



PALADIN

THE TRUE WORTH OF A PALADIN IS MEASURED NOT IN foes defeated or dungeons plundered. It is measured in lives saved and hearts turned to the causes of mercy and justice.

—Isteval

A paladin is a living embodiment of an oath—a promise or a vow made manifest in the person of a holy warrior who has the skill and the determination to see the cause through to the end. Some paladins devote themselves expressly to protecting the innocent and spreading justice in the world, while others resolve to attain that goal by conquering those who stand defiant and bringing them under the rule of law.

Although no paladin in the world could be described as typical, a number of them are narrow-minded do-gooders who refuse to tolerate even the smallest deviation from their own outlook. Paladins who take up the adventuring life, however, rarely remain so rigid in their attitudes—if only to keep from alienating their companions.

You can flesh out your paladin character by using the suggestions below. It's important to keep in mind that most paladins aren't robots. They have doubts and prejudices and harbor contradictory thoughts just as any other character does. Some are compelled by an internal motivation that might sometimes be at odds with the principles of their oaths.

PERSONAL GOAL

The precepts of a paladin's oath provide purpose to the character and dictate an ultimate goal or an overall intent that the paladin abides by and advances. Aside from that, some paladins are driven by a personal goal that either complements or transcends the dictates of their oaths. Paladins who swear different oaths might have the same personal goal, differing only in how they apply that goal to their actions when upholding their oaths.

If your paladin character has a personal goal, it might be drawn from some life event and thus not directly tied to the oath.

Living up to an oath? That sounds ridiculous. Why would anyone ever do that? There's nothing wrong with making promises, but only suckers keep them.



PERSONAL GOALS

d6	Goal
1	Peace. You fight so that future generations will not have to.
2	Revenge. Your oath is the vehicle through which you will right an ancient wrong.
3	Duty. You will live up to what you have sworn to do, or die trying.
4	Leadership. You will win a great battle that bards will sing about, and in so doing, you will become an example to inspire others.
5	Faith. You know your path is righteous, or else the gods would not have set you upon it.
6	Glory. You will lead the world into a grand new era, one that will be branded with your name.

SYMBOL

Paladins are mindful of the influence of symbols, and many of them adopt or design an artistic device that bears a distinctive image. Your symbol exemplifies the oath you have taken and communicates that message to those around you, friend and foe alike.

Your symbol might be displayed on a banner, a flag, or your clothing for all to see. Or it could be less obvious, such as a trinket or a token that you carry concealed on your person.

SYMBOLS

d6	Symbol
1	A dragon, emblematic of your nobility in peace and your ferocity in combat
2	A clenched fist, because you are always ready to fight for your beliefs
3	An upraised open hand, indicating your preference for diplomacy over combat
4	A red heart, showing the world your commitment to justice
5	A black heart, signifying that emotions such as pity do not sway your dedication to your oath
6	An unblinking eye, meaning that you are ever alert to all threats against your cause

NEMESIS

Their adherence to a sacred oath demands that paladins take an active stance in carrying their beliefs into the world. This activity naturally leads to conflict with creatures or entities that oppose those beliefs. Among those opponents, one often stands out as a paladin's most persistent or most formidable foe—a nemesis whose presence or influence is a constant factor in a paladin's life.

Your paladin character might have an enemy that dates from the days before you took up your path. Or you could be a target because when you became a paladin, you immediately attracted the attention of those that would do you in. If you have a nemesis, who or what is it? Whom among your enemies do you consider to be the biggest threat to achieving your goals?

NEMESSES

d6 Nemesis

- 1 A mighty orc war chief who threatens to overrun and destroy everything you hold sacred
- 2 A fiend or a celestial, the agent of a power of the Outer Planes, who has been charged with corrupting or redeeming you, as appropriate
- 3 A dragon whose servants dog your steps
- 4 A high priest who sees you as a misguided fool and wants you to abandon your religion
- 5 A rival paladin who trained with you but became an oath-breaker and holds you responsible
- 6 A vampire who has sworn revenge against all paladins after being defeated by one

TEMPTATION

Although paladins are dedicated to their oaths, they are mortals, and thus they are flawed. Many of them exhibit a type of behavior or hold to an attitude that is not in keeping with the highest ideals of their calling.

What is the temptation that your character succumbs to or finds it difficult to resist?

