

Kháine-God of Murder and Undead

Description: Kháine is the dread Lord of Murder – the patron of assassins and murderers – and God of the Undead. It is said that he is the son of Ulric and a demoness (in some stories, his mother is Écate). Kháine is jealous of his elder half-brother Mórr's rulership over the world of the dead. He steals the souls of those unprotected by the Cult of Mórr and those murdered or sacrificed in his name. With these souls he builds his own dark realm, a realm from where Necromancers call forth some of the Undead spirits.

Kháine is depicted as a grotesque, squatting demonic being with a huge, leering fanged mouth, a great horned head, and four arms, each holding a bloody dagger. He also wears a necklace of innumerable skulls. Kháine is an insane god worshipped either by murderous men or would-be Necromancers eager to wield the powers Kháine offers in return for service. Kháine is generous to those who add to his dark realm with offerings of blood and murdered souls.

Alignment: Evil.

Symbol: Kháine's symbols are a scorpion poised to strike and a human bone carved in the likeness of Kháine. In secret rituals and ceremonies, initiates and priests wear black robes or other outer garments trimmed with red and yellow, and elaborate masks depicting the horned, fang-jawed face of Kháine. Additionally, they bear staves carved from human bone which feature the fanged skull motif.

Area of Worship: A secret cult proscribed and actively persecuted in the Old World and Araby. The cult of Kháine originally found followers in ancient Nehekharu which worshipped a large pantheon of decadent gods. Kháine is still worshipped openly in isolated areas in the Badlands and the Dark Lands. Worship in the Old World is rare and followers remain few.

Temples: There are no obvious temples or shrines to Kháine in the Old World or Araby. Instead, his worship is pursued in secret temples and shrines hidden in basements, caves, remote areas, etc. There is no common architecture to these places of worship, except for the blood-stained altar before a statue of Kháine. Participants in ceremonies and rituals take mind-altering drugs which facilitate communion with the Lord of Murder and Undeath. Primarily, these rituals consist of consecrating souls in ritual sacrifices to Kháine. In other cases, these rituals may be conducted as a petition to Kháine to grant participants Unlife so they can better serve his will.

Friends and Enemies: Friends to no one (except maybe Écate), not even to the Chaos cults as the cult of Kháine tends to be treacherous, unpredictable, and highly unreliable. The cult is an eternal enemy of cults of the Old World, Mórr and Oermath the Sun God in particular.

Holy Days: Kháine has no holy days. Kháine will always accept a soul dedicated to him. If the sacrifice pleases Kháine, he may bestow a blessing. At times, initiates and priests may be directed by Kháine to undertake more aggressive sprees of murder and assassination or mass ritual sacrifices. Failure to perform Kháine's pleasure usually results in the cultist gaining an insanity point or two. After all, Kháine's followers always perform better after they have become a little unhinged.

Cult Requirements: None. However, Kháine does not permit a cultist to renounce his worship at a later date. Any attempt to withdraw from the cult guarantees an effort by other cultists to capture the traitor in order that the fool meets a horrific and ritualised death at the hands of a Kháinite priest. This then sends the soul of the traitor to Kháine's dark realm for eternal torture.

Priestly orders, including monks: None

Sponsored fighting orders-Templars: None

Strictures: Initiates and priests of Kháine must abide by the following strictures:

- Serve Kháine by feeding his power through sacrifice and populate his dark realm.
- Never permit an opponent to live as their death better serves Kháine – preferably administered by ritualised sacrifice.
- By advancing his cause and performing required tasks (generally scores of ritualised murder), one will gain power and eternal (un)life.
- Failure to perform a task requires a death, even one's own, to atone for that failure.
- Those souls populating Kháine's dark realm may be called forth to perform specific tasks in the Land of the Living. These tasks must involve additional deaths so that Kháine's cause is advanced.

Spell Use: Priests of Kháine may use any Petty Magic, Battle Magic and Necromantic Magic spells. In addition, priests of Kháine may use the following spell:

Withering Hand of Kháine

Spell Level: Third

Magic Points: 15

Range: Touch

Duration: Instantaneous

Ingredients: Skeletal Hand

This spell allows a priest of Kháine to siphon the life force of a target by simply touching it with the skeletal hand. The Kháinite priest rolls to hit as normal, ignoring unarmed combat modifiers. Any hit automatically causes d6 wounds (irrespective of Toughness and armour) to the victim each round and gives the priest an equal number of Magic Points (not to exceed their maximum).

This spell takes effect immediately and continues to wound the victim each round so long as the priest of Kháine maintains physical contact with the victim. Either wounding the priest or otherwise breaking his hold may end the spell. The corpses of victims who have their entire life force siphoned by this spell are left as skin and bones. All muscle and other tissue dissolves and the victim's face take on a reddish hue which gives it the appearance of a grimacing red skull. Anyone (outside the priest of Kháine) witnessing the death of the victim must make a **CI** test or gain 1 Insanity Point.

Only priests and witch-hunters of Mórr are allowed a WP-10 test to resist the power of this spell.

Skills: In addition to the skills normally available, initiates and priests of Kháine may choose, at normal cost, one extra skill per level from the following list: Arcane Language-Necromancy, Concealment-Rural, Concealment-Urban, Disguise, Frenzied Attack, Herb Lore, Hypnotise, Prepare Poison, Shadowing, Silent Move-Rural, Silent Move-Urban, Street Fighting.

Trials: Trials set by Kháine typically involve the capture and ritualistic murder of a cult enemy, particularly those of Mórr.

Blessings: Kháine favours the skills listed above. Favoured tests include Fear and Terror so that the servant of Kháine can retain self-control in their dealings with the more powerful of the Undead. A blessing from Kháine may include a temporary increase in Will Power and Cool, as well as a permanent increase in the number of Insanity Points, so that his cultist may better serve Kháine. Preferred insanities include megalomania, paranoia, and psychosis.