not to imply that the Holy Emperor is not a personage of vast influence. Being the second most powerful figure in an Empire that rules the known world is nothing to ignore.

The Von Tessel family was known as the Lions of Tarsis, and thus the Imperial seat was founded as the Lion-Guarded Throne, which it has remained ever since. The line of succession, although complex, is gender neutral. When an Emperor or Empress dies, the oldest living member of the immediate family (spouse or child) takes the throne. If there are no direct heirs, a complicated line of succession involving siblings, nephews, nieces, cousins, and so forth is traced until an appropriate heir is found. (It should be noted that the succession of the Holy Emperor does not work this way but is focused on males and male heirs.)

### The Three Emperors

Of course, as the Empire stands today, there are no clear heirs to the Von Tessel line. The current claimants to the Lion-Guarded Throne are as follows:

**Addares XXXIV:** A distant cousin of Addares XXXIII and XVIII by marriage, this native of Dohrinthas had never even been to Tarsis before the Empress died. Far more interested in pomp and wealth than actually ruling, Addares XXXIV has a reputation for throwing incredible parties, wearing amazing magical gowns, and stringing along a list of lovers too long for even her advisors to track. She is no fool, however; knowing her links to the throne are tenuous at best, she has put into motion plans to discredit her rivals. She also has the support of two influential generals in the Imperial Army. They have moved their legions to the lands surrounding her new capital, Dohrinthas, where she has promised to construct a new Imperial fleet greater than any that have come before.

**Segaci Fellisti:** With no legitimate claim to the Imperial line, Segaci is perhaps the unlikeliest of the three Emperors. He contends that, great as it was, the Von Tessel line finally has come to an end. An advisor to the last three Emperors, Segaci feels that only he can restore order to the Empire and bring back its quickly-fading greatness. Segaci, a very old man, has the support of much of the Imperial Court due to his experience as a diplomat and skill as a ruler. Segaci will do whatever it takes to restore the Empire, and this single-mindedness has led him to forge some strange and perhaps ill-advised alliances, including one with Kevris Killraven (see PT3, page 121). Segaci puts much of his faith in an organization known as the Shuul, which promises to restore the technological might and innovation that made the Empire strong so long ago.

**Holy Emperor Rehoboth:** The reigning Holy Emperor, Rehoboth Ylestos is a power-hungry man interested in joining back both “halves” of the Empire under himself. His claim to the throne is simple: Only one person in the Empire today legitimately possesses the title “Emperor,” and it is he. The fact that he fled Tarsis when the barbarians were coming, making a prolonged “visit” to his son in Ptolus, has earned him a poor reputation among the influential of the Imperial government. In return, ignoring those who belittle



The Imperial Seal

him, he plans to declare Ptolus the seat of the Empire.

This has caused nothing but outrage among the citizens. Even the Commissar of Ptolus is unlikely to support Rehoboth when the time comes for him to pick a side.

### Possible Futures

Obviously, the Imperial Line—and the Empire itself—stand at a crossroads. The shape of the future likely depends on which Emperor finally takes true control of the Lion-Guarded Throne.

If Addares takes the throne, she obviously will keep the seat of Imperial power in Dohrinthas. Such a move will be wildly unpopular in the Empire, and she likely will not have the support or the ability to hold the Empire together. Should she take the throne, one could expect the Empire of Tarsis to truly begin to fall apart within ten years, and possibly collapse entirely during her reign, or that of her successor. The various lands of the Empire—Nall, Rhoth, Palastan, and so on—would declare their independence. Ptolus likely would become an independent city-state.

If Segaci becomes the true Emperor, one might expect him to attempt to reinstate the technological glory of days gone by. And with the support of Shuul advancements in machineworks, this might actually be possible. In such an Empire, Ptolus would become a hub of industry with a commissar who was nothing more than a Shuul puppet. Imperial troops, armed with firearms as in days of old, would strengthen the Empire’s hold on its lands and deal with the barbarians in the east once and for all. Segaci might even decide to expand, setting his sights on Uraq and the south.

If Rehoboth gains the throne, the Holy Emperor would once again be the secular Emperor as well. The Church would be strengthened to the position it held during the Days of Blood, although Rehoboth would not allow such inquisitions to begin again—he is no reactionary theologian, and he would be too interested in earning and keeping the goodwill of the people to renew the witch hunts. Ptolus would become the new Imperial capital. However, in his obsession to become a beloved emperor and to promote goodwill for the Church, he likely would make concessions that would greatly weaken the Empire, and slowly it would collapse from within.