TEMPTATIONS

d6 Temptation

- 1 **Fury.** When your anger is roused, you have trouble thinking straight, and you fear you might do something you'll regret.
- 2 **Pride.** Your deeds are noteworthy, and no one takes note of them more often than you.
- 3 **Lust.** You can't resist an attractive face and a pleasant smile.
- 4 **Envy.** You are mindful of what some famous folk have accomplished, and you feel inadequate when your deeds don't compare to theirs.
- 5 **Despair.** You consider the great strength of the enemies you must defeat, and at times you see no way to achieve final victory.
- 6 **Greed.** Regardless of how much glory and treasure you amass, it's never enough for you.

SACRED OATHS

At 3rd level, a paladin gains the Sacred Oath feature. The following options are available to a paladin, in addition to those offered in the *Player's Handbook*: the Oath of Conquest and the Oath of Redemption.



PALADIN OF CONQUEST

OATH OF CONQUEST

The Oath of Conquest calls to paladins who seek glory in battle and the subjugation of their enemies. It isn't enough for these paladins to establish order. They must crush the forces of chaos. Sometimes called knight tyrants or iron mongers, those who swear this oath gather into grim orders that serve gods or philosophies of war and well-ordered might.

Some of these paladins go so far as to consort with the powers of the Nine Hells, valuing the rule of law over the balm of mercy. The archdevil Bel, warlord of Avernus, counts many of these paladins—called hell knights—as his most ardent supporters. Hell knights cover their armor with trophies taken from fallen enemies, a grim warning to any who dare oppose them and the decrees of their lords. These knights are often most fiercely resisted by other paladins of this oath, who believe that the hell knights have wandered too far into darkness.

TENETS OF CONQUEST

A paladin who takes this oath has the tenets of conquest seared on the upper arm.

Douse the Flame of Hope. It is not enough to merely defeat an enemy in battle. Your victory must be so overwhelming that your enemies' will to fight is shattered forever. A blade can end a life. Fear can end an empire.

Rule with an Iron Fist. Once you have conquered, tolerate no dissent. Your word is law. Those who obey it

Conquest sounds cool.
Do you have to leave your house for that?
Because I've got a fish named Sylgar and I can't
be away for too long or he gets sad.



shall be favored. Those who defy it shall be punished as an example to all who might follow.

Strength Above All. You shall rule until a stronger one arises. Then you must grow mightier and meet the challenge, or fall to your own ruin.

OATH OF CONQUEST FEATURES

Paladin Level	Feature
3rd	Oath Spells, Channel Divinity
7th	Aura of Conquest (10 ft.)
15th	Scornful Rebuke
18th	Aura of Conquest (30 ft.)
20th	Invincible Conqueror

OATH SPELLS

You gain oath spells at the paladin levels listed in the Oath of Conquest Spells table. See the Sacred Oath class feature for how oath spells work.

OATH OF CONQUEST SPELLS

Paladin Level	Spells
3rd	<i>armor of Agathys, command</i>
5th	<i>hold person, spiritual weapon</i>
9th	<i>bestow curse, fear</i>
13th	<i>dominate beast, stonikin</i>
17th	<i>cloudkill, dominate person</i>

CHANNEL DIVINITY

When you take this oath at 3rd level, you gain the following two Channel Divinity options. See the Sacred Oath class feature for how Channel Divinity works.

Conquering Presence. You can use your Channel Divinity to exude a terrifying presence. As an action, you force each creature of your choice that you can see within 30 feet of you to make a Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, a creature becomes frightened of you for 1 minute. The frightened creature can repeat this saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Guided Strike. You can use your Channel Divinity to strike with supernatural accuracy. When you make an attack roll, you can use your Channel Divinity to gain a +10 bonus to the roll. You make this choice after you see the roll, but before the DM says whether the attack hits or misses.

AURA OF CONQUEST

Starting at 7th level, you constantly emanate a menacing aura while you're not incapacitated. The aura extends 10 feet from you in every direction, but not through total cover.

If a creature is frightened of you, its speed is reduced to 0 while in the aura, and that creature takes psychic damage equal to half your paladin level if it starts its turn there.

At 18th level, the range of this aura increases to 30 feet.

SCORNFUL REBUKE

Starting at 15th level, those who dare to strike you are psychically punished for their audacity. Whenever a creature hits you with an attack, that creature takes psychic damage equal to your Charisma modifier (minimum of 1) if you're not incapacitated.

INVINCIBLE CONQUEROR

At 20th level, you gain the ability to harness extraordinary martial prowess. As an action, you can magically become an avatar of conquest, gaining the following benefits for 1 minute:

- You have resistance to all damage.
- When you take the Attack action on your turn, you can make one additional attack as part of that action.
- Your melee weapon attacks score a critical hit on a roll of 19 or 20 on the d20.

