

Oath

The oath was an institution of fundamental importance across an enormously wide range of social interactions throughout the ancient world. Oaths were uttered, prescribed, or referred to in almost every kind of literary or inscriptional text we have from the archaic world. This fundamental importance shows why the word was remembered with such accuracy and carried over into descendent cultures.

English - Oath

= a solemn pronouncement to affirm the truth of a statement.

Hebrew - אִוֶּת - awth

= sign, mark, token, ensign, standard, miraculous sign, proof, warning, consent and agreement.

Family/Language	I-E Reflex(es)	Gloss
Celtic		
Middle Irish:	oeth	oath
Welsh:	arfall	oath
English		
Old English:	awth	oath
	awth-brice	perjury, lit. oath-breaking
	awth-gehawt	sacred pledge, lit. oath-vow
Middle English:	ooth	oath
English:	oath	calling upon God to witness to truth
W-Germanic		
Old Frisian:	eth/ed	oath
Dutch:	eed	oath
Old Saxon:	aith	oath
Old High German:	eid	oath
Middle High German:	eit	oath
German:	eid	oath
N-Germanic		
Old Norse:	eithr	oath
Danish:	eed	oath
Swedish:	ed	oath
E-Germanic		
Gothic:	aiths	oath
Italic		
Latin:	iuro	oath
Portuguese:	juramento	oath
Spanish:	juramento	oath
French:	serment	oath
Italian:	giuramento	oath

From TWOT:

Owth is the general word for "sign," and it covers the entire range of the English term and the Greek word semeion. On the pedestrian end of the scale it includes what amounts to a "signboard" or "standard" (Num 2:2). It also includes such important concepts as the rainbow "sign" to Noah (Gen 9:12-13,17).

1. Owth first occurs in Gen 1:14, where it refers to the luminaries serving as "signs" to distinguish the seasons. In Jer 10:2 it has a similar meaning.

2. According to Gen 4:15, the Lord set a "mark" on Cain. The meaning of this word is uncertain.

3. A third use of the word is illustrated by Gen 9:12-13,17; according to which the rainbow is a "sign" of the covenant. Circumcision is the "sign" in Gen 17:11. Also, the Sabbath is to be a "sign," according to Ex 31:13,17 and Ezek 20:12. It is this use of "sign" that is meant when Christians refer to the ordinances as outward "signs" of inward grace.

4. Most of the eighty occurrences of owth refer to "miraculous signs." All the plagues on the Egyptians are called "signs." In these contexts the complementary word mōpet (q.v.) meaning "wonders" often occurs (Ex 7:3; Deut 4:34; 6:22; 7:19; 26:8; Neh 9:10; Isa 20:3; et al.). This word owth is used in Isaiah's famous prophecy to Ahaz (Isa 7:11,14). The shadow's advance on the palace steps was a "sign" for the ailing king Hezekiah (2 Kings 20:9; Isa 38:7). Likewise God showed Gideon a "sign" by igniting the offered food (Judg 6:17).

5. The word owth sometimes means "token." For example, Aaron's rod was to be a "warning to the rebellious" (17:25 in the book of Numbers NAB and Heb, v. 10 in other English versions). In the same category are the stones in the Jordan (Josh 4:6), the hammered plates on the altar (Num 16:38), and the witness pillar in Egypt (Isa 19:20).

6. A dreamer or a prophet, true or false, could produce "signs" according to Deut 13:1ff The fulfillment of Jeremiah's threat of punishment was a true "sign" (Jer 44:29), while Isaiah speaks of "signs" of liars (Isa 44:25).

Naturally, these categories are artificial and overlap, The simple fact that one Hebrew word covers them all is proof of that. The word "sign" either signifies the unusual event itself or in some way points to that unusual event. Or it may point backward to a historical event such as the stones in the Jordan (Josh 4:6), or even forward to such a promise as a thornless future world (Isa 55:13).

Hellenic	
Greek:	orcos oath

