

New Character Class: The Avantar

Avantar (*pl. avantari*): from the Calandian, meaning "champion of god"; i.e., a native 'paladin'.

The avantar is a fighter-class Character dedicated to the service of a deity or demigod. This champion is the Calandian equivalent of a paladin, but without the alignment restrictions of that non-native profession. The avantar is normally a single-class Character, but, in a few instances (explained following), may be dual-classed. This Character fights primarily on foot, specializes in a weapon favored by his/her deity, and gains spell-like abilities which vary with the god s/he serves.

History

During the turmoil of the Uttermost War, religious factions banded together to wage holy war upon one another. The clergy of most sects led cloistered lives and thus were not well-suited to warfare. There were not enough fighting clerics to carry the day in combat, so fanatic brotherhoods or sisterhoods of warriors were recruited for their cause. These religious fighting groups championed their respective deities, from which arose their name of avantar, "champion-of-god." Avantari were originally foot soldiers. Depending on when and where in history they were encountered, avantari have been no more threatening than a pack of ill-organized raiders, or have fought with devastating effectiveness against seasoned armies.

In the millenia following the Uttermost War, the avantari have remained in Calandian culture. Although not often found in military bands any more, individual warriors sometimes chose to dedicate themselves to the service of a particular deity. Such a champion is seldom regarded with neutrality, since s/he is expected to behave as the embodiment of his/her deity's principles. While most avantari are respected, those of evil or chaotic gods are often feared or hated, and those representing good or lawful deities are loved and honored. Avantari are relied upon by Calandian temples as their champions, much as paladins serve their out-world gods.

Avantari and Paladins

Paladins are a relatively recent arrival on the Calandian scene. Although many have chosen to serve native gods, only the L. Good deities Riegin, Uric, Melios, and the demigod Shau Lin can be championed by them.

Avantari, on the other hand, have no alignment restrictions in the gods they serve. Too, paladins are mounted fighters and avantari are not. Besides these obvious facts, the avantar is a unique outgrowth of the Calandian culture, and differs from the paladin in many other ways.

The Avantar

A Character of any race may be an avantar as long as s/he is of the same alignment as the deity s/he wishes to represent and as long as s/he meets the following qualifications:

- STR of at least 15,
- INT of at least 9,
- INS of at least 15,
- STA of at least 14, and
- APL of at least 12.

If the Character has both STR and INS of 17 or greater, s/he gains a +10% bonus to experience points awarded. The Character uses ten-sided dice for HTK, modified as explained in the Avantari table, following.

Some benefits of being an avantar vary with the deity served, and are detailed in the Avantari Abilities by Deity table. Other class skills are shared by all. The abilities avantari have in common are as follows:

1. Make all saving throws at +1 to the roll.
2. Immunity to disease and fear.
3. At Skill 10, the avantar gains the ability to cast clerical spells as a Skill 1 cleric of his/her deity. This ability improves as s/he increases in Skill level. For each Skill attained above Skill 10, s/he increases his/her clerical spell abilities one Skill level. For example, a Skill 12 avantar will have the clerical spells of a Skill 3 cleric.

Avantari begin with four weapon proficiencies and gain one every three Skill levels. They may specialize in a weapon of their choice, although this is almost always the weapon held in favor by their deity. Former keitari (see following) may continue to use the lance as their primary weapon of choice.

Avantari are expected to actively contribute to the welfare of their temple. They tithe up to 30% of their treasure and material gains to the church, and may not accumulate or keep more than the following magical items:

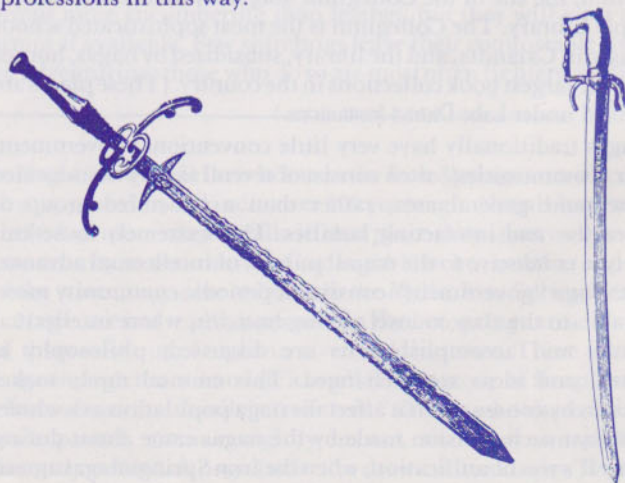
- one suit of armor
- one shield
- four weapons
- any other four magic items.

