

# ~MAGIC ITEMS~

# PRAYERBOOKS & SCRIPTURE



**T**HE GODS ARE REAL: THAT MUCH is true. But as a believer, what is my character's relationship to this god or that? What role has this god played in the life of my adventurer's people? What are the spiritual practices of their

community? In dark times, how do they call to the gods for help? Prayerbooks may hold some answers.

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Prayerbooks are to divine casters as spellbooks are to wizards. Prayerbook is a catch-all term for any specific collection of scriptures which may include sacred stories, wisdom literature, hymns, creeds, codes, and liturgical formulations. A divine spellcaster studying a given prayerbook can add the book's secrets to their own.

## WONDROUS ITEM (PRAYERBOOK)

Prayerbooks require attunement by a divine spellcaster. A character may only be attuned with up to one prayerbook at a time. Each prayerbook has a spell list, and an attuned divine spellcaster may cast those spells, even if they are not otherwise prepared or known. They still must have spell slots of an appropriate spell-level to cast those spells, even as a ritual. The more rare the prayerbook, the more powerful spells and benefits they bestow. Finally, the attuned character may use their attuned prayerbook as a spell focus.

### DIVINE SPELLCASTERS?

The classic definitive list of divine spellcasters includes clerics, druids, paladins, and rangers. At the GM's discretion, they may choose to extend the use of prayerbooks to other spellcasters who have profound religious bent, such as spiritual leaders or arcane casters with a divine power source.

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## A WORD OF SALVATION

*Wondrous item (prayerbook), common (requires attunement by a divine spellcaster)*

Only the most important stories of the common faith are in this abridged version of *Rites of Life*, particularly those with an eye toward converting the masses. Appended at the end is a brief commentary which breaks down the essentials of faith in a way that anybody can understand. Its cover is bright red for catching attention.

While attuned to this prayerbook, you can use it as a spell focus and you know the following spells:

**1st:** *bless, cure wounds, charm person*



## rites of life

*Wondrous item (prayerbook), uncommon (requires attunement by a divine spellcaster)*

This classic prayerbook features either a modest or ornate cover, depending on the scribe who bound it. Contained within are miraculous stories of saints and gods who intervene to save the innocent, as well as common hymns and liturgy to accompany such life events as childbirth, marriage, funerals, holidays, and everyday worship. While attuned to this prayerbook, you can use it as a spell focus and you know the following spells:

**1st:** *bless, cure wounds*

**2nd:** *prayer of healing, protection from poison, calm emotions*



## IMPRICATION & VINDICATION

*Wondrous item (prayerbook), rare (requires attunement by a divine spellcaster)*

Often published together in book form, these two ancient prophetic scrolls resurge in popularity during wartime. *Imprication* lists the crimes of the enemy, and condemns them with vows of violence

and curses unto the third thirty-third generation. *Vindication* is a collection of battle blessings, war speeches, and propaganda of yore, which assure the listeners of their absolute righteousness in the face of (apparent) evil.

While attuned to this prayerbook, you can use it as a spell focus. When you do so, you gain a +1 bonus to spell attack rolls and your spell save DC. In addition, while you are attuned to this prayerbook, you know the following spells:

**2nd:** *magic weapon, spiritual weapon*

**3rd:** *bestow curse, fear*



## JOURNEY THROUGH THE AETHER

*Wondrous item (prayerbook), very rare (requires attunement by a divine spellcaster)*

While many sages know this tome by name, few have actually had the opportunity to read it. The *Journey* contains scribal recordings of an anonymous mystic as they spiritually traveled through the outer realms. For a few centuries it was very popular and proliferated, but a faction suppressed it due to the prophecies and cosmic insights therein. Nonetheless, enough information was gleaned that it is actually the foundation for the present-day academic study of the multiverse.

While attuned to this prayerbook, you can use it as a spell focus. When you do so, you gain a +2 bonus to spell attack rolls and your spell save DC. In addition, while you are attuned to this prayerbook, you know the following spells:

**4th:** *banishment, dimension door*

**5th:** *dispel evil and good, dream, teleportation circle*



## THE HIEROPHANT'S JOURNAL

*Wondrous item (prayerbook), legendary (requires attunement by a divine spellcaster)*

These secret and deeply controversial personal writings of a most-high priest reflect less the thoughts of a pious leader, and more the confessions of a scheming mage. Besides various accounts of sacrilege and opinions tantamount to heresy, there are also many details embarrassing to political figures. When comparing all this to the life the hierophant appeared to have lived, it reveals certain insights into the true nature of divine magic.

While attuned to this prayerbook, you can use it as a spell focus. When you do so, you gain a +3 bonus to spell attack rolls and your spell save DC. In addition, while you are attuned to this prayerbook, you know the following spells:

**6th:** *mass suggestion, true seeing*

**8th:** *dominate monster, feeblemind, sunburst*



## THE SONG OF CREATION

*Wondrous item (prayerbook), artifact (requires attunement by a divine spellcaster)*

This golden tome is a written record of the divine dance which brought the world into being. The *Song* is eternal, meaning that it has always existed even before the words were wrought onto the page. One wonders—is the *Song* the written word, the book, or the melody the gods sang? Somehow the *Song* is more than this and yet they all are one. That means that in a way the *Song's* wielder holds the multiverse itself in their hands.

**Mystical Tome.** This tome is written in a script that even the angels cannot decipher. While attuned to it, you can read it as though you are reading your mothertongue. Reading the *Song* reveals beautiful poetry about nature, light, and life, but structurally they do not make sense when read start-to-end. The poems cannot be perfectly translated, as each individual interprets the same poem differently. The



pages cannot be counted, and various purported complete counts invariably disagree.

