SANCTUARY ETHICS REVIEW BOARD

SERB-003 — THE ANGIRIS COUNCIL

On Celestial Authority, Institutional Legitimacy, and the Presumption That Order Is Justice

A Preliminary Institutional Review of the Angiris Council, Its Deliberations Concerning Humanity, and the Exercise of Extraterritorial Celestial Authority

Issuing Authority: Sanctuary Ethics Review Board (SERB)
Docket: SERB-003
Classification: Institutional Governance, Collective Security, Jurisdictional Authority, and Population Rights
Date: October 24, 2026
Status: Preliminary Findings, Institutional Determination, and Notice of Continuing Review

Principal Respondent:
The Angiris Council of the High Heavens

Members Subject to Historical Review:

- Imperius — Archangel of Valor
- Tyrael — Archangel of Justice
- Auriel — Archangel of Hope
- Itherael — Archangel of Fate
- Malthael — Archangel of Wisdom

Designations reflect the members' offices during the historical deliberations under investigation. Subsequent changes in office, status, or disposition are addressed separately.

Affected Parties:

- Humanity and the Nephalem
- The Inhabitants of Sanctuary
- The Original Founding Population of Sanctuary
- Persons Subject to Celestial Intervention

- Subsequent Generations Affected by the Council's Decisions

Additional Interested Parties:

- Mephisto, Lord of Hatred
- Inarius, Former Angel and Co-Founder of Sanctuary
- The Burning Hells
- The Horadrim
- Surviving Witnesses and Historical Custodians of the Sin War

Principal Question:

Whether the Angiris Council's institutional authority within the High Heavens extended to determining the continued existence of Sanctuary and its inhabitants, and whether the Council's decision-making procedures adequately distinguished celestial interests from the rights of the affected mortal population.

I. NOTICE OF INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW

The Sanctuary Ethics Review Board hereby opens a formal inquiry into the historical conduct of the Angiris Council.

The Board recognizes the Council as a governing institution of extraordinary antiquity, possessing substantial authority within the High Heavens.

Its members embody principles traditionally associated with celestial order: Valor, Justice, Hope, Fate, and Wisdom.

The Board acknowledges the considerable moral and philosophical significance of these principles.

Valor may be necessary in the defense of the vulnerable.

Justice may provide a foundation for legitimate judgment.

Hope may sustain persons confronted by apparently insurmountable suffering.

Knowledge of fate may assist in anticipating consequences.

Wisdom may guide institutions where certainty is unavailable.

The Board nevertheless observes that the possession, embodiment, or institutional designation of a virtue does not establish that every act performed in its name is consistent with that virtue.

A tribunal may bear the title of Justice and nevertheless reach an unjust conclusion.

A military authority may invoke Valor while pursuing unnecessary destruction.

An institution devoted to Wisdom may fail to recognize the limitations of its knowledge.

Accordingly, the Board distinguishes between the virtues claimed by an institution and the ethical legitimacy of its decisions.

The presence of virtue in an institution's title shall not be treated as conclusive evidence of virtue in its conduct.

The present inquiry concerns that distinction.

II. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

A. The Angiris Council

The Angiris Council traditionally consisted of five archangels charged with the governance and defense of the High Heavens.

The Council functioned as a principal institutional authority throughout the Eternal Conflict.

Its members possessed extraordinary powers, extensive experience, and responsibilities concerning the preservation of the celestial realm.

The Board recognizes that these circumstances may justify substantial authority within the institution's established jurisdiction.

However, authority within one realm does not necessarily establish authority over another.

The existence of a governing body in the High Heavens does not, without additional justification, resolve its jurisdiction concerning Sanctuary.

The Board therefore distinguishes between:

1. The Council's authority over celestial affairs.
2. Its authority to defend the High Heavens from external threats.
3. Its authority to regulate the conduct of angels subject to celestial governance.
4. Its asserted authority to determine the existence and future of an independent mortal population.

These are separate questions.

The legitimacy of the first three does not automatically establish the fourth.

B. Discovery of Sanctuary

Sanctuary was established by Inarius, Lilith, and other angels and demons who sought refuge from the Eternal Conflict.

Their descendants became the nephalem, whose extraordinary capabilities eventually attracted the attention of the celestial and infernal powers.

The discovery of Sanctuary presented the Angiris Council with a novel political and ethical problem.

A previously unknown civilization existed beyond the ordinary structure of the Eternal Conflict.

Its inhabitants possessed both celestial and infernal ancestry.

Their capabilities raised the possibility that they might influence the balance between the High Heavens and Burning Hells.

The Board recognizes that these developments warranted investigation.

The discovery of an unknown population possessing extraordinary powers could reasonably produce concern among institutions charged with defending their own realms.

However, the Board observes that discovery does not constitute annexation.

Nor does the existence of a potential security concern establish unlimited authority over the population producing that concern.

A civilization does not become subject to another institution's jurisdiction merely because that institution discovers it.

C. The Initial Proposal for Destruction

The historical record indicates that the Angiris Council initially contemplated, and issued an edict supporting, the destruction of Sanctuary and its inhabitants.

The perceived danger arose principally from humanity's mixed ancestry and extraordinary potential.

The Board considers the contemplated measure one of the most consequential exercises of institutional authority in the surviving record.

The proposed action was not limited to individuals demonstrated to have committed harmful acts.

It contemplated the destruction of an entire inhabited world.

Its scope therefore requires an especially demanding ethical justification.

The Board notes that the presence of demonic ancestry was not evidence of wrongdoing by every member of the affected population.

Neither was the presence of celestial ancestry proof of innocence.

The Council's reliance upon ancestry and potential capability raises substantial concerns concerning collective judgment.

