

AZTEC MYTHOS I

Among the many deities revered by the people of the Central American highlands, the two most important are Quetzalcoatl and Tezcatlipoca. These two deities often take on adversarial roles, with Quetzalcoatl as the creator and Tezcatlipoca as the destroyer. On rare occasions, however, they do cooperate. Although individually powerful, only by working together could these two spirits create the world.

Having done so, together, they fought over who would be the sun. Tezcatlipoca—who was dark as shadow—stole the newly made sun and tied it to his waist. Thanks to his darkness, though, he could only illuminate half the day. Eventually, Quetzalcoatl took a gigantic stick and knocked him out of the sky. Quetzalcoatl then took up position as the sun.

After the world was settled, Quetzalcoatl took human form and lived among the Toltecs. He gave them the tools of civilization—agriculture and crafts, governance and piety—and served as an advisor to their rulers. Tezcatlipoca grew envious of Quetzalcoatl's eminence and he too took human form. Unlike Quetzalcoatl, though, Tezcatlipoca used his powers to cause mischief and discord among the Toltecs. He enthralled whole villages and led them to perform self-destructive acts. With the aid of his sister

Tlazoteotl, Tezcatlipoca even tricked Quetzalcoatl into becoming drunk and debasing himself. So ashamed was Quetzalcoatl that he ordered his city of Tula razed and all its treasures buried. Then he went to the coast and sailed off on a raft of snakes, vowing to return one day and reclaim his kingdom. Not long after he left, the Toltec empire collapsed.

Without the counterbalance of Quetzalcoatl, Tezcatlipoca is free to work his evil in the world unhindered, and many look toward the day when the Feathered Serpent returns.



QUETZALCOATL

Greater God (Lawful Good)

Quetzalcoatl is the god of order and goodness. With Tezcatlipoca, he created the world and the creatures that live on it. The author of civilization, all wisdom and knowledge flow from him. He served as the second sun.

Quetzalcoatl is a god in exile. During the time of the Toltecs, he led by example. The deception of Tezcatlipoca made him leave the mortal realms, however, and now men must rely on their own recognizance to determine what is good and orderly. Although his clergy strives to maintain the ideals Quetzalcoatl embodies, his clerics look forward to the day when the Feathered Serpent returns.

Quetzalcoatl is depicted with pale skin, a dark, full beard, and wearing either long, concealing robes or the feathered garb of a noble.

Despite his absence from the mortal realm, Quetzalcoatl remains a popular god. The clerics of Quetzalcoatl teach the values of adherence to social conventions, kindness to others, and peaceful relationship with neighbors. Civility separates humans from the beasts, and it is through civilization that humans collectively achieve perfection.

Portfolio: Air, civilization.

Domains: Air, Good, Law, Protection, Travel.

Favored Weapon: Mace.

Cleric Training: A cleric of Quetzalcoatl must possess knowledge of civics and literature, as he is expected to pass along his wisdom either as an advisor to a noble ruler or as a teacher in the *calmecac* (a religious school).

Quests: Typical quests undertaken in the name of Quetzalcoatl include helping a good prince become king over his evil rivals, protecting a village from a rampaging dragon, and foiling the schemes of Tezcatlipoca's minions.

Prayers: Although he no longer lives incarnate among the people, Quetzalcoatl still grants power to his clergy. Prayers to Quetzalcoatl often begin with a plea for his swift return.

Temples: Temples to Quetzalcoatl are distinctly circular in a culture that

FROM AZTEC TO OLMAN

This article kicks off a new series presenting everything your divine character needs to worship real-world deities. This month, we start with deities from the Aztec pantheon, some of whom the Olman of the Savage Tide Adventure Path worship. Let us know which other pantheons you'd like to see represented by sending an email to scalemail@paizo.com.

favors rectangular buildings. Found in every city, temples of the Feathered Serpent also dot the summits of tall mountain peaks. Clerics maintain these temples in pristine condition for Quetzalcoatl's return.

Rites: Celebrations honoring Quetzalcoatl are brightly colored affairs filled with music and dance. Unlike most other Aztec gods, Quetzalcoatl does not demand human sacrifice. In addition to traditional rites, clerics have recently added a new duty: a watch is maintained along the east coast, waiting for the god's return.