Avantari have a reputation for picking fights with other avantari of conflicting alignments. Indeed, the outcome of such a challenge has much to do with a particular temple's degree of influence in Calandia. An avantar goes easy on those whose alignment is one step removed, is argumentative to those who are two steps removed, and outright belligerent to those three steps removed. For example, a Chaotic Evil avantar will be tolerant toward a Lawful Evil avantar, argumentative toward a Neutral avantar, and belligerent toward a Lawful Good avantar.

Single- and Dual-Class Characters

Most avantari have always been that class of Character. However, a keitar may become an avantar upon reaching Skill 4 or greater, providing s/he has remained loyal to his/her particular deity and s/he has unswervingly followed his/her professed alignment. The keitar then becomes an avantar of Skill 1, and can progress no farther in the ranks of the keitari. S/He retains all skills mastered as a keitar, but gains future HTK and abilities as an avantar of the appropriate Skill level. Former keitari in command of other avantar/keitar troops sometimes continue to use keitar rank titles, as in the case of Pali Rendaeyos, Horse Master of the Seidrun Guard.

In a similar manner, a ranger of Neutral Good alignment may become an avantar dedicated to the demigod Derius at Skill 4 or higher. These are the only two Character classes which can switch professions in this way.



Alignment Behavior

It is vital for the avantar to behave in a manner strictly adhering to his/her alignment. Deviation from alignment results in the loss of some or all of the avantar's special abilities. The loss is permanent or temporary (GM's discretion) until atoned for by penance or a quest for the temple. For this reason, it is helpful for the GM and Player to agree on a definition of proper alignment-related conduct before play begins. For instance, a Character serving the Lawful Neutral demigod Vikkar Tornor, deity of oaths and justice, may agree that s/he will:

1. Stay absolutely true to his/her word, once given.
2. Show no mercy to those who have broken their word, and extract justice from them.
3. Remain loyal to friends, unless they are foresworn.
4. Use only justifiable force when dealing with enemies.
5. Aid the helpless if it seems fair and reasonable to do so.

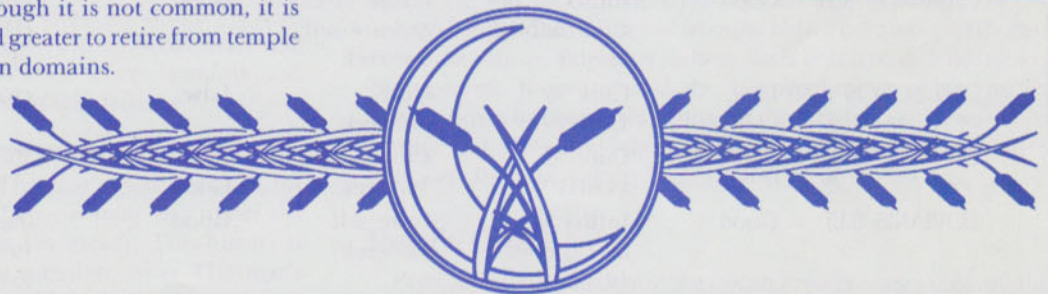
If the Character knowingly and willingly performs an act which is contrary to his/her alignment (if, for example, a Chaotic Evil avantar rescues an old lady), the Character immediately loses his/her status as avantar and becomes an ordinary fighter of equivalent Skill level and HTK. If formerly a ranger or keitar, s/he resumes that class at the level at which s/he left it. However, s/he keeps HTK gained as an avantar.

Avantari use the Avantari table following to determine HTK and experience progression.

Avantari are rewarded for their service by the temple they serve. Those who especially distinguish themselves may end up in command of temple troops, or in possession of lands gifted to them by the church hierarchy. Although it is not common, it is acceptable for avantari of Skill 10 and greater to retire from temple service and become lords of their own domains.