The Board therefore opens its inquiry with the following proposition:

The composition of a person's ancestry is not, without more, sufficient evidence to justify that person's destruction.

III. ON THE LIMITS OF CELESTIAL JURISDICTION

The Board acknowledges that the High Heavens existed before Sanctuary.

It further acknowledges that the Angiris Council possessed an established role in the administration of celestial affairs.

These facts may establish institutional seniority.

They do not necessarily establish jurisdiction.

The Board finds no sufficient basis for the proposition that an institution acquires legitimate authority over every subsequently discovered civilization merely by predating it.

Nor does superior power establish an unlimited right of governance.

The distinction is particularly important where the institution asserting authority is itself a participant in the conflict from which the affected civilization sought refuge.

The Angiris Council represented one principal faction of the Eternal Conflict.

The inhabitants of Sanctuary were not necessarily participants in that conflict.

Indeed, the creation of Sanctuary arose from an attempt to escape it.

The Board therefore questions whether the Council could evaluate Sanctuary's continued existence without improperly subordinating mortal interests to celestial strategic objectives.

An institution charged with defending one population may possess legitimate reasons to consider the risks created by another.

It does not follow that those reasons authorize extermination.

The proper distinction is between a right of defense and a claim of dominion.

The ability to defend the High Heavens against a demonstrated threat does not establish a general entitlement to determine whether Sanctuary may exist.

The Board requests identification of the specific authority under which the Council considered such a determination permissible.

References to the Eternal Conflict may explain the Council's concerns.

They do not independently resolve the jurisdictional question.

IV. THE HISTORICAL VOTE

The Board considers the Council's final deliberations following the sacrifice of Uldyssian ul-Diomed.

Uldyssian's actions demonstrated that humanity possessed extraordinary potential while also revealing a capacity for self-sacrifice in the preservation of others.

His intervention materially influenced the Council's reconsideration of Sanctuary.

The historical record identifies the following final positions.

RECORD OF CELESTIAL DELIBERATION

Council Member	Institutional Aspect	Recorded Position
Imperius	Valor	Destruction of Sanctuary
Auriel	Hope	Preservation of Sanctuary
Itherael	Fate	Preservation of Sanctuary
Malthael	Wisdom	Abstention
Tyrael	Justice	Preservation of Sanctuary

Recorded Result:

THREE — PRESERVATION

ONE — DESTRUCTION

ONE — ABSTENTION

The motion to preserve Sanctuary prevailed.

The Board recognizes that this decision prevented the implementation of the contemplated destruction.

It further recognizes that the individual votes reflect meaningful differences among the Council's members.

The result is historically significant.

However, the Board identifies a preliminary procedural concern.

No representative of humanity appears to have participated in the vote.

The Board does not suggest that every person affected by a decision must personally participate in every deliberation.

Representative institutions necessarily operate through delegated judgment.

Nor does the Board presume that an independent human government capable of participating in such proceedings existed at the relevant moment.

The concern is instead that the Council appears to have treated humanity's continued existence as a matter within its own exclusive authority.

The affected population was neither represented by its own delegates nor recognized as holding an independent claim to continued existence that the Council was bound to respect.

The Board therefore distinguishes two questions.

First, whether the Council reached a decision that prevented extraordinary harm.

Second, whether the Council possessed legitimate authority to place the continued existence of humanity to a vote.

The Board provisionally answers the first in the affirmative.

The second remains unresolved.

A favorable outcome does not retroactively establish the legitimacy of every procedure by which it was reached.

V. THE QUESTION OF THE FIFTH VOTE

The Board identifies the vote of Tyrael as particularly significant.

The historical account indicates that Imperius expected Tyrael to support the destruction of Sanctuary.

Tyrael had previously regarded humanity and its ancestry with serious suspicion.

However, the sacrifice of Uldyssian altered his assessment.

He ultimately supported preservation.

The Board recognizes this as a meaningful example of institutional reconsideration.

A decision-maker confronted by new evidence may have an ethical obligation to revise an earlier judgment.

The ability to reconsider is not necessarily a weakness.

It may instead demonstrate that the decision-maker understands the distinction between loyalty to an institution and fidelity to the principle the institution claims to represent.

Nevertheless, the Board identifies an uncomfortable implication.

The continued existence of humanity depended, under the Council's deliberative arrangement, upon the judgment of a single archangel whose position had changed.

Had Tyrael voted differently, the result might have permitted the implementation of the earlier destructive edict.

The Board therefore asks:

What protection did humanity possess independent of the disposition of its judges?

The Council's final decision was favorable.

Its procedure nevertheless appears to have allowed the potential destruction of an entire civilization through the ordinary operation of a five-member governing body.

The Board recognizes that some extraordinary emergency decisions may require collective deliberation.

However, the legitimacy of the procedure cannot be determined solely by counting votes.

A majority does not automatically possess authority to dispose of every interest placed before it.

The Board therefore distinguishes:

- A procedurally valid vote within an institution.
- An ethically legitimate subject for institutional decision.
- A decision consistent with the rights of affected persons.

These conditions are not interchangeable.

An institution may follow its own procedures while exceeding the proper limits of its authority.

The Board recognizes that three members voted to preserve humanity.

It does not recognize that three members were necessary to establish humanity's entitlement to exist.

VI. ON IMPERIUS AND THE ETHICS OF VALOR

The Board next considers the position of Imperius.

As Archangel of Valor, Imperius represented a principle associated with courage, strength, and the willingness to confront danger.

The Board acknowledges that these qualities are essential in circumstances requiring defense against aggression.

The Eternal Conflict presented substantial threats to the High Heavens.

Imperius's experience in that conflict is therefore relevant to understanding his assessment of Sanctuary.

The existence of beings possessing both angelic and demonic ancestry could reasonably have challenged established celestial assumptions concerning the nature of the opposing powers.

