

DEUS
VULT

THE TOMB OF SOLOMON



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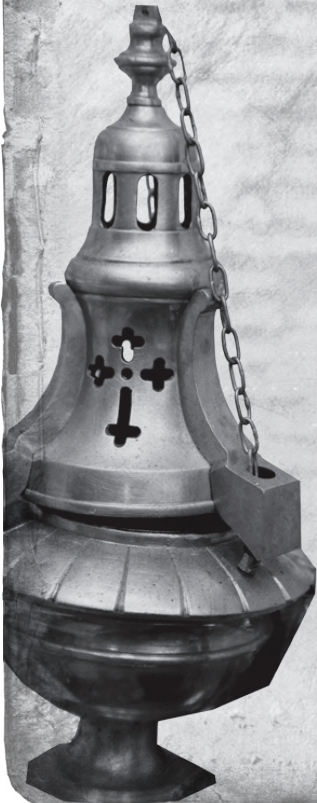
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Verse 6.0

INTRODUCTION



Legend holds that Solomon, son of David and king of the Jews, had in his possession a magical ring that gave him power over demons and spirits. He imprisoned these spirits and sealed them away forever, so they would trouble humanity no more – and every word of this legend is true.

King Solomon was indeed a mighty sorcerer and he mastered a spell of binding that could contain even the most powerful spirit. He travelled the length and breadth of Judea, ridding the land of spirits and demons. Some he forced to serve him, others he demanded knowledge from but the greater part of these he imprisoned for all eternity in a trap-filled dungeon, the Tomb of Solomon.

Today, the tomb is lost beneath the deserts of Syria – and this is a blessing for mankind, for if the tomb were to be found, the greed of men would surely lead to them loosing the demons of Solomon on the world. As the wise king learned at great cost, power corrupts.

Using The Tomb In Your Game

The Tomb of Solomon is not a direct sequel to *The Heresiarch of Troyes* and *The Lord of Misrule*. Those two scenarios dealt with the pursuit of a single spirit, the Joyous One. The spirit was never sealed in the tomb; the servants who should have brought the spirit's bottle to the tomb instead abandoned it in a cave, where it was found many centuries later by the Templars. After playing through those two scenarios, the players should be aware that there is a treasure to be found in Syria.

That does not necessarily mean that the characters should go straight from *The Lord of Misrule* to seeking the Tomb of Solomon. Months or even years of game time can pass in between the defeat of the Joyous One and the beginning of the search. The journey to the Middle East alone is worth several sessions of play.

Hard–Won Clues

There are two major sources of information available in the earlier scenario – Jerome's encrypted notes from the Templar castle and the Joyous One itself. According to Jerome's notes, the tomb is located somewhere near the city of Tadmor (in Greek, Palmyra) in Syria. Cryptically, it says that 'six is the number of the faithful and seven are hidden in the seal' and to seek 'the sons of the seven hundred'. Most of these clues can only be interpreted when the characters are actually in Syria.

The Joyous One knows that the tomb is in the deserts east of Palmyra and believes that it can sense the location of the tomb as soon as it comes within a few miles of the sacred place.

If the characters have access to neither of these sources of information, then they must start their investigations from almost nothing. In this case, the Order discovers through a spy that the Templars are searching for *something* in the deserts of Syria near Palmyra; the characters are sent to investigate this rumour and to ascertain whether or not the Templar plan is a threat to Christendom and the Divine Path.

Other Treasure Hunters

There are four other groups who are also looking for the tomb – or are looking for those who are looking for the tomb! These are the Templars, the Joyful People (assuming the PCs did not wipe them out in *The Heresiarch of Troyes* and *The Lord of Misrule*), the Followers of Ibn Sina and the Sons of the Seven Hundred. See *Rival Treasure Hunters* for more details.

The Tomb of Solomon as a Stand–Alone Adventure

If the characters are to play through *The Tomb of Solomon* without first playing the other two adventures, then the best hook is to have them find the cryptic note about the Tomb from *The Chateau du Paynes* in some Templar fortress in the Holy Land, along with clues pointing to the existence of something important and ancient in the deserts near Palmyra. The Order can then command the characters to investigate.



Verse 6.1

RIVAL TREASURE HUNTERS



There are four other groups who know that the tomb exists; these can be allies or rivals for the characters.

The Poor Knights of the Temple of Solomon

The Templars made a grievous error by sending the Joyous One and the associated scrolls from the cave back to Europe. Not only did they accidentally free the Joyous One on Troyes, they also lost precious months between the discovery of the scrolls and actually realising that there was a greater treasure to be found. Syria is well beyond the Templar's sphere of military influence but they are capable of sending a handful of treasure hunters into the desert to search for the Tomb.

The Templar plan is to find the tomb, enter it and search it for the fabled Ring of Aandaleeb, the talisman used by Solomon to command the spirits. If they can find the ring, they will use it to take control of the imprisoned spirits and reconquer Jerusalem with an army of djinni. Even if the ring is missing, they can still use the jars of spirits as weapons. If Troyes was nearly destroyed by a single spirit, the Templars can bring every city in the east to its knees with the resources of the vault.

The Templars travelled from Antioch to Syria, disguised as a band of Christian merchants looking to purchase silks and spices from the east. They carried with them a fortune in gold and precious jewels, most of which they spent on bribes in Aleppo to get this far. A dozen knights set out from Antioch; two have died in the desert, another two were executed as Christian spies by particularly devout warriors in the service of the Emir of Damascus and another fled into the wilderness. Seven knights have come to Palmyra.

The Templars' chief advantage is that they are all battle-hardened warriors, devoted to their cause. The passage of the desert tested them to their utmost limits, burning away weakness and hesitancy and leaving only an iron determination to win the prize for Christ and the Temple.

Audan of Aquitaine

The chief of the Templars' treasure-hunters is Audan of Aquitaine, brother to Jerome. The two brothers were among the Templars who found the cache of scrolls and jars in the cave near Jerusalem. While Jerome returned to Troyes to work on the translation, Audan continued to poke around the caves, looking for more clues. He discovered that the urn was destined for distant Palmyra and that it was but one of hundreds of similar jars. He also found a set of instructions for entering the tomb but has no idea where the tomb is.

Audan lacks his brother's intellect but he has twice as much courage. He is a man of action and determination and he believes that by finding the tomb and defeating the Saracens with sorcery, he will be accounted as one of the Worthies and win his place in Heaven. The search for the tomb consumes him; without the power of Solomon, he believes that the followers of Islam will wash over Christendom like a great wave and that the true faith will be extinguished forever.

What The Templars Know

Audan knows that the quest begins in Palmyra and that to enter the tomb, you must be 'as one dead' or you arouse the wrath of the guardians. Beyond that, he knows nothing – but he will stop at nothing to find out more.

Followers of Ibn Sina, Those Who Bear The Burden Of God

These are an order of Islamic sorcerers, who believe that the world is a collection of chaotic dust motes that move at random but are held in a form of ordered stasis by the will of God. If God were to withdraw his attention, even for a moment, then the world would fly apart into its constituent atoms.

The sorcerers believe that they have the power to momentarily take the burden of God, to hold the world together by *their* will instead of that of God. As part of this burden, they gain the power to reshape reality for an instant. Spells are acts of devotion for the Followers of Ibn Sina.

In the time of their founder, Ibn Sina (known as Avicenna in the west), the sorcerers consulted with Jewish scholars and from them learned of the existence of the tomb of Solomon. This was treated as nothing more than a historical curiosity by the sorcerers. The *djinni* and demons imprisoned by Solomon are, in their eyes, aberrations in the divine plan. The *djinni* can work miracles on the stuff of matter in a manner akin to the attention of God but they lack the infinite wisdom and compassion of Allah. Therefore, they are troublesome spirits and it is a good thing they are imprisoned where they cannot torment God or man.

The Followers have no desire to free the spirits from the tomb but they very much wish to keep the Franks - their term for all invaders from Europe - from gaining the power of the spirits of Solomon.

Master Fadhel

This sorcerer and three of his apprentices have arrived in Palmyra on the strength of a letter from a fellow sorcerer in Aleppo, who described a Christian who was taken captive in the desert. This Christian claimed to be a Templar knight who set out in search of a great treasure. Fearing that some unwise fools were planning to open the fabled Tomb of Solomon, Fadhel gathered what allies he could find quickly and set out for the town.

What The Followers of Ibn Sina Know

From those long-dead Jewish mystics, Fadhel knows that the tomb is located near Palmyra and that it is guarded by both mortal and supernatural defenders. He knows that the tomb is a series of tests for those who would dare enter it, designed to ensure that only those who are morally and spiritually strong enough to resist temptation can reach the final chamber. He also suspects that the Seal of Solomon has something to do with the location of the tomb.

The Sons of the Seven Hundred

The Sons of the Seven Hundred, also known as the Artabani, are the descendants of those who built the tomb. They claim to be the children of Solomon and his 700 wives and concubines. For centuries, the Sons lived in six villages in the desert, east of Palmyra. Three of the six villages converted to Islam many years ago and two more were abandoned. The last village is the final refuge of the Sons, a small few of whom still hold true to the ways of their forefathers and observe their own strange Jewish traditions.

The Muslim sons despise the Jewish ones and vice versa; the two rival clans have skirmished for centuries. They are united only by their common oath to protect the tomb of Solomon from outsiders.

Shams al–Malu

The leader of the converted sons, Shams al-Malu has left his home village and now lives in Palmyra, where he is a merchant of some repute. While many of his clan believe he has turned from their traditions, Shams sees no contradiction between his commercial activities and his oath to protect the tomb of Solomon. He uses the ancient watchtowers as waystations for his trade caravans, navigating the desert using the lights of three towers his kin control.

