

Religion

Notes on religion and worship in the lands of Nesperia

- The Dipantheon of Nesperia

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The Cycle

Nesperia's heavens are ruled by two pantheons, each of nine gods. These groups of gods are **the Mothers** and **the Fathers**. Each group consists of nine gods, each representing a clerical domain in the DND5e ruleset (Arcane, Death, Knowledge, Life, Light, Nature, Tempest, Trickery, War).

Only one group of gods rules the heavens at a time. Every ten years, the Mothers and Fathers alternate, one group becoming dormant while the other awakens from a celestial slumber and resumes deityhood. The world recognizes these periods of time as the "**Mothers' Mercy**" and the "**Fathers' Reign**", respectively. The periods are sometimes also referred as "**Seasons**".

At the end of each period, the world's citizens convene in the largest cities in the land to witness what is known as **the Cycle**. Towns, tribes, and peoples from all over Nesperia send runners to observe the event. Individuals venture out on their own personal pilgrimages to attend. The world's people gather to celebrate the rebirth of the sleeping gods.

Alignment

The gods of Nesperia do not tend towards alignment on the Good vs Evil axis. Just like on Earth, good and bad people can worship the same god. Instead, Nesperia's gods are identified by their identity on the Law vs Chaos axis.

The Fathers are fierce gods, ruling strictly, but from afar. They smite those who defy them, insist upon offerings and sacrifices, and strike fear into their worshippers. The **Fathers are lawful** in alignment.

The Mothers are merciful and loving. They prefer that their worshippers honor them through festivals. They offer miracles and forgive trespasses often. The **Mothers are chaotic** in alignment.

The Church and Politics

The acting pantheon is represented on Nesperia by a council of nine church figureheads known as **the Children**. The Children keep indirect contact with the gods through angels and celestials that visit them.

Amongst themselves, they appoint one member to act as **Speaker**. They choose the Speaker based on the world's needs at the time. After a great plague strikes, they might elect the council

member of Life, the child of Koro and Kara to be the Speaker. During wartime, the Child of Zeldar and Zelda may be elected. The Speaker makes all of the church's formal addresses to the people of Nesperia.

In Nesperia, the church has heavy political clout. The Children help draft and pass laws, and give aid and guidance to political leaders across Nesperia. It is not uncommon for most towns in a civilized region to have regional rulership appointed by the Children. These appointed leaders are called **Delegates**.

Naturally, when a Cycle occurs, all members of this leadership structure are retired. A new council of Children is formed by way of election amongst clerical orders, a new Speaker chosen amongst them, and new Delegates are distributed throughout the land.

Standing Army

The church has its own standing army which occupies the civilized lands of Nesperia. This army is known as **The Children's Hand**, or "the hand" for short.

The Father's Hand are a band of strict law lovers. They show no quarter for criminals and miscreants. They are firm but fair. These enforcers march during the Fathers' Reign.

During the Mothers' Mercy, **The Mother's Hand** doles out a more lax form of law enforcement. They won't turn a blind eye to truly dark deeds such as murder, but they adhere to the spirit of the law, not the letter.

The **High Hand** are the elite members of the Children's Hand, acting as personal guard to the Children themselves, and tasked with missions and duties of the utmost importance to the church.

The Slumbering Gods

It is not uncommon for an individual or entire cultures to prefer the Fathers over the Mothers, or vice versa. However, the worship of the gods that are not currently acting is a taboo act, shunned by most civilizations.

In Hampshire, such worship would be kept a secret. Secret cults form to continue taboo worship of inactive gods. Seeking out and breaking up these cult activities is one duty of The Children's Hand.

Entire cultures devote themselves to a particular god or set of gods. The tribal women of the Isle of Zelda honor the Mother of War regardless of the period.

Table of Gods

Domain	Father	Mother	Symbol
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Arcane	Kenwer	Kelwer	the all seeing eye
Death	Vox	Vex	a corpse on a pyre
Knowledge	Lukas	Lucia	an open book
Life	Koro	Kara	the soul
Light	Felorn	Felora	the rising sun
Nature	Rell	Ren	a growing tree
Tempest	Menos	Meenas	two lighting bolts
Trickery	Yorn	Yeln	a winding serpent
War	Zeldar	Zelda	two spears crossed

Holy Symbols

