



OATH OF THE HELLSWORN

PALADIN SACRED OATH OPTION

Red steel longsword held in an ebon gauntleted fist, a male human with a strikingly handsome face smiles a friendly, approachable smile as he walks towards a cadre of orcs, looking onward with confusion, attempting to discern the human's motivation. The human knows full well that the orcs, following Gruumsh, cannot be swayed from their faith - but the nearby villagers the orcs have been raiding most certainly can, with proper action on his part. With a dread word and a sweep of his blade, the human's longsword erupts into hellfire, and a wave of hateful flame scythes the nearest orc in two, the human smiling placidly all the while.

Pulling a child safely behind her, a female elf in brass chainmail holds up a shield, protecting them both from the scorching flames of a red dragon. Though her shield has spared both the child and herself from the fire, the elf feels a strong sense of foreboding as the brand on her left hand begins to burn and itch. The holder of her contract is unsatisfied, she knows, and further selfless infractions may cause them to have some very undesirable words.

Dragging the pommel of her mighty, two-handed greataxe through the dirt, a female half-orc in charred full plate grunts with modest effort as she completes her etching of a large-sized pentagram inscribed within a circle. Anointing the circle with fresh blood from a non-descript earthenware jar, she lays down her enormous axe and kneels alongside it. In an instant, darkness and dread sweep through the surrounding area, nearby trees wilting and dying. Raising herself and her axe from the ground, the half-orc knows she can now sleep easily, warded against lesser creatures while on this recently unhallowed ground.

Often known as hellknights, paladins who undertake

the Oath of the Hellsworn sign a contract with a greater being of Hell, offering service in exchange for power. Hellknights find many reasons to do this, but often either desire power for its own sake, or are willing to make an incredibly dark self-sacrifice in service of someone or something that they love. The exact nature of the service demanded by this contract varies, but it always suits the agendas of Hell and the fiend holding the contract, and is often cleverly disguised to appear aligned with the paladin's own personal interests, as well.

Hellknights are most frequently evil and lawful, though tempting a good or chaotic individual to undertake this Oath is a driving goal for many of the fiends of Hell. The Oath by its very nature corrupts, and the demands of their contract and the powers at their disposal often drive many individuals in its sway down darker and darker paths. Indeed, many fiends allow those under contract a degree of free reign, knowing that the hellknight's deeds and actions cannot help but further Hell's purpose.

Hellknights ubiquitously gravitate towards wearing armor with red, blackened, or brass elements, and each hellknight also carries with them a distinct sign of their

contract. This sign may be physical or supernatural, and you may either choose a sign with your DM or roll for one on the Sign of the Beast table, below.

d10 Sign of the Beast

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| 1 | You have a symbol of your contract on your left hand, either a tattoo or a brand. |
| 2 | Your tongue is forked, similar to a snake's. |
| 3 | When casting your spells or channelling your power, your eyes become entirely black. |
| 4 | Your teeth are sharper than would be natural, most of them being finely pointed. |
| 5 | Small, thorny spike-like protrusions bristle from your forearms. |
| 6 | Plants wilt subtly and milk curdles in your presence. |
| 7 | Beasts with a Challenge Rating of 0 are instinctively frightened of you. |
| 8 | Other humanoids feel more prone to exhibiting moral flaws in your presence. |
| 9 | Deaths (other than those you cause) occur with uncommon frequency around you. |
| 10 | At inconvenient moments, lesser fiends sometimes track you down to plead with you for favors. |

TENETS OF THE HELLSWORN

Contracts forged between a fiend of great power and a future hellknight often contain no end of complicated, legally-binding language and fine print that attempts to confuse and obfuscate its true purpose. It is highly recommended that you work with your DM to draft a personalized contract for your hellknight, using the following tenets as guidelines for what your contract-holder would expect of you.

Contracts are Contracts. The terms of this oath dictate that the under-sworn hellknight complete or endeavor to fulfill all contracts they willingly enter into, to the best of their ability. The hellknight will also respect the contracts of others, and will not attempt to break signatories from their contractual services unless doing so is required by one of the hellknight's contracts.

Tempt. The under-sworn must seek affiliates as necessary, and tempt them into closer alliance through word and deed. Appealing to the baser desires of these affiliates is not mandated, but is nevertheless looked upon favorably. Any alliance rendered to the hellknight will further the might of Hell by proxy.