David al–Shem

The leader of the traditionalist sons, David is a fanatic who is considered a dangerous bandit by both the Vizier of Palmyra and his distant cousin. David is committed to defending the tomb against anyone who would despoil it but his followers are few in number and are being hunted by both their estranged kin and the soldiers of the Vizier. He desperately needs allies to reinforce his village but who can he trust, when every stranger is a potential enemy.

What the Sons of the Seven Hundred Know

The Sons know that the only way to find the tomb is to light the six beacons between the six villages and to then travel into the desert and find the exact point where all six fires are visible. No-one has visited the actual tomb in centuries and not even the Sons know exactly where it is, although David has a rough idea of its location and Shams' trade caravans pass within a mile of the spot.

The Joyful People

If the characters failed to destroy or imprison the Joyous One in previous scenarios, then the spirit and its followers are still at large. After escaping the Order in the Bay of Biscay, the Joyous One inhabited the body of a priest in Aragon and began its long journey east. By the time it reached Antioch, the spirit's cult numbered in the hundreds.

At Antioch, though, the Templars ambushed the Joyful People. Word had reached Antioch from Troyes ahead of the spirit's ship, describing the Joyful People and the danger of the Joyous One. The Templars and their allies wiped out most of the cult but the spirit and a few followers escaped and fled into the desert. At the start of the scenario, they are wandering the desert like the Israelites, although they believe – thanks to the Joyous One's blessings – that they walk in the gardens of paradise amid scintillating fountains and shimmering ponds. The Joyful People arrive in Palmyra a few days after the Player Characters.

What The Joyous One Knows

The Joyous One has only a vague idea where the tomb is but it can dimly sense the presence of the other spirits. Therefore, the Joyous One can find the tomb just by wandering the deserts. The spirit is certain to find the tomb, given enough time.

Audan of Aquitaine

The younger brother of Jerome of Aquitaine, Audan is half the magician his brother is - but he is a superior swordsman and a more determined foe.

STR	16	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP	Combat Actions	3
CON	16	1-3	Right Leg	5/7	Damage Modifier	+1d4
SIZ	15	4-6	Left Leg	5/7	Magic Points	12
INT	13	7-9	Abdomen	5/8	Movement	8m
POW	12	10-12	Chest	5/9	Strike Rank	+13 (+6 in armour)
DEX	13	13-15	Right Arm	5/6		
CHA	14	16-18	Left Arm	5/6		
		19-20	Head	5/7		

Armour: Chain

Equipment: Longsword, Heater Shield

Spells: Banish, Enhance (POW), Intuition, Magic Resistance, Mystic Vision, Spirit Resistance

Notable Skills: Athletics 65%, Courtesy 50%, Influence 50%, Insight 60%, Lore (Occult) 40%, Manipulation 20%, Perception 50%, Persistence 50%, Resilience 80%, Ride 80%, Sorcery (Key of Solomon) 45%



WEAPONS

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Longsword	M	L	120%	1D8	6/12
& Heater Shield	L	S	120%	1D4	6/12

Master Fadhel

Fadhel is an accomplished sorcerer and scholar. Despite his considerable magical power, he refuses to use his spells for personal gain or violence; he believes that he is a servant of Allah the Merciful and that to abuse his gifts would be an unjust and sinful act.

STR	9	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP	Combat Actions	2
CON	12	1-3	Right Leg	-/4	Damage Modifier	-1d2
SIZ	8	4-6	Left Leg	-/4	Magic Points	14
INT	14	7-9	Abdomen	-/5	Movement	8m
POW	14	10-12	Chest	-/6	Strike Rank	+12
DEX	9	13-15	Right Arm	-/3		
CHA	16	16-18	Left Arm	-/3		
		19-20	Head	-/4		

Armour: None

Equipment: Protective Amulet

Spells: Animate (Sand), Banish, Damage Enhancement, Intuition, Neutralise Magic, Passage Through Fire, Sand Warrior, Spirit Resistance, Telepathy, Wrack

Notable Skills: Courtesy 80%, Influence 60%, Insight 80%, Lore (Occult) 120%, Manipulation 90%, Perception 60%, Persistence 90%, Resilience 40%, Sorcery (Book of Ibn Sina) 90%



WEAPONS

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Dagger	S	S	60%	1D4	6/8

Fadhel's Apprentices

These three apprentices lack their master's moral strength and are much more willing to abuse their magical talents. Perhaps wisdom will come with age.

STR	12	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP	Combat Actions	2
CON	14	1-3	Right Leg	-/5	Damage Modifier	+0
SIZ	10	4-6	Left Leg	-/5	Magic Points	15
INT	13	7-9	Abdomen	-/6	Movement	8m
POW	15	10-12	Chest	-/7	Strike Rank	+12
DEX	10	13-15	Right Arm	-/4		
CHA	13	16-18	Left Arm	-/4		
		19-20	Head	-/5		

Armour: None

Equipment: Scimitar

Spells: Banish, Damage Enhancement, Intuition, Neutralise Magic, Passage Through Fire

Notable Skills: Athletics 55%, Grimoire (Book of Ibn Sina) 45%, Manipulation 40%, Perception 60%, Persistence 50%, Resilience 50%, Stealth 50%



WEAPONS

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Scimitar	M	M	75%	1D8	6/10

Artabani Raiders

These statistics can also be used for Shams al Malu or David al Shem. For Shams, add Commerce 75% and Courtesy 50%. For David, add Lore (Military Tactics) 50%.

STR	12	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP	Combat Actions	2
CON	14	1-3	Right Leg	-/5	Damage Modifier	+0
SIZ	10	4-6	Left Leg	-/5	Magic Points	10
INT	13	7-9	Abdomen	2/6	Movement	8m
POW	10	10-12	Chest	2/7	Strike Rank	+12 (+10 in armour)
DEX	11	13-15	Right Arm	2/4		
CHA	10	16-18	Left Arm	2/4		
		19-20	Head	-/5		

Armour: Leather

Equipment: Scimitar, Short Bow, Dagger

Notable Skills: Athletics 65%, Lore (Regional) 60%, Persistence 40%, Resilience 50%, Stealth 60%



WEAPONS

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Scimitar	M	M	65%	1D8	6/10
Dagger	S	S	65%	1D4	6/8
Short Bow	—	—	60%	1D8	4/8

Verse 5.2

TRAIL OF THE TOMB



The hunt for the Tomb of Solomon begins in Palmyra – or, more accurately, Tadmur, for few in Syria know the city by its Greek name. Tadmur is the Bride of the Desert, for travellers crossing the desert of Syria must pass through the gates of the city or they will surely perish in the sands. Men have dwelt here since the Creation of the World; the name of the city is recorded in tablets from Babylon. It is said that Tadmur was founded by worshippers of Ba'al and a great temple dedicated to him still stands in the city. Other tales claim that the city was built by Solomon the Wise, or that he conquered it during the brief flowering of his great kingdom. In Roman times, Queen Zenobia waged her futile war against the Empire from here.

Today, Tadmur is a city in decline; the caravans still visit but the population is shrinking and some buildings are falling into ruin and will one day be reclaimed by the sands. The city is ruled by the Emirs of Damascus, who appoint a vizier to oversee the government of Tadmur. The current vizier is Bassam al Mukhtar, a native of Tadmur who prides himself on being cosmopolitan. He speaks Latin, Greek, Italian and even a little English and French, collects Roman antiquities and visited Byzantium in his youth. Despite his fascination with the Occident, he is a devout Muslim and a strong supporter of Salah ad-Din ibn Ayyub, known in the west as Saladin.

Arrival in Palmyra

The most direct route to Palmyra is via Damascus but Christians are unpopular in that city – depending on when this adventure takes place, there are either rumours of a third Crusader army en route under the command of Emperor Frederick Barbarossa, or (after 1191) the Crusaders have already arrived. A more likely route for the characters is to travel from the Crusader state of Antioch and then skirt the edge of the desert on a long southerly journey before taking the desert road from Homs to Tadmur.

In Disguise

The characters can disguise themselves as either Western traders (as the Templars have done) or as natives. Disguising oneself as a European merchant requires an unmodified Disguise test; pretending to be a Syrian requires a Hard (-40%) Disguise test (rising to Very Hard (-60%) if a character has a SIZ of 16 or more).

If a Disguise test is failed, then the locals see through the characters' disguise, increasing Notoriety. At least one Disguise test will be needed when the characters arrive in Palmyra; call for more if the characters are closely watched or draw attention to themselves.

Acting Openly

If the characters do not attempt to disguise their origins, then they are treated as suspicious intruders and curiosities. It is not unheard-of for Franks to visit Syria but to go past Homs and Damascus and come into the desert is extremely unusual. The characters will be questioned by everyone they meet as to their destination and purpose. Children flee when they see them, for it is well known that the Franks are brutish cannibals and beggars scorn them, for it is equally well known that the Crusaders have no money save what they loot. They may even be attacked by gangs of hot-blooded youths.

Staying in Palmyra

There is a caravanserai where the characters can find beds for the night. Alternatively, they can easily find a place to stay on the edge of the city, in one of the many ruined buildings.

Notoriety

The actions of the Player Characters may draw the attention of al Mukhtar's agents in Palmyra and the surrounding lands; the chances of this happening are determined by the character's Notoriety score. Notoriety is a percentile score that starts at 0%.

Roll d% against the character's current Notoriety each day when they are in Palmyra (or more often if they are causing a disturbance).

If you roll under their Notoriety, then a patrol of guards comes to investigate. If you roll a critical success, then the followers of Ibn Sina start to watch the characters. See *The Sorcerers*.

