

Chapter 3

Character Classes

“What is the measure of man? Of woman? Some say power and riches, others friends and good health, still others accomplishments and recognition. Holy books say that a man’s worth is known only to the gods and shall be revealed in the pressure of the grave. I submit that you shall know the measure of a man by what his left hand does when his right hand is not looking. Thus, we are all of two natures.”

– Imam Nafari al-Muluki

The AL-QADIM campaign provides character builds suited to adventures in the Land of Fate. These guidelines, while useful, are just that – guidelines. If you decide to create your own character concept keep in mind that these builds are more than rules, they are also role-playing tools that can be used for internal character conflict and development. While the builds represent heroines and heroes, they also have weaknesses such as the askar’s rivalries and feuding or the sa’luk’s running from bad situations. These “points of darkness” in the PCs are great fuel for player-generated quests.

Class Builds

Beggar-thieves mark a mystic talking to his donkey while a sharp-eyed barber shaves a weary mercenary. They are familiar faces in the Land of Fate, but they have changed too; for example the merchant-rogue of 2nd edition has been elevated to a merchant-prince (a warlord) and the matrud is now a ranger (not a rogue). Within these pages you will also find new faces introduced for the first time – the traitor, fateweaver, and a host of others. Players can choose from any of the builds listed for their class below in addition to the ones in the PHB.

Clerics

Pragmatist	Traveling and contemporary priests of the common people
Ethoist	Dutiful officiates of the faith tending everyday prayer services
Moralist	Righteous and puritanical zealots militant in their faith
Hakima	Wise women whose clear vision pierces the veils of deception
Mystic	Reclusive prophets devoted to revealing a new spiritual truth

Fighters

Askar	Raucous citizen-soldiers fiercely loyal to city and clan
Guard	Stoic defenders of caravan, harem, mosque, and palace
Mercenary	Callous sell-swords feared in wartime and reviled during peace
Mamluk	Slaves raised as elite soldiers and cavalry of utter loyalty
Traitor	Branded and jaded soldiers on the run from tyranny

Paladins

Faris	Righteous exemplars protecting the people against injustice
Ghazi	Divinely-gifted raiders striking at enemies of the faith
Reckoner	Grim scarred devil hunters who do not fear the hellfire

Rangers

Corsair	Unscrupulous privateers in love with the freedom of the seas
Desert Rider	Daring horsemen and women both raiding and protecting desert travelers
Matrud	Bitter and calculating exiles hardened to a lonely life

Rogues

Barber	Quick-witted and menacing apothecaries, smugglers, and spies
Beggar-Thief	Charming and nimble pickpockets spiteful of upper classes
Daroga	Astute police detectives willing to overlook and bend the law
Holy Slayer	Undercover zealots using terror tactics to kill their targets
Sa'luk	Adventurous conmen one step ahead of debt and death

Warlocks

Malaka'is	Haunted souls pacted to mysterious and menacing angelic beings
Rawun	Glib tribal lorekeepers pacted to the spirit of history itself
Sha'ir	Impetuous summoners pacted to the auspicious Djinni Lords

Warlords

Amir	Shrewd noble lords ever defending and conquering fortresses
Merchant-Prince	Enterprising conquistadors seeking new trade routes and frontiers
Sheikh	Proud and uncompromising chiefs of the desert tribes

Wizards

Elemental Mage	Righteous and secretive wizards pursuing an elemental ideal
Fateweaver	Manipulators of the web of fate with a glimpse of eternity
Feisha	Tribal witches combating monstrosities with arcane wards
Philosopher Mage	Pious astrologers and alchemists straying close to heresy
Spectre	Outlaw illusionists and enchanters with one foot in another world

Paragon Paths

Each build suggests paragon paths suited to that character concept; these are drawn from the class-based paragon paths in the PHB and the new paragon paths presented here. Take these suggestions with a grain of salt; after all, perhaps your sheikh is a multi-classed ghazi with the Heir Apparent paragon path who raids to challenge a tyrant for his rightful throne. Paragon paths denoted as “universal” are available to Zakharan characters regardless of class, though they may have other prerequisites.