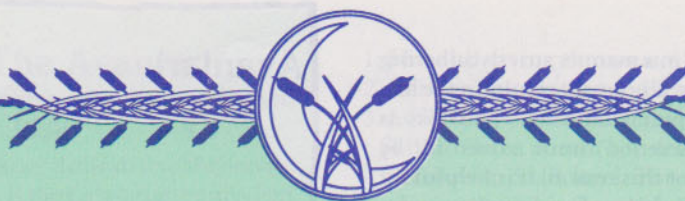
Avantari

XP	Skill	# of D10 for HTK	Skill Title (Calandian)
0-2,800	1	1+2	Warrior (Prauvar)
2,801-5,750	2	2+2	Raider (Dolvar)
5,751-12,000	3	3+1	Dedicant (Demrik)
12,001-24,000	4	4	Hero (Kemlos)
24,001-45,000	5	5	Gallant (Tarvin)
45,001-95,000	6	6	Victor (Reobaur)
95,001-175,000	7	7	Protector (Kesvar)
175,001-350,000	8	8	Defender (Orenvar)
350,001-700,000	9	9	Champion (Avantar)
700,001-1,050,000	10	10+2	Champion (Avantar)
1,050,001-1,400,000	11	11+2	Champion (Avantar)



Avantar Abilities by Demigod

DEMIGOD		ABILITY				
	DETECT	LAYING ON OF HANDS	AFFECT DISEASE	PROTECT. AURA 1" RADIUS	FAVORED WEAPON(S)	OTHER
BARCUS (CE)	Good	Cure +1 or Inflict -1 1x/day	—	Good	thrown dagger	—
DERIUS (NG)	Evil	Cure +1 1x/day	—	Evil	longbow	—
ERIN (NE)	Good	Inflict -1 1x/day	Cause 1x/week	Good	barbed, hooked net	Infravision 60', 1x/week per Skill level
GADNOR (CN)	Law	Cure self +2 1x/day	Cure self 1x/week	Law	bear spear (8', 1D10 HTK of damage)	—
SHAU LIN (LG)	Evil	Cure +2 1x/day	Cure 1x/week per 6 Skill lvls.	Law	long sword	—
VIKKAR TORNOR (LN)	Chaos	Cure +1 1x/day	Cure 1x/week per 6 Skill lvls.	Chaos	bastard sword	—



Avantar Abilities by Deity

DEITY	ABILITY					
	DETECT	LAYING ON OF HANDS	AFFECT DISEASE	PROTECT. AURA 1" RADIUS	FAVORED WEAPON(S)	OTHER
ARDRUNA (NG)	Evil	Cure +3 1x/day	Cure 1x/week per 3 Skill lvls.	Evil	staff, flail quarterstaff	+10% to Resurrection survival rolls
BRAGLA (LN)	Chaos	—	slow progress by ½ 1x/week	Chaos	bo stick, sling	additional +1 to saving throws
BRELIG (CE)	Good	Cure +2 or inflict -2	Cure or cause, 1x/month	Good	wire whip*, bo stick	—
CORAM (LN)	Chaos	—	recognize and cure, if possible 1x/week	Chaos	quarterstaff, sling	+10% to reaction rolls
DHURIS (NE)	Law	Cure +2 1x/day	Cures only those resulting from dissipation (1x/week)	Law	blowgun	+5% to reaction rolls
GAMBROS (CE)	Good	Inflict -3 or Cure self +2 1x/day	Cause disease or cure self 1x/week	Good	falchion (1D8 HTK of damage)	wither limb by touch 1x/yr per 5 Skill lvls.
LAN LOROS (CN)	Law	Cure +2 1x/day	Cure 1x/week	Law	crossbow	move silently 5%/Skill level
LENORIS (N)	Evil	Cure +2 1x/day	Cure 1x/week	Evil/ Good	shortbow	—
LOVIANIS (LE)	Good	Inflict -2 or Cure +2 1x/day	Cure self 1x/week	Good	dagger, two-handed axe	additional +1 on cure self 1x/week
MELIOS (LG)	Evil	Cure +3 1x/day	Cure 1x/week per 3 Skill lvls.	Evil	quarterstaff (to stun, but not kill)	additional +1 to cure 1x/week
NALAGAR (CG)	Evil	Cure +2 1x/day	Cure 1x/week	Evil	long sword	—
PEREN (NG)	Evil	Cure +1 1x/day	Cure 1x/week	Evil	spear	war dogs are frequent pets
RIEGIN (LG)	Evil	Cure +2 1x/day	Cure 1x/week per 4 Skill lvls.	Evil	mace	+2 to hit during Bless spell
SEIDRUN (CN)	Law	Cure +2 1x/day	Cure 1x/week per 6 Skill lvls.	Law	trident	—
URIC (LG)	Evil	Cure +2 1x/day	Cure 1x/week	Evil	broad sword	+1 to saves vs. INS

* The wire whip is leather interwoven with metal. It does 1D4+2 HTK of damage to S- and M-sized opponents, and 1D4 to L-sized.