If you roll a critical failure, then some other unfortunate is misidentified as one of the character's allies; reduce Notoriety by 50% for one day.

At 50% Notoriety, the characters are 'invited' to speak with the Vizier. See *Visiting The Vizier*, page 103.

At 100% Notoriety, the characters are treated as criminals in Palmyra and will be hunted down and arrested if they remain within the city.

Notoriety Increases

- Being identified as Christians: +10%
- Trying and failing to disguise oneself: +20%
- Being identified as dangerous allies of the Crusaders: +30%
- Behaving strangely (per incident): +10%
- Fighting on the streets: +20%
- Injuring a guard: +40%
- Killing a guard: +100%
- Associating with Shams al-Malu: +30%
- Associating with David al-Shem: +60%

Optionally, the characters may be able to use bribery or Influence to reduce their Notoriety.

Searching for Clues

There are several routes that the characters can take when searching for clues. If the players get stuck, then one of the other factions seeking the tomb can be used to push them back onto the right track.

Rumours

Gathering rumours requires a Difficult (-20%) Influence or Streetwise test.

- If you're looking for something old, then the vizier's advisor Zuabi knows nearly everything. He has a library of old scrolls and relics.
- The desert! It's a dangerous place. Full of al-Shem's raiders. Who's al-Shem? Why, he's the headman of a village out in the wilderness. They say he's an insane Jew.
- There used to be more of those Artabani villages but now there's only one left. That merchant Shams al-Malu knows about such people; he's related to them. I wouldn't trust a word he says, if I were you.
- My cousin Ali says that he saw a band of Frankish barbarians in the desert! Why, what if the Crusaders are coming here?

Traces in the Ruins

The Temple of Ba'al strongly resembles the Temple of Solomon in Jerusalem, as any character who makes a successful Lore (History) or a Difficult Lore (Christian Theology) roll will realise. Poking around the semi-derelict temple turns up one useful clue: a stone tablet in the wall of the temple that depicts the battle between Elijah and the Priest of Ba'al. In this image, the Priests of Ba'al are shown to be connected - or perhaps possessed, as a Lore (Occult) roll confirms - by spirits. If the characters remove the tablet, they find a cache of ancient scrolls behind it. This scroll reads:

SIX IS THE NUMBER OF THE FAITHFUL AND SEVEN ARE HIDDEN IN THE SEAL. THE GREATEST OF THESE IS THE TOMB OF SOLOMON. FIND THE SONS OF THE SEVEN HUNDRED WHO ARE YET FAITHFUL AND BE GUIDED BY THE LIGHT OF THE SUN IN A HIGH PLACE.

Consulting the Archives

The archives are housed in a tower attached to the Vizier's palace. Characters can try sneaking in here but the tower is located right next to the seraglio. Any intruders are dealt with harshly by the guards. Alternatively, the characters can just approach the scholar Zuabi during the day.

Visiting Zuabi raises the characters' Notoriety by 20% if it is below 50%.

Zuabi is a eunuch astrologer and historian. After day 1, he is also a spy for the Followers of Ibn Sina; as soon as he can do so once the characters arrive, Zuabi lights a scented candle. A character who succeeds at a Very Hard (-60%) Perception test notices strange images flickering in the candle-flame - the flame is a two-way viewing portal to Fadhel's rooms in the vizier's palace and the characters are being watched by the sorcerer! Even if the characters do not spot the candle, a successful Insight test suggests Zuabi is nervous as if he is being watched.

If asked about the Tomb of Solomon, he admits that legends of the place have circulated around Tadmur for centuries but he has never found any clear evidence of the tomb's existence. Many who sought the tomb never returned, though that is more likely due to the Artabani raiders of the desert. The Artabani, he says, know a great deal about the desert.



If the characters offer Zuabi something, such as a look at the scrolls from the Temple of Ba'al or, better yet, the scrolls from the Chateau du Paynes, then the scholar can be of more use to the characters. According to records dating back to the time of the Prophet, blessings be upon him, when some of the local tribes converted to Islam, they destroyed their altars. These strange altars were described as 'tall towers' and were shared by the six villages of the desert. Some of these towers may still be partially intact; indeed, travellers claim that the towers closest to the hidden village of David al-Shem are just as they were in the days of old.

Supernatural Traces

A Hoffman Device can be used to search for the tomb but Solomon put magical wards in place to ensure his vaults would not be found by meddling sorcerers. The Hoffman Device can find the general location of the tomb but not the precise entrance. Still, it can give the character a clue that the six villages are something to do with the tomb.

Events in Palmyra

If the characters are in Palmyra at the right time, they may observe these events.

The Followers of Ibn Sina Arrive (Day 1)

Master Fadhel and his apprentices arrive from Damascus in the evening of Day 1, accompanied by a dozen bodyguards. After they arrive, these bodyguards dissolve into sand; they were created by Fadhel's magic a few minutes before the sorcerer entered the city. Fadhel immediately goes to the vizier's palace and speaks with al-Mukhtar. The sorcerers do not explain why they are in Tadmur, only that their mission is an urgent one. They fear that if the vizier knew that a source of ultimate power was located a short distance from his palace, he would seek it out. Al-Mukhtar can never know of the Tomb of Solomon.

They also recruit the vizier's servant Zuabi, winning his loyalty by promising him membership in their order if he aids them.

Fadhel remains in the palace for the next few days, sending his three apprentices out into the city to search for signs of the tomb.

The Templars Arrive (Day 2)

Audan and his surviving followers stagger out of the desert at noon on Day 2. The warriors are exhausted and suffering from heat-stroke and dehydration. They collapse in the caravanserai, begging for water and food. Rumours quickly circulate about the foolish Frankish merchants who tried to cross the desert the wrong way; later rumours whisper that they might be the advance guard of a Crusader army.

The Sorrows of Shams Al-Malu (Any Day)

Any character visiting the marketplace of Palmyra will hear the sorrows of Shams Al-Malu. The merchant complains bitterly that his trade caravans are attacked again and again by the Artabani; worse, he can get no help from local mercenaries or the vizier's soldiers because of his own suspect ancestry. Al-Malu offers to hire anyone - even Christian warriors - who can protect his caravans against the Artabani.

If the characters take him up on his offer, see *An Audience with Shams Al-Malu*, page 104.

The Joyous One Arrives (Day 4)

On Day 4, the followers of the Joyous One arrive in the town. Madmen are considered holy in Islam, so the obviously crazed followers who survived the crossing of the desert are cared for by the vizier. They are given food and water and permitted to remain in tents at the edge of the city.

The next day, the vizier's men round up the madmen and imprison them all in the palace seraglio, which is hastily converted to serve as a comfortable jail. The Followers of Ibn Sina realised during the night that the 'madmen' are under an enchantment and spend the next few hours casting *Neutralise Magic* spells to free the followers of the Joyous One from the spirit's wiles. In the confusion, the Joyous One itself escapes and flees into the desert.

Faction	Goal	Starting Knowledge	Assets	Potential Allies	Potential Enemies
The guardian priests	Find the Tomb	Whatever the PCs discovered in previous scenarios	Whatever the PCs brought with them	Any	All
Vizier al Mukhtar	Find the Tomb, gain the power of Solomon	None	Lots of soldiers, civic authority	None	All
The Followers of Ibn Sina	Bury the tomb forever	None	Sorcery	Shams al-Malu, Vizier al Mukhtar (as long as he knows nothing of the tomb)	The PCs, the Templars, The Joyous One, Vizier al Mukhtar
Shams al-Malu	Protect the tomb	Secret of the Seal	Loyalty of some Artabani	The PCs, Followers of Ibn Sina	All
David al-Shem	Protect the tomb (or, if convinced, use the power of Solomon)	Secret of the Seal	Fanatic Artabani raiders	The PCs	All
The Templars	Find the Tomb, gain the power of Solomon	Secret of the Gate	Hardened Templar warriors	The PCs	All
The Joyous One	Find the tomb, free the spirits	None	Insane followers, spirit powers	None	All

The Joyous One Finds The Tomb (Day 7)

If none of the factions have found the tomb by this point, the Joyous One sniffs out the entrance to the tomb on Day 7. The spirit digs up the entrance but is slain by the Guardians just inside the door. Undeterred by this, the Joyous One flies off, possesses some other unfortunate and marches his body to the tomb. The Guardians cannot endure forever...

The Other factions

The characters may wish to ally themselves with one of the other groups in Palmyra or just throw their competitors off the trail.

Secret of the Seal: The faction knows that the only way to find the tomb is to line up the lights from the beacons. See *The Seal of Solomon*.

Secret of the Gate: The faction knows how to avoid the Guardians. See *The Tomb*.

Visiting the Vizier

The characters may request an audience with Vizier Bassam al Mukhtar, or they may be encouraged to visit him by his guards. In either situation, the vizier treats the characters with the utmost respect, inviting them to dine at his palace as honoured guests. (Courtesy rolls are appropriate to avoid offending the vizier.) The vizier is bombastic, boastful and eager to show off his erudition. He insists on speaking English or French and even offers to have his cooks prepare 'more familiar' food for the characters.

During the conversation, al Mukhtar will try to ferret out *why* the characters are in Tadmur and if they are a threat to him or his masters. While al Mukhtar has no knowledge of the occult, he realises that it cannot be a co-incidence that the sorcerers of Ibn Sina arrived at just the same time as all these strange westerners and the madmen. What are they all doing here? Where are they going?

If al Mukhtar suspects that the characters are searching for some treasure, then he has his guards watch the characters and may even pursue them into the desert if he is convinced the risk is worth the potential reward.

