

Ahriman

Source of darkness, destruction, sterility, and death.

Words of Ahriman

“All men and gods have the drama of choice. They ask themselves ‘What shall I choose?’ In that moment of decision are you sure you have made the right choice? I am the doubt. I am the wondering. I am the choice that gnaws at your soul.”

“What is the un-dead to a priest of Ahriman? The un-dead are the same as men. If a man strikes you, you strike him back. Do men call on gods to turn men? No. A man arms himself appropriately and does battle. With the un-dead it is likewise.”

Iconography

Ahriman is represented in human shape, but he has animal ears and snakes in his hair. In many depictions he is shown as lion-headed with horns on his head and snakes emanating from his shoulders and wrapping around his body. The voice of Ahriman is said to be a horrible noise.

Tenants and Myths

Ahriman is locked in an eternal struggle with Ormazdyus. At the creation of the universe, Ormazdyus created the heavens and the earth and all things that are beautiful and good; but Ahriman created the demons and all that is evil and perverse. Ormazdyus created riches, Ahriman poverty.

Ahriman created a host of demons called daevas to spread his evil influence by appealing to the envy, greed, and desire for power of human beings. Daevas take many shapes and are like smoke and shadow until they have need of interaction with the physical realm.

The lot of the wicked in the afterlife, is darkness, foul food, and cries of woe.

Ariman & Ormazdyus

When Ahriman became aware of the existence of Ormazdyus, he fled back to the darkness and fashioned many demons. Ormazdyus meanwhile had created or given birth to the form of fire, out of which the universe is to develop. He chanted the *Ahunvar*

prayer by which he revealed to Ahriman his own final victory. Ahriman swooned and fell back into the darkness and lay there unconscious.

The universe unfolds and Ormazdyus' creation, Gayōmard, the Primal Man, grows to power and ventures into the darkness. He finds Ahriman and with great magic transforms the god into a horse and blinds him. During this period, called The Imprisoning, Ahriman is ridden for thirty ages by Gayōmard who binds him tightly in his stable every night. Each day he saddles Ahriman and rides him around the world. It continues thus until Ahriman learns that Gayōmard fears the particularly dizzying ascent up the Great Mountain. The next day, Ahriman rears-up and throws Gayōmardt and frees himself.

After gaining his freedom, Ahriman, who until this point has resisted the exhortations of his demons to attack Ormazdyus, floods Ormazdyus's creation with his own creatures. The creations are impure and evil, from reptiles to plants. Ormazdyus, having made twenty-four lesser gods (*yazds*), puts them in the Cosmic Egg; Ahriman engenders an equal number of evil spirits (*dēvs*) and inserts them into the egg, whence the mixture of good and evil. The entire universe is divided between Ormazdyus and his *yazds*, on one side, and Ahriman and his *dēvs*, on the other. Ahriman slays the Primal Bull, then the Primal Man, Gayōmard. The battle goes on, between Ormazdyus and Ahriman, and in the soul of every man and in the whole universe.

Worship

Zazteros, First Abbot of Darkness, taught the first priests to sacrifice to Ahriman with offerings for averting ill, and things of gloom. For, pounding in a mortar a herb called omomi, priests invoke Hades and darkness; then having mingled it with the blood of a slaughtered wolf, they bear it forth into a sunless place and cast it away.

Another rite passed down by the Dark Abbot, was the perverted, devilish, unrighteous rite of the "mystery of the sorcerers." The ceremony consists of praising Ahriman, the destroyer. Evil smells are emphasized during worship because it belongs to death, illness, filth, and foul food.

Game Mechanics

Benefits

If the Judge feels that a particular adherent is worthy of Ahriman's blessing, they may grant the first level wizard spell *chill touch* as a 1st or 2nd level known spell. Spells with

mental effects (i.e - *paralysis*, *lotus stare*, etc.) that traditionally do not work on un-dead may also be energized by Ahriman vs un-dead targets. These benefits are superordinary and might be subject to temporary or permanent disjunction depending on the character's disapproval rating or other actions.