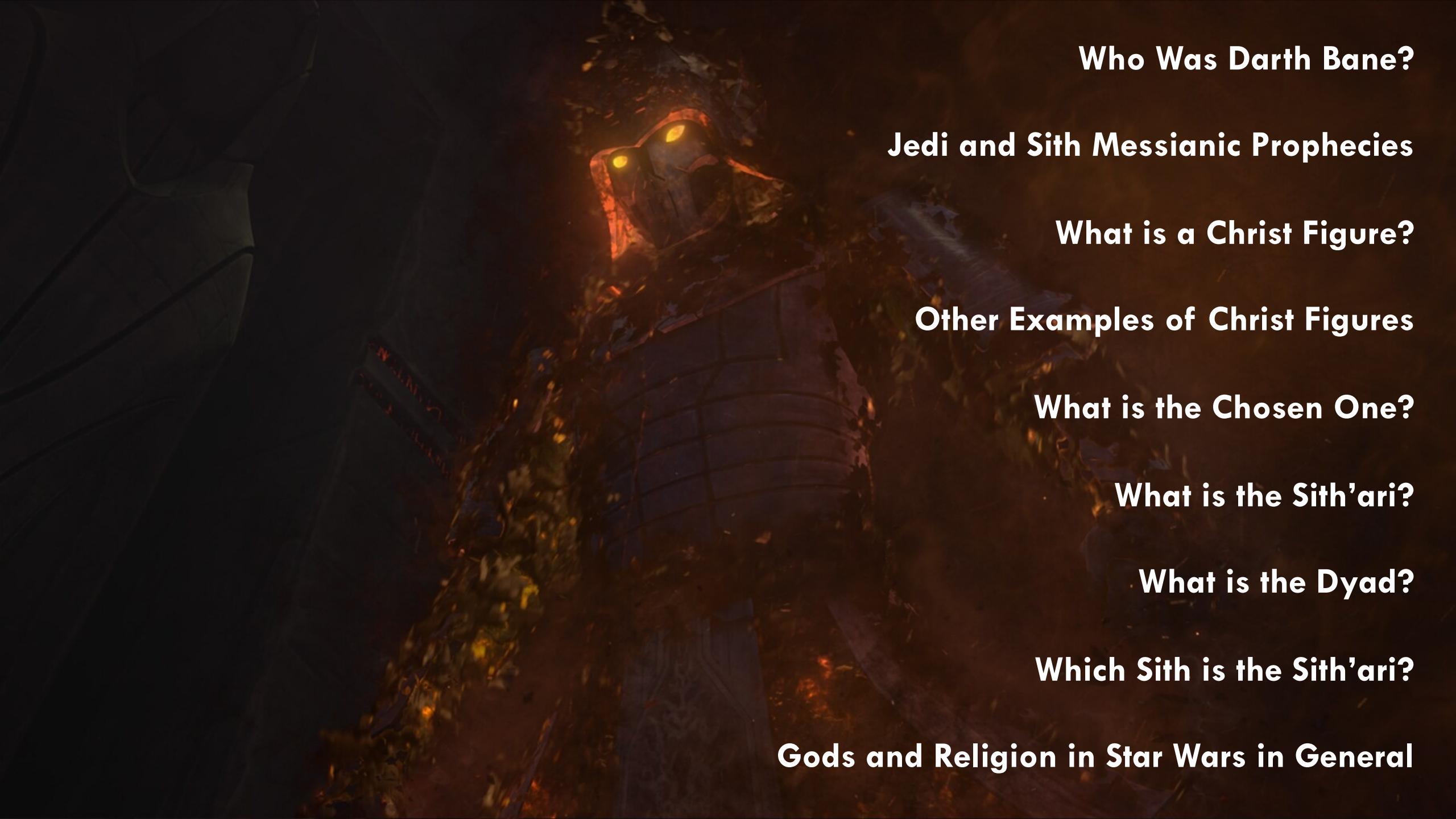


Darth Bane as the Christ of the Sith, and Other Messianic Figures in Star Wars

Chris Wildrick



Who Was Darth Bane?

Jedi and Sith Messianic Prophecies

What is a Christ Figure?

Other Examples of Christ Figures

What is the Chosen One?

What is the Sith'ari?

What is the Dyad?

Which Sith is the Sith'ari?

Gods and Religion in Star Wars in General

WHO WAS DARTH BANE?



The Life of Darth Bane

Bane was born in poverty and grew to be physically powerful. He served in the Sith military, then gained entrance to the Sith Academy, where he became a star student.

