

RELIGION

Basic Cosmology: As befits a heroic fantasy campaign, *Faded Glory* is ultimately about the struggle of good against the forces of evil. With that in mind, let's look at some basic cosmology for the *Faded Glory* campaign. The following is from the *Gospel of Creation* in the *Book of Osirian* and is known throughout the lands:

*In the time before time began, the Great Mother that is the earth was shrouded in Shadow, so that nothing could grow upon the land. The Great Mother Earth despaired, for all that she brought forth from her womb withered and died in the face of the Shadow. So it came to pass that she took a great part of her essence and placed it into three great jewels from the depths of the earth. The Great Mother Earth then let her tears fall onto the first jewel and behold, **Osirian**, the Light-bringer, first child of the earth mother, was born!*

Osirian was tall and strong and fair and the light blazed forth from his eyes, driving the Shadow back and for the first time, the Shadow knew fear! Instantly, trees and flowers bloomed, hills and mountains formed, seas filled and rivers flowed with water, for the Great Earth Mother was freed from the curse of the Shadow.

*The Shadow formed a dart of darkness and hurled it at Osirian, seeking to slay him. The dart struck Osirian near his heart and four great drops of blood welled from the wound and fell to the breast of the Great Earth Mother. As Osirian's blood drops struck the seas, each transformed into a lesser likeness of the light-bringer and rose to stand at his side. Thus were the archangels **Tyrial**, **Gabriel**, **Myriel** and **Uriel** born and the Shadow again knew fear.*

The Shadow formed more darts of darkness and hurled them at Osirian and his minions. Tyrial, Gabriel, Myriel and Uriel were all struck near the heart and from each of them, four drops of blood welled, falling to the earth and being transformed by the Great Mother Earth into lesser likenesses of themselves – thus were the 12 greater angels born.

*Osirian was struck in the loins and again, four drops of blood welled. The first fell into the newly grown forest. The second fell onto the newly raised mountains. The third fell onto the newly formed hills. The fourth fell into the newly flowing river. From these drops rose four lesser aspects of Osirian, the four Elder Races – born of the blood of Osirian's loins, each touched by the elements they had landed among. From the woods rose **Corelian**, father of the Elves. From the mountains rose **Moradin**, father of the Dwarves. From the hills rose **Garilin**, father of the gnomes. Lastly, from the river rose **Avorin**, father of the halflings.*

The Great Earth Mother could see that her firstborn was hard-pressed by the Shadow and she closed her eyes to shed tears unto the next great jewel. The Shadow sensed what she was about and formed another dart of darkness and hurled it at the great jewel, just as the earth mother's tears fell. The dart of darkness pierced the jewel a moment before the Great Earth Mother's tears covered it and now one saw, for the Earth Mother's eyes were closed and Osirian and his minions were busy binding their wounds. Thus was Arhiman, second child of the earth mother, born.

He was tall and strong and fair, just like his brother. But deep inside him, the dart of darkness took root and began to slowly grow. Arhiman strode forward to stand beside Osirian and the two

brothers, along with the archangels and the lesser angels and the fathers of the Elder Races contested with the Shadow. Still they were hard pressed and so the Great Earth Mother closed her eyes once again and let her tears fall on the third great jewel. She had used much of her essence on the first two jewels and so the being that sprang from the third jewel did not have the strength of the first two, but the Great Earth Mother empowered her in other ways. Thus was **Seluna**, third child of the earth mother, born.

Seluna was slight and pale, yet possessed an inner power as great as the physical prowess of her brothers. She summoned forth-great magics and with her help, Osirian and Arhiman and their minions defeated the Shadow and locked it away in a great prison, far from the lands of the Great Earth Mother. The earth mother, exhausted from the birth of her three children, fell into a deep slumber, from which her children could not awaken her.

Osirian and Arhiman and Seluna rejoiced at their victory and set about ordering the world. Osirian made Arhiman captain of the Hosts of Heaven and his most trusted advisor. Seluna took the Elder Races under her wing and taught them the secrets of magic and they flourished and multiplied. Osirian busied himself with creating birds and fish and beasts to populate the lands.

For many ages, all was well and all were content with their lot. Over the ages, however, the dart of darkness within Arhiman slowly grew, and he began to resent the sovereignty of his older brother Osirian. Arhiman quietly began to sown discontent among the archangels and angels, the host of heaven. His fair face and words belied his false words and corrupt heart. The Archangel Uriel tried to tell Osirian of Arhiman's machinations, but such was his faith in Arhiman that he dismissed the warning and berated Uriel for his pettiness.

Uriel, angered at his rebuke, allowed himself to be persuaded to Arhiman's cause. Arhiman persuaded his brother to create a new being, using all of his skill. Arhiman argued that all of the other minions had been created by chance and that Osirian deserved a minion that was truly of his own creation. Osirian agreed, and for seven days and seven nights, he worked unceasingly to create his perfect being. Just as Osirian was about to finish and breath life into his creation, Arhiman and Uriel stole into his chamber and struck him down.

