

Priests and Shaman

Priesthood and the gods

The priests and their initiates have been trained to interact with the gods. Their training and dedication permits them to lead services of worship and support their congregation as well as to enter the Fane of the gods. Humans may elect to be priests, any member of the Duke's Camp can elect to be an initiate.

Followers

Anyone may follow the gods. When these followers join in worship lead by a priest they help the priest to attract the attention of the gods.

Initiates

Initiates have the responsibility for leading and guiding the untrained followers of the gods. Although they are generally dedicated to a single god, they have general knowledge of the gods and their proper worship.

Initiates are much more helpful than mere followers in attracting attention for their priest.

Initiates may approach the Fane of the gods and enter its dwelling, though they may not touch the Altar without being asked to do so.

Priests

Priests have all the duties and responsibilities of an initiate but further, they are responsible for leading the followers of the gods in services of worship, prayer and thanksgiving. It is an article of faith that a priest should not attempt to lead more than one service each day for this would surely bring the wrath of the gods.

Priests are even more powerful than initiates when it comes to attracting the attentions of the gods even when they are not leading the service in question.

Priests are responsible for supplicating the gods to create the barrier around the Duke's Camp and for maintaining it with their prayers. They are also responsible for bringing any other blessings of the gods to their followers.

The Blessed

It has been known for a follower of the gods to receive their particular blessings. Such a blessing may transform the follower into something no longer quite entirely mortal. This transformation manifests in many small changes of appearance as well as gaining strange powers.

The process by which this is achieved is not known but it is certain that it is more likely to happen to initiates and priests.

The Fane of the gods

This term is often used to refer to the place where the gods speak to their followers. In the Vale where permanent structures are impossible, this will be a large tent set up by the priests and their servants. In truth it is really the chest / altar which is placed within this tent. Entering the tent of the Fane may be fatal, though this is unlikely to happen to initiates and priests, touching the altar is even higher risk.

When the gods are present, the appearance of the Altar changes and at these times it becomes possible to commune them. Churchmen should be aware that the gods do not answer requests for their blessings or more general aid; they grant their help as they choose and to those they deem worthy – asking will frequently cause offence.

The Fane is also the centre of the power that produces the barrier around the Duke's Camp.

Shaman and the demons

The shaman and their assistants have a special connection with the demons. This allows them to deal with them in much greater safety than others. In the course of their dealings they communicate on behalf of others who wish to commune with the demons. Orcs and goblins may elect to be shaman or a shamanic assistant.

Shamanic Assistants

Shamanic Assistants may enter the presence of the Black Mirror and seek to commune with the demons. Demons are capricious beings and a supplicant would be wise to wait at the entrance until invited to enter.

Common reasons to seek an audience include to bring word to the demons of information of interest to them and to bring them tribute. The latter reason is vital because it allows soul crystals charged with the souls of living beings to be brought to the demons in trade for the demonic currency which is required to pay for demonic assistance with the Tinkers' crafting efforts.

Shaman and their Assistants may approach the Black Mirror and enter its dwelling, though they may not touch the Mirror itself without being asked to do so.

Shaman

Shaman have all the benefits of an Assistant but have a stronger connection with the demons which makes it more likely that they will survive and less likely that they will annoy the demons. While there is no hard and fast rule, a Shaman who keeps bothering the demons is pushing his or her luck and will ultimately pay tribute with their soul.

Common reasons to seek an audience include to bring word to the demons of information of interest to them and to bring them tribute. Shaman also escort Tinkers into the presence of demons to complete their magical crafting and to act as advocates for those seeking to form a pact with a demon in order to become one of the possessed (although care should be taken as this may simply result in the supplicant being taken as tribute).

Shaman are responsible for persuading the demons to create the barrier around the Khan's Camp and for maintaining it with their tribute.

The Possessed

It has been known for a mortal to form a pact with a particular demon in order to gain great power. These pacts take the form of bargains which must be carefully yet respectfully negotiated with the demon and requires the aid of a Shaman to act as an advocate. Such a pact may transform the possessed into something no longer quite entirely mortal. This transformation manifests in many small changes of appearance as well as gaining strange powers.

The Black Mirror

When the Khan's forces arrive in the Vale, the first thing that they do is create a shrine in which the Black Mirror can be set up. This is vital because the Black Mirror is the mechanism through which the shaman and their assistants communicate with the Khan's demon allies. Entering the presence of the Mirror is usually fatal although the shaman and their assistants can survive provided that they do not irritate any demons present. For some reason Tinkers are also permitted to enter the demons' presence and the demons also permit any warlord with sufficient following to enter their presence (respectfully) as they recognise the warlord's position as an ally. No undead below the rank of Lich is known to have survived contact with the demons and Liches generally avoid contact.

The Black Mirror is also the centre of the power that produces the barrier around the Khan's Camp.