At the time, the Sith were plentiful, and organized into clusters led by warlords. Feeling that the warlords were petty and demeaned the Sith, Bane destroyed them all, along with many Jedi, with a Thought Bomb.

Bane studied ancient Sith techniques through scrolls and holocrons, including those of Darth Revan, Darth Andeddu, Freedon Nadd, and Belia Darzu, which led him to innovate many Force powers, including Force Wave, a Death Field, the Thought Bomb, and Essence Transfer.

He mastered lightsaber combat, including the forms Djem So and Soresu. He gained a special parasitic but nigh-invulnerable Orbalisk armor.



The Life of Darth Bane

His apprentice was Darth Zannah, whose powers eventually grew to include a greater mastery of Sith magic than Bane's. Zannah ultimately killed him and took her own apprentice, which began a lineage that eventually led down to Darth Sidious and his apprentices, Darths Maul, Tyrannus, and Vader.



Darth Bane's Legacy

Bane saw himself as the culmination of all the Sith Lords before him, including Andeddu, Revan, Malak, Malgus, and Ruin.

Darth Bane's major achievement was to create the Rule of Two: that there should be only two Sith at any one time: the Master to hold power and the Apprentice to crave it. The Apprentice was fated to kill the Master, then to gain their own Apprentice, thus ensuring that the Sith would grow in power over time. They would live in secrecy, to more safely grow their power.

The Sith followed the Rule of Two for a thousand years, ending with Darth Sidious as the final Master.

Darth Bane also created a holocron that other Sith consulted over the years.

Bane's spirit appeared to Yoda a thousand years after his death, at a point when the Jedi Master was questioning his life in the Force.





Bane's major appearances include the comic *Jedi vs Sith*; the short story "Bane of the Sith"; the trilogy of novels *Path of Destruction*, *The Rule of Two*, and *Dynasty of Evil*; and the *Clone Wars* episode "Sacrifice." His visual portrayal changed radically from one to another.

JEDI AND SITH MESSIANIC PROPHECIES



The Jedi and Sith could use the Force to see the future and generated many prophecies. However, these prophecies were often vague and could arguably apply to multiple people or situations. For instance,

“He who learns to conquer death will through his greatest student live again,” from *Master and Apprentice*

This could apply to Qui-Gon, who learned to become a Force Ghost and taught Yoda to do the same.

It could apply to Darth Sidious, who was brought back to life as a clone through the aid of Snoke, Kylo Ren, and even Rey.

It could apply to Rey, who healed Ben; or Ben, who resurrected Rey.



Three of the most important Jedi and Sith prophecies are:

The Chosen One: a Jedi prophecy about a (presumed) Jedi

The Sith'ari: a Sith prophecy about the Sith

The Dyad: a Sith prophecy about Force users who share their power

All three are Messianic figures, and the first two (at least) are Christ Figures in particular.

WHAT IS A CHRIST FIGURE?



A Messianic Figure is a character destined to act as a savior. A Christ Figure is a subset of Messianic Figures who possesses several characteristics similar to those of Jesus, from Christian mythology, such as:

- Being chosen by an all-powerful mystical force
- Virgin birth
- Having apostles/companions/followers
- Being betrayed by one of those followers
- Persecution by non-believers
- Miracles/healing/doubting
- Forgiveness and redeeming of others
- A connection to a Father figure
- Death/resurrection/martyrdom/sacrifice
- Crucifixion-like poses