When you first attune to this tome and when you read it, you must make a DC 18 Wisdom saving throw or else become stunned for 1 hour. If you succeed on this saving throw, you are not subject to it again for 1 week. If you consult this tome during a Wisdom or Intelligence check to recall lore, you gain a +5 bonus to the roll, and any natural d20 results of 2 through 9 count as a 10.

**Prayerbook.** While attuned to this prayerbook, you can use it as a spell focus. When you do so, you gain a +3 bonus to spell attack rolls and your spell save DC, and you cast the spell without the need for any other material components. In addition, while you are attuned to this prayerbook, you know the following spells:

**8th:** *demiplane, maze*

**9th:** *astral projection, gate, true resurrection*

**Random Properties.** The *Song of Creation* has the following random properties:

- 2 minor beneficial properties
- 1 minor detrimental property
- 1 major detrimental property

**Destroying the Song.** The *Song of Creation* is made from a material that defies categorization, and it may well be indestructible. The best hope at banishing its power from the world is to return the tome directly into the hands of a god.



## CREATING A PRAYERBOOK

Characters proficient with calligraphy tools can copy or compile a prayerbook during their downtime, just like creating any other magic item. In addition to quality materials, they must also have sufficient scripture and religious documents on-hand (how much is at the GM's discretion).

When creating a custom prayerbook, use the following guidelines.

- A prayerbook exists to help players explore the world and should encourage interaction with in-world faith in a richer way than a divine domain or the acolyte background. The prayerbook might relate to a divine domain, but it should pose questions, allude to mysteries, and include hints about the world.
- Mechanically, prayerbooks offer a small set of reliable spells. This helps a divine caster prepare other spells, or expand their limited set of known spells.
- The rarity of a spellbook informs its power. A prayerbook offers a maximum spell level based on its rarity:
  - » Common—1st level only
  - » Uncommon—Up to 2nd level
  - » Rare—Up to 3rd level; +1 spell attack and save DC when used as a focus
  - » Very Rare—Up to 5th level; +2 spell attack and save DC when used as a focus
  - » Legendary—Up to 8th level; +3 spell attack and save DC when used as a focus
  - » Artifact—Any spell level; +3 spell attack and save DC when used as a focus
- Ordinary prayerbooks should offer no more than 5 spells. Artifacts may offer more.

The prayerbooks listed above by no means cover the full diversity of scripture and religious texts. When creating prayerbooks, GMs should consider the following questions:

- What are the various religious groups and people groups in this campaign? Whose story should be told? Whose story is worth knowing more about?
- What are the important time periods in the history of this faith group? What are some of the religious phrases, beliefs, texts, and practices that originate during this time?
- Through the ages, how would this people reflect their beliefs and experiences in art?
- Are there any traditions, powers, or secrets that were suppressed over time? Were they suppressed by the group in question, or by a rival group?

## SACRED STORY GENERATOR

GMs usually have a good general grasp of their own world history, but there is always room for more detail. The following tables add lore to settings, items, and adventures by zooming in on a specific sacred story from the campaign's religious lore. A GM can also roll on these tables as a writing prompt, or for an improvised story during an Intelligence (Religion) check.

Consider also the relationship between religious NPCs and the stories they hold sacred. Do they see themselves in the tale, or do they hate the story? To what degree and how does it affect their daily life?

### HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Besides adding historical color to a story, the context of a sacred story helps to inform its most correct interpretation. A tale of healing takes on a different sense during the golden age as opposed to a similar story from an age of exile.

1d12	Historical Context
1	Famine, plague, or economic depression
2	Journey to promised land
3	Living in the promised land
4	Exile from home
5	Peace with nearby people
6	War with nearby people
7	Political tumult
8	Domination by foreign power
9	Golden age
10	Recent history
11	Another plane or prophesied future
12	Roll twice, ignoring additional results of 12—both contexts are true even if there is an apparent conflict



### RELIGIOUS FIGURES

It is usually best to roll on this table twice. Many folk stories (including sacred stories) are named for two characters, such as "Little Red Cap and the Wolf."


1d12	Religious Figure (Lesser)
1	Farm animal, house pet, or wild beast
2	Orphan or widow(er)
3	Elder, or person with illness or disability
4	Priest
5	Warrior
6	Hero
7	Prophet or sage
8	Trickster
9	Prince(ss)
10	Queen or King
11	Saint
12	Roll on Religious Figure (Major) table

### 1d20 Religious Figure (Major)

- 1 Low-rank aberration
- 2 Low-rank celestial
- 3 Low-rank construct
- 4 Low-rank dragon
- 5 Low-rank fey
- 6 Low-rank fiend
- 7 Low-rank giant
- 8 Low-rank undead
- 9 High-rank aberration
- 10 High-rank celestial
- 11 High-rank construct
- 12 High-rank dragon
- 13 High-rank fey
- 14 High-rank fiend
- 15 High-rank giant
- 16 High-rank undead
- 17 Demigod
- 18 Avatar
- 19 Major deity

20 Roll twice and ignore additional results of 20; the entities have a relationship of the GM's choice, such as master and servant, ruler and army, or rivals

## RELIGIOUS HAPPENINGS

These details help explain why this particular story lingers in the people's religious memory. 

### 1d12 Religious Happenings

- 1 Moral lesson
- 2 Origin story or folk etiology
- 3 Divine punishment: plague, famine, exile, or smite
- 4 Holy war
- 5 Advent of prophet, king, hero, or demigod
- 6 Celestial event: eclipse, meteor, or cosmic syzygy
- 7 Interplanar conjunction
- 8 Miracle of feeding
- 9 Miracle of healing
- 10 Miracle of destruction
- 11 Miracle of rescue
- 12 Divine revelation