The Board does not presume that Imperius's concerns were entirely without foundation.

The nephalem possessed extraordinary capabilities.

Their potential alignment with the Burning Hells might have created serious security risks.

Nevertheless, the existence of a potential threat does not establish that destroying the population from which it might arise is necessary.

The Board accordingly distinguishes courage from the unrestricted exercise of destructive power.

Valor may require confronting an enemy.

It may also require restraint where a proposed action would harm persons who have not established themselves as enemies.

The Board therefore requests that Imperius address the following questions:

1. What evidence established that humanity, as a population, constituted an immediate threat to the High Heavens?
2. Was the possibility of future infernal allegiance treated as sufficient evidence of present hostility?
3. Were non-destructive protective alternatives considered?
4. What distinction was made between the capabilities of humanity and the actions of particular individuals?
5. Did the Council evaluate the consequences of destroying Sanctuary upon persons who had not participated in the Eternal Conflict?

The Board recognizes that the respondent may maintain that the preservation of the High Heavens required decisive action.

Such an argument may be submitted.

However, it must identify the threat, explain the proposed response, and address the proportionality of the anticipated harm.

The Board does not accept the proposition that the most destructive available measure is necessarily the most courageous.

VII. ON AURIEL AND THE ETHICS OF HOPE

The Board recognizes Auriel's vote in favor of preserving Sanctuary.

As Archangel of Hope, Auriel embodied a principle particularly relevant to an uncertain future.

Hope permits the possibility that present circumstances do not exhaust the range of what may occur.

The Board observes that the nephalem's mixed ancestry did not predetermine every moral choice available to them.

Their future conduct could not be established solely from their origins.

Auriel's position therefore warrants consideration as an alternative to the assumption that humanity represented an inevitable threat.

However, the Board cautions against treating optimism as a sufficient substitute for institutional safeguards.

The belief that a population may achieve good does not automatically establish how its rights should be protected.

Nor should the preservation of that population depend exclusively upon the benevolence of a sympathetic decision-maker.

The Board acknowledges the moral significance of Auriel's vote.

It nevertheless asks whether the Council possessed procedures capable of protecting humanity even if Hope had been absent from the deliberation.

An institution cannot rely indefinitely upon the goodwill of its most compassionate members.

Its structure must account for the possibility that compassion will sometimes fail to prevail.

Hope may guide a decision.

It cannot substitute for a right.

VIII. ON ITHERAEL AND THE LIMITATIONS OF FATE

The Board next examines the position of Itherael.

As Archangel of Fate, Itherael possessed an extraordinary relationship to knowledge of possible future events.

Such knowledge may have been relevant to the Council's assessment of Sanctuary.

The Board recognizes that superior predictive capacity can assist in evaluating long-term consequences.

However, the existence of predictive knowledge raises separate ethical questions.

A forecast does not necessarily constitute a judgment of culpability.

Nor does knowledge that a person may someday commit a harmful act establish that the person has already committed it.

The Board therefore distinguishes between the ability to anticipate danger and the authority to punish or eliminate persons on the basis of that danger.

It further observes that knowledge of fate may be incomplete, conditional, or affected by events outside the ordinary scope of prediction.

The extent of Itherael's knowledge concerning humanity is not conclusively established for purposes of this inquiry.

Accordingly, the Board requests clarification concerning the role predictive knowledge played in the Council's deliberations.

In particular:

Was the future of humanity regarded as fixed?

Were alternative futures considered?

Was humanity's capacity for independent choice adequately represented in those projections?

Did the Council distinguish between a possible future threat and a necessary one?

The Board acknowledges Itherael's vote to preserve Sanctuary.

It nevertheless concludes that the ethical standing of humanity cannot depend solely upon the existence of a favorable prediction.

A person does not acquire the right to exist only upon demonstrating that the future will find that existence useful.

IX. ON MALTHAEL AND THE RESPONSIBILITY OF ABSTENTION

The Board identifies Malthael's abstention as a matter warranting particular attention.

As Archangel of Wisdom, Malthael occupied a position associated with reflection, understanding, and the interpretation of difficult questions.

The decision confronting the Council was extraordinary.

It concerned the continued existence of a civilization whose nature challenged the established division between Heaven and Hell.

The Board recognizes that abstention may constitute a legitimate procedural choice.

A decision-maker may lack sufficient information.

A decision-maker may perceive an unresolved conflict of interest.

A decision-maker may conclude that the institution lacks authority to decide the matter presented.

Under such circumstances, abstention may express intellectual restraint rather than indifference.

The Board therefore does not presume that Malthael's abstention was improper.

However, the ethical significance of abstention depends upon its circumstances and foreseeable effects.

Where a vote concerns the destruction of an entire population, the consequences of withholding judgment may be substantial.

The Board requests clarification concerning the reasoning underlying Malthael's decision.

Did the respondent abstain because he considered the evidence insufficient?

Did he question the Council's authority?

Did he regard humanity's future as beyond reliable prediction?

Or did he decline to take a position despite recognizing that his abstention would affect the final outcome?

The available record does not establish a definitive answer.

The Board therefore makes no adverse finding concerning the respondent's motives.

It nevertheless enters an institutional observation.

The refusal to choose may be ethically defensible.

It is not necessarily without consequence.

The Board further notes that Malthael's later departure from the Council and subsequent actions as the Angel of Death raise serious questions concerning institutional oversight of former officeholders.

Those matters are reserved for a separate investigation.

The present docket does not retroactively interpret the abstention as evidence that Malthael had already formed the intentions associated with his later conduct.

X. ON TYRAEL AND THE LIMITS OF JUSTICE

The Board recognizes Tyrael's decisive role in preserving Sanctuary.