EXAMPLES OF CHRIST FIGURES



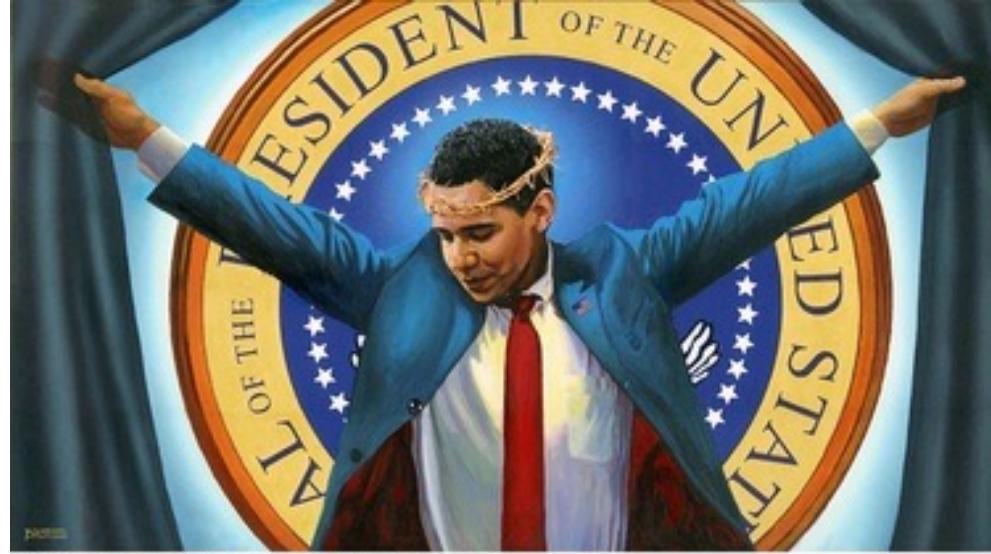
POLITICS

Barack Obama

Donald Trump

MUSIC

Jim Morrison



THE TRUTH ©2009 Michael D'Antonio acrylic on canvas 30" x 54" www.ArtandResponse.com



MOVIES & TV

Klaatu, The Day the Earth Stood Still

Neo, The Matrix

Jack or Christian or Locke, LOST



BOOKS

Aslan, Narnia

Harry Potter, Harry Potter

Gandalf, The Lord of the Rings



NEW GOD WHO DIS?

Osiris, Egyptian mythology

Odin, Norse mythology

COMICS

Superman

Adam Warlock

Silver Surfer

Jean Grey

Hope Summers

Magneto

MCU Iron Man

MCU Black Widow



Hope Summers and her prophet, Exodus



WHAT IS THE CHOSEN ONE?



The prophecy of the Chosen one, from *Master and Apprentice*:

“A Chosen One shall come, born of no father, and through him will ultimate balance in the Force be restored.”

The Gods of Mortis believed Anakin was The Chosen One, destined to take the place of the Father and bring balance to the Force.

Qui-Gon Jinn first identified Anakin as the Chosen One when he was a child. His vast midi-chlorian count seemed to support this.

There are divergent explanations for how Anakin was born “of no father.” Officially, he was born through the will of the Force. In Legends, it was heavily implied that Darth Plagueis and Darth Sidious used a Sith ritual that led to his birth, intentionally fulfilling the Jedi Chosen One prophecy in such a way that it would serve the Sith’s needs. Both explanations could be true.

While Anakin became a Sith, seemingly abandoning the Chosen One role, he later repented and killed Sidious, ending the unbalanced nature of the Dark Side. (For a few decades, anyway. Kind of a quick turnaround for a prophecy thousands of years old.)

Anakin could be seen as a Christ Figure due to:

- His “chosen” status by either the Force or Plagueis/Sidious
- His “death” by turning into Darth Vader, and his resurrection as Anakin
- His enduring of temptation, and repentance
- His connection to a “Father” in both Obi-Wan and Sidious
- His use of miracles through the Force
- His virgin birth (obvs)



Some characters and fans believe other characters also fit the Chosen One prophecy.

Obi-Wan Kenobi believed that **Luke** was the Chosen One. In Rebels' "Twin Suns" (s3e20), Maul asked Kenobi if he thought Luke was the Chosen One and Kenobi said "yes" with no ambiguity. Recall his turmoil at trying to understand how Anakin could be the Chosen One if he slaughtered a Temple full of younglings.

In *From a Certain Point of View*'s story "There is Another," Kenobi's Force Ghost tells Yoda to get ready to start working with the Chosen One (still believing it's Luke). Yoda says he's ready to work with "her," showing that Yoda has also come to believe the prophecy was wrong, but he thinks it refers to **Leia**.

Many fans believe the Chosen One was **Rey**, since she is the one who permanently defeated Sidious.

However, while Luke, Leia, and Rey grew up without their fathers, it's more of a stretch to say they were "born of no father."



WHAT IS THE SITH'ARI?



Sorzus Syn, a Sith Lord and writer of the Sith Code, said in ~6900 BBY:

"I know the Jedi myth of Mortis, of a Chosen One who will destroy the dark side and bring balance to the Force. The Sith have their own prophecy. Since the time of King Adad, they have foretold the coming of a perfect being—the Sith'ari.

...

The abbatar around my neck translates as 'overlord.' Yet it is more accurate to consider the Sith'ari a god, as the Sith Purebloods believe. While some among the Kissai priests deem that the prophecy began and ended with Adas, many more await the Sith'ari's return."

The prophecy of the Sith'ari, according to Syn:

The Sith'ari will be free of limits.