Herald and Allies: Quetzalcoatl's herald is a 20th-level cleric recognizable by his pale skin and full beard. Allies are hound archons, couatls, and planetar angels.

TEZCATLIPOCA

Greater God (Chaotic Evil)

Tezcatlipoca (the Smoky Mirror) is the god of chaos and evil. He personifies the harmful and disruptive forces of nature and is the patron of sinful pleasures and arcane magic. He encourages people to escape the bonds placed on them by society and fate, and thus the lowly and downtrodden worship him—as do the ambitious. Despite his evil, he is the vessel by which people gain absolution for their sins from the gods. Tlazoteotl, goddess of filth, is his sister.

Tezcatlipoca aided Quetzalcoatl in creating the world and served as the first sun, but he wasn't bright enough to last the whole day. Quetzalcoatl eventually knocked him out of the sky, and Tezcatlipoca later became the god of night.

Tezcatlipoca is depicted as black skinned with a yellow striped face. He carries a mirror of polished obsidian (a traditional divining tool). Tezcatlipoca sometimes takes the form of a jaguar, his sacred animal.

Tezcatlipoca encourages his followers to push the boundaries of ethics and morality, and he teaches that the strong-willed can change their fate.

Portfolio: Night, mischief.

Domains: Chaos, Evil, Knowledge, Magic, Trickery.

Favored Weapon: Dagger.


Cleric Training: Clerics of Tezcatlipoca, like those of other Aztec gods, refrain from regular bathing. As such, dried blood and filth caked them as a result of their foul rituals. Tezcatlipoca is the patron of diviners, and his clerics train in a number of traditional divining methods. Some of his clergy take levels in wizard or sorcerer, often specializing as diviners or illusionists.

Quests: A follower of Tezcatlipoca might never know if a quest he undertakes is part of the god's greater plan or merely a random act of destruction. Typical quests include embarrassing a respected ruler, stealing a powerful magic item, and playing a deadly trick on an entire village.

Prayers: Many pray to Tezcatlipoca seeking absolution for their sins or reprieve from divine misfortunes. Others who call on the god seek to bend the rules—whether societal, such as serfs who aspire to higher castes, or natural, such as wizards researching new spells.

Temples: Although undeniably evil, Tezcatlipoca is an important and sometimes even beneficial deity, and temples to the Smoky Mirror are found in all major cities. Carvings of jaguars feature prominently on these temples.

Rites: Unlike the public rituals of most of the gods, worship of Tezcatlipoca is mostly performed behind closed doors. Participants in these rituals often engage in acts of debauchery as a form of catharsis.

Herald and Allies: Tezcatlipoca works mischief through his herald, a 20th-level sorcerer. Allies are howlers, glabrezu demons, and nalfeshnee demons. 

AZTEC MYTHOS II

Agriculture is the foundation of civilization. From laborers and craftsmen to nobles and warriors, all depend on the abundance of crops produced on farms, orchards, and *chinampas* (floating gardens). Not surprisingly, then, Tlaloc the rain god is arguably the most widely worshiped deity in the Central American highlands. Without rain, crops wither, and thus it is vital that the correct propitiations to Tlaloc be made year round to guarantee enough rain for a good harvest.

After the second sun had gone, Tlaloc claimed the sky and took his place. After a time, Quetzalcoatl sent a firestorm that burned the earth. The shower of flame burned so hot that even the sun went up in flames. Those people who survived transformed into turkeys, a bird important to the Aztecs. Quetzalcoatl then invited the rain god's wife, Chalchihuitlicue, to become the fourth sun, and she agreed. Her time as the sun was marked by unending rain. The water eventually rose above the mountains and the people changed into fish. It rained so hard the sky fell, and with it the fourth sun.

When Quetzalcoatl discovered Food Mountain—where corn, beans, peppers, and all the other foods had been hidden since the beginning of the world—he asked the other deities what they should do with it.

Most believed they should take its contents and give it to the people. Yet not Tlaloc, who stole

the food while the other deities debated. The rain god still has the food from Food Mountain, which he gives back only a part of each year—some years more, some years less.

Tlaloc and Chalchihuitlicue dwell in the paradise realm of Tlalocan, where the souls of people who died from drowning, lightning, or in childbirth reside.