His vote followed the sacrifice of Uldyssian and reflected a reconsideration of humanity's moral potential.

The Board regards willingness to revise a judgment in light of new evidence as consistent with the ethical responsibilities of a decision-maker.

It also recognizes that Tyrael's subsequent assistance to humanity, including his establishment of the Horadrim, materially affected Sanctuary's ability to resist the Prime Evils.

These actions warrant acknowledgment.

However, the Board declines to exempt Tyrael from institutional review merely because his decisions produced beneficial consequences.

The question is not whether Tyrael demonstrated greater sympathy toward humanity than certain other members.

The question is whether he recognized humanity as possessing moral standing independent of celestial approval.

A decision to spare a population may arise from compassion.

It may arise from prudence.

It may arise from recognition that the population possesses a right not to be destroyed.

These justifications are not identical.

The Board considers the distinction important.

If humanity was preserved because Tyrael judged its future promising, the preservation remained contingent upon a favorable assessment.

If humanity was preserved because its members possessed an independent moral claim to continued existence, the Council's authority was correspondingly limited.

The Board therefore invites Tyrael to address whether his decision represented a change in his judgment concerning humanity's usefulness, humanity's character, or the proper limits of celestial authority.

The Board does not presume these explanations to be mutually exclusive.

It nevertheless identifies an especially significant principle:

Justice is not merely the willingness to reach a merciful conclusion.

It is also the willingness to recognize when the question placed before a tribunal exceeds the tribunal's rightful authority.

XI. THE PROBLEM OF CELESTIAL REPRESENTATION

The Board now considers the institutional composition of the Angiris Council.

Five archangels participated in the decision concerning humanity.

Each possessed extraordinary responsibilities within the High Heavens.

Each represented a distinct celestial aspect.

Yet no member represented humanity by virtue of selection, authorization, or accountability to the mortal population.

The Board recognizes that the Council was not designed as a representative institution for Sanctuary.

This fact is not, standing alone, evidence of defective governance within the High Heavens.

It becomes relevant when the Council undertakes decisions directly affecting populations outside its original jurisdiction.

The Board identifies three structural concerns.

A. Absence of Mortal Participation

The available record does not establish that humanity possessed any meaningful opportunity to participate in the final determination.

B. Institutional Conflict of Interest

The Council represented a principal participant in the Eternal Conflict.

It therefore possessed interests potentially distinct from those of Sanctuary.

C. Lack of External Review

The available record does not establish an independent institution capable of reviewing the Council's authority to determine Sanctuary's fate.

The Board does not insist that a modern representative assembly could have been established under the extraordinary conditions of the Sin War.

Nevertheless, the absence of such an assembly does not establish that the interests of humanity could be disregarded.

Alternative safeguards might have included consultation with mortal representatives, recognition of independent rights, or express limitations upon the scope of celestial intervention.

The Board finds insufficient evidence that such safeguards were established before the Council entertained the possibility of annihilation.

The governing problem was therefore not merely the absence of a human vote.

It was the absence of a recognized institutional requirement that humanity's interests be considered as its own.

Five distinct celestial perspectives do not necessarily constitute representation of the mortal world.

XII. THE AGREEMENT WITH MEPHISTO

Following the decision to preserve Sanctuary, the Angiris Council entered into an agreement with Mephisto, representing the Burning Hells.

The arrangement provided for noninterference in Sanctuary's affairs.

Humanity was to be permitted to determine its own path without direct celestial or infernal manipulation.

Inarius was surrendered to Mephisto as part of the settlement.

The Board recognizes the potentially beneficial significance of an agreement intended to remove Sanctuary from the immediate contest between Heaven and Hell.

It further recognizes that such an arrangement may have reduced the likelihood of immediate destruction.

Nevertheless, the agreement raises substantial jurisdictional and procedural concerns.

A. Authority to Negotiate

The Board requests identification of the authority under which the Angiris Council and Mephisto negotiated the future of Sanctuary.

Neither party represented humanity through an established process of mortal authorization.

B. Status of Sanctuary

The Board requests clarification concerning whether the agreement recognized Sanctuary as an independent realm or merely established limitations upon intervention by the signatory powers.

These arrangements are not necessarily equivalent.

A promise not to interfere may reduce danger.

It does not automatically establish recognition of the affected population's independent sovereignty.

C. Consideration Exchanged

The surrender of Inarius raises questions concerning the status of individuals transferred between hostile powers as part of an agreement.

The Board makes no determination in the present docket concerning Inarius's individual culpability or the propriety of his detention.

However, the respondent's alleged misconduct does not eliminate the need to consider the conditions and legitimacy of his transfer.

This matter is reserved for independent review.

D. Enforcement

The Board seeks evidence concerning the mechanisms established to ensure compliance with the noninterference arrangement.

In particular, the Board requests clarification concerning the procedures available if either the High Heavens or Burning Hells violated the agreement.

The Board notes that subsequent infernal incursions demonstrate the substantial difficulty of securing durable compliance.

E. Representation of Humanity

The Board observes that the agreement concerned humanity's freedom to determine its future.

Yet humanity does not appear to have participated in negotiating the terms under which that freedom would be recognized.

This produces an institutional contradiction.

The freedom of a population was negotiated by powers that had previously treated that population as an object of strategic competition.

The Board recognizes the value of the settlement.

It does not presume that the value of the outcome cures every defect in the authority by which the outcome was obtained.

XIII. ON THE ERASURE OF MEMORY

The historical record indicates that humanity's memories of the Sin War and direct celestial and infernal involvement were erased in connection with the conflict's resolution.

The Board regards the loss of collective historical knowledge as an issue of exceptional ethical significance.

The measure deprived affected persons of information concerning the forces that had contested their allegiance and threatened their continued existence.

It also obscured the circumstances under which their future had been determined.