The Sith'ari will lead the Sith and destroy them.

The Sith'ari will raise the Sith from death and make them stronger than before.



Various Sith were considered to be the Sith'ari by themselves or by others.

King Adas, first to bring the Sith together, was “worshipped as the Sith'ari, or god of the Sith.”

Sorzus Syn said, “Though I have never put my faith in farseeing, I remain convinced the Force called me here. Perhaps I am the Sith'ari.”

Darth Andeddu claimed to be the Sith'ari.

Restelly Quist, Chief Librarian of the Jedi, said that the Sith of **Darth Bane's** own era saw him as the Sith'ari, and Darth Plagueis agreed that Bane was the Sith'ari.

Darth Plagueis said, “the prophecy of the Sith'ari still holds some interest. The fact that the Sith created their own savior myth is predictable, but the prophecy states that a being will arise who is free from restrictions and who will destroy the Sith only to make them stronger than before. These statements seem uniquely specific to the actions I am taking now.

“I am free from blind obedience to symbols and mysticism. I will end the traditions that have bound the Sith throughout their history. I have unlocked the secrets of life, and by doing so I will enable long-term plans to ensure Sith dominance for centuries. I am not a creature of superstition. But if the robes of the Sith'ari fit, I see no reason not to claim them.”

Darth Sidious said, “Throughout the eras, the Sith foretold of a being who would destroy their Order and rebuild it stronger than before. I do not care about ancient prophecies. The approval of the dead is meaningless. Yet it is clear that the Sith'ari could be no other than me.”

WHAT IS THE DYAD?



The prophecy of the Dyad was carved into the walls of a Sith Temple on Exegol, controlled by the Sith Eternal sect.

It said:

"There should be two; no more, no less. First to embody power, second to crave power."

Of it, Sidious said: "There are few secrets of the Force that I have yet to master. But our Order's ancient prophecies speak of one fabled manifestation unseen for generations - a dyad. This pairing of two beings strong in the Force, linked together by an unbreakable bond, creates a power as strong as life itself."

Sidious also said, "For a millennium, the Sith have adhered to the Rule of Two. But this decree is said to merely be a pale imitation of its predecessor, the Doctrine of the Dyad."

The text of the prophecy is very similar to Darth Bane's Rule of Two.

It is said that perhaps the goal of the Rule of Two was actually to create a Dyad.

Darth Plagueis tried to create a dyad between himself and Darth Sidious, but failed.

Darth Sidious tried to create a dyad between himself and Darth Vader, but failed.

The Dyad actually referred to the connection between Ben Solo and Rey, who used that power to defeat Sidious.

The text of the Dyad is confusing when applied to Ben and Rey's situation. Reddit user Jaina-Solo noted that it could make more sense when the line breaks and punctuation are changed, showing that the Rule of Two may be a misinterpretation of the prophecy of the Dyad, with the possible correct interpretation on the left:

Adding line breaks and punctuation

*There shall be; (a)
Two halves of a whole One.
To embody power,
And also to crave it.*

*There shall be Two; (b)
Halves of a whole.
One to embody power,
And also, to crave it.*



WHICH
SITH IS THE
SITH'ARI?



So—with all that taken into consideration, who was the Sith'ari?

Bane was listed as the official Sith'ari in the *Complete Star Wars Encyclopedia* in 2008, and you'll find him listed as the Sith'ari on Wookieepedia on the strength of that.

However, many Sith, especially Darth Sidious, have had a number of impressive feats since then, so the title should be interrogated.

Who else is an option and could fit the prophecy?

Darth Revan

Exar Kun

Darth Sidious

Many other Sith were personally very powerful, and arguably had a greater ability with the Force than Darth Bane, like Freedon Nadd, Naga Sadow, Darth Nihilus, or Darth Plagueis, so they might fit the concept of a “god of the Sith” better. But the Sith’ari must also have an effect on the Sith as a whole.

Sidious, Kun, and Revan all had a great influence on the Sith. However, Revan eventually turned back to the light. Exar Kun was a powerful mentor to many Sith and had a lasting effect on the order, but he didn’t destroy them. Sidious, while possibly the most powerful of all, destroyed them without bringing them back.



The Sith’ari will be free of limits.
The Sith’ari will lead the Sith and
destroy them.

The Sith’ari will raise the Sith from
death and make them stronger than
before.



In comparison, Darth Bane had a lasting and intentional effect on the Sith.