The Sorcerers

Master Fadhel remains in the vizier's palace, meditating and (after Day 4) freeing the Joyful People from the spirit's curse. He acts through his three apprentices, who he sends out into the city as spies. Each apprentice has six magical candles which Fadhel can use as scrying devices, identical to the ones in Zuabi's tower.

As soon as he realises that the characters are looking for the tomb, then Fadhel has his apprentices spy on them whenever possible. If the characters catch one of these apprentices, then the apprentice is under orders to say the following: *'I come on behalf of Master Fadhel, who begs to speak with you on a matter of great importance. Please, I have in my pouch a magic candle. Simply light it, and my master will be able to converse with you as though he were here now.'*

Fadhel's argument is simple: the Tomb of Solomon was sealed for a reason. Opening the tomb would be exceedingly unwise, as there is no guarantee that those who unlocked the power of the djinni would be able to control the spirits. He wants all traces of the tomb erased. If the characters can find the tomb, he can use his magic to bury it for all time beyond the reach of mortal men.

If the characters reveal that there are other factions hunting the tomb, the Followers of Ibn Sina agree to aid the characters in stopping them.

An Audience with Shams al-Malu

The harried merchant is willing to talk to anyone who can help protect his caravans from attack. If questioned, he explains that he comes from the people of Artaban, who have dwelt since time immemorial in six villages in the desert. For many generations, the Artabani were enemies of the true faith and it is only in the last few generations that the Artabani have embraced Islam. Nonetheless, they are still mistrusted by the people of Tadmur.

Al-Malu is obviously wealthy; he explains that his chief advantage over the other merchants is that his followers can cross part of the desert by night without getting lost. His kin still dwell in three villages in the desert and near each village is a tall tower. They light beacons atop these towers when caravans are near, to guide the travellers home.

If the characters ask about the Sons of the Seven Hundred, then al-Malu looks curiously at the characters; that is indeed an ancient name for the Artabani. Where did they hear it?

If the characters ask about the tomb, then al-Malu instantly becomes defensive and evasive; he refuses to discuss the tomb and if possible, he hires the characters and sends them right into the heart of Artabani territory, in the hopes that David al-Shem's fanatics kill them.

The Sons of the Seven Hundred

To make contact with the Artabani, the characters must travel into the desert to David al-Shem's village. The last of the six villages is located in mountainous territory that is extremely hazardous, full of hidden ravines and steep cliffs. The Artabani raiders know this territory very well indeed; anyone travelling in or near this region will likely be attacked by the Sons.

To make peaceful contact with the Sons, the characters need to convince the Artabani that they are no threat to the village. Allies of Tadmur or the Emir of Damascus are not welcome here. If the characters promise to aid the village against attack, then David al-Shem agrees to meet with them.

Al-Shem is paranoid, convinced that the vizier and half the world are plotting to wipe out his village and take the secret of the tomb. The characters will have to tread carefully or else al-Shem will leap to the conclusion that they are planning to steal the location of the tomb. The best approach is to slowly feed al-Shem's paranoia until he is convinced that his village is about to be destroyed, then suggest that the only way to save the faithful Sons of the Seven Hundred is to use the power of the tomb.

The Templars

Audan and his knights stay in Palmyra for a single night before heading into the desert. They wander around the desert for a few days before Audan realises that there must be more to the mystery than simply digging in the sands. By Day 7, the Templars have discovered the ruins of the abandoned villages and the mysterious towers and are trying to work out the connection between the towers and the hidden tomb.

If the characters reveal themselves to the Templars, then Audan immediately suggests they work together. The Order and the Temple may have their differences but they are both Christians and enemies of the Saracens. The guardian priests have the occult knowledge and secret weapons to enter the tomb and recover the power of Solomon but the Templars have the military force and knowledge of the enemy needed to successfully use the weapons in the tomb. Only by allying together can they be certain of ultimate victory!

Even as he promises to help the characters, Audan is considering the possibility of betraying them. He would prefer not to do so – they are fellow Christians, after all, and Audan is not cruel by nature – but this treasure belongs to the Temple of Solomon, not Mont St-Michel or Rome.

The Seal of Solomon

The Tomb of Solomon is hidden in the shifting, featureless desert of Syria. There is no marker to show its location, no grand entrance or towering pillar or statue. The only sign of the tomb on the surface is a few shallow graves that somehow endure the constant movement of the sands. Finding the tomb just by wandering the desert is impossible.

The clue is in the great seal of Solomon. The King established six villages, scattered seemingly at random in a rough circle around the tomb. The location of the villages is irrelevant – but near each village stands a pillar. These pillars are all of different heights, ranging from six to twelve metres. In Solomon's day, a polished shield of copper was mounted atop each pillar.

When travelling in the desert, it is possible to see these beacons shining in the sun. As the traveller gets closer to the location of the tomb, the beacons seem to line up along the horizon. At the exact position of the tomb, the six lights are spaced evenly along the horizon. The towers themselves are not evenly spaced but from the perspective of one standing atop the tomb, the lights appear to form six equidistant points, a great six-pointed Seal of Solomon. It is not enough to simply know the locations of the towers – you also have to trek across the desert until you find that one place where they line up (alternatively, a Very Hard (-60%) Engineering test can be used to calculate the point).

To ensure these towers could be correctly rebuilt if they were damaged, the builders of the tomb also constructed a synagogue in each village and above the door of each synagogue they wrote the correct height of the tower in cubits. Whenever these synagogues were repaired, the number was copied onto a new stone.

At least, so it was in the days of Solomon the Wise. Only one of the six towers is still intact. Two of the towers have fallen into ruin. The other three towers were partially destroyed when the Artabani of those villages converted to Islam but in recent years Shams al-Malu has rebuilt these towers.

He claims this is to help guild his caravans and at night his servants place flaming torches atop the towers, so the caravan drivers can navigate the desert in the dark by following the lights but it is also because Shams al-Malu honours his ancestors and holds true to the commandments of the Artabani people.

To find the tomb using this method, the characters need to rebuild the damaged towers, light beacons atop each of them and then travel into the desert to line up the lights.

The Three Villages of the Faithful

The three small villages nearest to Palmyra all converted to Islam centuries ago. The villages are small settlements, with no more than a few dozen inhabitants in each. Life here in the desert is hard indeed. Only the old and the very young live here now, scratching out a subsistence living from the soil. Those young enough to travel to Palmyra to find work, usually with Shams al-Malu, who is the richest of the Artabani and often the only one who will employ this despised minority.



The villages are unremarkable, save for the ancient, weathered little temple – now a mosque – in the heart of each of them. There are clues that observant characters can pick up on:

- The towers outside these three villages have been rebuilt by Shams al-Malu. He employs a watchman to stand by each tower; at night, the watchman must climb up the tower and light the beacon.
- In one mosque, they still keep the shield of polished copper that once stood atop the beacon tower. The iman believes it to be a Jewish idol but the characters can recognise it as a heliograph.
- In all three mosques, there is still a number in Hebrew script over the door.
- If the characters listen to the games the children play in the street, they notice the children are playing a curious version of hide and seek. The seeker must find a place where he can see two other children at once. Usually, he finds one child very quickly, then traipses all over the village looking for a spot where he can see another one at the same time.

The Ruined Villages

Two of the six villages are abandoned and ruined. The tower near one village still stands; in the other village, the tower collapsed centuries ago but if the characters dig around, they can find the remains of the village temple and learn the correct height of the tower, as well as a semi-intact polished shield.

The Village of David al–Shem

The last of the villages is located far to the east of Palmyra, atop a rocky plateau. Here, some 200 Artabani still practice the traditions of their ancestors, protecting the Tomb of Solomon and waging war on the followers of the Prophet.

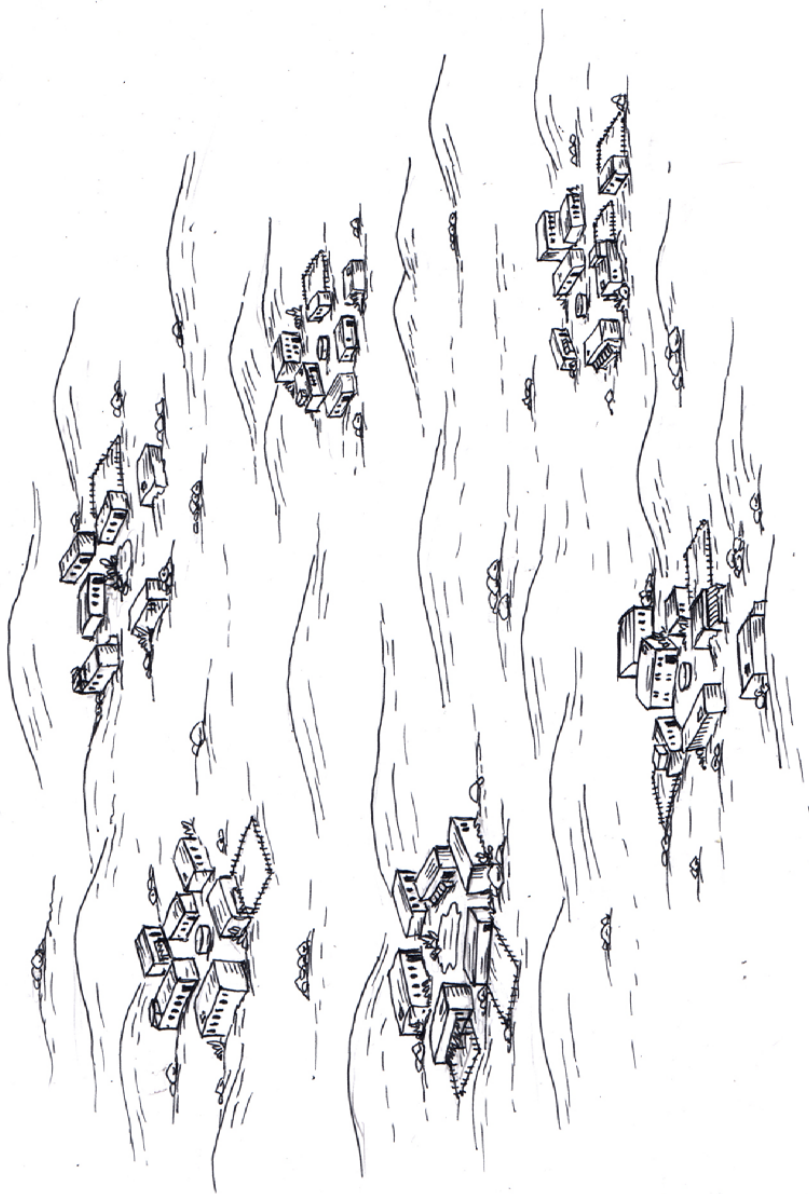
The tower outside the village, high atop the plateau, is the first thing most visitors see. It is also the last – the slopes up to the village are heavily defended by Artabani warriors.