CHALCHIHUITLICUE

Lesser God (Neutral Good)

Chalchihuitlicue (She of the Skirt of Jade), the goddess of water, beauty, and youth, is revered by water-bearers, fishermen, and *chinampa* workers who depend on her for their livelihood. She is associated with fertility and childbirth and serves as the patron of artists and craftsmen, young lovers, and women in labor.

Chalchihuitlicue lives in Tlalocan, a beautiful paradise created for her by her husband, Tlaloc. After Quetzalcoatl deposed Tlaloc as the third sun, he chose Chalchihuitlicue to serve as the fourth. The ceaseless rain of her time eventually flooded the whole world.

Usually depicted as a beautiful young woman wearing a skirt of jade scales, Chalchihuitlicue is sometimes represented by a river with a fruit-laden cactus on its banks. Jade and the prickly pear cactus both symbolize the human heart, over which she has metaphorical dominion. Her symbol is that of a jade fish.

Chalchihuitlicue teaches a simple philosophy of respect for life. Love and beauty transcend all boundaries, and her followers are encouraged to look for and nurture goodness wherever they find it.

Portfolio: Water, beauty, youth.

Domains: Good, Healing, Luck, Water.

Favored Weapon: Trident.

Cleric Training: Clerics of She of the Jade Skirt look after wells, lakes, and springs. These clerics make



THE FIRST TWO SUNS

This article, the second in a new series presenting everything your divine character needs to worship historical deities, features the deities who acted as the third and fourth suns in the Aztec creation stories. The first and second suns, Tezcatlipoca and Quetzalcoatl, were presented in the first article of the series, in *DRAGON* #352. Tezcatlipoca, the dark god of chaos and evil, served as the first sun but wasn't bright enough. Quetzalcoatl, god of order and goodness, knocked Tezcatlipoca from the sky and ascended as the second sun (until Tezcatlipoca later knocked him from the sky).

THE ROLE OF CLERICS

The D&D alignment system cannot do justice to the complex morality of early Central American cultures. While many of the Aztec gods were undeniably evil, they had authority over phenomena vital to all living things. Although the gods asked a terrible price, they also provided all that is good in the world: food and drink, beauty and wonder, family and friendship.

The manner in which the people worshiped the deities varied from city-state to city-state, and indeed from individual to individual. While the Aztecs waged continual wars ostensibly to capture prisoners to feed their hungry deities, other Mesoamerican tribes worshiping the same entities practiced human sacrifice much less often.

If you use the Aztec pantheon in your game, you should allow clerics to be of any alignment, rather than merely within one step of their deities. It is not unusual for a good cleric to worship the gentler aspects of an evil deity—such as Tlaloc as the life giving rain or Tezcatlipoca as defender of the downtrodden—and eschew the more violent aspects of the god's worship. Conversely, among an evil culture, an otherwise good deity might be placated with ghastly rituals.

As a further optional rule, an Aztec cleric can cast spells with any alignment descriptor. Evil is still evil, however, so a good cleric who repeatedly casts evil spells or who engages in evil rituals (especially human sacrifice) becomes evil herself.

A cleric can still lose his spells and class features if he grossly violates the tenets of his deity. Although less concerned with ethics and morals, the deities still ban actions that harm or oppose their portfolio—even an evil cleric of Tlaloc would never poison food or drink granted by the god.

sure fresh water remains available to all who need it. They protect these sources of water from overuse and contamination.

Quests: Typical quests include discovering why a well has dried up, uniting star-crossed lovers, and bringing water from Tlalocan to a prince with an incurable disease.

Prayers: Offerings to Chalchihuitlicue are thrown into a body of water. Typical offerings include flowers and small pieces of jade.

Temples: Temples to Chalchihuitlicue are built near sources of fresh water, such as rivers, lakes, and *cenotes* (natural wells), and contain decorative elements made from jade.

Rites: Few regular ceremonies exist for Chalchihuitlicue. Clerics of She of the Jade Skirt serve as celebrants

for marriages and births or might be called upon to bless a new *chinampa* or public artwork.

Herald and Allies: Chalchihuitlicue's herald is an 18th-level celestial human cleric. Allies are Medium and Large water elementals and elder *tojanidas*.