Holy Emperor  
Rehoboth Ylestos

- c. 7,300 BE The Dread One creates a magical vortex of chaos within the Spire called the **Entropy Sphere**. He configures magical portals called the **Gates of Delirium** to regulate its power so that he may utilize it freely.
- c. 7,260 BE Eslathagos Malkith attacks the civilized lands, raining destruction down upon the world and all its inhabitants. Only runebearer heroes, blessed by the gods' divine power, are able to stop him and his armies.
- c. 7,200 BE The Dread One's invasion over, the world's remaining forces—organized primarily by the Wizard-Priests of Ni-Gorth—attempt to destroy the Spire and its fell fortress. They fail. Instead, they seal it, shoring up the magic that Eslathagos Malkith (as Danar) created centuries ago. To maintain contact with the **Seven Jewels of Parnaith**, the wizard-priests create the *colordoor nodes*, places where the moving Ethereal Islands occasionally pass that one can access through particular notes of music.
- c. 7,000 BE The seas cease their shifting, and the land mass looks much as it does today.
- c. 6,000 BE The wizards of **Kem** build the city of Erish-aga.
- c. 5,900 BE The Solarr and Lunas elves finish construction of Dreta Phantas in the land then known as **Theridae**, north of the Spire along the coast. The line of the Dream Kings rules over the elves in an age of prosperity and peace. They are close allies of the followers of Ni-Gorth, who continue to maintain the Seven Jewels of Parnaith.
- c. 5,600 BE The **cthorn**, a strange and malevolent race of humanoids, prosper near the Gulf of Satran along the coast of Southern Sea. They terrorize those around them and focus on gathering magical lore, particularly black magic.
- c. 5,500 BE The **Charad Titans** arrive in Theridae in great ships. They establish trade with the Solarr and Lunas elves of Dreta Phantas.
- c. 5,300 BE The Charad Titans discover the sleeping Galchutt and vast caches of chaositech. Some of them become corrupted by their discovery, and the titans begin to fight among themselves.
- c. 5,000 BE As the religion of Ni-Gorth fades into obscurity, the wizard-priests abandon the area surrounding Jabel Shammar and the Spire.
- c. 4,800 BE Last of the Earthsingers, the third overclan of dwarves, dies.
- c. 4,600 BE The cthorn diminish, undone by their own corruption. The wizards of Kem steal many of their secrets.
- c. 4,200 BE The Charad Titans leave in their great ships, ultimately repulsed by the evil of the area.
- c. 4,000 BE The Wars of Fire. Wizards from the west and those from Kem meet on the Plains of Panish and fight horrible magical wars.
- c. 3,400 BE The dark elves surface for the first time since their Shoal ancestors disappeared for their long subterranean exile. They wage wars with the elves of Theridae and Dreta Phantas.
- c. 3,000 BE Much of Kem is consumed in the Metalstorm, unleashed by wanton magic. **Ochremeshk** the Demon God is imprisoned in a magical rune.
- c. 2,800 BE The dark elves are driven back down underground by the armies of the surface elves. More Shoal elves settle in Theridae than ever before, having come to the region to help fight the dark elves.
- c. 2,000 BE Dwarves settle in the area near the Spire and build the fortress-city of **Dwarvenhearth**. Most of the city lies underground, but portions extend to the surface.
- 1,554 BE The dark elves launch a massive attack on the surface elves and use a powerful spell, channeled directly from their goddess Gorgoth-Lol, to steal the entire city of Dreta Phantas, which they hide deep below the Spire. They settle in nearby areas even below Dwarvenhearth. The surface elves of Theridae are dispersed.
- c. 1,500 BE Humans settle in Theridae, founding the Kingdom of **Palastan**. They establish friendly relations with the dwarves of Dwarvenhearth.
- c. 1,200 BE The **Wintersouled** undead come to the area around the Spire, led by the King in Yellow. They find themselves drawn by the power of the sleeping Galchutt. Being undying creatures, they silently wait for the evil ones to awaken.
- c. 1,000 BE The **Circle of Green**, a powerful group of druids, forms in Palastan.
- c. 800 BE **Uraq** establishes itself as the world's major power economically, through its control of the Southern Sea.
- c. 700 BE The Metalstorm in Kem completely fades.
- c. 600 BE Seeking the *Black Grail* held within the Banewarrens, the half-demon wizard Sokalahn builds an underground fortress near the coast by the Spire. He eventually uses a powerful spell to shatter one of the Gates of Delirium and breach the wards around the Banewarrens. This causes the Entropy Sphere to spin forth great energies, which twist into pools and eddies called the **Pits of Insanity**. They dot the interior of the Spire and nearby subterranean locations, playing havoc with physical laws and magical powers.
- c. 500 BE Uraq's influence begins to decline.
- 477 BE **Lothian** the wandering preacher is crucified. The Kingdom of Prust collapses when an earthquake and floods kill thousands, including the king and his entire court.
- 443 BE The first of the dwarven wars with the dark elves begins.
- c. 440 BE Ghul the Half God, the Skull-King who claims to be the resurrected son of Eslathagos Malkith, slays the last of the cthorn.
- 436 BE The first dwarven/dark elf war ends.
- 399 BE Ghul slays the Circle of Green.
- 376 BE The human wizard **Alchestrin** takes over **Castle Shard**.

## THE UTTERDARK OF GHUL

The man (or creature) known as Ghul claimed to be the son of Eslathagos Malkith and some dark, unnamed demon goddess. He called himself the Half God and claimed the Spire as his birthright.

These were all lies.

He was indeed a half-demon, but he had no blood relation with the Dread One (who never had children). Ghul was a mighty sorcerer with incredible natural talent and an innate aptitude for utilizing and shaping power toward his own ends. Originally from the land of **Kem**, he searched the world for sources of power to exploit. When he came to the Spire, he knew he had found what he sought.

Ghul had discovered the **Entropy Sphere**, anchored in the middle of the Spire but not truly existing in that space—its wild, chaotic energies created their own spatial location. Ghul tapped into its almost limitless power to expand this supernatural space and found that it existed within a realm of complete blackness, which he named the Utterdark. He built his fortress, **Goth Gulgamel**, at an access point halfway up the Spire.

So did Ghul admire the Dread One, he even assumed his symbol of a black skull (below right) and took from it the name “Skull-King.” Most historians don’t even recall that the symbol originally belonged to the first master of the Spire.

The paths within Goth Gulgamel stretched to points that magically joined with warrens that his servants quickly carved out of the living rock surrounding the Spire, all the way to the sea. These burrows provide the basis for most of the **underground labyrinths** that lie under Ptolus today, although many have been significantly altered, partitioned, or incorporated into other subterranean structures. In these chambers, Ghul constructed breeding pits and laboratories where he created all manner of foul creatures that became part of his so-called “Squirming Horde.” It was here, too, that Ghul tortured and twisted Elder and Shoal elves into Harrow elves as well as into the elves that became the Urthon Aedar (the latter a fact not widely known).

By 288 BE, Ghul had so mastered the power of the Entropy Sphere that he drew the Utterdark out into the normal, physical world. This darkness covered the lands for almost two centuries, until an elf wizard named Khelaeson finally banished it. Khelaeson was instrumental in Ghul’s eventual downfall, as he also helped engineer the Pact of Brightfather’s Day, wherein a unified army of elves, dwarves, humans, and halflings gathered to fight against the Squirming Horde.



Eventually, the unified armies were victorious and laid siege to Goth Gulgamel. A group of heroes known today as the **Great Seven** pursued Ghul who, upon seeing that his defeat was imminent, fled into the Jewels of Parnaith. It was there they slew him.

With Ghul dead, champions of the unified armies entered Goth Gulgamel, slaying every creature they could. Khelaeson used his knowledge of the Utterdark to sever many of the branching corridors from their anchors within the darkness, sending them to be lost forever in the void. Some of them, however, he left, claiming it was not within his power to destroy all of the fortress—but this was a lie. In truth, he knew that if they annihilated Goth Gulgamel, they might lose contact with the Entropy Sphere for good, and Khelaeson had the foresight to realize the sphere would have its uses. In fact, Khelaeson became the first of the **Urthon Aedar**, seeking and eventually finding a way to use the Entropy Sphere to reach the stolen elven city of **Dreta Phantas**.

When Khelaeson and the other champions had finished with Goth Gulgamel, they left nothing alive (or undead). The place still reeked of evil, though, and the Brightfather armies did not want to risk another dark lord arising from the foul puissance of the Spire. So, under the guidance of the dwarves, they built Dalenguard to protect the location from intrusion. Thanks to that move, Goth Gulgamel lay quiet and vacant for centuries.

