

GLD27 Conquest Paladin CR0-20

By Dan Hass



Sometimes a DM wants to present an opponent that is built in the same way as a PC or the DM wants to add an NPC to the party – to strengthen a weaker party or to provide a voice for the DM within the party. Here is a paladin with the Conquest oath presented from CR0 through CR20.

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About the Author

For more than thirty years Dan Hass has been writing adventures and supplements for D&D. You can access the full set of Dimgaard adventures and supplements at www.dimgaard.com.

Supplement Summary

GLD27 Conquest Paladin CR0-20 is a 5th Edition supplement designed to help DMs broaden their campaign. It references the *Player's Handbook*® (PHB), *Xanathar's Guide to Everything*® (XGE), and *Dungeon Master's Guide*® (DMG)

As the title suggests, this supplement presents a paladin (conquest) scaled from a CR0 creature to CR20. It follows the guidelines for modifying a monster as described in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*® (DMG) beginning on p.273. It uses the option on p.282 for building an NPC like a player character.

Using this Supplement

There are 24 stat blocks for the **Conquest Paladin** with a descriptive moniker added. There are several reasons a DM may want to use one of the listed paladin.

Paladins have always been interesting in their special role as enforcer of the faith. The alignment restriction limited the usage in previous editions, but 5th edition has lifted the alignment restriction and greatly increased the utility of the class.

Now the paladin can be a herald or crusader for any powerful cause – good or evil. Their relationship to their patrons and oaths yield a deep roleplaying angle. Even powers of pure chaos such as Yeenoghu can have paladins who have sworn oaths to a corrupt cause. (In the case of Yeenoghu, a gnoll paladin – wow.)

Paladins serve as special emissaries (trusted because of their oath), heralds (because of their embodiment of ideals), generals, and special forces. Paladins can also rise to be nobles commanding forces of their own in the service of their ideals.

As detailed in the *DMG* 92–93 there are several uses for NPCs (followers, fellow adventurers, contacts, or patrons) in addition to being villains, and a conquest paladin can fill any of those roles.

Dealing with Smite

The paladin's smite results in an extreme damage nova. This is a problem when trying to construct a smooth and balanced CR progression. For this reason, while the paladin progresses with spell effects in place to reflect the paladin's spellcasting ability, he is deprived of actual spell slots until late in the progression to accommodate the desired CR progression.

Quarterstaff

The paladin presented uses a quarterstaff as his polearm/heavy weapon. This may seem a suboptimal choice since it does 1 less average damage than a glaive/halberd/pike and has a shorter reach. The quarterstaff's 5 ft. reach, though, does offer an advantage. With a high AC, the paladin can back away easier, and when the opponent approaches, it can provoke the opportunity attack of the polearm master. When added to the roleplaying flair of a quarterstaff, the quarterstaff becomes a better choice for the paladin presented.

Legendary Actions

When a single creature faces a party of PCs, legendary actions are critical to evening out the action economy. However, legendary actions must be chosen carefully so that the effect on CR is predictable. The following can be added as legendary actions with no effect on CR:

Adjust. The paladin moves up to half the paladin's speed without provoking opportunity attacks.

Retribution. A creature the paladin can see within 30 ft. becomes vulnerable to one damage type of the paladin's choice until the end of the paladin's next turn.

Shove. The paladin takes the Shove action.

If added as a legendary action the following will increase the paladin's CR by one step (by increasing defensive CR by two steps):

Divine Shield. Until the beginning of the paladin's turn, his armor class is increased by 5.

If added as a legendary action the following will increase the paladin's CR by one step for each opportunity the paladin can use the legendary action (because each time it is used, it increases the offensive CR by two steps):

Radiance. A creature the paladin can see within 60 ft. takes radiant damage equal to 2d10 + the paladin's Charisma modifier. The damage is halved if the target succeeds on a Dexterity saving throw equal to 8 + the paladin's proficiency bonus + the paladin's Charisma modifier.

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CR0: Aged

CR calculations (Defensive; Offensive)

| AC | HP | Note |
|----|----|-------|
| 14 | 28 | |
| -4 | | Blind |
| 10 | 28 | CR 0 |

| To Hit | Dmg | Note |
|--------|-----|-------|
| +3 | 5 | |
| -4 | | Blind |
| -1 | 5 | CR0 |

Aged Conqueror*Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment***Armor Class** 14 (scale mail)**Hit Points** 28 (3d10+6)**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| 13(+1) | 10(+0) | 14(+2) | 10(+0) | 12(+1) | 14(+2) |

Saving Throws Wis +3, Cha +4**Skills** Animal Handling +3, Athletics +3, Perception +3, Religion +2**Tool Proficiencies** Disguise Kit**Senses** passive Perception 13**Languages** Racial, one additional language**Challenge** 0 (10 XP)**Blind.** The paladin is blind.**Channel Divinity (XGE 38):** Conquering Presence, Guided Strike.**Out of Resources.** The paladin has used all his spell slots, Lay on Hands, and Channel Divinity.**Paladin Abilities (PHB 84-85).** Divine Sense, Divine Health, Divine Smite, Fighting Style: Great Weapon Fighting, Lay on Hands (15 pts).**Actions****Quarterstaff.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6+1) bludgeoning damage or 5 (1d8+1) bludgeoning damage when used two-handed.**Javelin.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6+1) piercing damage.