They bound Osirian with a specially forged chain and cast him into a deep pit, where they thought that he would perish. Arhiman then claimed ruler ship over the heavens and the earth and all of the races that dwelt therein. He took Seluna, whom he had secretly lusted after, to be his wife, in order to father a new race of beings. He also prepared the final creation of Osirian to be sacrificed to celebrate his nuptials.

For three days, Seluna resisted his advances, so Arhiman taunted her with the knowledge that Osirian was still alive, bound and in a pit, slowly dying. Seluna agreed to yield to Arhiman's lust if he told her were Osirian was. Such was his desire and confidence that he told her, after setting Uriel to watch the host of heaven and the door to his chamber. Seluna yielded to him and he begat himself upon her.

Such was Seluna's strength and friendship with the Elder Races that she was able to tell Corelian, Moradin, Garilin and Avorin the whereabouts of Osirian with a dream. The fathers of the Elder Races braved many obstacles to rescue Osirian and free him from his bindings.

On the next day, Arhiman and Seluna stood before the assembled hosts of heaven and the Elder Races and prepared to sacrifice the last creation of Osirian so Arhiman could bless their union. Freed from his imprisonment, Osirian burst into the ceremony and denounced his brother, tears streaming down his face. As he leapt to attack his brother, one of his tears fell upon his creation, imbuing it with life!

Great was the battle that followed, for Uriel and the three angels that had sprung from him stood with Arhiman – thus the host of heaven was sundered. And Arhiman had been busy with his own creations – golems and dragons and giants all rose up and assaulted the Elder Races and the minions of Osirian. In the end, the power and righteous anger of Osirian and the Archangels Tyrial, Gabriel and Myriel and the assembled hosts of the Elder Races were too much and Arhiman was cast down and his heart was cut from his chest and flung upon the ground and his body was burned.

As Osirian wept over the heart of his brother, he noticed his last creation lay on the ground next to Arhiman's heart, bathed in the tears of Osirian and the blood of both Osirian and Arhiman. He named his creation man, in honor of his fallen brother and vowed never to create another creature. He then banished Uriel and his followers to the dark places beneath the earth and scattered the mad creature of his brother to the winds. Seluna told him of her rape and that she was with child and brother and sister left the field to mourn their losses. So too did the host of heaven and the Elder Races quit the field, leaving man standing alone on the field with the heart of Arhiman.

The heart of Arhiman contained the dart of darkness that had struck Arhiman at the moment of his birth and that dart whispered to man, bidding him to take the heart of Arhiman to the sea and cast it in. Man, being touched by the blood of Arhiman as well as the blood and tears of Osirian, obeyed. He took the heart to the nearest sea and cast into the depths, then he made his way out into the world, touched by both the light and the darkness.

Within the year, Seluna gave birth to twins, a boy, Azrael, and a girl, Mortiana. Azrael resembled both his father and his uncle. He grew quickly to be a tall and fair child, yet there was always a brooding quality within him. His sister was slight and pale, like her mother, yet she also contained an inner reservoir of strength. When the children were 16, they were playing by the seashore when Azrael found a strange gem among the flotsam. When he retrieved it, the spirit of Arhiman possessed the lad. Driven mad by years of isolation and despair, the spirit of Arhiman caused Azrael to strike out at the closest thing to him, his sister Mortiana. Horrified that he had struck his sister down, Azrael-Arhiman fled into the wilds and eventually made into the realms carved out by Uriel and the fallen angels.

Alerted by Mortiana's cries, Seluna rushed to seashore to find her daughter dying. She carried her to Osirian, who prevented her from traveling all the way into the Deathsgate, but he could not bring her back to the living. There she remains to this day, standing astride the Deathsgate, neither alive nor dead, judging those that come before her.

Mortiana's fate proved to be too much for Seluna. She requested that Osirian remove her from the world that had caused her so much pain. Although it grieved him to do so, he agreed to her request and placed her among the heavens, where she could escape the pain of the world, but still

follow what happened in the world. There she remains to this day, Seluna, the moon, watching over the body of the Great Earth Mother while Osirian rests.

So it is that Osirian, Lord of Light, Overlord of the Heavenly Host, the One True God, seeks to keep the darkness at bay. His three Archangels, Tyrial, Gabriel and Myriel, the nine greater angels and the spirits of the saints that served in life and were judged by Mortiana to be worthy to serve in the afterlife serve him faithfully. He is worshipped on the lands by his faithful, the Church of Light, whose adherents revere the Lord of Light in all of his aspects and also give homage to his Archangels, greater angels and saints.