Cleric Paragon Paths

Disaffected Priest	Jaded priest of questionable faith angry at clerical tyranny
Heresiarch	Leader of a heretical religious movement
Imam	Respected theologian and prayer leader of a mosque
Mujaddid	Prophesied reviver of the pure tradition
Wandering Saint	Compassionate and terrifying miracle-worker
Wisdomkeeper	Protector of oral and written religious traditions

Fighter Paragon Paths

Fate Blade	Warrior chosen by fate to be in the right place at the right time
Man of Two Masters	Cagey soldier whose true allegiances are impossible to pin down
Peacemaker	Weary warrior seeking to forge lasting peace ... by the sword
Scimitar Dancer	Master of the traditional Zakharan ritual fighting style
Slave of the Promise	Ruthless and respected warrior-slave fighting to earn freedom
Tasked Minder	Guardman keeping his charge in as much as enemies out

Paladin Paragon Paths

Breath of the Divine Wind	Superhumanly fast raider engaging foes in a zephyr of destruction
Denier of Paradise	Holy warrior who has seen the afterlife and chosen to fight on
Insurgent Champion	Divine liberator leading a resistance movement against tyranny
Lion of Faith	Merciful yet terrifying embodiment of righteousness

Ranger Paragon Paths

Dunestrider Ghost	Trackless stalker of the deepest desert who leaves no witnesses
Legendary Horseman	Daredevil rider with a mystical bond to a noble steed
Envoy of the Corsair Council	Notorious corsair captain with far-reaching influence
Haven Falcon	Covert protector of an oasis or island beyond time

Rogue Paragon Paths

Budayeen Inquisitive	Detective going into the heart of scum and villainy for answers
Ear of the Souk	Shady information broker who hears all and forgets nothing
Da'is	Missionary of the assassins mastering propaganda and terror
Harem Spy	Scheming smuggler of the harem with an eye for beauty
Repentant Scoundrel	Rogue giving back what was stolen after a change of heart
Sultan(a) of Thieves	Master of the city streets leading a gang of pickpockets

Warlock Paragon Paths

Djinni Courtier	Ambassador to the courts of Jinnistan scheming for power
Ineffable Herald	Messenger carrying an angel's decree ... with some editing
Mystic Chronicler	Long-lived recorder of tribal memories and heroic deeds
Oathbinder	Binder of supernatural beings and men alike to uphold their word

Warlord Paragon Paths

Emissary of the Enlightened Throne	Suave diplomat-warrior backed by the Grand Caliph
Esteemed Effendi	Bejeweled master of the shipping lanes and caravan routes
Heir Apparent	Political underdog seeking to usurp their rightful throne
Unifier of the Tribes	Ambitious nomad fighting to restore tribal dominance

Wizard Paragon Paths

Cabalist	Secret society wizard engaged in political machinations
Eye of the Tempest	Devastatingly serene wizard surrounded by elemental maelstrom
Illustrious Sage	Court wizard with a reputation for answering any question
Mirage Arcanist	Master of illusory landscapes concealing dire threats
Salt Bearer	Potent abjurer driving off supernatural enemies
Scion of Eternity	Devout protector of the web of Fate ... with an ulterior motive

Universal Paragon Paths

Damsel-of-Distress	Archetypal beautiful maiden ... with the mind of a mousetrap
Dashing Anti-Hero	Archetypal handsome swashbuckling hero ... with a dark vendetta
Munificent and Elusive Ruler	Adventuring ruler sharing spoils (and curses) with the populace
Servant of Fate	Fatalist beyond despair and redemption striving to embody the Zakharan virtues of honor, family, purity, hospitality and piety

Epic Destinies

Zakharans speak of one's Fate (as distinguished from fate) with reverence and gravity. Many men never learn of their Fate, and many die trying to grasp it. The few who meet their Fate are forever changed, and with them the Land of Fate is transformed.

Epic Destinies

Grand Caliph	Master of the Enlightened Throne
Grandfather of Assassins	Secretive leader of a holy slayer order
Holy Prophet	Voice of a god made manifest
Loregiver's Handmaiden	Eternal protector of the Loregiver's Law