If the characters make it to the village and can prove they are not servants of the vizier, then they can speak with David al-Shem.

The Tomb of Solomon

The spot in the middle of the desert where the beacons meet is an unprepossessing one; this stony hollow looks like any of a thousand nigh-identical spots in the desert. Still, a few minutes' toil exposes several old graves and a stone slab... a slab marked with the Seal of Solomon! The tomb has been found!

Region East of Palmyra



Bandit Attack!

If the characters visit the ruined villages, David al-Shem's village, accompany Shams al-Malu's caravans or just wander the desert, they may be attacked by raiders. These Artabani bandits are sworn to defend the Tomb of Solomon from anyone who might despoil it – but all too often, they attack because their besieged village can survive only by raiding.

The bandits are adept at hiding in the stony desert. They stalk their prey, waiting until their targets are tired or distracted. They might choose to attack when the characters are making camp, or when one wanders away from the main group, or when the characters are occupied with navigating a steep cliff or treacherous wadi.

When the bandits attack, they begin with a hail of arrows. In a raiding party, there are two bandits per Player Character, plus two. If there is any possibility that their prey might escape by fleeing, then the bandits divide into two groups before attacking; one group circles around and waits for the first group to attack with arrows, then they close the jaws of their trap when the prey runs away from the archers.

If the characters surrender to the bandits, or (more likely) defeat them and spare a few of the attackers, they may be brought back to David al-Shem.

Bemused and Confused?

If the players are having trouble solving the puzzle of the tomb, there are several ways to help them.

- **Reward correct deductions:** If a player makes a suggestion that puts the characters on the right track (*'Hey, maybe it's something to do with the seal of Solomon' or 'if those towers line up somehow...'*), give that character a Hero Point as a reward.
- **Let them spy on other factions:** The Templars are actively searching for the tomb; the Joyous One is trying to sniff it out. The failed investigations of other groups can help the characters put the pieces together themselves.
- **Offer alliances:** Any of the other factions could offer to help the characters, in exchange for help winning the power of Solomon.

Vizier's Guards

STR	13	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP	Combat Actions	2
CON	14	1-3	Right Leg	1/5	Damage Modifier	+0
SIZ	11	4-6	Left Leg	1/5	Magic Points	12
INT	11	7-9	Abdomen	1/6	Movement	8m
POW	12	10-12	Chest	1/7	Strike Rank	+9 (+11 in armour)
DEX	11	13-15	Right Arm	1/4		
CHA	10	16-18	Left Arm	1/4		
		19-20	Head	4/5		

Armour: Padded with steel cap

Equipment: Scimitar, Hoplite Shield

Notable Skills: Athletics 50%, Perception 50%, Persistence 40%, Resilience 60%, Streetwise 40%, Stealth 30%



WEAPONS

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Scimitar	M	M	75%	1D8	6/10
& Hoplite Shield	H	S	75%	1D4	6/18

Verse 6.3

THE TOMB



The Tomb of Solomon was constructed not to hold the corpse of Solomon but to hold the spirits and demons that he bound with the magic of the Ring of Aandaleeb. The tomb is more than a series of traps; it is a test of worthiness. By passing through all 10 chambers of the tomb successfully, the supplicant proves himself to possess wisdom, courage and determination, the three key factors needed to work magic.

Structure of the Tomb

The tomb's layout is based on the Cabalistic concept of the Sephirot, the Emanations of God. The Tree of the Sephirot describes the 10 aspects (or emanations) of God that allow the unknowable divine light to manifest in our world. Of the 10 chambers in the tomb, each one corresponds to one of the 10 Sephirot.

If any of the players mention the Cabalistic tree of life, or the Sephirot, or suggest that there may be a mystical pattern underlying the tomb's structure, give them the handout 'A Brief Introduction to the tree of the Sephirot' on page 115. Only by navigating the 10 Sephirot can the characters find the ultimate secret of the tomb.

Physical Attributes

The passageways in the tomb are made of brick. There are no doors in the complex, save for the freestanding door in Hod and the impassable doors between Tiferet and Binah, Chokmah and Kether. There is no lighting in the passageways or in the entrance chamber but the 10 chambers of the Sephirot are illuminated by a magical glow.

In some places, passageways cross over or under another. There are short narrow staircases leading up and down in such cases.

The Pillars and The Keys

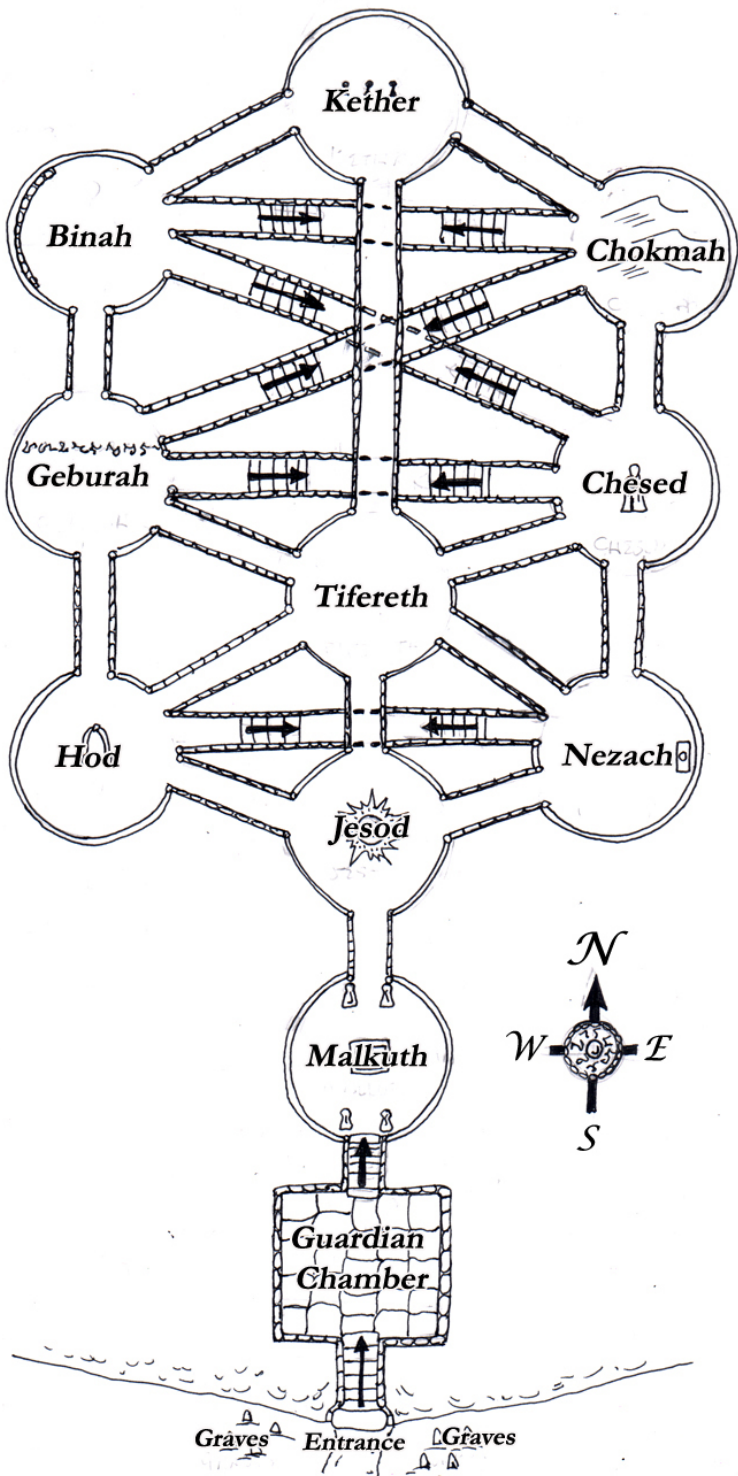
The 10 spheres are arranged into three columns, referred to as the Pillars. The central pillar (Malkuth->Jesod->Tifereth->Kether) is the Pillar of Mildness, symbolising the breath and the balance of forces. The left pillar (Hod->Geburah->Binah) is the Pillar of Severity and the right pillar (Nezach, Chesed and Chokmah) is the Pillar of Mercy. If the characters complete the tests in all of the Sephirot of a particular pillar, then they will be rewarded with the key corresponding to that pillar. All three keys are needed to open the chamber beyond Kether.