TLALOC

Intermediate God (Lawful Evil)

Tlaloc is the widely worshipped god of rain, for without his life-giving water the city-states could not survive. Tlaloc is also seen as the protector of children and served as the third sun until Quetzalcoatl sent a firestorm to end his reign.

The most inhuman looking of the highland gods, Tlaloc has a reptilian countenance with wide staring eyes and a tusked maw. He is served by his

children: minor water spirits collectively known as the Tlaloques.

Tlaloc promotes a philosophy of obedience and discipline. In order to receive the gifts of heaven (such as sunlight and rain) one must obey the will of the deities. He teaches that those who respect their superiors are rewarded. Tlaloc encourages his followers to seize opportunities to advance themselves whenever possible, just as he does himself.

Portfolio: Rain.

Domains: Air, Law, Plant, Water.

Favored Weapon: Sickle.


Cleric Training: Clerics of Tlaloc learn the means to track and predict weather (the will of Tlaloc). When not serving at the temple, clerics might be found providing guidance and blessings to rural communities.

Quests: Typical quests include annexing a *cenote* from a barbarian tribe, protecting a noble's child from evil spirits, and leading an army against an impious king.

Prayers: Clerics of Tlaloc make idols from cornmeal paste, which they then sell to farmers who wish to supplicate the rain god.

Temples: Most cities have a prominent temple to Tlaloc built atop a zigurat. These temples usually sit alongside temples to the sun god, Tonatiuh (or Huitzilopochtli, in Tenochtitlan). Small shrines to Tlaloc and Chalchihuitlicue are also found near springs and *cenotes*.

Rites: Typical agricultural rituals are performed at various times of the year to appease Tlaloc. During times of draught, however, clerics perform additional rites. These rituals involve shouting and dancing through the night in hopes of waking the rain god from his drought-inducing slumber. If prayers fail, the clerics offer the blood of a youth to Tlaloc. The youth's cries are taken as a positive sign: the more tears, the more rain.

Herald and Allies: Tlaloc's herald is a 20th-level lizardfolk druid with wide eyes and large tusks. Allies include formian taskmasters, formian myrmarchs, and Huge elementals (air, fire, or water). 

AZTEC MYTHOS III

In the place of spirits lived a woman who was constantly hungry. She had mouths on her wrists and elbows and mouths on her ankles and knees. The spirits could not feed her, so Quetzalcoatl and Tezcatlipoca carried her down to the endless waters below and stretched out her body. They made forests from

Huitzilopochtli, their divine patron. Once, while Coatlicue swept, a tuft of feathers fell down beside her. She picked it up and tucked it into her skirt. When she had finished sweeping, she looked for the feathers but couldn't find them, and after that she was pregnant. Coatlicue had uncountable children already, and when they found out about her pregnancy they were ashamed and angry. The eldest sister, Coyolxauhqui, convinced her siblings that they must kill their mother before she gave birth. As they approached, however, Huitzilopochtli was born in an instant, full-grown and dressed for war. He slew Coyolxauhqui quickly, and his other siblings he killed or routed.

her hair and lakes from her eyes. From her shoulders they made mountains, and from her nose they made valleys. But her mouths were still everywhere and she still cried out for food. When it rains she drinks. When flowers shrivel, trees fall, and people die she eats. But she is never full.

The Central American highland people, like people everywhere, worshiped the earth in various guises. The Mesoamerican earth goddess, though, was no beneficent Mother Earth. Cihuacoatl, as the Aztecs called her, was both producer and consumer.

She has another name as well: Coatlicue, the mother of

The Aztecs were relative newcomers to the highlands. They journeyed from the north at the behest of their patron god, Huitzilopochtli, who spoke to them through a wooden idol. A number of city-states already called the Valley of Mexico home when the Aztecs arrived there. These established tribes were dismissive of the outsiders and forced the Aztecs to live on swamplands considered unsuitable for settlement. For a time, the Aztecs worked as mercenaries and developed a fearsome reputation in the region. Yet, Huitzilopochtli felt they had become complacent.