His Rule of Two refocused the Sith into a lineage that led to the rise of the most powerful Sith in history, Darth Sidious, just as Bane wanted. Even Sidious followed Bane's rule. Bane also revived and edited the Sith Code. In so doing Bane affected the structure and the definition of the Sith.

While arguably no Sith has been "free of limits," Bane led the Sith and destroyed the previous Sith structure of individual warlords both ideologically—through the Rule of Two—and literally—through the Thought Bomb.

He then resurrected the Sith in himself and in his apprentice, Darth Zannah, who was a child who survived the Thought Bomb, and thus was post death-of-the-Sith herself.

The Sith'ari will be free of limits.
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There is no other Sith for whom the Sith existence is bifurcated in so clear a manner as are the pre-Bane and post-Bane eras. For instance, there is no post-Sidious Sith.

Without Bane, the Sith would arguably have been destroyed on Ruusan through a combination of their own internal conflicts and the Jedi army.

Bane also innovated the use of holocrons and scrolls to reinvigorate the Sith's use of esoteric powers, including Essence Transfer and the Death Field, which would become vital parts of Plagueis and Sidious's experiments, thus connecting the Sith to their history and expanding their potential. He, more than those before him, saw the Sith as a line of Darths leading through him and into the future.

Bane is the savior of the Sith and the best case for the Sith'ari.

The Sith'ari will be free of limits.
The Sith'ari will lead the Sith and destroy them.
The Sith'ari will raise the Sith from death and make them stronger than before.



Bane as Christ Figure

In addition to being the Sith'ari, Bane is also a Christ Figure.

- Through his editing of the Sith Code and the creation of the Rule of Two, the eras before and after Bane are analogous to the Old and New Testaments' understanding of Christianity, and akin to the chronology of BC and AD as relates to his/Christ's birth.
- He physically almost died and was reborn (twice!) and was conceptually reborn as Bane from his earlier life as a miner.
- He was born in humble beginnings.
- He was a Chosen One, as a star student at the Sith Academy
- He had multiple Apostles, including his Apprentice Darth Zannah



- He was betrayed by his Apostle—as he intended via the Rule of Two, which is in a sense a form of intentional self-sacrifice in the name of the greater good of the Sith
- He was persecuted by Sith and Jedi non-believers
- He railed against the Pharisees of his time, the individual Sith warlords, and recreated the Sith in his own image
- The Master and Apprentice model is somewhat similar to the Christian Father and Son (with the Holy Ghost as the Force)
- He went to live and learn in privation in the desert of the Valley of the Sith Lords, where he was in effect reborn (again)
- Similarly to how the Holy Spirit animated Jesus's disciples, Bane used Essence Transfer to send a bit of his own spirit into Zannah at the moment of his death; and his spirit lived on to teach via his holocron, similar to a holy text



GODS AND RELIGION IN STAR WARS IN GENERAL



Religion and Mythology in Star Wars

The Skywalker movies are all about Joseph Campbell “hero’s journey,” which is about story archetypes that exist across many religions and cultures.

However, the Skywalker movies are a small minority of the stories in the Star Wars universe, which has constantly generated new tales for decades across multiple companies in formats that include movies, TV shows, comics, novels, magazines, and more. For instance, Marvel alone has published around 500 Star Wars comics since 2015. This material is sufficiently complex and plentiful that it can be about anything or told in any way. The hero’s journey only applies to a fraction of these stories.

For instance, much of the values, and the sense of religion, in Star Wars are akin to Buddhism’s practice of a mindful life, as seen in the ethics of the Jedi.

However, there is also room in Star Wars for Christian mythology, like Christ Figures, as we have discussed.

The following will look at a few examples of the god-like beings, messianic prophecies, and religious variety in the Star Wars universe.



God-like Beings

The Bendu represents the middle of the Force, between the Jedi's *ashla* and the Sith's *bogan*. It is unclear whether he is a "god," "mystic force," or just a being who came to great understanding of the Force.



God-like Beings

The Force Priestesses were five beings that lived on a Force-empowered planet and were very connected to both the Cosmic and Living Force. It is unclear whether they are once-living beings that ascended into the Force or avatars of the Force itself.

God-like Beings

The Father, Son, and Daughter, sometimes referred to as "the Gods of Mortis," were mystic beings that exemplified the dark and light side of the force, and their confluence in the Father.

They believed Anakin was the Chosen One and that he would take the Father's place. restoring balance to the Force.