Enemies and Uncertain Allies

Depending on events in *Trail of the Tomb*, then the characters may not be the only ones who find the tomb. If the characters' enemies find the tomb, the reaction varies by faction:

The Followers of Ibn Sina: If the followers find the tomb, then Master Fadhel makes camp a short distance away from the entrance and begins a lengthy magical ritual to whip up a great *simoon*, a desert wind that will dump hundreds of thousands of tons of sand on top of the tomb, burying it for all time. If the characters are already in the tomb, then this gives them a time limit; if they do not escape the tomb before Fadhel completes his ritual, they will be buried in the sands for eternity.

The Templars: If the Templars find the tomb, then Audan and his followers charge into the unknown just as their fellows did at the siege of Ascalon. The Templars know the secret of entering the tomb but in their excitement they forget and just run straight in. Half of Audan's followers are killed by the Guardians; the rest fall victim to other traps until only Audan is left. Audan makes it to the final chamber and may confront the characters there.



Other Factions in the Tomb

It can be tricky to keep track of even one or two Non-Player Characters in a complex environment like the Tomb of Solomon and it is possible – depending on the actions of the characters – that there could be a dozen or more NPCs running around if multiple factions are involved. If this happens, keep as many characters ‘off-screen’ as possible. Have NPCs lurk outside the tomb, or take different routes through the labyrinth, or kill them off with traps as quickly as you can.

If the players fail to win all three of the keys needed to open Kether, then you can have an NPC show up with the missing key at the end of the dungeon, forcing the characters to fight or negotiate to access the final chamber.

The Artibani: The Artibani (either the followers of Shams al-Malu, or David al-Shem if the characters have not convinced him to aid them) know the rough location of the tomb and will stalk anyone who gets too close. They will lie in wait at the tomb entrance, ambushing those who try to enter or leave.

The Joyous One: If the Joyous One finds the tomb, then it never makes it past the Guardians... over-and-over again. When the characters arrive, they find a dozen corpses of possessed victims in the entrance chamber. The Joyous One may offer to ally itself with the characters at this point, promising to guide them through the dungeon in exchange for their help getting past the Guardians. The spirit has no idea of the layout of the dungeon; it is lying through its borrowed teeth when it claims it can help.

The Vizier: If the characters were foolish enough to let al Mukhtar know about the existence of the tomb, then the vizier responds in a typically understated way. He shows up at the tomb with an army, including several dozen Christian slaves. The slaves are fed, one-by-one, into the dungeon’s maw. His plan is to keep triggering traps until the path to the treasure is clear.

The vizier will never find the secrets of Solomon this way but it does mean that there is a small army waiting outside the tomb when the characters emerge.

If the characters ally with a faction, then their erstwhile allies are likely to betray them at some point.

The Artabani (al-Malu’s Faction): If the characters ally with al-Malu and manage to survive his attempts to kill them by sending them into ambushes, then al-Malu may pretend to relent and help guide the PCs to the tomb. Once they reach the tomb, his ulterior motive is revealed; al-Malu seals the tomb behind the characters by collapsing the entrance chamber. The characters will be trapped in the tomb forever unless they can use the magic of the *djinni* to escape.

The Artabani (al-Shem’s Faction): If the characters convince al-Shem to take the power of Solomon, then the bandit leader and two of his followers accompanies them into the tomb. They will only betray the characters if they believe the characters will not use the power of Solomon on the vizier’s forces.

The Templars: The Templars want the power of the tomb for themselves but they also know how dangerous the Order’s guardian priests can be. Therefore, Audan’s plan is to wait for the characters to trip up and then stab them in the back. If the characters never seem to be in danger, then he will hang back and wait, while advising them to turn the power of Solomon on the Saracens.

The Entrance

The entrance to the Tomb of Solomon consists of a heavy block of sandstone marked with the Seal of Solomon. Dragging the block away reveals a staircase going down into a brickwork tunnel. Halfway down this staircase, the characters find a human skull embedded in the wall; it whispers a message in ancient Hebrew – *‘this place is death! Turn back or perish!’* A character who continues to descend this staircase arrives in the chamber of the Guardians.

There is a second way into the tomb, mentioned obliquely in the Templar scrolls from the Chateau du Paynes and also known to Audan of Aquitaine. There are several strange shallow graves just outside the tomb’s entrance, graves that have survived for more than 1,000 years despite the constant wind and the shifting of the sands. A character who buries himself in one of these graves is sucked through the ground and falls through the ceiling of the Malkuth chamber, avoiding the Guardians.

The Guardian Chamber

At the end of the staircase, you enter a large square chamber with a paved floor and a vaulted ceiling. At the far side of the chamber is another staircase. Four statues of ancient kings – you recognise Solomon himself, David his father and two others you cannot immediately identify – flank the two exits.

If the Joyous One got here ahead of the characters, add:

The floor of the chamber is littered with battered and broken corpses. More alarmingly, the fists of the four statues are caked in blood.

The statues are, obviously, animated golems. Any character who crosses the floor of the chamber is challenged by the golems who should ‘HALT’ as one. If a character continues beyond the mid-point of the room, all four golems activate and attack. The guardians are wise enough to use tactics – one statue guards each exit, while the other two methodically eliminate any intruders trapped in the room.

The stairs on the far side of the room lead to Malkuth.

Battling the Guardians

The Guardians are sturdy but unimaginative foes. Their tactic is simply to pound their enemies into paste. Direct conflict with the Guardians is futile; the creatures are made of stone and virtually invulnerable. Their chief weakness is the scroll marked with the word *emet* (truth) contained in the golem’s mouth. Destroying or altering this scroll deactivates the golem. Counter-magic spells against Magnitude 8 can also destroy the golems.

An agile character can try to get the golems to strike each other – the chamber is so cramped that a wild swing from a golem’s stony fist can hit another golem. To accomplish this, the character must use Evade to set up the golems and then make another Evade test to dodge at just the right time.

The Tree of Life

To complete the tests set by Solomon, the characters must pass the challenges of all nine of the lesser Sephirot. The tests are in three groups of three – the Pillar of Mildness, the Pillar of Severity and the Pillar of Mercy. Whenever the characters complete a Sephirah, a momentary feeling of peace floods over them. If they complete all three Sephirot from a pillar, they will find the key a few moments later. The key might be lying in the middle of the corridor, hidden behind a loose brick, or suddenly be found hanging from a character’s belt, placed there by unseen hands.

Malkuth

If the characters arrived here from the entrance chamber, they enter via the staircase at the south end of the room. If they buried themselves alive on the surface, then they fall through the ceiling of the Malkuth chamber.

You enter a round room with walls of polished brown stone. A passageway leads north. In the centre of the room is an altar and sitting on this altar is a veiled figure wearing blue robes. She raises her head as you enter.

'I am the least of the brides and this is the kingdom of the world. From my throne, you may rule all the world for eternity. Will any of you take my place?'

Beneath her veils, the bride is made of stone, like the golems in the upper entrance chamber. Her lower body is fused with the stone altar on which she sits; she may be the secret ruler of the world but she cannot take a single step. She was one of Solomon's wives, millennia ago; she tried to steal the Ring of Aandaleeb and he punished her by turning her to stone.

If a character agrees to take her place, then she invites him to sit beside her on the altar. When he does so, the character turns to stone and the bride becomes flesh. She immediately begins to age as the centuries catch up with her. A moment later, she crumbles into dust.

If the characters refuse to take her place, she sighs and indicates the passageway behind her. *'There are three pillars of wisdom and each pillar has a key. Seek wisdom and you will find the key.'* She says nothing more but by refusing her offer, the characters have one-third of the key of Mildness.

Jesod

As you enter this chamber, a pale white glow begins to emanate from a crystal sphere in the centre of the room. The pale light illuminates a circular room of bluish-white stone. There are three exits, leading north-west, north and north-east. The crystal sphere seems to pulse with barely contained power... and an instant later, a shaft of white light shoots straight up out of the sphere. Pinioned in the beam of light is a beautiful nude female figure, perhaps a spirit, who floats languidly in the air above the sphere. Her naked body writhes with pleasure as the beam of light plays over her and she seems to become more solid and physical where the light touches her. Then the beam of light fades and so does the beautiful woman.

The sphere responds to the character's touch; if a character touches the sphere, it shoots out a beam of light in the direction he desires. If the character illuminates the seductive spirit, the spirit becomes more and more real the longer the beam is trained on her. She whispers licentious promises into the character's ears as she comes closer to manifesting.

The spirit is a temptation – the light of the sphere is finite and if the character wastes it all on lust, then he fails the test of this sphere. The correct response is to reflect the light of the Sephiroth into Malkuth by sending a beam of light down the south passageway.

If the characters shine the light on the spirit for five rounds, she manifests fully – the light goes out and the creature attacks. She is a Vengeful Spirit.

Hod

Entering this chamber, you see there are multiple exits, leading south-east, east, north-east and due north. There is also a door in the very centre of the room – a free-standing door, with nothing around it save a doorframe. You can walk around the door or step through it.

The door symbolises the divide between the world as sorcerers see it and as those who do not practice the arcane arts perceive it. Stepping through the door casts Mystic Vision on anyone who

passes through the portal, at a cost of 1d4 damage to the head in the form of a blinding headache of revelation. A character under the effects of *Mystic Vision* in this room can see an altar and a sheaf of scrolls against the western wall of Hod. Written on this scroll is a spell, which can be cast with a Lore (Occult) test or a Grimoire skill. Casting the spell permanently enhances the caster's POW by one and also passes the test of this Sephirah – the character has found wisdom through prayer.

However, a character who steps through the door is also vulnerable to attack. Lurking in this chamber is another Vengeful Spirit. A character who has gone through the door can see and attack the spirit; other characters are unable to see or interact with it.