Azrael, corrupted by the heart of Arhiman, the Great Deceiver, the Prince of Lies, and the Corrupter of Souls, opposes him. At his right hand stands Uriel the Damned, Captain of the Hosts of Hell. They are served in turn by the three fallen greater angels and the countless hordes of corrupted souls, judged and found lacking by Mortiana. The twisted adherents of the Church of Darkness, or the Cult of Shadow worship Azrael-Arhiman, as it is more commonly known. They revere him in all of his aspects and also give homage to Uriel, Duke of Hell, and the demons and devils that follow them.

Those that have a special bond of nature and seek to remove themselves from the struggle between the Church of Light and the Cult of Shadow quietly worship the Great Earth Mother. Her adherents are the druids that watch over quiet groves and places of great natural beauty. They seek to maintain the balance that is the Great Earth Mother and protect the quiet places from harm. Those that follow the path of the Arcane often revere Seluna, for it is she who replenishes their power as they sleep though the night, bathing the lands with her soft moonlight.

Game Information: The two primary religious forces in the game are the Church of Light and the Church of Darkness, commonly referred to as the Cult of Shadow. Worship of the Great Earth Mother (Mistress of Druids) and Seluna (Mistress of the Arcane) joins these primary faiths. Each church is basically monotheistic, with Osirian being the One True God for the Church of Light and Azrael-Arhiman serving the same position in the Cult of Shadow.

Each church recognized multiple aspects of its chief deity. For example, Corelian, Moradin, Garilin and Avorin are all considered to be aspects of Osirian, so their followers are “welcomed” into the Church. In addition, Osirian and Azrael-Arhiman are served by Archangels, greater angels and “saints” (mortal followers that have been recognized by their respective church for outstanding service). These servants are venerated and have followers of their own, although Church doctrine holds that all divine powers granted to such followers flows from either Osirian or Azrael-Arhiman.

In addition to these main faiths, scores of lesser cults exist. Some sages believe that if enough people believe in a divine being, that belief enables followers to be granted the favor of divine magic. Other sages believe that all divine power flows from one of the four aforementioned sources and that followers of these lesser cults receive their divine magic to further the ends of Osirian, Azrael-Arhiman, The Great Earth Mother or Seluna. Doctrine from the Church of Light holds the latter view to be true and further believes that most such cults receive their powers from Azrael-Arhiman, the Great Deceiver and Prince of Lies, and should be eradicated.

The followers of Osirian (in all of these aspects), the Archangels, the greater angels, officially sanctioned saints and those who worship Seluna are “welcomed” into the Church of Light. This means they may worship in the Church of Light’s temples, monasteries and cathedrals; receive the sacraments and blessings of the Church; receive healing, aid and comfort from the Church; and petition the Church for Resurrection and Restoration. The followers of the Great Earth Mother are not “welcomed” into the Church, but relations between the two faiths is usually cautiously cordial. The followers of Azrael-Arhiman and his minions are not “welcomed” into the Church and they are considered heretics. The Church actively seeks to root out and destroy the followers of the Cult of Shadow whenever and wherever they find them.

Heretics are given one chance to repent from the Cult during their lifetime. If they repent and later return to their evil ways, they are hunted down without mercy. If they refuse to repent, they are slain to prevent their evil from continuing in the world. Unfortunately, some of the more strident members of Church hierarchy extend these views to all faiths that are not “welcomed” into the Church. This is particularly true in the Empire and the Jewel Cities.

Finally, there are rumors of a secret sect that exists that venerates Mortiana, but the Church has never confirmed these rumors.

Primary Deities: The following is a list of the primary deities in *Faded Glory*, including their alignment and the domains available to their clergy. This is by no means an exhaustive list, as many obscure cults and forgotten powers may still exist.

Church of Light

- Osirian (Lord of Light, Overlord of the Heavenly Host, The One True God, Patron of Imperial Emor); LG; Worshipped by any good; Domains – Fire, Good, Law, Soul, Sun. The Clergy of Osirian lead the Church of Light and will normally be the senior clergy at any given temple or monastery.
- Tyrial (Right Hand of Osirian, Captain of the Heavenly Host, Patron of Paladins); LG; Worshipped by any good; Domains – Good, Protection, Strength, War. The Clergy of Osirian is the primary militant arm of the Church of Light. Many of their members go on to become Holy Paladins, serving the needs of the Church.
- Gabriel (Left Hand of Osirian, Master of the Fleets of Heaven, Patron of Sailors); NG; Worshipped by any good or non-evil neutral; Domains – Air, Travel, Water, Weather. The Clergy of Gabriel is popular with ship captains and in coastal areas.
- Myriel (Heart of Osirian, Mistress of Mercy); NG; Worshipped by any good or non-evil neutral; Domains – Good, Guardian, Healing, Protection. The Clergy of Myriel are typically not very militant, preferring to use peaceful means to solve issues. They will oppose followers of the Cult of Shadows without pause, however.
- Corelian (Aspect of Osirian, Master of the Forests, Patron of Elves, Caeldyn and Rangers); CG; Worshipped by any good or non-evil neutral; Domains – Animal,

Earth, Good, Plant. The Clergy of Corelian are few since the elves disappeared, but the deity is still worshipped by the Caeldyn and those rangers that do not venerate the Great Earth Mother.