God-like Beings

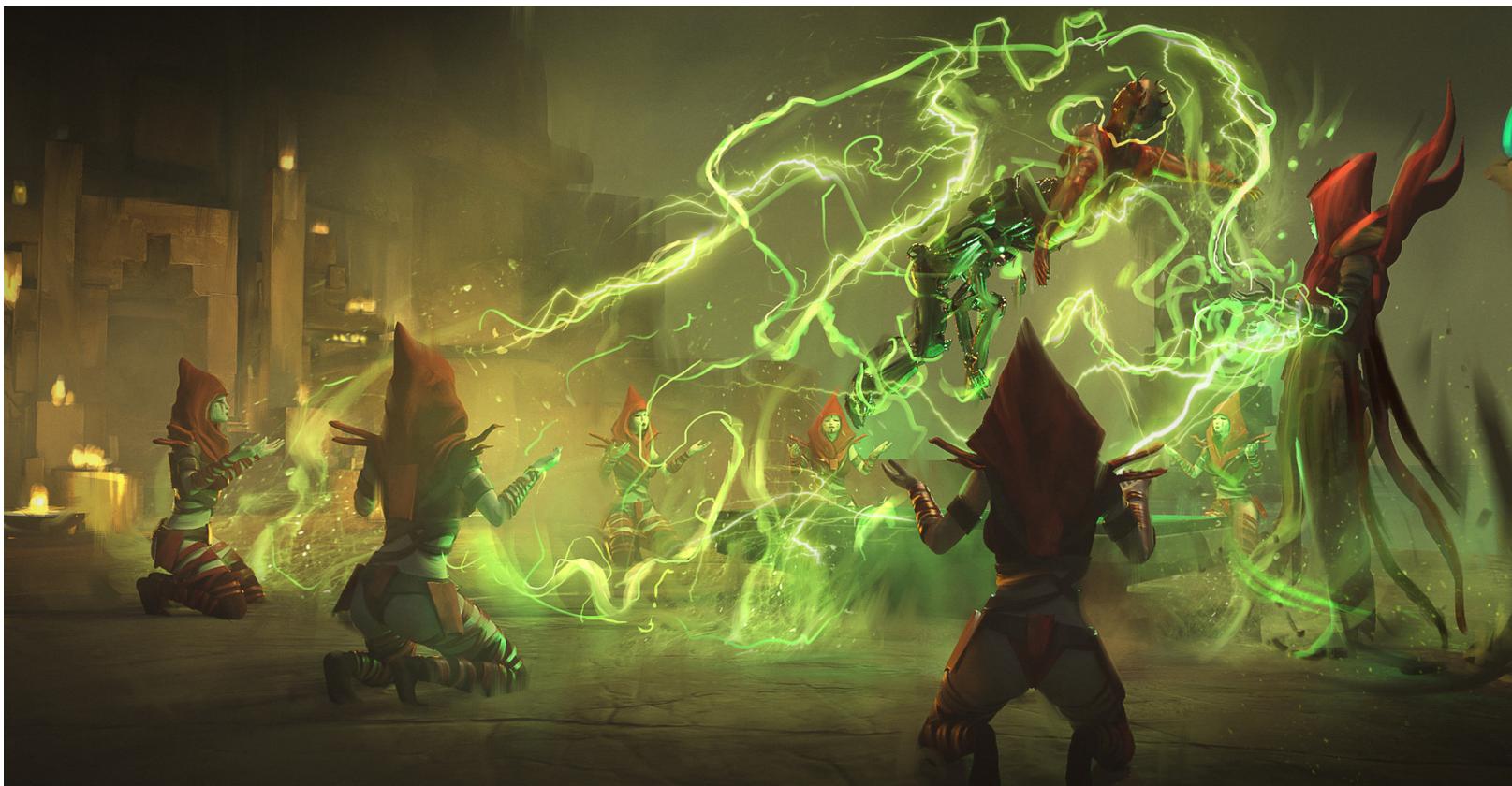
The Cave of Evil was a convergence of the Force that gained sentience by absorbing the mental characteristics and memories of the Jedi and Sith who entered it.