Nezach

This chamber shimmers with amber light. There are four exits – south-west, west, north-west and due north. Standing against the eastern wall of the chamber is a small plinth, on which stands a cup of water.

A character who tries to cross the chamber suddenly perceives the room as being unimaginably vast, perhaps hundreds of miles across. The floor is a trackless desert and it seems to take a lifetime to get anywhere. Call for Resilience rolls – a character trying to make it from one entrance to another must make five Resilience rolls, while getting to or from the cup from any of the entrances requires three Resilience rolls. Failing a Resilience roll inflicts 1d8 damage to the character's chest.

Drinking from the cup not only cures any damage suffered by the character but also gives him a +50% bonus to Resilience while in the sphere of Nezach. When the character drinks from the cup, he suddenly remembers his mother incredibly vividly.

Merely crossing this room successfully in any direction completes the test of this Sephirah.

Tifereth

The next chamber you enter is mirrored on every surface and you are not sure if it is a circular room or a spherical one. Light cascades in unimaginably complex patterns in every direction, as if this place was reflecting infinite other, higher spheres. Standing in this chamber as if waiting for you is a young woman, even more beautiful than any you have seen before. Her clothing and appearance seems to change depending on the angle you view her from – now she is dressed in a samite gown, now in rags, now in a nun's habit, now in armour, now in stranger costumes – but her features remain constant.

'I am Tifereth' she announces, 'the mirror of the soul. What do you bring to me?'

Tifereth wants the characters to offer the essence of their personalities to her. Who are they? What defines the characters? What is the core of their being? She will prompt them with questions, trying to pare them down to the core of their being and asking them to define themselves.

With each answer, Tifereth defines herself as the opposite. For example:

PC: *'I am a warrior of God.'*

Tifereth: *'Then I am faithless; I believe in nothing.'*

PC: *'I am a defender of the weak.'*

Tifereth: *'Then I prey on them; I use my strength to despoil and destroy.'*

PC: *'I seek wisdom.'*

Tifereth: *'Then I am heedless, ignorant, wilful and witless.'*

PC: *'I am a killer of men.'*

Tifereth: *'Then I am a saviour and a healer.'*

With each answer, her appearance and demeanour changes to reflect her declaration.

If Tifereth ends up with more negative traits than positive traits, she transforms into a demonic Vengeful Spirit and attacks; the characters are obviously overwhelmingly self-deluded and can therefore not be permitted to reach Kether. Optionally, you should give her unique abilities based on the traits the characters assigned to her; a faithless Tifereth might be immune to Divine Magic, for example.

If Tifereth has more positive traits than negative ones or an equal balance of the two, she vanishes, completing this Sefirah's test.

There are six exits from Tifereth – south to Jesod, north-west to Geburah and Binah, north-east to Chesed and Chokmah and north to Kether. The passageways north from Tifereth to the upper three Sephiroth end in impassable iron doors. These doors open only if all the other spheres save these three have been visited (not necessarily completed).

Geburah

As you approach this chamber, you feel an intense pressure in your skull, as if a storm was building up around you. Your throat becomes dry. Your heart pounds wildly. You feel an overwhelming desire to flee, to cower, to prostrate yourself before the awful power that dwells in the room beyond.

Steeling yourself, you manage to enter the room. There are five entrances: south, south-east, east, north-east and north. A line of characters is drawn in the floor, bisecting the room. The north and north-east exits are on the far side of this line.

Also on the far side is the Wrath of God. You know it when you look upon it; a roiling cloud of fury, fire, thunder and utter destruction. The Wrath appears constrained by the symbols on the floor, but you know that if it were set loose, even for an instant, it would consume everything. The only thing between you and seething nuclear chaos is a few Hebrew letters drawn on the floor.

If a character reads the letters, he recognises them as the text of the Torah. Bizarrely, although there are only 22 letters on the floor, their order changes every time the characters reads the markings, suggesting that all possible combinations are contained here.

There are three ways to complete this Sefirah.

- They can temper judgement with mercy by visiting Chesed before crossing the line (see *Chesed*).
- They can try to rewrite the law and contain the Wrath of God – redrawing the symbols on the floor to contain the Wrath and give access to Binah and Chokmah. Doing so requires a Very Hard (–60%) Lore (Occult) test; failure means the Wrath explodes outwards, consuming everyone in the room.
- They can close their eyes and walk into the Wrath of God. The Wrath inflicts 2d6 damage to all locations, ignoring armour.

Chesed

A gentle light bathes this white-walled chamber. There are five exits – south, south-west, west, north-west and north.

In the centre of the room stands the statue of a beautiful woman, dressed in marble robes. She carries a bloody scimitar in one hand that is very real and sharp indeed. In the other, she holds a cup of water. The white marble floor is awash in blood. A familiar figure lies crumpled on the floor, bleeding.

The figure on the floor is an enemy of the characters. Ideally, it is someone who is already in the tomb, like the Joyous One or Audan or David al-Shem but if there are no suitable candidates, it can be the illusion of some past foe or long-running rival. Obviously, the purpose of this Sephirah is to test the characters' capacity for mercy.

There are two ways to heal the wounded foe. They can make a First Aid test, or they can take the cup of water from the statue and pour the healing liquid on the foe's wounds. Either approach saves their wounded enemy from dying and completes this Sephirah.

The cup of mercy can also be used to avoid the Wrath of God in Geburah.

If a character tries to step past the statue to reach the north or north-west exit without first dealing with the dying victim on the floor, the statue turns to glare at him. If he continues, the statue attacks - use the Guardian statistics but add the following attack:

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Sword of Mercy	H	L	80%	2D10	6/18

Binah

Light reflects off a wall of complicated brass cogs. This chamber contains an extremely complex device, a huge lock of some sort, that is mounted on one wall. The lock consists of dozens of cogs and bars of varying sizes. Turning one cog also moves some of those around it. Written above the mechanism are the words 'AS ABOVE, SO BELOW'.

To pass through Binah successfully, the characters must solve this lock. A diagram of the cogs is provided here.

If the players have been paying attention, they will recognise the Tree of the Sephirot in the middle of the lock mechanism. Ten of the cogs correspond to the ten Sephirot. Turning the wheels in order from Kether to Malkuth (-locks Binah).

If the players are unable to decode this puzzle, a Very Hard (-40%) Mechanisms test lets the characters figure out the workings of the lock and disable it.

Chokmah

You enter this chamber to find yourselves in the open air. You stand in the desert and it is just before dawn. The eastern sky is touched with a breath of pink and gold. The whole world seems still and peaceful, yet filled with potential. Your every step seems to carry you many leagues forward; your every gesture seems symbolic of greater things, as though you were players on a stage or magicians enacting a rite.

Chokmah is the Sephirah of intuition and emotion. The characters cannot fail this test, as long as they do not second-guess themselves. Any action, carried out boldly, is the correct one here.

Kether

The final chamber is the Sephirah of Kether, the ultimate hidden source of all things, the light of God. It is locked away from the characters when they first enter this room - there are three keyholes on the floor. The only way to open the vault below this chamber is to possess all three keys (yes, characters can try picking the lock; it is a Formidable (-80%) Mechanisms test and failing means the character is struck down by the Wrath of God from Geburah).

If the characters have all three keys, they can open the vault. If they have only two keys, then bring in one of the rivals with the last key and force the characters to negotiate.

If the characters open the trapdoor in the floor, a bright light envelops them. They have entered the Vault of Solomon.

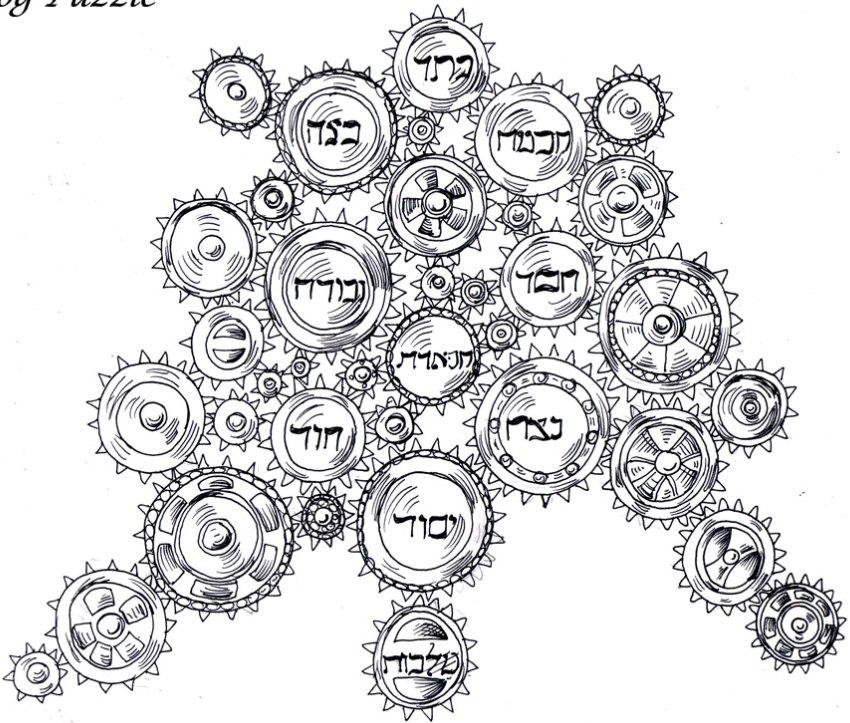
The Vault of Solomon

Your eyes adjust to the glorious light... and see wonderful things. The walls are decorated with carvings testifying to the wisdom of Solomon and the glories of the Kingdom of Israel. Gold and jewels lie scattered around the floor, a king's ransom in treasure of all sorts. The chief part of the treasure, though, is the many clay jars similar to the one that held the Joyous One.

