



THE OATH OF ATONEMENT

A NEW PALADIN OATH FOR 5E

WESTLEY BRASWELL

An brand new Oath for paladins that wish to atone for the
sins that they alone cannot wash away



CREDITS

Designer: Westley Braswell

Template: [Simple Microsoft Word Template](#) by Laura Hirsbrunner

Cover Illustrator: Vagelio Kavila

Interior Illustrators: Wizards of the Coast

Special Thanks: James Introcaso for providing a recommendation and link to Laura's incredible work, Valaska Ur-Inanna for her review and playtesting, and being one of my best and oldest friends.



ON THE COVER

Gar-ogar, the lizardfolk paladin, spends a moment in silent contemplation. His mind turns to the violence he unleashed upon his enemies in his younger days. The blood that stains his soul. And the vow he swore to never again lift his blade if not in defense.

This wonderful piece was illustrated by Vagelio Kavila.

Please support her work at [DriveThruRPG - Vagelio](#)

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INTRODUCTION

Kaia threw wide open the doors of the temple, and stepped toward the altar. The tip of her sword screeched the song of violence as she dragged it across the stone floor, before she let it drop and clatter to the floor. With each step, more of the blood she was awash in fell from her body, leaving a crimson cut across the holy body of the temple.

She arrived at the altar, and fell to her knees. Her pale eyes looked to the effigy of St. Dorri, Guardian of the Hearthfire. His own gaze fell upon her, lifeless and stone as his eyes were.

"All my life," she said, "I've thought you were my enemy. Getting in the way of all that I had to achieve. Had to..." she stopped, and placed a hand on St. Dorri's hammer. "But none of that matters anymore." She closed her eyes, and bowed her head to the effigy that cast its silent judgement upon her.

"Forgive me," she said, as her tears mixed with the blood of her enemies, and fell to his mercy.

OATH OF ATONEMENT

Walk the path of forgiveness, and help others along the way

There are those who commit crimes and sins without a single weight upon their conscious, and have no regard for those whom they harm with their actions. Yet, every so often, a mortal realizes the weight of sin they carry upon them, and pledges to a god that they will live a virtuous life in order to make right all that they've done wrong. Yet the mark of a sin is not so easily wiped away, and holding themselves to virtue is the greatest challenge anyone faces when they swear the Oath of Atonement.

Paladins who swear this oath share the following tenants:

- Violence is a last resort, as life is sacred
- Work to build bridges, rather than burn them
- Forgive others for their sins, as you ask yours to be

LEVEL 3: OATH OF ATONEMENT SPELLS

The magic of your oath ensures you always have certain spells ready; when you reach a Paladin level specified in the Oath of the Ancients Spells table, you thereafter always have the listed spells prepared.

OATH OF ATONEMENT SPELLS

Paladin Level	Spells
3rd	<i>Expeditious retreat, healing word</i>
5th	<i>Calm emotions, hold person</i>
9th	<i>Slow, tongues</i>
13th	<i>Divination, freedom of movement</i>
17th	<i>Commune, hold monster</i>

LEVEL 3: SHIELD OF SACRIFICE

As a reaction when a creature within 30 ft. of you is hit by an attack, you can expend a use of your Channel Divinity feature and move up to 30 ft., ending the movement adjacent to the creature. You gain temporary hit points equal to 2d6 + your Paladin level, and you become the new target of the attack.

LEVEL 7: AURA OF FORGIVENESS

When you make a Charisma (Persuasion) ability check against a creature within your Aura of Protection, you may add +5 to your check's total.

In addition, when a creature with your Aura of Protection takes damage, you can reduce the amount of damage they take by half (no action required). You then take the same amount of damage, which cannot be reduced in any way.

You can use this feature a number of times equal to 1 + your Charisma modifier (minimum of one), and regain all expended uses when you finish a Long Rest.

LEVEL 15: SALVE OF THE MARTYR

When you use your Lay on Hands feature on a creature other than yourself, you may expend up to three of your Hit Dice, adding 10 to the amount of Hit Points restored for each Hit Die expended.

LEVEL 20: ATONED

As a Bonus Action, you gain the benefits below for 10 minutes or until you end them (no action required). Once you use this feature, you can't use it again until you finish a Long Rest. You can also restore your use of it by expending a level 5 spell slot (no action required).

Armor of Forgiven Sins: You have resistance to all damage dealt by other creatures. At the start of your turn in combat, if you are Bloodied, you regain Hit Points equal to 5 + your Charisma modifier. This cannot restore you to more than half your Hit Point maximum.

Sword of the Sanctified: When you use your Divine Smite feature while you are Bloodied, you can use d12's for the damage dice instead of d8's.

OATHBREAKERS

The Oath of Atonement makes for a good replacement for a paladin that has broken their oath in a way that would otherwise cause them to become an Oathbreaker. If the paladin seeks redemption or atonement for the transgression, the player should talk to the DM about switching their oath to the Oath of Atonement, with the possibility that they could switch back once they have made amends for their failure to upkeep their oath originally.

BACKGROUNDS

THE MARKED OUTCAST

Skill Proficiencies: Survival, Stealth

Languages: Any one of your choice

Tool Proficiencies: Land or Water Vehicles, or disguise kits (your choice)

Equipment: A token of your homeland, a **map** of a nearby area, a **glass bottle** with a drink of your choice in it, a set of travelers clothes, and a pouch containing 10 gold pieces.

THE SHAME

You were once a respected member of your community, one whom people could turn to and count on. Then, you broke it all, by committing an act vile or shameful enough to warrant your exile and forever place a mark upon your name. You can roll a d8 or choose from the options in the **Shameful Past** table to determine what it was that ruined your reputation.