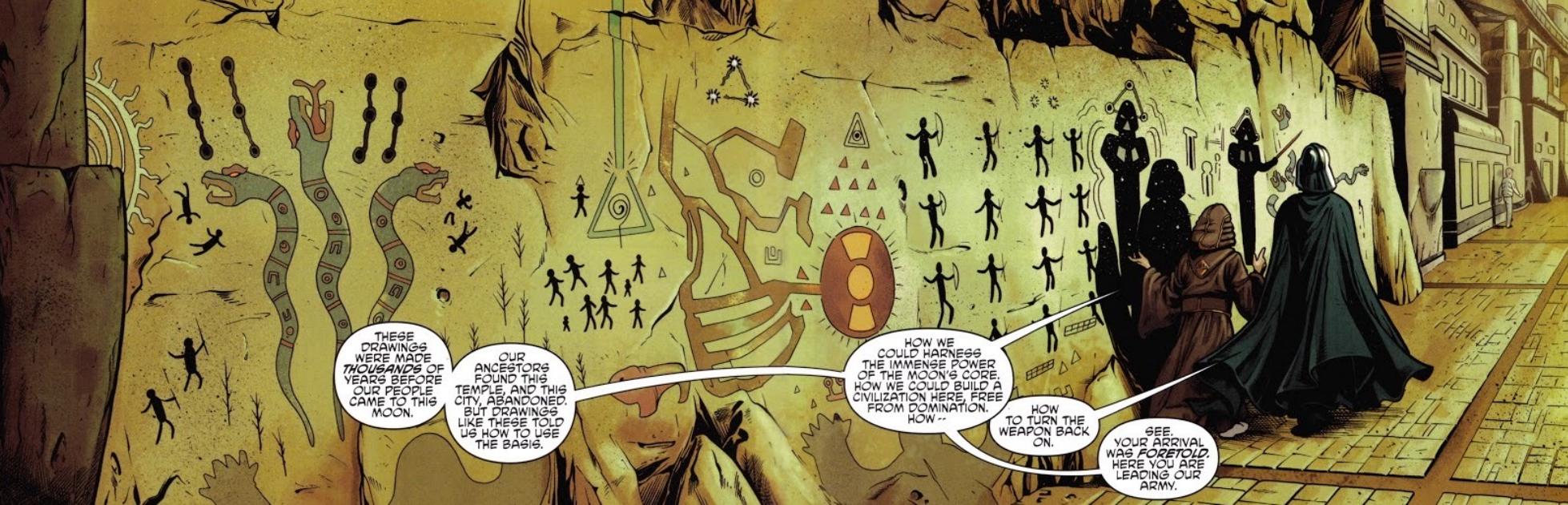
In a fictional universe where everyday people can have powers, whether that's Star Wars or the MCU, what is a god? What is a religion?

Religions with Messianic Prophecies

The Nightsisters of Dathomir's religion was based in the Force and was somewhat similar to Paganism. They believed in a Winged Goddess—a white gryphon who stood for fertility, growth, and mediation—and a Fanged god—a black gargoyle who represented virility, the hunt, and the senses.

They had a messianic prophecy similar to the Chosen One: "It has been foretold by Allya that a perfect being will one day arise—one brought into existence by the spirits and one who will embody the balance between the Winged Goddess and the Fanged God." This seems to describe Anakin.





Religions with Messianic Prophecies

The Heinsnake Cult has its own, separate prophecy about Darth Vader being the chosen one, but in this case he is prophesied to bring chaos to the galaxy.

(Star Wars: Darth Vader and the Ninth Assassin 3)



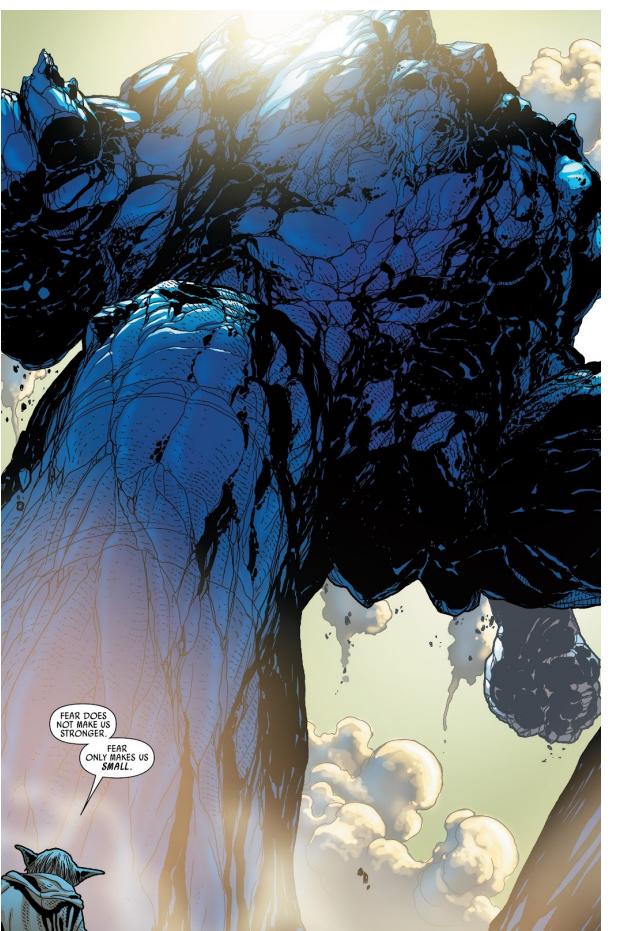
Religions with Messianic Prophecies

The Navallaanians had a shamanist religion that involved psychedelic vision quests and prophecies of a savior.