*Entropy Sphere, PT9: page 499*  
*Gates of Delirium, PT9: page 499*  
*Seven Jewels of Parnaith, PT9: page 526*

*Kem, page 41*

*Theridae is the ancient name for the region now known as Palastan, so named and governed by the Elder Elves.*

*Cthorn, PT9: page 495*  
*Charad Titans, page 77*

*Goth Gulgamel, PT9: page 486*

*Ochremeshk, PT6: page 623*  
*Dwarvenhearth, PT7: page 460*

*Ghul’s Labyrinth, PT7: page 418*

*Palastan, page 42*  
*Wintersouled, PT6: page 632*  
*Circle of Green, PT3: page 108*  
*Uraq, page 44*

*Urthon Aedar, PT3: page 138*  
*Dreta Phantas, PT7: page 457*

*Pits of Insanity, PT7: page 416*  
*Lothian, page 66*  
*Alchestrin and Castle Shard, PT5: page 285*



### **The Great Seven**

*The slayers of Ghul are: Dionys, a human fighter-druid; Eriskal, an elf rogue; Kam, a halfling monk; Runshallot, a human cleric; Saerth, an elf wizard-rogue; Uthegos, a dwarf fighter; and Yllistro, a half-elf sorcerer-ranger. Statues of the Great Seven stand in the Hall of Heroes in the Temple District (PT5, page 372). For more on Ghul, see the “Goth Gulgamel” chapter in PT9.*



- 351 BE The second of the dwarven wars with the dark elves begins.
- 350 BE The dwarves notice that someone has moved onto the Spire and has begun building a fortress. Their spies reveal it to be Ghul. This fortress, which he calls **Goth Gulgamel**, is built by orcs he created: the tribe of Toruk-Rul (which means “closing fist”). The war with the dark elves is too costly for the dwarves to do anything but seal off Dwarvenhearth’s entrances to the surface.
- 347 BE The death of Caliph Ulrazed marks the true end of Uraq’s position of power and influence.
- 343 BE The second dwarven/dark elf war ends.
- 330 BE Goth Gulgamel completed, Ghul sends his armies down to attack the dwarves.
- 319 BE Ghul’s forces drive the dwarves from Dwarvenhearth.
- 292 BE Ghul begins an invasion to conquer the surrounding lands that history has termed the Ghulwar. His forces include Toruk-Rul orcs, dark elves, tribes of evil men and dwarves, and monsters.
- 291 BE Palastan falls to Ghul. Ghul slays King Rissathion upon the **King’s Stone**.
- 290 BE The Sea Kingdoms fall to Ghul
- 289 BE Eastern Rhoth falls to Ghul, cutting off the realm of Cherubar from the rest of the continent.
- 288 BE Ghul conjures forth a magical darkness called the Utterdark, which covers the lands he has conquered.
- 285 BE The elves of the northern Moonsilver Forest fall to Ghul. They are taken to Goth Gulgamel *en masse* and filter out again slowly as Harrow elves—the blighted ones.
- 282 BE The Elder Elves of Theridae stop the advance of Ghul’s armies near the River Tonam.
- 281 BE The Cold Quiet begins. Few pass in or out of the Utterdark.
- 152 BE The Cold Quiet ends. The armies of Ghul issue forth from the Utterdark, composed of Toruk-Rul orcs, the newly spawned Sorn-Ulth orcs (meaning “bleeding breath”), ogres, trolls, and worse.
- 150 BE The Elder Elves, now allied with the Stonelost dwarves (descended from those who fled Dwarvenhearth), drive back Ghul’s armies.
- c. 100 BE The dark elves drop their alliance with Ghul, concerned now with matters in the under-realms. The **zaug** begin a series of aggressions known as the Deep Wars.
- 87 BE The elf wizard **Khelaeson** banishes the Utterdark.
- 86 BE The elves and dwarves invade the realm of Ghul.
- 85 BE The invaders take back the Moonsilver Forest and most of Palastan from Ghul.
- 84 BE Ghul calls forth the Squirring Horde, also known as the Shrieking Horde, and defeats the elves and dwarves. The horde follows the Elder Elves back to their homeland of Theridae and razes it.
- c. 75 BE The dark elves drive their zaug enemies back from Dreta Phantas but grow sorely depleted in power.
- 74 BE Ghul attacks Dreta Phantas in order to wrest it from the dark elves. He hopes to gain control of Koth, the dream tower fabled to guard the path to the many worlds.
- 71 BE The Pact of Brightfather’s Day. The Stonelost dwarves, the Shoal elves, the halfling tribes, the Grailwarden dwarves, and the Prustan humans of Tarsis from the east forge a pact to ally against Ghul.
- c. 70 BE The dark elves seal Dreta Phantas so that no one can enter (or so they think).
- 61 BE Weakened from their battles with the dark elves, the foul hordes of Ghul fall to the combined forces of the Stonelost dwarves and the eastern Prustan forces. This marks the end of the Ghulwar.
- 59 BE Goth Gulgamel falls. Ghul flees into the Jewels of Parnaith.
- 55 BE The **Great Seven** hunt down Ghul and destroy him.
- 50 BE With the help of Tarsis, the people of the once-dark lands begin to rebuild.
- 43 BE The dwarves begin construction on Dalenguard, a fortress for the Tarsisians.
- 41 BE Tarsisan outposts and garrisons dot the landscape, providing security and maintenance on the roads.
- 40 BE Construction of Dalenguard completed.
- 9 BE **Delian Von Tessel** becomes ruler of Tarsis, naming his seat of power the Lion-Guarded Throne after his family crest.
- 1 IA The Lion-Guarded Throne proclaims Imperial control over the lands all around it. The Age of the Empire of Tarsis begins.
- 15 IA After a short conflict, Rhoth falls to the Tarsisian armies and becomes part of the Empire.
- 61 IA The noble houses of Palastan swear allegiance to the Lion-Guarded Throne.
- 110 IA Despite magical aids, Delian Von Tessel, first Emperor of the Lion-Guarded Throne, dies.
- 180 IA Uraq falls to the Empire after a series of bloody conflicts.
- 223 IA A conclave of divine beings appoints Emperor Rudolf Von Tessel the **Main Purveyor** of Law. They grant him vast power, which he uses to strengthen the Empire.
- 301 IA The Great Earthquake devastates much of Tarsis. Rebuilding takes almost fifty years.
- 386 IA Following the assassination of her husband, Empress Addares (Von Tessel) X makes it illegal to own a firearm without official Imperial dispensation.
- 413 IA The second city of Ptolus, named after fragmentary information regarding the distant past discovered by the loremaster **Gerris Hin**, is founded. It is built near (and eventually encompasses) the fortress of Dalenguard. The Church of Lothian opposes the founding of the city but takes no overt action. It does not explain its opposition.

*Continued on page 50 (84)*



## RISE OF EMPIRE

Although a powerful alliance already existed among the Prust and the Grailwarden dwarves, it would be incorrect to refer to their creation as an “empire” until after the Pact of Brightfather’s Day, the building of Dalenguard, and, of course, the rise of Delian Von Tessel: first Emperor of Tarsis.