On the command of their god, the Aztecs approached the king of Colhuacan and asked for his daughter to be Huitzilopochtli's wife. The greedy king readily agreed. Yet, when they brought the princess to their temple, the priests sacrificed her. They flayed her skin and dressed a boy in it, as Huitzilopochtli instructed, and invited the king to make offerings to his daughter, the goddess. The room was dark when the king began



to make his offerings, but when he lit the incense he saw what the Aztecs had done. Infuriated, the king brought his army against the Aztecs, who fled to an island in the middle of Lake Texcoco.

On the island, Huitzilopochtli gave them a sign: They came upon an eagle, perched on a cactus, eating a snake. This was the sign that they had reached their new home.

For more information about the Aztec pantheon, see the first two articles in this series, covering Quetzalcoatl and Tezcatlipoca in DRAGON #352 and Chalchihuitlicue and Tlaloc in DRAGON #354.

CIHUACOATL

Intermediate Goddess (Neutral)

Cihuacoatl (Snake Woman; Coatlicue, "Skirt of Serpents;" the Hungry Woman) is the earth from which all living things spring. She is also the earth which consumes the dead. As spirit of the fertile earth, she acts as the patron of mothers and farmers, but she also serves as the spirit of barren rock and the swallowing cave, and in this aspect mourners and miners worship her.

Most depictions of Cihuacoatl show her as a woman with a necklace of severed hands and a skirt of live snakes. Sometimes she has the head of a snake.

According to the teachings of the Cihuacoatl, the earth is the womb which births all things, and the grave to which all things inevitably return. No one owns the land, nor can one use a plot of land forever; after a time one must let the land lie fallow.

Portfolio: Earth, birth, death.

Domains: Animal, Death, Earth, Plant.

Favored Weapon: Pick.

Cleric Training: Clerics of Cihuacoatl are taught to recognize the will of the earth goddess. They must be able to determine the best place to plant and hunt, as well as to know when a piece of land can no longer support crops or game.

Quests: Typical quests include taking an offering to a distant

crevasse, exploring a cave system for treasure, and defending a mountain village from lowland invaders.

Prayers: Worshipers pray to Cihuacoatl for abundant crops and healthy children or to reveal buried treasures. An offering of food for the Hungry Woman goes a long way toward gaining the goddess's attention.

Temples: Natural caves typically house temples dedicated to Cihuacoatl. Otherwise, they are dark and claustrophobic buildings reminiscent of caves.

Rites: Clerics of Cihuacoatl celebrate births and often act as midwives. They also oversee ceremonies made at beginnings, such as when plowing fields, opening mines, and interring the dead.

Herald and Allies: People traveling in the countryside at night might hear the frightful moan of Cihuacoatl's herald, an 18th-level human ghost cleric. Allies are Medium, Large, and Huge earth elementals.

HUITZILOPOCHTLI

Lesser God (Lawful Evil)

Huitzilopochtli (Hummingbird of the South) is a young god and the primary deity of the Aztec people. The god of war and conquest, he urges his chosen people to make war. The Aztecs fight not to destroy their rivals, but to subdue them: collectively (forcing defeated cities to pay tribute) and individually (gathering prisoners for sacrifice).

Although the patron of the Aztecs, Huitzilopochtli's influence is mostly confined to the region around Tenochtitlan. Conquered city-states pay lip service to the Aztec god, but few worship him. That said, all know Huitzilopochtli is the impetus behind the Aztec warmongering and rightly fear him.

The central tenet of Huitzilopochtli's church is "might makes right." He teaches his followers that strength in battle leads to temporal success. He also tells his chosen people, the Aztecs, that they are des-

tinued to dominate the world through military might.

Portfolio: War, conquest, Aztecs.

Domains: Evil, Law, Strength, War.

Favored Weapon: *Macahuitl* (stone-edged longsword).

Cleric Training: All clerics of Huitzilopochtli are trained to fight and many travel with armies, providing divine assistance while fighting alongside warriors. Others officiate over the sacrifice of hearts to Huitzilopochtli and other gods.

Quests: Quests for Huitzilopochtli involve war and conquest. Typical quests include inciting war between two nations, defeating the minions of other gods, and leading an army in conquest.

Prayers: Blood is the central component of Huitzilopochtli worship. The war god ignores prayers not sanctified with blood—whether from the petitioner or a sacrificial victim.