General Grievous persuaded them that he was the savior but it seems that it was actually Anakin.

(Clone Wars microseries s3e3&4)





Religions with Messianic Prophecies

The Rockhawkers and Muckwhackers of the Vagadarr system believe in the Stonepower of the Mountains— living beings empowered by a variant of the Force.

The Muckwhackers believe Yoda is a prophesied “Deliverer” who will help them. (Star Wars 2015, #27-30)





Religions

The Force by itself is not necessarily a religion. The Jedi and Sith orders were religions based on the Force, but not all Force users followed those specific religions.

Admiral Motti here notes the religious nature of the Sith and Jedi.

Religions

The Jedi and Sith both had temples and holy sites of various kinds.

The Jedi tree (and library) on Ahch-To and the Jedi Temple on Tempes had very different forms but both had shrine-like structures that were used for religious purposes. (*Rise of the Skywalker, Star Wars v2#6*)



Religions

The Sith had holy sites as well. The planet Korriban featured a valley of tombs of Sith Lords, with statues inside and out, that were used as objects of veneration and to focus Sith mystical power. The Sith Eternal had similar statues on Exegol although it is unknown whether they had direct powers.

(Star Wars: Darth Vader 11 and Tales of the Jedi: Dark Lords of the Sith 3)



Religions

Many other religions used temples. The temples of Vaale housed two mystical, cursed rings. (Doctor Aphra v2-2)





Religions

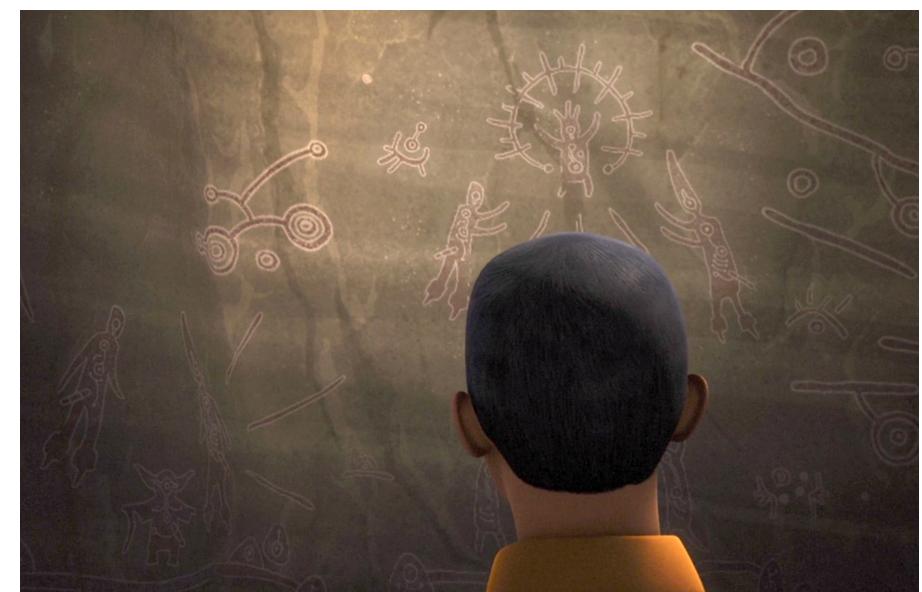
Mandalorian religions include various splinter creeds, with beliefs including the Manda (oversoul), an afterlife of combat, purification rituals, baptism, and the negation of self via a helmet that must be worn at all times.

The religion is part way of life, part mystic ritual—partly Buddhist, partly Catholic.



Religions

These Lothal caves indicate an early animist-style connection to the Force and Force beings. (*Rebels s4e7*)



Religions

These later Lothal shrines to the Gods of Mortis and the World Between Worlds (a mystical realm) show an evolution of the planet's mystic interests.

Are these a religion? A practical connection to supernatural power? These are questions that could be asked of many practices in Star Wars. (*Rebels* s4e12 & 13)