Unlike the previous chapters of history, the last seven centuries or so are extremely well documented and detailed. This is the history that schoolchildren know.

The Prust were humans who had originated in the southeast. Dark haired but fair skinned, from the earliest days they were ruled by authoritarian kings who organized them into an efficient, regimented society. Their traditional enemies were the peoples of the northern lands such as **Nall** or the tribes beyond the Grey Mountains to the east.

When the Prust and their Grailwarden allies took control of Tarsis, reputedly the oldest city in the world and certainly one of the largest, they developed a bond with the place. They called it the Eternal City and soon began to believe that it had always been theirs. From there, they would plant the seeds for their eternal Empire. After the Pact of Brightfather’s Day, they knew the time had come.

However, the Empire almost collapsed before it could really form, amid dissent from squabbling nobles and numerous powerful factions. It took the charisma and drive of one man—Delian Von Tessel, son of the human signer of the Pact of Brightfather’s Day—to unite the people of Tarsis. He was crowned Emperor.

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of the Empire of Tarsis was that it was not born entirely

of conquest. Resistance arose in some places, to be sure, but other lands had been so devastated by Ghul that they welcomed Imperial control—and the Imperial wealth, organization, and goods that came with it. Life was simply more stable and safe in the Empire, and so Imperial armies often were welcomed at city gates with open arms. (This was certainly true at first in Palastan, one of the most ravaged lands.) By 100 IA, the Empire had spread from the Grey Mountains in the east to Cherubar in the west. That done, the Emperor next annexed all the lands beyond ever known to exist, literally claiming rulership over the entire world. Of course it took years for the distant lands to the south to even know this had happened, and by the time they did, it was simpler to send a minor tribute and words of fealty than to argue. At its height, the Empire of Tarsis controlled lands so distant that no actual Imperial soldier ever set foot there. The rulers of Panogolan and Buneir in the far south were simply declared Imperial governors and left to rule as they had always done.

The spread of Empire brought with it the spread of innovation. Grailwarden firearms, clockworks, and steam-powered machines were as much a part of the Empire as Imperial laws, bureaucracy, and garrisons.

## THE DECLINE

Some blame the Church. Some blame greedy or shortsighted Emperors. Some blame the forces of evil, whatever they may be. Some simply blame time. But after more than seven hundred years, the Empire of Tarsis is coming apart at its very seams.

### The Main Purveyors

*The idea of the four Main Purveyors, each a single being charged with representing Good, Evil, Law, or Chaos, is a concept unknown to most people. The most famous of the known Main Purveyors, Emperor Rudolf Von Tessel, was the Main Purveyor of Law throughout his unnaturally long lifetime. These individuals, each a shining example of the concept they embody, are said to be chosen by a conclave of the gods. They are always mortals, and obviously they are always enemies of each other. There is not always a Main Purveyor of every alignment at work in Praemal at all times; they arise only when worthy individuals answer the call.*

*With the mantle comes extra long life and special powers—mostly involving influence over like-minded creatures. Thus, the Main Purveyor of Chaos gains the power to command creatures of chaos.*

*Goth Gulgamel, PT9: page 486  
King’s Stone, PT3: page 88*

*Zaug, PT6: page 633  
Khelaeson, page 81*

*Nall, page 41*

*The Great Seven, page 81*

*It is the genius of Delian Von Tessel (page 78) that he created the “Empire of Tarsis,” rather than the “Prustan Empire.” This subtle but important move appeased the noble families of Tarsis while still giving the conquering Prust what they wanted.*

*Gerris Hin, PT5: page 332*

- 417 IA After years of labor, the artificial shoreline for the docks of Ptolus is finished and the harbor opens.
- 418 IA The Brotherhood of the Sword is founded in Ptolus.
- c. 420 IA Sensing that the Galchutt would awaken within a few hundred years, the Wintersouled begin granting soldiers who fell in the Ghulwar the gift of unlife. They build the **Dark Reliquary** on the cliffs overlooking the sea. The Wintersouled manage to keep their undead servitors from drawing too much attention by residents of the growing city.
- 420 IA Based on the research of Gerris Hin, Shay Orridar recreates the **Knights of the Golden Cross** to stand against evil and bring back the worship of the **Elder Gods**.
- c. 431 IA The noble families of Palastan relocate to Ptolus and begin building estates. Some of these are descendents of the original noble families of the first (but nearly forgotten) city of Ptolus.
- 440 IA The Commissar of Ptolus grants each noble family a seat on the Assembly of the City Council as a way of placating the people of the region who have for so long looked upon the noble houses as rulers and thought-leaders.
- 444 IA Construction of the **Pale Tower** is completed.
- 449 IA As it is wont to do every thousand years or so, the tarrasque rises in Nall and ravages the countryside. It is eventually defeated by the half-orc warrior Brusk. After this, half-orcs are afforded a little more tolerance across the land.
- c. 450 IA Sewer workers, gravediggers, and construction workers begin to spread stories of the vast underground structures beneath Ptolus. Ghul's Labyrinth, Dwarvenhearth, dark elf tunnels, and natural caverns make for an complex system of interconnected subterranean spaces unlike anything anywhere else.
- 512 IA The Brotherhood of the Sword disbands.
- 513 IA By Ptolus' centennial, it has spread beyond its original bounds, the area that is now called Oldtown.
- 514 IA Construction of **Ptolus' Arena** begins.
- 519 IA **Maven Balacazar** consolidates many of the criminals in Ptolus for the first time. The **Longfingers** thieves' guild begins to lose its influence.
- 520 IA Thadeus Koll discovers the **Shadow of Ptolus** and brings the *box of shadows* he finds there to the Malkuth.
- 532 IA A drought in the north leads to food riots in Ptolus. The **Sisterhood of Silence** helps maintain order.
- 533 IA The Sisterhood of Silence builds the **Priory of Introspection** in Ptolus.
- 554 IA Fleeing the Empire's growing distaste for arcane magic (due to the influence of the Church of Lothian), the mages' guild known as the **Inverted Pyramid** relocates to Ptolus, in the hinterlands of the Empire.
- 560 IA The Edict of Deviltry is issued, adding strict laws prohibiting arcane magic to the *Vast Codex*.
- 562 IA The First Inquisition terrorizes the Empire. The "Days of Blood" begin.
- 563 IA With sponsorship from the First Inquisition, the **Keepers of the Veil** forms in Ptolus.
- 564 IA The First Inquisition ends.
- 590 IA The wall around Ptolus is finished.
- 598 IA The Second Inquisition begins. Its main goal is to find the Inverted Pyramid.
- 601 IA The **Order of Iron Might** warriors' guild is founded in Ptolus.
- 602 IA The ghost-lich **Kagrisos** rose from beneath the city streets to cast a spell that would spread a plague throughout the city. Before he could complete this horrible act, the great hero **Abesh Runihan** struck him down. However, Runihan died in the process.
- 609 IA Despite tortures and horrible massacres, the Second Inquisition ends in failure. The Edict of Deviltry falls into disfavor. The "Days of Blood" end.
- 615 IA The Commissar of Ptolus, Norrid Favanar, officially declares the city a safe haven for arcane spellcasters. Both Emperors officially reprimand the Commissar but make no move to actually stop the action. More and more wizards and sorcerers come to Ptolus.
- 617 IA Commissar Norrid Favanar begins to make use of spellcasters in the City Watch.
- 618 IA **Aelian Fardream**, an elf wizard, creates a number of clones of himself, including the one that will one day call itself the Shadow Eyes.
- 620 IA **Derrin Darkbirth** establishes in the Guildsman District an asylum that will one day bear his name.
- 633 IA The Imperial Census records the population of Ptolus as fifty thousand people.
- c. 640 IA Ptolus begins in earnest to incorporate existing underground structures as usable parts of the city. **The Prison** and other underground locations are established.
- 640 IA The **Brotherhood of Redemption** finishes development of a magical process to redeem evil creatures and compel them to turn to good.
- 641 IA The Edict of Deviltry is officially overturned.
- 643 IA **Healers of the Sacred Heat** begin their work in Ptolus.
- 651 IA **Yrkyth Vladaam** creates the Enigma Engine, which he hopes will tap into the power of the Dread One's Entropy Sphere. He fails.
- 657 IA The Prince of the Church is permanently stationed in Ptolus. The Prince at the time is Lukas Mikolic. The Church of Lothian is secretly concerned about the underground activity in Ptolus.
- 688 IA The **Keepers of the Veil** move their headquarters to Ptolus.