Temples: Temples of Huitzilopochtli are built atop very steep zigurats (aside the temple of Tlaloc, the rain god). Priests force prisoners of war to ascend these stone steps to the altar: a circular stone stained with the blood of many sacrifices. The largest of these temples stands at Tenochtitlan, and rumors persist that the original wooden idol of Huitzilopochtli that spoke to priests and led his people is housed there.

Most Aztec garrisons include a small shrine to the war god.

Rites: Huitzilopochtli demands the hearts of warriors as sacrifices to give him the strength he needs to fight the spiritual enemies of the Aztecs. His loyal worshippers capture many of their foes to sacrifice in this way. Even when there are no real battles to fight, they stage mock battles called Flower Wars, and those captured by the rival team are sacrificed to the war god.

Herald and Allies: Huitzilopochtli's herald is an 18th-level fiendish human fighter. Allies include bearded devils, barbed devils, and pit fiends. 🐉

AZTEC MYTHOS IV

When it came time to choose the fifth sun, the deities built a bonfire and stood around it discussing who would be next. None of the deities wanted to be the new sun, so they chose Nanahuatl, god of misfortune. Nanahuatl balked, but the other deities told him, "Don't be afraid.

No longer will you be poor and weak; as the sun you will fly through the sky."

Thus, Nanahuatl closed his eyes and jumped into the bonfire. When his body had completely burned, he traveled underground until he reached the eastern horizon.

When the sun appeared over the horizon it was large and bright, but as soon as it appeared, it stopped. The gods sent a falcon to see what the trouble was. When the falcon returned, it told the assembled deities that the sun refused to rise unless they agreed to sacrifice themselves and give their hearts to the new sun.

Angry and frightened, the deities called upon the terrible war god Tlahuizcalpantecuhtli, the Morningstar. Tlahuizcalpantecuhtli took his bow and fired an arrow at Nanahuatl, but the new sun dodged out of the way. Then Nanahuatl took up his own bow and shot the Morningstar with a flaming dart. Wounded, Tlahuizcalpantecuhtli fell into the Dead Lands.

The deities realized that the sun was too powerful to resist, and so allowed themselves to be sacrificed one by one. Satisfied at last, Nanahuatl—now called Tonatiuh—began his journey across the sky.

Sacrifice is a fundamental component of the Central American Highland religion. While powerful, the deities are not omnipotent. It took effort to create the world, and it continues to take effort to keep it running smoothly. In exchange for sunlight, rain, and all the other gifts of the deities, humans must feed them. Without the sustenance provided by sacrifice, the deities become weak and senile, causing the universe to grind to a halt.

The Aztecs practiced animal sacrifice daily, with animals raised for just this purpose. Birds, such as quails and hummingbirds, were the most common. Dogs, already raised to feed humans, were also sacrificed to the deities. In other ceremonies, priests ritually destroyed pottery objects instead.

Offerings of human blood were made as well. Penitents pricked their flesh with maguey thorns and placed the bloody spikes in a woven receptacle as offering to the deities. Nearly everyone—old and young, commoner and noble—was required at one time or another to perform this ritual. Priests especially performed self-laceration as part of their ascetic lifestyle.

Of course, the Aztecs are best known for human sacrifice. While all of the tribes of Central America practiced this ritual at times, the Aztecs took human sacrifice to new levels of depravity. Where other city-states offered captives merely to appease the deities, in Tenochtitlan they used sacrifice as a political tool. The Aztecs forced subjugated city-states to provide them with victims and



staged mass sacrifices to display their might and empower their patron god, Huitzilopochtli. (Rules for sacrifice as a magical catalyst can be found in the *Book of Vile Darkness*, intended for mature audiences.)

TONATIUH

Intermediate God (Neutral Evil)

The fifth and current sun, Tonatiuh is a demanding god. He requires the blood of warriors to give him strength to fight his way through the underworld and defeat the forces of night. The people acquiesce, knowing they cannot live without the sun. His lesser aspect is Nanahuatl, the god of misfortune, such as poverty, disease, and earthquakes.

Tonatiuh is depicted with his face blazing like the sun; the light obscures the rest of his body. His previous incarnation, as Nanahuatl, appears as a wretched dwarf.

The doctrine of Tonatiuh teaches that happiness and success come only with toil and suffering. His followers are encouraged to test their own limitations. As Tonatiuh's own origins demonstrate, power does not come without pain.