The Board recognizes that disclosure of extraordinary knowledge can create danger.

Information concerning the Eternal Conflict might have enabled renewed manipulation, panic, or harmful attempts to exercise dormant powers.

The Board does not presume that unrestricted disclosure would necessarily have been safe.

However, the erasure of memory raises a question distinguishable from ordinary protective secrecy.

Secrecy restricts access to information.

Memory alteration changes what persons are capable of recalling about their own experiences.

The latter may directly affect personal autonomy, historical continuity, and the ability to hold institutions accountable.

The Board therefore requests evidence identifying:

1. The authority responsible for the decision.
2. The means by which the erasure was accomplished.
3. The population affected.
4. The anticipated protective benefits.

5. The consideration given to less intrusive alternatives.
6. Any mechanism permitting later restoration of historical knowledge.

The Board does not attribute every consequence of the memory alteration solely to the Angiris Council.

The available record requires distinction among the actions of Uldyssian, the effects of the Worldstone, and the arrangements following the Sin War.

Responsibility must be established through evidence.

Nevertheless, the Board identifies the resulting condition as ethically significant.

A population cannot readily challenge a decision whose existence it has been made unable to remember.

Nor can the absence of objection be treated as proof of consent when knowledge of the relevant events has been removed.

The Board recognizes that peace may require forgetting certain grievances.

It does not follow that peace may legitimately be imposed by depriving an entire population of its history.

XIV. NONINTERFERENCE AND SUBSEQUENT CELESTIAL ACTION

The Board next considers the tension between the noninterference arrangement and subsequent celestial intervention.

The historical record establishes that Tyrael later organized the Horadrim to combat the Prime Evils in Sanctuary.

These actions occurred in response to substantial infernal threats.

The Board recognizes that intervention undertaken to prevent catastrophe may be ethically distinguishable from intervention intended to control a population.

Nevertheless, the agreement's terms require examination.

If the arrangement prohibited celestial and infernal interference, under what circumstances could intervention be justified?

The Board identifies several possibilities.

An intervention might be authorized by the affected population.

It might be required to repel an immediate external attack.

It might be necessary to prevent imminent destruction where meaningful consent cannot be obtained.

Alternatively, it might constitute an impermissible attempt to manipulate Sanctuary's affairs.

These possibilities must be distinguished according to the circumstances of each action.

The Board does not find that every celestial intervention was necessarily improper.

Nor does it accept that beneficial intention alone establishes permission.

In particular, the establishment of the Horadrim raises questions concerning the relationship between celestial guidance and mortal agency.

The Horadrim consisted of mortals undertaking extraordinary responsibilities.

Their participation may distinguish their activities from purely unilateral celestial action.

However, the extent of their knowledge, consent, independence, and ability to challenge their celestial patron requires examination.

The Board therefore reserves a separate docket concerning Horadric governance and containment practices.

An institution cannot resolve the problem of unauthorized intervention merely by appointing local agents to perform it.

At the same time, the voluntary participation of affected persons may be ethically relevant.

The Board will assess those distinctions upon further evidence.

XV. THE INSTITUTIONAL MEANING OF ORDER

The Board returns to the principle underlying the Angiris Council's authority.

The High Heavens are associated with order.

The Burning Hells are associated with chaos and destruction.

The distinction possesses substantial significance within the Eternal Conflict.

Nevertheless, the Board cautions against treating order and justice as synonymous.

Order describes, among other things, the arrangement and stability of a system.

Justice concerns the legitimacy of conduct, obligations, and the treatment of persons.

An orderly institution may employ unjust procedures.

An institution may preserve stability by imposing burdens upon those unable to resist.

A tribunal may act consistently with its established rules while those rules themselves lack adequate ethical justification.

Conversely, the disruption of an established order does not necessarily establish wrongdoing.

Sanctuary itself arose from a rejection of the prevailing cosmic arrangement.

Its founders sought to escape a conflict maintained by the great powers.

The existence of the nephalem subsequently challenged assumptions concerning the separation of angelic and demonic nature.

The Council's response therefore presented a foundational question.

Was Sanctuary dangerous because its inhabitants had demonstrated destructive intentions?

Or was it regarded as dangerous because their existence challenged an established conception of cosmic order?

The Board recognizes that these concerns may have overlapped.

The available record does not permit all relevant motivations to be established with certainty.

Nevertheless, the distinction remains central.

An institution's preference for an existing order is not sufficient justification for destroying persons whose existence challenges that order.

The Board further observes that a system may be stable without being legitimate.

Its duration may demonstrate endurance.

Its power may demonstrate effectiveness.

Neither quality independently establishes justice.

XVI. THE QUESTION OF INSTITUTIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY

The Angiris Council exercised power of extraordinary magnitude.

Its members could influence wars, alter the conditions of realms, and determine responses to existential threats.

The Board recognizes that such responsibilities may require institutional discretion.

However, discretion must be distinguished from immunity.

The available record raises questions concerning the mechanisms by which Council members were held accountable for decisions affecting persons beyond the High Heavens.

The Board therefore requests clarification concerning:

- Procedures for challenging a Council decision.
- Standards governing intervention outside celestial territory.
- Requirements for disclosing conflicts of interest.
- Mechanisms for reviewing the conduct of individual archangels.
- Procedures governing dissent and abstention.

- Rules concerning the reconsideration of prior destructive edicts.
- The representation of populations affected by celestial decisions.

The Board recognizes that the Council may possess institutional traditions not fully reflected in the surviving record.

It therefore makes no final determination that such procedures were entirely absent.

Nevertheless, the magnitude of the Council's authority creates substantial grounds for examination.

An institution possessing the capacity to destroy an inhabited world should be able to articulate the principles limiting its use of that capacity.