Once you use this feature, you can't use it again until you finish a long rest.

OATH OF REDEMPTION

The Oath of Redemption sets a paladin on a difficult path, one that requires a holy warrior to use violence only as a last resort. Paladins who dedicate themselves to this oath believe that any person can be redeemed and that the path of benevolence and justice is one that anyone can walk. These paladins face evil creatures in the hope of turning their foes to the light, and they slay their enemies only when such a deed will clearly save other lives. Paladins who follow this path are known as redeemers.

While redeemers are idealists, they are no fools. Redeemers know that undead, demons, devils, and other supernatural threats can be inherently evil. Against such foes, paladins who swear this oath bring the full wrath of their weapons and spells to bear. Yet the redeemers still pray that, one day, even creatures of wickedness will invite their own redemption.

TENETS OF REDEMPTION

The tenets of the Oath of Redemption hold a paladin to a high standard of peace and justice.

Peace. Violence is a weapon of last resort. Diplomacy and understanding are the paths to long-lasting peace.

Innocence. All people begin life in an innocent state, and it is their environment or the influence of dark forces that drives them to evil. By setting the proper example, and working to heal the wounds of a deeply flawed world, you can set anyone on a righteous path.

Redemption. So you feel bad about having done something, and then you have to do something to feel better? Why don't you just kill and eat someone? That always makes me feel better.



Patience. Change takes time. Those who have walked the path of the wicked must be given reminders to keep them honest and true. Once you have planted the seed of righteousness in a creature, you must work day after day to allow that seed to survive and flourish.

Wisdom. Your heart and mind must stay clear, for eventually you will be forced to admit defeat. While every creature can be redeemed, some are so far along the path of evil that you have no choice but to end their lives for the greater good. Any such action must be carefully weighed and the consequences fully understood, but once you have made the decision, follow through with it knowing your path is just.

OATH OF REDEMPTION FEATURES

Paladin Level	Feature
3rd	Oath Spells, Channel Divinity
7th	Aura of the Guardian (10 ft.)
15th	Protective Spirit
18th	Aura of the Guardian (30 ft.)
20th	Emissary of Redemption

OATH SPELLS

You gain oath spells at the paladin levels listed in the Oath of Redemption Spells table. See the Sacred Oath class feature for how oath spells work.

OATH OF REDEMPTION SPELLS

Paladin Level	Spells
3rd	<i>sanctuary</i> , <i>sleep</i>
5th	<i>calm emotions</i> , <i>hold person</i>
9th	<i>counterspell</i> , <i>hypnotic pattern</i>
13th	<i>Otiluke's resilient sphere</i> , <i>stoneskin</i>
17th	<i>hold monster</i> , <i>wall of force</i>

CHANNEL DIVINITY

When you take this oath at 3rd level, you gain the following two Channel Divinity options.

Emissary of Peace. You can use your Channel Divinity to augment your presence with divine power. As a bonus action, you grant yourself a +5 bonus to Charisma (Persuasion) checks for the next 10 minutes.

Rebuke the Violent. You can use your Channel Divinity to rebuke those who use violence. Immediately after an attacker within 30 feet of you deals damage with an attack against a creature other than you, you can use your reaction to force the attacker to make a Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, the attacker takes radiant damage equal to the damage it just dealt. On a successful save, it takes half as much damage.



PALADIN OF REDEMPTION

AURA OF THE GUARDIAN

Starting at 7th level, you can shield others from harm at the cost of your own health. When a creature within 10 feet of you takes damage, you can use your reaction to magically take that damage, instead of that creature taking it. This feature doesn't transfer any other effects that might accompany the damage, and this damage can't be reduced in any way.

At 18th level, the range of this aura increases to 30 feet.

PROTECTIVE SPIRIT

Starting at 15th level, a holy presence mends your wounds in battle. You regain hit points equal to 1d6 + half your paladin level if you end your turn in combat with fewer than half of your hit points remaining and you aren't incapacitated.

EMISSARY OF REDEMPTION

At 20th level, you become an avatar of peace, which gives you two benefits:

- You have resistance to all damage dealt by other creatures (their attacks, spells, and other effects).
- Whenever a creature hits you with an attack, it takes radiant damage equal to half the damage you take from the attack.

If you attack a creature, cast a spell on it, or deal damage to it by any means but this feature, neither benefit works against that creature until you finish a long rest.