Portfolio: Sun, misfortune.

Domains: Destruction, Evil, Sun, War.

Favored Weapon: Shortbow.

Cleric Training: Tonatiuh demands his clerics perform many exacting rituals to appease and strengthen the sun god on his daily journey. Followers fear that if the proper rituals are not performed, the sun will fail to rise and the time of monsters will ensue.

Just as Tonatiuh opposes creatures of the dark as he passes through the underworld, so too must his clerics.

Clerics of Tonatiuh channel positive energy regardless of their alignment.

Quests: Typical quests for Tonatiuh include finding or creating a magic item needed to win a battle, capturing a certain renowned warrior to sacrifice to the sun god, and defeating a powerful creature from the Underdark.

Prayers: As the sun sets, the people give prayers to Tonatiuh to strengthen

him so he can rise again the next day. They also pray for mercy from Tonatiuh when the sun becomes oppressive or misfortunes strike.

Temples: Temples to Tonatiuh are built atop ziggurats, typically alongside temples to Tlaloc, the rain god. The altars of these temples are stained black from many offerings of blood.

Rites: The hearts of captured warriors are sacrificed to Tonatiuh on most days, to give him the strength to make his daily journey. As well, soldiers pierce themselves and scatter their blood as sacrifice to give power to the sun god. They hope that, in return, Tonatiuh grants them strength versus their enemies.

In Tenochtitlan, the Aztec war god Huitzilopochtli—a being even more bloodthirsty than Tonatiuh—subsumed the role of defeating night.

Herald and Allies: Tonatiuh's herald is a pit fiend. Allies are flamebrother, average, and noble salamanders (called *xiuhcoatl*, or “fire serpents”).

XIPETOTEC

Intermediate God (Lawful Neutral)

Xipetotec, the Flayed Lord, is the god of agriculture and sacrifice. He allows others to flay off his red and diseased skin to reveal a golden body underneath. This is a metaphor for the process of growth in plants, the stalk emerging from the seed and the maize shucked from its husk, and spiritual growth—only by casting off one's sins and flaws can a person hope to reach perfection.

Xipetotec encourages his followers to seek self-perfection. By identifying your flaws and working to overcome them you become a better person. His followers also seek to improve society through commitment to the greater good, and by reforming (or removing) those who shirk their duty to the deities and their fellow man.

Portfolio: Agriculture, sacrifice.

Domains: Earth, Law, Luck, Plant.

Favored Weapon: Flail.

Cleric Training: The primary duty of clerics of Xipetotec is to oversee crops from planting to harvesting.

They also aid others in making proper sacrifices to the deities.

Quests: Typical quests include protecting a harvest from swarming vermin, capturing a group of crop-stealing bandits, and destroying a useful artifact as a sacrifice to the deities.

Prayers: As god of agriculture, Xipetotec is predominantly worshiped by farmers, who pray for good crops. Those who suffer from a disease or curse might also call upon the Flayed Lord to remove their burden.

Temples: Temples of Xipetotec are decorated with motifs of corn and other crops. They are often built near communal silos.

Rites: Clerics of Xipetotec perform a number of agricultural rituals throughout the year. Among the Aztecs, these rituals are particularly grisly, as a priest imitates the god by wearing the flayed skin of a sacrificial victim.

Herald and Allies: The flayed-skinned herald of Xipetotec has the characteristics of a mummy lord, but is not evil. Allies are formian taskmasters, formian myrmarchs, and horned devils. 🐉

AZTEC MYTHOS I-IV

This concludes the Aztec Mythos series of Divine Class Acts. Quetzalcoatl the creator and Tezcatlipoca the destroyer are in #352, while #354 presented Tlaloc the rain god and Chalchihuitlicue the goddess of beauty appeared, and #356 detailed Cihuacoatl the earth goddess and Huitzilopochtli the Aztec patron. You can pick up these and other back issues at paizo.com/backissues.

Together, these four articles trace the five suns, or realities, of the Aztec cosmology. From shadowy Tezcatlipoca's too-dim sun to Quetzalcoatl's usurped role, Tlaloc's prematurely ended reign, the rain-flooded time of Chalchihuitlicue's, and finally, the current era under Tonatiuh.