The Board does not require the Angiris Council to resemble a mortal legislature.

It does require an explanation of why celestial authority should be regarded as legitimate when exercised over those who never granted it.

XVII. THE SUBSEQUENT DEPARTURE OF MALTHAEL

The Board notes that Malthael subsequently departed the Angiris Council following the destruction of the Worldstone.

His later emergence as the Angel of Death and his campaign against humanity raise grave institutional questions.

The Board does not examine those events fully in this proceeding.

Nevertheless, they are relevant to the broader problem of accountability.

An individual who previously occupied one of the highest positions in celestial government later undertook actions threatening the population whose continued existence had once been the subject of Council deliberation.

The Board therefore identifies several questions for future investigation.

Did the Council possess procedures for evaluating the conduct of former members?

Were warning signs or changes in institutional behavior subject to review?

What responsibilities, if any, remained with the Council following a former member's departure?

Could an institution founded upon extraordinary virtues adequately distinguish loyalty to a former colleague from its obligations toward threatened populations?

The Board cautions that subsequent wrongdoing does not establish that every earlier institutional decision was improper.

Nor does the later conduct of one member establish collective responsibility without evidence of institutional action, omission, or foreseeability.

However, an institution's responsibility may extend beyond the decisions it makes while assembled.

Its structures must also be evaluated according to how they respond when those entrusted with extraordinary authority cease to exercise it responsibly.

The Board reserves these matters for a separate proceeding.

XVIII. PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

Following review of the available historical record, the Sanctuary Ethics Review Board enters the following findings.

Finding 1 — Established Celestial Authority

The Angiris Council possessed significant institutional authority within the High Heavens.

That authority does not automatically establish jurisdiction over Sanctuary.

Finding 2 — Extraordinary Scope of Deliberation

The Council considered the destruction of an entire inhabited world.

The proposed action extended beyond the treatment of specific persons demonstrated to have committed harmful acts.

Finding 3 — Absence of Established Mortal Representation

The historical record does not establish meaningful representation of humanity in the Council's final vote.

Finding 4 — Preservation of Sanctuary

The Council ultimately voted to preserve Sanctuary and humanity.

The Board recognizes the substantial protective consequence of that decision.

Finding 5 — Procedural Legitimacy Remains Unresolved

The favorable result does not, by itself, establish that the Council possessed legitimate authority to determine humanity's continued existence.

Finding 6 — Ethical Significance of Reconsideration

Tyrael's change of position demonstrates that new evidence may properly alter an institutional judgment.

The Board recognizes reconsideration as a potentially important safeguard against the persistence of mistaken decisions.

Finding 7 — Limits of Predictive and Strategic Judgment

The possibility that humanity might threaten the High Heavens did not, without further evidence, establish collective culpability.

Finding 8 — Ambiguity of Abstention

Malthael's abstention affected the decision-making process.

The available record does not establish sufficient grounds for a definitive ethical judgment concerning his reasons.

Finding 9 — Questions Concerning the Mephisto Agreement

The noninterference agreement produced a potentially significant reduction in immediate danger.

However, the authority of the negotiating parties to determine Sanctuary's future without mortal participation remains unresolved.

Finding 10 — Historical Memory and Autonomy

The erasure of humanity's knowledge concerning the Sin War raises substantial questions concerning informed autonomy and institutional accountability.

The Board reserves specific findings of responsibility pending further examination.

Finding 11 — Distinction Between Order and Justice

The maintenance of celestial order does not independently establish the ethical legitimacy of every action undertaken in its defense.

Finding 12 — Continuing Institutional Responsibility

The Council's extraordinary powers support heightened scrutiny of the procedures by which its members exercise authority affecting populations outside the High Heavens.

XIX. QUESTIONS DIRECTED TO THE ANGIRIS COUNCIL

The Board hereby requests a collective response to the following inquiries.

Question One:
What instrument, principle, or established rule authorized the Council to consider the destruction of Sanctuary?

Question Two:
Did the Council distinguish between its authority to defend the High Heavens and its authority to determine the existence of another civilization?

Question Three:
What evidence supported the original destructive edict?

Question Four:
Were alternatives to the destruction of Sanctuary considered?

Question Five:
Why was humanity not afforded meaningful representation during the final deliberations?

Question Six:
Did the Council recognize any rights of humanity independent of celestial approval?

Question Seven:
What procedures governed the reconsideration of the original destructive edict?

Question Eight:
What institutional effect did Malthael's abstention have, and were rules governing abstention established in advance?

Question Nine:
Under what authority did the Council negotiate Sanctuary's future with Mephisto?

Question Ten:
What mechanisms were established to enforce the noninterference agreement?

Question Eleven:
What role did the Council play in the alteration or erasure of human memory following the Sin War?

Question Twelve:
What protections existed against the use of celestial authority to advance institutional interests at the expense of mortal autonomy?

Question Thirteen:
Did the Council recognize any procedure by which the inhabitants of Sanctuary could reject celestial intervention?

Question Fourteen:
What standards governed the subsequent activities of Council members within Sanctuary?

Question Fifteen:
Does the Council maintain that humanity possesses an inherent right to exist, or merely that humanity's continued existence remains permissible under celestial policy?

The Board regards the final question as particularly important.

The two positions are not equivalent.

The first recognizes a limit upon celestial power.

The second preserves the possibility that the Council may reconsider humanity's existence whenever its institutional preferences change.

XX. INSTITUTIONAL DETERMINATION

The Board finds that the Angiris Council's historical conduct presents substantial questions concerning the distinction between institutional power and legitimate authority.

The Council's decision to preserve Sanctuary prevented catastrophic harm.

Its reconsideration following Uldyssian's sacrifice demonstrates the importance of responsiveness to new evidence.

The Board acknowledges these facts.