Serve. Each year and a day, the contract-holder of the under-sworn may make a single request of the hellknight. Unless this request conflicts with a prior contract belonging to the hellknight, the hellknight must complete this task to the best of their ability. Failure to do so places the under-sworn in breach of contract, with all the penalties this implies.

Raise Hell. The under-sworn should not spread general chaos, nor should they act contrary to the interests of Hell. Rather, the under-sworn should seek to (overtly or subtly) aid the fiends of Hell when encountered, as long as such aid does not conflict with prior contractual arrangements.

OATH SPELLS

You gain oath spells at the paladin levels listed.

OATH OF THE HELLSWORN SPELLS

Paladin Level	Spells
3rd	<i>charm person, hellish rebuke</i>
5th	<i>calm emotions, darkvision</i>
9th	<i>fear, fireball</i>
13th	<i>blight, dimension door</i>
17th	<i>dominate person, hallow</i>

CHANNEL DIVINITY

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

Hellfire Weapon. As an action, you can wreath a weapon that you are holding with the fires of hell, using your Channel Divinity. For 1 minute, you add your Charisma modifier in fire damage to the damage dealt by an attack from that weapon (with a minimum bonus of +1). The weapon also emits bright light in a 10-foot radius and dim light 10 feet beyond that. If the weapon is not





already magical, it becomes magical for the duration.

When you first use this Channel Divinity or as an action on a later turn, you may immediately end this effect by slamming your weapon into the ground, unleashing a line of hellfire 30 feet long and 5 feet wide in the direction you are facing. Each creature in the line must make a Dexterity saving throw against your spell save DC. A creature takes 4d6 fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. At 9th level this damage increases to 6d6, and at 17th level the damage increases to 8d6.

You may otherwise end this effect with no action on your turn. If you are no longer holding or carrying this weapon, or if you fall unconscious, this effect ends.

Turn Adversary. As an action, you present a holy symbol of your contract-holder and speak an indictment of the enemies of Hell, using your Channel Divinity. Each aberration, celestial, elemental, or chaotic fiend that can see or hear you within 30 feet of you must make a Wisdom saving throw. If the creature fails its saving throw, it is turned for 1 minute or until it takes damage.

A turned creature must spend its turns trying to move as far away from you as it can, and it can't willingly move to a space within 30 feet of you. It also can't take reactions. For its action, it can use only the Dash action or try to escape from an effect that prevents it from moving. If there's nowhere to move, the creature can use the Dodge action.

BEGUILING AURA

Beginning at 7th level, the hellish influence that flows through you is instinctively both enticing and terrifying to those nearby, making their emotions easier to sway. Enemies within 10 feet of you have disadvantage on saving throws against effects that would charm or frighten them, including class features that Turn foes. You also have advantage on Charisma (Deception) checks made against creatures within this radius.

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

BRIMSTONE BLESSING

Starting at 15th level, you can channel the power of your contract to imbue you with an unnatural vitality. As a bonus action on your turn, you can gain an amount of temporary hit points equal to your Charisma modifier (minimum 1).

Additionally, no matter what you say, magic that would determine if you are telling the truth indicates you are being truthful, if you so choose, and you can't be compelled to tell the truth by magic.

HELLISH CANDESCENCE

While the Divine Smite all paladins receive at 2nd level still deals radiant damage for those that undergo the Oath of the Hellsworn, the infernal power these paladins possess taints and alters their smite somewhat.

Where other paladins release a blinding display of brilliant, pure light, a hellknight's smite produces a shrieking wave of sulphurous hellfire, burning white-hot against the metal of the paladin's weapon. The torrent of power a hellknight's smite creates is almost a living thing, itself seeking painful judgment for those who would defy the absolute law of Hell's will.

INFERNAL INHERITOR

At 20th level, your contract nears completion, and you can assume the mantle of your contract-holder, fully commanding an aspect of their power. This immense power partially transforms you, toughens your skin, and causes you to grow a foot or two taller and sprout horns and claws, making you perceptibly reminiscent of your contract-holder.

You may transform using an action on your turn. If you do, you gain the following benefits for 1 minute:

- Darkvision out to 120 feet, or increase any existing Darkvision you have by 120 feet. You are also able to use this vision to see through magical darkness.
- Large, bony, bat-like wings sprout from your back, if your armor is made to accommodate them. You gain a flying speed of 60 feet.
- Whenever you deal damage from an attack, you deal an additional 2d6 fire damage.
- You have resistance to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical weapons that are not silver.

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

CREDITS:

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