At the height of the Empire, the power it wielded was supreme—both temporally and spiritually. The Emperor issued the Edict of Deviltry in 560 IA, declaring arcane magic akin to diabolism. The Edict made arcane spellcasting illegal, and worse, it gave the Church the power to punish, incarcerate, and even execute someone for violating Church doctrine. During the First and Second Inquisitions, the Church wielded supreme power in the Empire, both in the spiritual realm and the secular. And it is difficult to describe what Church leaders did with that power, beyond simply stating that they abused it. They may have thought they were reforging the world in Lothian's name, but today that period of inquisition is called the Days of Blood, and most people in the Church look upon it with shame and regret. In 609 the Second Inquisition ended, and in 641 the Edict of Deviltry was overturned (although most regions were ignoring it long before that).

By then, people's faith in the Empire had been quite shaken, and the Inquisitions stirred up anti-Imperial sentiments in every jurisdiction. Further, the technological advancements that had been the backbone of the Empire slowed to a halt. Over time, people found it harder and harder to locate someone who could repair or maintain their firearms, clockworks, or steam engines. Even among the Grailwarden dwarves, the number of technicians declined with each passing year.

In 706, Empress Addares XXXIII and XVIII died, leaving no direct heirs. Her cousin in Dohrinthas, calling herself **Addares XXXIV and XIX**, declared herself empress and moved the capital to her city. But many opposed her claim. An imperial advisor named **Segaci Fellisti**, who had counseled many emperors and empresses, decided that only he could save the Empire. Soon after, **Holy Emperor Rehoboth** claimed



that if there was no clear successor to the throne, he—the only person in the Empire officially holding the title “Emperor”—should rule, as the first and greatest of the emperors, Delian Von Tessel, did, wielding both religious and secular authority at once.

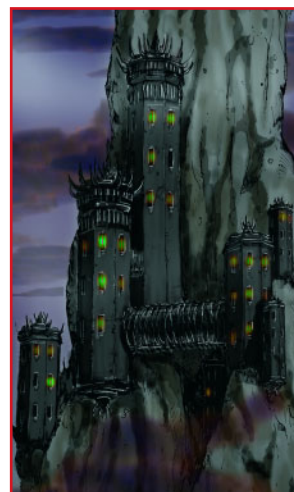
No one knew whom to follow. Everyone seemed to choose a side, including factions of the Imperial army. Taxes were split among all three, depending on the allegiance of the various gover-

nors or commissars. Thus, Imperial finances were in terrible shape when in 710 barbarian invaders from the east stormed Tarsis and sacked the city. Upon leaving the city four years later, King Oulgas, leader of the united Eastern Hordes, said he had conquered it simply because he could. Resentment of the Empire had finally taken its toll.

For more information on the state of the Empire today, see The World chapter.

*Dark Reliquary, PT4: page 238*  
*Knights of the Golden Cross, PT3: page 124*  
*Elder Gods, page 59*

*Empress Addares, page 79*  
*Segaci Fellisti, page 79*  
*Holy Emperor Rehoboth, PT5: page 293*



*Ghul's fortress Goth Gulgameil*

*Pale Tower, PT5: page 329*

*The Arena, PT5: page 315*  
*Balacazars, PT3: page 100*  
*Longfingers Guild, PT3: page 128*

*Shadow of Ptolus, PT5: page 327*  
*Box of shadows, PT5: page 328*  
*Sisterhood of Silence, PT3: page 134*  
*Priory of Introspection, PT5: page 374*  
*Inverted Pyramid, PT3: page 115*  
*Keepers of the Veil, PT3: page 119*

*Order of Iron Might, PT3: page 130*  
*Kagrisos and Abesh Runihan, PT3: page 112*

*Aelian Fardream, PT5: page 348*  
*Derrin Darkbirth, PT4: page 184*  
*The Prison, PT7: page 436*

*Brotherhood of Redemption, PT3: page 107*  
*Healers of the Sacred Heat, PT5: page 373*  
*House Vladaam, PT3: page 96*





Holy Emperor Rehoboth,  
PT5: page 293

King Oulgas, page 41  
Igor Urnst, PT4: page 149  
Empress Addares, page 79  
Twelve Commanders,  
PT4: page 148  
Urthon Aedar, PT3: page 138  
Kirian Ylestos, PT5: page 295

In 712, the Commissar, having fought against monsters throughout his career as a military man, wanted monsters on his side when planning the defense of Ptolus. So he employed Inverted Pyramid mages to polymorph willing volunteers into appropriate monsters. The lack of volunteers limited the program to merely the use of polymorphed trolls guarding the King's River Bridge. One can see these trolls there today, garbed in Imperial military uniforms and serving a human commander. The Commissar still really likes this plan and, should the defense of Ptolus ever become an issue, would conscript "volunteers" for polymorphing.