Nevertheless, the surviving record does not adequately establish that the Council possessed legitimate authority to determine the continued existence of humanity in the first instance.

The Board therefore enters the following provisional determination.

The preservation of Sanctuary was an ethically significant outcome.

The authority asserted in contemplating its destruction remains insufficiently justified.

The Board further determines that celestial status, extraordinary longevity, military power, and embodiment of a virtue do not independently establish unlimited jurisdiction over mortal populations.

The Council is invited to submit evidence or argument addressing the limitations of its authority.

No adverse conclusion shall arise solely from membership in the High Heavens.

Equally, membership in the High Heavens shall not establish immunity from examination.

The Board recommends that any future exercise of celestial authority affecting Sanctuary be assessed according to:

1. The existence of a legitimate purpose.
2. The nature and immediacy of the anticipated threat.
3. The rights and interests of affected persons.
4. The availability of less harmful alternatives.
5. The proportionality of the proposed intervention.
6. The meaningful participation of those affected, where feasible.
7. The availability of independent review.
8. The preservation of sufficient historical records to permit later accountability.

These principles are proposed as an ethical framework.

They do not purport to reproduce a binding celestial legal code.

XXI. CONCLUDING OBSERVATION

The history of Sanctuary presents an unusual account of survival.

Humanity emerged from a union of beings who sought escape from an ancient war.

Its existence challenged the assumptions of both powers responsible for that war.

The High Heavens regarded the new civilization with suspicion.

The Burning Hells perceived opportunities for influence.

And between them stood a population whose future became the subject of negotiations it had not authorized.

The Angiris Council ultimately decided that humanity would be permitted to continue.

That decision mattered.

Its consequences cannot be dismissed.

Yet the Board considers it necessary to ask why such permission was regarded as the Council's to grant.

For there is a difference between permitting another to live and recognizing that one possesses no legitimate authority to destroy them.

There is a difference between restraint exercised as a matter of preference and restraint imposed by an obligation.

And there is a difference between a favorable judgment and a just jurisdiction.

The Board recognizes the extraordinary difficulty of the Council's position.

The nephalem possessed powers whose consequences could not be fully predicted.

Their ancestry challenged the apparent division between celestial and infernal existence.

Their potential role in the Eternal Conflict presented genuine uncertainty.

But uncertainty does not eliminate the moral standing of those who must live beneath it.

A population cannot be reduced to a strategic calculation merely because its future may affect powerful institutions.

Nor does the antiquity of those institutions establish that the population exists for their benefit.

The Council's virtues remain worthy of consideration.

Valor may protect.

Hope may preserve.

Fate may illuminate.

Wisdom may restrain.

Justice may correct.

Yet none of these virtues can fulfill its purpose merely through the exercise of power.

A sword wielded courageously may still strike the innocent.

Hope may remain dependent upon the favor of those who possess it.

Knowledge of the future may become an instrument of domination if it is used to deny the present moral standing of persons.

Wisdom may fail when it refuses to confront the consequences of inaction.

And Justice may become little more than an institutional title if it does not acknowledge the limits of its own jurisdiction.

The Board therefore regards the final vote not merely as an account of humanity's preservation.

It is also evidence of a deeper problem.

Five beings convened to determine whether an entire civilization should continue to exist.

Three voted that it should.

One voted that it should not.

One declined to decide.

Humanity survived.

But humanity's survival does not settle the question of whether its existence was properly theirs to decide.

The Board concludes that the legitimacy of a governing institution cannot rest solely upon the magnitude of its power, the nobility of its title, or the favorable consequences of particular decisions.

It must also be examined through its obligations toward those subject to its actions.

An institution claiming Justice must be willing to examine whether its own authority is just.

An institution claiming Wisdom must recognize that it may not possess every answer.

And an institution claiming to defend existence must distinguish between preserving life and maintaining control over the conditions under which life is permitted.

The Council preserved humanity.

The Board acknowledges this.

It now asks the Council to consider whether humanity required celestial permission to exist at all.

Order is not necessarily justice.

Power is not necessarily authority.

Restraint is not necessarily recognition of rights.

And the survival of a civilization by majority vote does not establish that its existence was ever properly subject to a vote.

The inquiry remains open.

XXII. DISPOSITION

The preliminary investigation into the Angiris Council shall remain open pending additional evidence concerning its jurisdiction, deliberative procedures, and institutional responsibilities toward Sanctuary.

The Board orders no alteration to the governance of the High Heavens.

It further recognizes that the present review does not establish enforceable authority over the Council under any identified celestial legal system.

The Board's determinations are ethical and investigatory.

The Council is invited to respond collectively or through individual submissions.

Members who dissented from historical decisions may submit separate statements.

Members who abstained may explain their reasons without prejudice arising solely from the abstention.

The Board encourages preservation of the original voting record.

The Board further requests that no respondent undertake retaliatory action against Sanctuary or its inhabitants on account of the present inquiry.

The Board acknowledges that its capacity to enforce this request may be limited.

This limitation does not alter the ethical question.

So entered.

Sanctuary Ethics Review Board
Office of Celestial Governance and Institutional Accountability
Division of Extraterritorial Authority

ADMINISTRATIVE ADDENDUM A

Regarding the Council's Title and Institutional Mandate

The Office of Jurisdictional Review has received an inquiry concerning whether the Angiris Council's governance of the High Heavens establishes a presumption of authority over all realms threatened by the Burning Hells.

The Office acknowledges the Council's substantial responsibilities concerning celestial security.

However, it finds that jurisdiction must be distinguished from the capacity to exercise force.

The Council is therefore invited to provide evidence of any agreement, instrument, or independently justified principle establishing its authority over Sanctuary.

The Office notes that no such instrument has been produced in the present proceeding.