CR1/8: Blind

CR calculations (Defensive; Offensive)

| AC | HP | Note |
|----|----|--------|
| 16 | 28 | |
| -4 | | Blind |
| 12 | 28 | CR 1/8 |

| To Hit | Dmg | Note |
|--------|-----|--------|
| +4 | 6 | |
| -4 | | Blind |
| +0 | 6 | CR 1/4 |

Blind Conqueror*Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment***Armor Class** 16 (chain mail)**Hit Points** 28 (3d10+6)**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| 15(+2) | 10(+0) | 14(+2) | 10(+0) | 12(+1) | 14(+2) |

Saving Throws Wis +3, Cha +4**Skills** Animal Handling +3, Athletics +4, Perception +3, Religion +2**Tool Proficiencies** Disguise Kit**Senses** passive Perception 13**Languages** Racial, one additional language**Challenge** 1/8 (25 XP)**Blind.** The paladin is blind.**Channel Divinity (XGE 38):** Conquering Presence, Guided Strike.**Out of Resources.** The paladin has used all his spell slots, Lay on Hands, and Channel Divinity.**Paladin Abilities (PHB 84-85).** Divine Sense, Divine Health, Divine Smite, Fighting Style: Great Weapon Fighting, Lay on Hands (15 pts).**Actions****Quarterstaff.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6+2) bludgeoning damage or 6 (1d8+2) bludgeoning damage when used two-handed.**Javelin.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6+2) piercing damage.**Comments**

Some necessary choices that vary from the expected paladin resources have been made.

Scale mail is suboptimal to the paladin's starting armor (chain mail). However, as medium armor it reflects the resources of a paladin past his prime.

Blind reduces the CR. The advantage it gives attackers reduces AC to the desired range, and the disadvantage from attacks reduces offensive CR.

Out of Resources eliminates options that would raise the CR too high.

Comments

We bring Strength and armor in line with the expectation for a 3rd level paladin, but still must implement **Blind** and **Out of Resources**.

GLD27 Conquest Paladin CR0-20

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PREVIEW

CR1/4: Depleted

CR calculations (Defensive; Offensive)

| AC | HP | Note |
|--------|-----|--------|
| 16 | 28 | CR 1/4 |
| To Hit | Dmg | Note |
| +4 | 6 | CR 1/2 |

Depleted Conqueror*Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment***Armor Class** 16 (chain mail)**Hit Points** 28 (3d10+6)**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| 15(+2) | 10(+0) | 14(+2) | 10(+0) | 12(+1) | 14(+2) |

Saving Throws Wis +3, Cha +4**Skills** Animal Handling +3, Athletics +4, Perception +3, Religion +2**Tool Proficiencies** Disguise Kit**Senses** passive Perception 13**Languages** Racial, one additional language**Challenge** 1/4 (50 XP)**Channel Divinity (XGE 38):** Conquering Presence, Guided Strike.**Out of Resources.** The paladin has used all his spell slots, Lay on Hands, and Channel Divinity.**Paladin Abilities (PHB 84-85).** Divine Sense, Divine Health, Divine Smite, Fighting Style: Great Weapon Fighting, Lay on Hands (15 pts).**Actions****Quarterstaff.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6+2) bludgeoning damage or 6 (1d8+2) bludgeoning damage when used two-handed.**Javelin.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6+2) piercing damage.**Comments**

In every way except for **Out of Resources**, this is a standard 3rd level conquest paladin. This is likely a paladin that has been through a battle already and hasn't been able to rest yet.

CR1/2: Guided

CR calculations (Defensive; Offensive)

| AC | HP | Note |
|--------|-----|------------------|
| 16 | 28 | |
| | +5 | armor of Agathys |
| 16 | 33 | CR ½ |
| To Hit | Dmg | Note |
| +4 | 6 | |
| +3 | | Guided Strike |
| +7 | 6 | 2 |

Guided Conqueror*Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment***Armor Class** 16 (chain mail)**Hit Points** 28 (3d10+6) + 5 temp from *armor of Agathys***Speed** 30 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| 15(+2) | 10(+0) | 14(+2) | 10(+0) | 12(+1) | 14(+2) |

Saving Throws Wis +3, Cha +4**Skills** Animal Handling +3, Athletics +4, Perception +3, Religion +2**Tool Proficiencies** Disguise Kit**Senses** passive Perception 13**Languages** Racial, one additional language**Challenge** 1/2 (100 XP)**Channel Divinity (XGE 38):** Conquering Presence, Guided Strike.**Out of Spell Slots.** The paladin has used all his spell slots.**Paladin Abilities (PHB 84-85).** Divine Sense, Divine Health, Divine Smite, Fighting Style: Great Weapon Fighting, Lay on Hands (15 pts).**Actions****Quarterstaff.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6+2) bludgeoning damage or 6 (1d8+2) bludgeoning damage when used two-handed.**Javelin.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6+2) piercing damage.**Comments**

The Guided Strike's +10 to hit is amortized across the three attacks over the first 3 rounds to give a net +3 to hit.