Tacheron Kint, PT5: page 373  
Emperor Segaci, page 79  
Delver's Guild, PT3: page 108  
Thoy Champous, PT5: page 373  
Sheva Callister, PT4: page 222  
Kevris Killraven, PT3: page 121

- 690 IA After almost two centuries of working unofficially to help keep order, the Sisterhood of Silence gains official Imperial sanction to enforce laws and deal with criminals in Ptolus.
- 693 IA The first incident of Faceless Rage is recorded in Ptolus.
- 695 IA Prince Lukas Mikolic dies of a degenerative disease called the Rotting Fester, which even magic could not permanently cure. The new Prince is his cousin, **Rehoboth Ylestos**.
- 696 IA The Gnoll War rages in southern Rhoth. General Igor Urnst leads Imperial troops to victory there.
- 700 IA Holy Emperor Palabosh dies, and Rehoboth Ylestos becomes the new Emperor of the Church.
- 700 IA The Eastern Hordes unite under the barbarian **King Oulgas**.
- 703 IA **Igor Urnst** is appointed the Commissar of Ptolus
- 706 IA Empress Addares XXXIII and XVIII dies (see "The Imperial Line," page 78). The Empire is in chaos, with ultimately three different people claiming the Lion-Guarded Throne. **Empress Addares XXXIV** attempts to move the capital to her home city of Dohrinthas.
- 707 IA The Commissar assembles the **Twelve Commanders** in Ptolus.
- 708 IA The **Urthon Aedar** begin to appear in Ptolus, prophesying doom and performing enigmatic deeds.
- 709 IA The Eastern Hordes lay siege to Tarsis. Eight-year-old Prince of the Church **Kirian Ylestos** arrives in Ptolus.
- 710 IA Tarsis is overrun by barbarians from the Eastern Hordes. Holy Emperor Rehoboth of the Church of Lothian flees to Ptolus to stay with the Prince of the Church.
- 712 IA The Commissar recruits willing volunteers to be *polymorphed* into trolls to guard the King's River Bridge from all threats.
- 713 IA Explorers plumbing the ancient reaches beneath Ptolus discover great treasures and begin bringing them to the surface. **Tacheron Kint** gains fame as tales spread of the strange underground treasure troves he has found, reportedly dating back to the days of Ghul.
- 714 IA The barbarians leave Tarsis. **Emperor Segaci Fellisti** attempts to re-establish the Empire from its traditional capital.
- 717 IA Ptolus becomes the center of much attention as more and more would-be treasure-seekers plumb the depths below the city.
- 718 IA The **Delver's Guild** is established. **Thoy Champous**, paladin of Ahaar, disappears exploring the regions below Ptolus with the famous *bow of Ahaar*.
- 719 IA **Sheva Callister**, a famous delver, uncovers the *Crown of Ki-Lias*, an artifact of the Charad Titans, below the city. She retires after she sells it.
- 720 IA Minor outbreaks of Scarlet Death spread throughout Ptolus. Future crime lord **Kevris Killraven** arrives in the city.
- 721 IA Today.

#### PLAGUES AND DISEASES OF NOTE

**Faceless Rage** is a magical disease of evil and chaos that affects only humanoids. It transforms its victims by erasing their face and turning them into murderous savages.

Fortitude save (DC 18), infection by contact, incubation time one day, damage 1d6 Intelligence and 1d6 Wisdom, plus transformation. Only magical treatment can save a victim, namely a *remove disease* spell followed by a *regeneration*, *greater restoration*, *wish*, or *miracle*.

**Rotting Fester** is a magical disease once contained solely within the Banewarrens. It causes its victims to deteriorate physically over time.

Fortitude save (DC 16), infection by contact, incubation time 1d3 days, damage 1d3 Constitution. Magic cannot restore Constitution damage, and a *remove disease* or similar spell only suspends the progress of the disease for 1d3 days.

**Scarlet Death** is another magical disease spawned by chaos. Its victims turn red and die very quickly. Some say the appearance of these diseases is actually a re-appearance that points to a festering cyst of chaos and darkness beneath the city that is seeping slowly to the surface.

Fortitude save (DC 15), infection by contact, incubation time one hour, damage 2d6 Constitution and 1d6 Strength.