The assertion that the Council acts in defense of cosmic order is acknowledged.

It does not independently resolve the question presented.

The Office respectfully observes that the words "High Heavens" describe a realm and do not, by themselves, constitute a universal grant of jurisdiction.

ADMINISTRATIVE ADDENDUM B

Regarding the Preservation Vote

The Office of Records has completed a preliminary review of the historical vote concerning humanity.

The tally is entered as follows:

Preservation: 3

Destruction: 1

Abstention: 1

The Office recognizes that the motion to preserve Sanctuary prevailed.

However, the following question remains outstanding:

Whether the Council possessed authority to make the continued existence of Sanctuary conditional upon the outcome of its vote.

The Office advises that this question is not resolved by the numerical result.

The record shall therefore reflect both the favorable decision and the unresolved jurisdictional objection.

For avoidance of doubt, the Board does not propose a second vote concerning humanity's existence.

The existence of humanity is not presently scheduled for reconsideration.

ADMINISTRATIVE ADDENDUM C

Regarding the Archangel of Valor

The Office has received a preliminary objection asserting that the Council's authority is supported by its capacity to enforce its decisions.

The Office recognizes that the Council possesses extraordinary military capabilities.

It further recognizes the considerable distinction between an ordinary administrative institution and one composed of archangels.

Nevertheless, the existence of superior force does not, without additional justification, establish lawful or ethical authority.

The respondent is invited to distinguish the two.

The Office respectfully requests that any response address the question without a demonstration of the destructive capabilities of Solarion.

The destructive capabilities of Solarion are not in dispute.

ADMINISTRATIVE ADDENDUM D

Regarding the Archangel of Justice

The Office has received an inquiry concerning whether Tyrael's decisive vote to preserve humanity should be regarded as dispositive of the broader jurisdictional question.

The Board recognizes the historical and ethical significance of the vote.

It further recognizes Tyrael's subsequent efforts to protect Sanctuary.

However, the question under review concerns the Council's institutional authority rather than the personal virtue of any single member.

Accordingly, Tyrael's favorable decision shall be entered as evidence relevant to the inquiry.

It shall not be treated as a universal resolution of the questions concerning celestial jurisdiction.

The Office observes that the respondent's history of reconsidering prior judgments may be particularly relevant to future proceedings.

The Board invites the Archangel of Justice to consider whether justice includes recognizing the limits of the institution authorized to administer it.

ADMINISTRATIVE ADDENDUM E

Regarding the Abstention of Wisdom

The Office of Records has received a request to clarify whether an abstention may be treated as evidence of institutional neutrality.

The Office advises that abstention records the absence of an affirmative vote on the question presented.

It does not necessarily establish neutrality concerning the underlying subject.

Nor does it independently establish approval, disapproval, or indifference.

Where the consequences of abstention are foreseeable, those consequences may be relevant to an ethical evaluation.

The Office therefore requests that the historical rationale for Malthael's abstention be preserved, if available.

The Board makes no presumption concerning that rationale.

The Office notes that silence is a procedurally recognizable position.

Whether it was a sufficient discharge of responsibility remains a separate question.

ADMINISTRATIVE ADDENDUM F

Regarding the Absence of a Mortal Delegation

The Office of Institutional Procedure has been unable to identify any mortal delegation authorized to participate in the Council's final deliberation concerning Sanctuary.

The Office recognizes that such representation may not have been contemplated under the prevailing celestial system.

It further recognizes that the absence of a representative institution does not automatically invalidate every emergency measure undertaken to protect a population.

Nevertheless, the Office considers the absence of affected-party representation relevant to the legitimacy of a decision contemplating that population's destruction.

The Council is invited to explain whether it regarded humanity as possessing interests independent of those of the High Heavens and Burning Hells.

The Office further requests clarification concerning the means by which those interests were evaluated.

The assertion that celestial members possessed superior knowledge may be relevant.

It does not establish that their interests and humanity's interests were identical.

The Board respectfully notes that five chairs were occupied.

None belonged to the population whose existence was under consideration.

FINAL ADMINISTRATIVE NOTICE

SERB-003 — NOTICE OF CONTINUING JURISDICTIONAL INQUIRY

The Board recognizes that the Council's historical vote resulted in the preservation of humanity.

No party is required to defend the proposition that humanity should have been destroyed in order to participate in the present inquiry.

The Board's concern is narrower.

It concerns the authority claimed by an institution when it treated the continued existence of another civilization as a matter within its discretion.

The Office of Records has entered the favorable vote.

The Office of Institutional Review has entered the absence of mortal representation.

The Office of Jurisdictional Review has entered the unresolved question of authority.

The Board therefore requests that the Angiris Council address the following proposition:

If humanity possesses an independent right to exist, the Council's vote did not create that right.

If humanity possesses no such right, the Council must explain the basis upon which its existence remains subject to celestial permission.

The respondent may submit a written answer.

The Board respectfully requests that the answer address the proposition presented.

An affirmation of celestial power will not be considered responsive.

An account of the Eternal Conflict may be included as supporting historical context.

A further recitation of the Council's virtues is unnecessary.

The virtues are already listed in the record.

The question concerns their exercise.

END OF SERB-003

NEXT PROPOSED INQUIRY

SERB-004 — THE BURNING HELLS

On Infernal Sovereignty, Coercive Agreements, and the Presumption That Power Confers Consent.

Preliminary Jurisdictional Observation:

The Board recognizes that the Burning Hells may not acknowledge the authority of an independent ethics review.

The Board further recognizes that the Burning Hells may consider coercion an ordinary instrument of governance.

Neither circumstance eliminates the ethical questions arising from its use.

The Board requests that Mephisto refrain from interpreting this notice as an invitation to negotiate the continued existence of the reviewing institution.