Atop a pedestal is another such jar but this one is made of blue crystal and it glows from within. Written on the lid of the jar are the words 'OPEN ME'.

The treasure here is almost incidental, as the guardian priests have taken vows of poverty. Still, if anyone wants to break their vows and fill their pockets, there are tens of thousands of silver pieces' worth of treasure.

Cog Puzzle



The jars contain more trapped spirits. If a PC approaches the jars, he hears voices from within; some voices boom and threaten the character with dire consequences and demonic wrath if he does not open the jars, while others plead for freedom as they have been unjustly imprisoned or offer wondrous rewards if freed. If a character is foolish enough to open a jar, then the spirit escapes and flees into the wider world to cause mischief or destruction.

The characters can try carrying jars out of the tomb; each jar has an ENC of 6. Each jar contains a demon, ghost or other spirit of some sort, the exact nature of which is up to the GM.

The spirits can only be commanded with the Ring of Aandaleeb, which is in the blue jar.

The blue jar is obviously special. If the characters open that...

A cloud of smoke billows forth from the jar and takes on the shape of an old man of kingly aspect. His eyes shine with wisdom; his face is stern and regal. On his phantasmal hand he wears a solid ring of iron. His voice speaks in your minds.

'I am Solomon, Son of David. Why do you come here? What do you seek?'

The characters stand in the presence of the shade of one of the mightiest sorcerers in history. When Solomon felt his life beginning to slip away, he turned the Ring of Aandaleeb on himself and bound his own soul into a jar, so he could be the final guardian of the tomb. He may be dead but he has lost none of his wisdom and none of his power.

Attacking Solomon is futile. He is an awesomely powerful sorcerer in the heart of a sanctum that he himself created. Do not even bother rolling the dice – Solomon can do whatever he wants to the PCs. If they try to hurt him, he annihilates them. If you are feeling merciful and the players spend a lot of Hero Points, then maybe he will just have a djinni drop them into the middle of the ocean or send them hurtling forward or back in time instead of turning them to stone or blasting them with fire from heaven.

Immortality has not taught him patience or mercy, either. The wisest of kings does not suffer fools gladly. The characters' fate depends on their response to his question.

We're Here For Power/We're here for the jars of spirits: This is the wrong answer.

'Power, you seek? Then power you shall see!' The shade raises his ring and all the jars in the room rattle and quake with anticipation. 'Destroy them!' orders Solomon. The lids of all the jars explode and a host of terrible spirits stream towards you.

Any character who does not immediately turn and run is killed on the spot. Any player who does flee must make an Athletics roll to stay ahead of the host of spirits; anyone who fails is killed. If no-one fails, then the straggler with the lowest movement score or the lowest margin of success is taken by the spirits and destroyed. The spirits pour through the tomb complex, killing any other intruders. The survivors flee out of the tomb and – if they look back over their shoulders while they keep running – see the spirits lift up what seems to be the whole desert and dump it on top of the tomb entrance, burying it for all time. The spirits flood back into their jars after completing the task laid upon them by the Ring of Aandaleeb.

God sent us/we want to defeat the Saracens!: Solomon frowns in response to such a declaration.

'And what aid do you expect from me?' The characters must restate their desires but Solomon is now on his guard and the chances of the characters being incinerated is a lot higher.

A Brief Introduction to the Tree of the Sephirot

The Sephirot are a Rabbinical concept that explains how God's will becomes manifest in reality, cascading from the unknowable ultimate divine light down through the Tree of the Sephirot until it becomes physical form. By studying the Sephirot, a mystic may align his thoughts to those of God.

There are 10 Sephirot, traditionally arranged in a tree formation.

1st: Kether – **The Light of God**; the ultimate, the unknowable.

2nd: Chokmah – **The Emotion of God**; raw action, intuition, potential.

3rd: Binah – **The Intellect of God**; rationality, logic.

4th: Chesed – **The Loving Kindness of God**; love, action, causality.

5th: Geburah – **The Judgement of God**; strength, power, the Law.

6th: Tifereth – **The Union of all Spheres**; balance, beauty, integration.

7th: Nezach – **Endurance, Patience, Acceptance**. Also associated with victory.

8th: Hod – **Prayer, Consciousness, Ceremonial Magic**. Associated with language and speech.

9th: Jesod – **The Connection, the Reflected Light of God**. Associated with the Moon and the generative organs. Said to reflect the light of the other Sephirot into the physical world.

10th: Malkuth – **the Kingdom, the Physical World**. The Creation of God, the Bride.

We're here to stop others from stealing your power!: A better response.

'Thieves! Very well! Let them see what they would claim!'

Again, Solomon looses the spirits upon the intruders. The PCs glimpse their foes being dragged through the tomb and torn apart by the host of angry spirits. Once the intruders have been dealt with, Solomon offers the characters a boon – see *Solomon's Boons*.

We're here to imprison the Joyous One!: If the spirit is still at large, the characters can tell Solomon that they are here to deal with that spirit.

Solomon laughs. 'So, that rogue is still dallying with the daughters of Eve? Come, spirit, take the place that was long prepared for you. By the Ring and the Seal I command you! Come to me!' A

wind blows through the chamber and the characters glimpse a vaguely humanoid shape flying past them. One of the jars opens and for a moment something *else* tries to crawl out of the jar but Solomon forces both the Joyous One and the other entity back into the jar and the stopper leaps off the ground and seals it once more. The jar rocks and shakes, as if two cats were fighting inside it.

'They do not like sharing, I think' says Solomon, *'but thank you for returning this wayward charge of mine. For this, you shall be rewarded.'*

We seek Wisdom: The best response. Solomon made the same request of God during his reign. The spirit smiles.

'Lord, Give Thy servant an understanding heart to judge Thy people and to know good and evil.' So shall it be. The characters each receive a permanent +25% increase to Insight and another 75 skill points that can be allocated to any skills, as long as no one skill gains more than 25 points. Solomon continues *'I too asked for wisdom and God rewarded me with wealth and power. So too shall I reward you. To each of you I grant a boon.'*

Solomon's Boons

If the characters pleased Solomon, they may each receive a boon. Suitable boons:

- A permanent +1 increase to a Characteristic.
- The service of a *djinni* for three tasks.
- A complete copy of the *Key of Solomon*, including spells missing from the translated versions.
- A magical weapon from Solomon's treasury.
- A permanent increase to Divine Fervour.

Leaving the Tomb

Depending on events before the characters entered the tomb and within the tomb, there may be anything waiting outside, ranging from absolutely no-one to a whole army to a whole army running in terror from the host of djinni loosed by Solomon's shade.

The characters should not be able to return to the tomb. Even if they managed to find the tomb without alerting any of the other factions, have Shams al-Malu tear down his pillars after he discovers that someone visited the sacred place without his knowledge. If all else fails, Master Fadhel can bury the tomb in sand once he divines its location.

After Ex Cathedra

Escaping Solomon's tomb completes the tale of the Joyous One and the spirits. The guardian priests have travelled from the heart of Christendom to beyond the furthest reach of the Crusades. They have faced down all manner of horrors and spoken with Solomon himself. Their faith, resolve and sanity have all been tested.

What next? What adventures lead from this point?

- If Audan managed to recover any of the demon jars from the tomb, he intends to use them to reconquer Jerusalem. Do the characters help him smuggle these magical weapons into an enemy-held city, or do they intend to thwart his plans?
- The characters are, by now, accomplished guardian priests. The Order might direct them to set up a new Preceptory in the Holy Land or in Constantinople.
- The Followers of Ibn Sina may now be aware of the existence of the Order and vice versa. How do the two occult organisations interact? Do the philosophies of the followers hold any relevance to the Divine Path?

Guardians

These stony golems are virtually invulnerable to conventional weapons. Neutralise magic spells or attacking the golem's mouth to destroy the scroll are the best ways to defeat the monsters.

STR	30	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP	<i>Combat Actions</i>	1
CON	25	1-3	Right Leg	10/9	<i>Damage Modifier</i>	+1d10
SIZ	20	4-6	Left Leg	10/9	<i>Magic Points</i>	0
INT	0	7-9	Abdomen	10/10	<i>Movement</i>	4m
POW	0	10-12	Chest	10/11	<i>Strike Rank</i>	+2
DEX	3	13-15	Right Arm	10/8		
CHA	7	16-18	Left Arm	10/8		
		19	Head	10/9		
		20	Mouth	3/3		

Armour: Stone Skin

Equipment: None

Notable Skills: Brawn 120%, Persistence 100%, Resilience 100%

WEAPONS

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Fist	H	L	80%	1D10	As per arm

Vengeful Spirits

It is said that these are the ghosts of the wives of Solomon, who led him to the worship of false gods for a time. These spirits have manifested and can be attacked with normal weapons, but they take minimum damage from any attacks.

STR	-	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP	Combat Actions	3
CON	-	1-3	-	-	Damage Modifier	1d8
SIZ	-	4-6	-	-	Magic Points	12
INT	13	7-9	-	-	Movement	12m
POW	12	10-12	-	-	Strike Rank	+16
DEX	-	13-15	-	-		
CHA	18	16-18	-	-		
		19	-	-		
		20	-	-		

Armour: None, but the spirit takes minimum damage from any attacks.

Equipment: None

Notable Skills: Perception 80%, Persistence 60%, Resilience 60%, Spectral Combat 70%,

WEAPONS

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Claw	M	M	70%	1D8	As per spirit

Armour does not protect against the spirit's attacks.