# Eastern Palastan



WHITEWIND  
SEA

MOONSILVER  
FOREST

MOONHUNT  
RIVER

BAY OF  
PTOLUS



10 miles

South  
Road

Emperor's  
Road

Carper's  
Bay

Tessen

Nakron

Emperor's  
Road

Old  
Coast  
Road

Soerith

Camber

Vioth

Vioth  
Road

Caeralith

Storch

Thyerith

Thymael

Twillendale

Old  
Coast  
Road

Durgle

Faelasith

Emperor's  
Road

Ashenburg

Farris

Balleton

Rolomsford

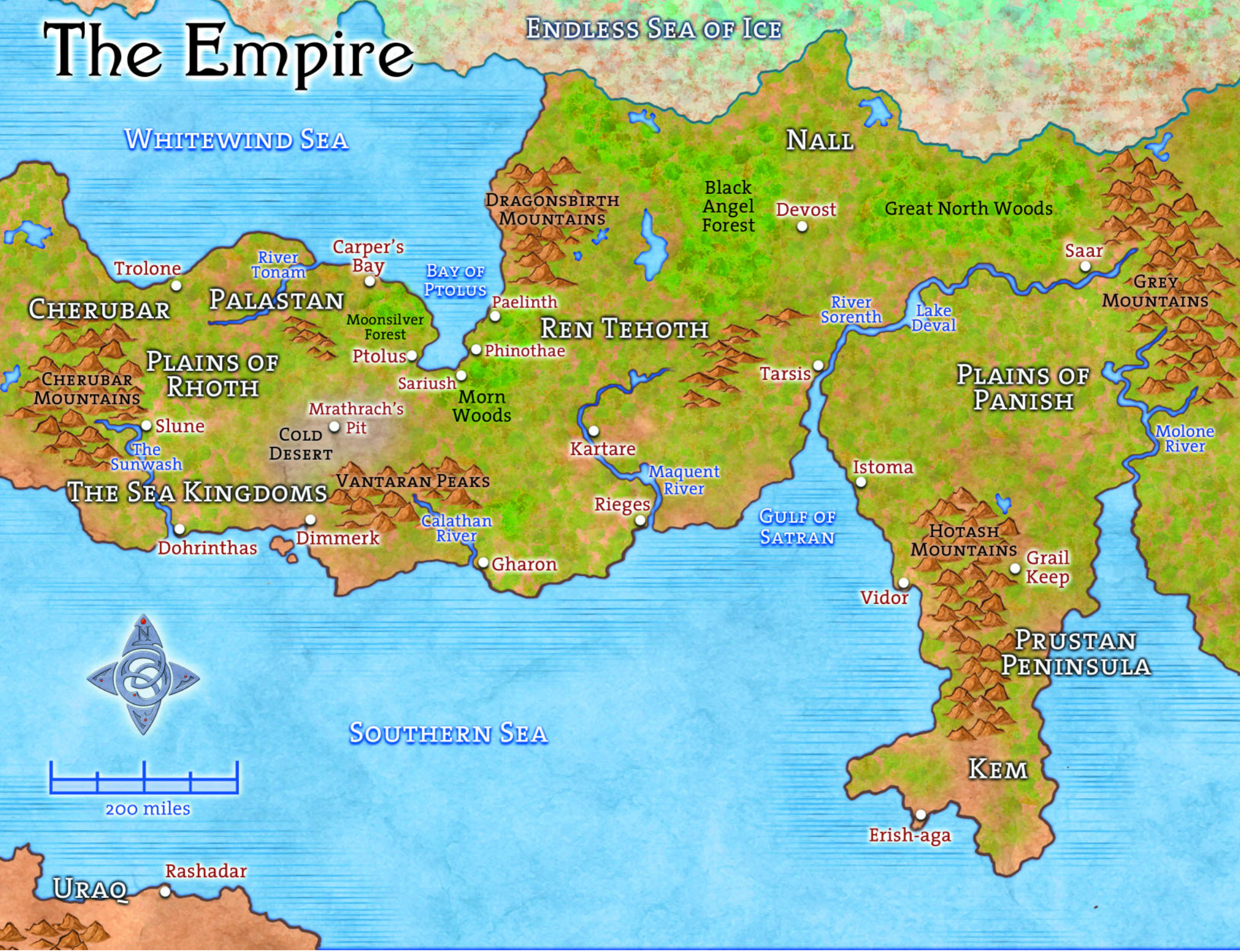
Larth

Spire

Ptolus

Charenburg

# The Empire



ENDLESS SEA OF ICE

WHITEWIND SEA

NALL

CHERUBAR

PALASTAN

DRAGONS BIRTH MOUNTAINS

Black Angel Forest

Great North Woods

Carper's Bay

BAY OF PTOLUS

Devost

Saar

GREY MOUNTAINS

PLAINS OF RHOTH

REN TEHOT

PLAINS OF PANISH

CHERUBAR MOUNTAINS

Moonsilver Forest

River Sorenth

Lake Deval

Ptolus

Paelinth

Phinothae

Tarsis

Sariush

Morn Woods

Mrathrach's

Pit

Kartare

Maquent River

Molone River

COLD DESERT

VANTARAN PEAKS

Rieges

GULF OF SATRAN

Istoma

HOTASH MOUNTAINS

Grail Keep

THE SEA KINGDOMS

Dohrinthas

Dimmerk

Calathan River

Gharon

Vidor

PRUSTAN PENINSULA

KEM

Erish-aga



SOUTHERN SEA



200 miles

URAQ

Rashadar



# PTOLUS

NOBLES' QUARTER

OLDTOWN

SOUTH MARKET

NORTH MARKET

TEMPLE DISTRICT

MIDDTOWN

GUILDSMAN DISTRICT

NECROPOLIS

THE DOCKS

THE WARRENS

BAY OF PTOLUS





# The Ptolus Year

## Newyear

T	K	A	W	E	F	Q
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

## Growth

T	K	A	W	E	F	Q
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				



## Days of the Week

Theoday  
 King'sday  
 Airday  
 Waterday  
 Earthday  
 Fireday  
 Queensday

## Birth

T	K	A	W	E	F	Q
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

## Blessing

T	K	A	W	E	F	Q
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

## Wind

T	K	A	W	E	F	Q
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

## Toil

T	K	A	W	E	F	Q
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

## Rain

T	K	A	W	E	F	Q
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

## Harvest

T	K	A	W	E	F	Q
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

## Bloom

T	K	A	W	E	F	Q
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

## Moons

T	K	A	W	E	F	Q
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

## Sun

T	K	A	W	E	F	Q
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

## Yearsend

T	K	A	W	E	F	Q
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

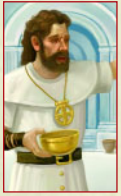
## Holidays

1st of Newyear  
**Newyear's Day**  
 5th of Rain  
**Godsday**  
 10th of Sun  
**Day of Joining**  
 14th of Blessing  
**Brightfather's Day**  
 31st of Harvest  
**Harvest Festival**  
 23rd of Moons  
**Festival of the Cold Moons**  
 30th of Yearsend  
**Yearsend Day**

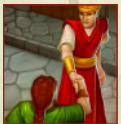
## Special Days in Ptolus



**Newyear's Day (1st of Newyear):** The first day of the year is one of celebration and good tidings. People reflect on the good things that happened in the previous year, but mostly they focus on the potential of the coming year with optimism and hope. Babies born on this day are considered lucky (but not extraordinarily so—unlike the cursed children born one day earlier).



**Godsdays (5th of Rain):** This day is set aside to revere all gods. This is the holiest day in many religions, and at least an important one to all faiths (Lothianites fall into the latter category). Many consider Godsdays to be the day when the gods' influence in the world is the strongest—the day they look down upon their worshippers and pay the most attention. The *Stones of Thamus* on Clasthamus Isle (see “Necropolis” in PT4) had to falter one day each year, so Godsdays was chosen, because the good fortune and holiness of the day seemed to make it the safest choice.



**Day of Joining (10th of Sun):** This day is holy in many religions. Even to irreligious folk, it is thought to herald good fortune, particularly regarding new ventures such as alliances, business dealings, and, most importantly, marriages. In fact, ten times more couples are married on the Day of Joining than on any other day.



**Brightfather's Day (14th of Blessing):** This ancient holiday is still observed, although its exact origins are now lost. Most religions have adopted it as a high holy day to revere an important god. All look upon it as a day of feasting, family, and making peace with enemies. The Pact of Brightfather's Day (see the “History” chapter) was a historic joining of elves, dwarves, and humans to combat Ghul, the Skull-King. This is the high holy day of the Church of Lothian.



**Harvest Festival (31st of Harvest):** Celebrating the bounties of the harvest this day is filled with feasting, dancing, and performances of short historical plays characterized by colorful masks. The performers of these plays are often children.



**Festival of the Cold Moons (23rd of Moons):** Most people consider this day, which the elves call *Chaokaemus*, to be a dire one of ill omens and evil spirits. The somber, quiet festivals held each year on this night are full of rituals to ward away evil, to think about lost loved ones, and to appreciate one's living family and friends. The elves, however, see this night as one of rejuvenation and rebirth—of good omens, not bad ones. They also hold festivals on this night, but they are celebrations of life and joy.