SHAMEFUL PAST

d8	Event
1	You murdered someone, and they didn't deserve it
2	You broke someone's heart, and you couldn't fix it
3	You stole something, and couldn't give it back
4	You betrayed someone, and they couldn't forgive you
5	You ran away, and someone needed you
6	You destroyed something precious, and you meant to do it
7	You lied to someone, and then they found out
8	You made a promise, and then you broke it

FEATURE: OUTCASTS SANCTUARY

The mark upon your name means you've learned how to keep a low profile and avoid unwanted attention. In settlements, you know the places where one can rest and avoid being found (even if they're not the most sanitary or safest conditions). If it's a settlement that knows your shame, you can count on there being at least one contact within the settlement that still calls you a friend, and would be willing to shelter you as much as is reasonable.

SUGGESTED CHARACTERISTICS

As someone who was once a part of a community and was then forced to leave it, your character exists in a place between society and the freedom of the wilderness. They may be searching for a new place to call home, or desperately trying to find a way back to the one that forced them out.



PERSONALITY TRAITS

d8	Personality Trait
1	When someone blames me for something, I just accept it
2	I put myself down in almost every conversation
3	I do my best to hide my shame from others
4	I throw myself at whatever challenge comes my way, in the hopes it'll make up for what I've done
5	I don't hide the bitterness and anger I feel over being throw out
6	I don't like people, and they don't like me. That's fine.
7	Anytime someone asks me about my past, I shut down or lash out
8	I never accept responsibility for anything, even if really should sometimes

IDEALS

d6	Ideal
1	Home. No matter what happened, I still love and cherish my homeland. (Any)
2	Order. A wrong act can only be answered by a right one, and I seek to restore the balance. (Lawful)
3	Restorative. The only way to fix the wounds between people is for the person that wronged the other to do so, as much as they can. (Good)
4	Acceptance. There's nothing to be done about what people think of me. I should just roll with it. (Chaotic)
5	Revenge. The people that shamed me called me a monster. I will show them that they were right. (Evil)
6	Family. While my old home is no more, I know that there's one out there that will accept me. (Any)

BONDS

d6	Bond
1	I finally got a letter from home; one that calls me back to do something right for once.
2	Someone else was also responsible for the shame that exiled me. I will find them and make them share my fate.
3	There was a person from my past life I cared about dearly and had to leave behind. They've since gone missing, and it's up to me to find them.
4	I know that if I face a foe dangerous enough, overcome a trial great enough, my people will welcome me back.
5	A person in a position of power placed the mark upon my name. I will force them to remove it.
6	I've heard tale of a great treasure to my people. If I find it and bring it to them, maybe that will make up for what I've done.

FLAWS

d6	Flaw
1	Death may absolve me of my crimes. So, I seek it wherever I can.
2	I take credit for other people's good work in the hope it will help my reputation.
3	I keep all those who would attempt to get close to me at a distance. I do not want to hurt anyone again.
4	I tell people about my past as soon as they get to know me; better they know now rather than later.
5	I can't help but defend my reputation against even the smallest slight, often with disproportionate actions.
6	I indulge in vices to keep my mind busy from thinking about my shame.



MAGIC ITEMS

BLADE OF MERCY

Melee weapon that deals slashing damage, legendary (requires attunement)

With one edge sharpened to kill and the other blunted, this weapon possesses the ability to kill, and to spare. It is the will of the wielder to choose. You add +3 to your attack rolls and damage rolls you make with this weapon. While attuned to this weapon, it gains the following benefits.

Edge of Mercy: You are under the effects of a *sanctuary* spell while you are attuned to this weapon (Save DC 18) and have advantage on Wisdom and Charisma saving throws. This effect ends for seven days if you reduce a creature to 0 Hit Points with an attack and kill them.

Edge of Murder: When you reduce a creature to 0 Hit Points with an attack from this weapon and choose to kill them, you have advantage on your attack rolls and add 1d10 extra slashing damage for seven days.

However, you also have disadvantage on Wisdom and Charisma saving throws for the same duration.

The Choice: When you critically hit a creature with this weapon, you may choose to deal an extra 3d10 force damage to the creature. However, if you reduce the creature to 0 Hit Points, you cannot choose to knock them unconscious.

WARRIORS VESTMENTS

Robes or common clothing, very rare (requires attunement by a cleric or paladin)

Those sworn to higher powers that are called to fight for their faith, these vestments serve as protections for both the traveler and the warpriest. While attuned to these vestments, you gain the following benefits while wearing them.

- Your AC is equal to 13 + your Wisdom or Charisma modifier (your choice). You can use a shield and still gain these benefits.
- When you use your Channel Divinity feature, you gain temporary Hit Points equal to 2 × your cleric or paladin level. While you have these temporary Hit Points, you have resistance to radiant and necrotic damage.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

Follow me on Bluesky [In the West Meadows \(@iridusknight.bsky.social\)](#) — Bluesky and connect with me on LinkedIn [Westley \(Wes\) Braswell-Leetch | LinkedIn](#) for updates on upcoming projects on the DMsGuild and beyond!

For a first project, this was an absolute joy to make official. The idea of the Oath of Atonement was one of the first real moments many years ago where I began to think with a narrative designer's mindset; about how a class can tell a *story*.

Bringing this to life all these years later is a special moment for me. I am just as excited, though, for what comes next.

A special thanks to Laura Hirsbrunner for her wonderful work on the 5e Templates and Guides. I wouldn't have known to start without her. Please support her and her projects at [Dungeon Masters Guild - Laura Hirsbrunner](#).

To all of you, I wish you luck, strength, and the wind at your back.