- Moradin (Aspect of Osirian, Master of the Mountains, Patron of Dwarves and Khazardyn); LG; Worshipped by any good; Domains – Earth, Fire, Strength, War. The Clergy of Moradin are few since the dwarves disappeared, but the deity is still worshipped by the Khazardyn, particularly in the Monrovia Highlands.
- Garilin (Aspect of Osirian, Master of Song, Patron of Bards, Gnomes and Rogues); CG; Worshipped by good and non-evil neutral; Domains – Guardian, Protection, Travel, Trickery. The Clergy of Garilin are not numerous, particularly since the destruction of the Gnomes during the Race War. Garilin does have small, but loyal following among bards and rogues.
- Avorin (Aspect of Osirian, Master of Rivers, Patron of Halflings); NG; Worshipped exclusively by good and non-evil neutral halflings; Domains – Good, Luck, Travel, Trickery. The Clergy of Avorin is very active in assisting halfling merchant houses and protecting them from attack.
- In addition to the powers listed above, there are nine greater angels and numerous saints that are venerated as part of the Church of Light (more information on these powers will be provided to those who choose to play a cleric of the Church of Light).

Cult of Shadow (Church of Darkness)

- Azrael-Arhiman (The Great Deceiver, Prince of Lies, Corrupter of Souls, Overlord of Hell, Patron of Divine Evil); NE; Worshipped in many aspects by all evil and some non-good neutral; Domains – Destruction, Evil, Trickery, Undeath. The Clergy of Azrael-Arhiman seek to bring woe to the lands and advance the cause of Azrael-Arhiman against Osirian and the Church of Light. They operate from hidden temples and shrines in every region and are a secretive lot. Most evil races; the Felevar, the Warveds; the Grimlocks and others worship some aspect of Azrael-Arhiman. They also create many of the undead creatures that walk the land.
- Uriel (Right Hand of Azrael-Arhiman, The Damned, Captain of the Hosts of Hell, Patron of Blackguards); LE; Worshipped primarily by evil warriors and fallen paladins; Domains – Evil, Fire, Strength, War. The Clergy of Uriel are the sword arm of the Cult of Shadow. Most exalted among them are “The 13” – all fallen paladins damned for eternity.
- Baelzar (Blade of Azrael-Arhiman, The Faceless One, Patron of Assassins); CE; Worshipped by assassins and Gnolls; Domains – Chaos, Evil, Luck, Trickery. The Clergy of Baelzar are few in number but greatly feared. They are rumored to be able to walk through a crowded tavern, kill their victim and escape without ever being seen.
- Voryndiel (Whore of Azrael-Arhiman, The Temptress, Queen of the Succubi, Mistress of the Night); CE; Worshipped by harlots, were-creatures and Succubi; Domains – Astral, Chaos, Charm, Evil. The Clergy of Voryndiel are found seedy taverns and high-class brothels. They delight in corrupting innocent souls then sending them to the depths of Hell.

- Kryshni (Breath of Azrael-Arhiman, The Rat Queen, Mistress of the Plague); NE; Worshipped primarily by the Skaven; Domains – Air, Evil, Knowledge, Undeath. The Clergy of Kryshni are often found in the sewers of major cities, ministering to their Skaven flock and are rarely human.
- There are numerous other powers - demons, devils, dragons and corrupted souls that serve the Cult of Shadow. It is said that the legions of Hell are beyond counting!

Other Powers

- The Great Earth Mother (Nature, The Life-giver, Patron of Druids); N; Worshipped primarily by Druids and those close to nature; Domains – N/A). The Clergy of the Great Earth Mother are Druids. Most seek to find balance in nature, although they can be any of the alignments listed in the PHB for Druids.
- Seluna (The Silver Lady, Mistress of the Arcana, Patron of Sorcerers and Wizards); NG; Worshipped primarily by sorcerers and wizards; Domains – Astral, Knowledge, Magic, Travel. The Clergy of Seluna is small, but powerful. Many have knowledge of arcane magic in addition to their divine abilities.
- There are scores of minor cults scattered throughout the lands, with new ones springing up every few years thriving for a while, and then dying out.

Domains: There are several new domains that clergy of the various faiths have access to listed below. In addition, the *Death* Domain from PHB page 163 has been renamed the *Undeath* Domain.