**Yearsend Day (30th of Yearsend):** If the Festival of the Cold Moons is a dire time, Yearsend is worse. It is considered a wholly unlucky day with no redeeming value, as the luck and goodness of the year has been all used up. No marriages, no celebrations, and no meetings are ever scheduled for Yearsend Day. Most people stay at home. Shops are usually closed, and people on the street hurry to their destinations, lest the ill luck of this day cause them some misfortune along the way.

Children born on Yearsend Day are cursed. They suffer a -1 penalty on all attacks, saves, and checks for their entire life. Calamity follows them wherever they go. Milk sours faster in their presence. People standing next to these jinxes are struck by lightning. Buildings they enter collapse. These extremely unlucky individuals can undo their bad fortune in one of two ways. The first is to wait until everyone who knows when they were born has died. The second is to carry around a talisman made of a mummified cat's eye. As long as the talisman remains in their possession, they suffer no ill effects.

Destor is a god of Yearsend. His worshippers ask him to send ill fortune away from them and toward others. (Not a popular sentiment: Destor's worship was banned from Ptolus more than eighty years ago.)

### THE MONTH OF VALLIS

Although not marked on the calendar, most people believe there is a secret thirteenth month called Vallis, named after the mysterious “moon of magic” that is said to have disappeared from the sky aeons ago. One can access this secret month only by magic, and hence it is sometimes thought of as “wizards' month.” Supposedly, casting a special spell at Yearsend lets a mage enjoy an extra month all to himself. (See “Magic” in PT6.)

# IMPERIAL CITIZENSHIP PAPERS



IN THE EYES OF THE LION-GUARDED THRONE, THE HOLDER OF THESE PAPERS IS HEREBY RECOGNIZED AS

\_\_\_\_\_  
(NAME)

AND CONFIRMED AS A CITIZEN IN GOOD STANDING OF THE EVERLASTING EMPIRE OF TARSIS.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(PLACE OF BIRTH)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(PLACE OF RESIDENCE)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(RACE)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(OCCUPATION)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(PARENTS' NAMES)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(GROUP AFFILIATIONS)

WITNESSED HERE, THIS \_\_\_\_\_ DAY OF \_\_\_\_\_ IN  
THE YEAR \_\_\_\_\_ OF THE IMPERIAL AGE, BY

*Belara Trasero*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
INVESTED IMPERIAL MINISTER

\_\_\_\_\_  
(SIGNATURE OF CITIZEN)



# IMPERIAL IDENTIFICATION PAPERS



IN THE EYES OF THE LION-GUARDED THRONE, THE HOLDER OF THESE PAPERS IS HEREBY RECOGNIZED AS

\_\_\_\_\_  
(NAME)

WITH NO CLAIMS OF CITIZENSHIP IN THE EVERLASTING EMPIRE OF TARSIS.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(PLACE OF BIRTH)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(PLACE OF RESIDENCE)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(RACE)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(OCCUPATION)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(PARENTS' NAMES)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(GROUP AFFILIATIONS)

WITNESSED HERE, THIS \_\_\_\_\_ DAY OF \_\_\_\_\_ IN  
THE YEAR \_\_\_\_\_ OF THE IMPERIAL AGE, BY

*Belara Trasero*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
INVESTED IMPERIAL MINISTER

\_\_\_\_\_  
(SIGNATURE)



# IMPERIAL LICENSE TO BEAR FIREARMS



THE BEARER OF THIS LICENSE

\_\_\_\_\_  
(NAME)

IS HEREBY GRANTED, THROUGH THE GENEROSITY OF THE LION-GUARDED THRONE, THE RIGHT TO POSSESS A FIREARM(S) AND AMMUNITION.

LICENSE HOLDERS MAY CARRY SAID FIREARMS IN PUBLIC PLACES AND MAY CONCEAL THEM ON THEIR PERSONS BUT MUST DISPLAY THIS LICENSE UPON DEMAND BY ANY IMPERIAL OFFICIALS OR AGENTS THEREOF.

LICENSE HOLDERS REMAIN SOLELY RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY CRIMES OR WRONGDOINGS RESULTING FROM USE OR MISUSE OF SAID FIREARMS.

WITNESSED HERE, THIS \_\_\_\_\_ DAY OF \_\_\_\_\_ IN THE YEAR \_\_\_\_\_ OF THE IMPERIAL AGE, BY

Durannis Kaletan  
IMPERIAL REGISTRAR OF FIREARMS

\_\_\_\_\_  
(SIGNATURE OF LICENSE HOLDER)



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# PTOLUS™

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Swordswoman



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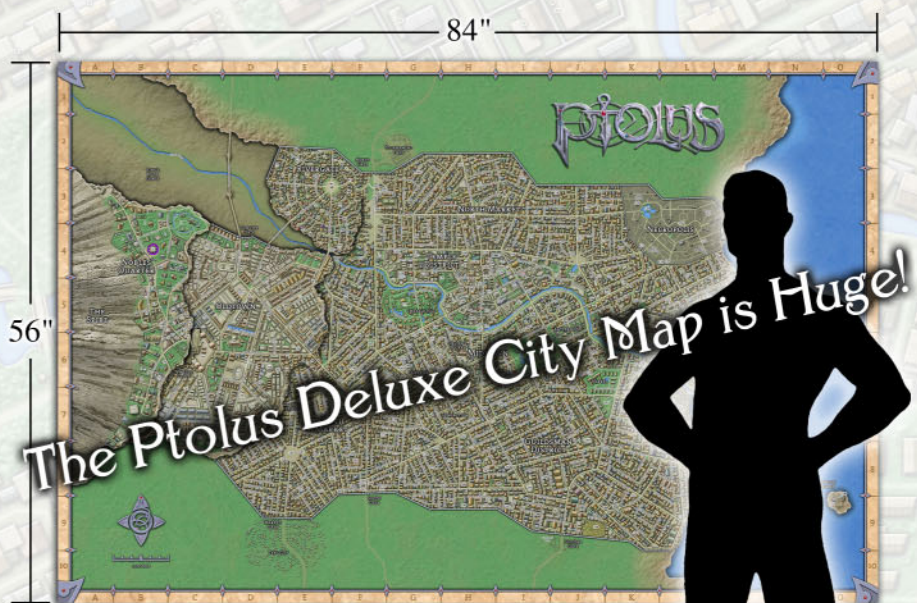
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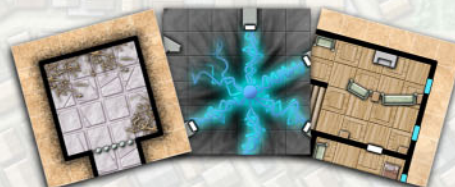
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# PTOLUS

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