

# A GUIDE TO PRINCES OF THE APOCALYPSE

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POWER SCORE RPG



# Introduction and Overview

This document is a guide for Dungeon Masters running the Dungeons & Dragons 5th Edition adventure Princes of the Apocalypse. We're going to go through the book and sort it out. The goal here is to save you time when preparing this adventure and maybe even help you get a better handle on it without having to wade through a million pages, flipping back and forth.

This .pdf is an extension of my blog, Power Score RPG. I write guides to adventures and monsters. I also recap various D&D streams and wax poetic on a variety of D&D topics.

## Power Score RPG

<http://powerscorerpg.blogspot.com/>

<http://thecampaign20xx.blogspot.com/>

When you're getting ready to run Princes of the Apocalypse, I think there are a few things to keep in mind.

The Delegates are Non-Essential: This is the hook for the adventure, but if you decide you don't want to use them, writing them out takes almost no effort. You'll just need to make up your own hook. There really isn't a lot of interaction with the delegates and the heroes don't rescue them for a very long time.

The Factions Aren't Important: There are quite a few faction NPCs in this book, but they're of little consequence. This is another thing you can scrap if it doesn't suit you. The factions are mostly used for Adventurer's League play.

Information is Spread Throughout the Book: The hardest thing about running this adventure is that there are all of these cool little things that are hard to remember and find when the time comes to use them. In my opinion, the coolest stuff is all of the little cult retaliations and side schemes that litter a number of sections.

I highly recommend that you read them, write down the ones you like, and then plan out when you want to use them. There's a lot of great material and it would be a shame to miss out on running it.

Chapter 6: This chapter is full of side adventures. Some of them are pretty cool. The problem is that this book has too many scenarios! Some of these side adventures have absolutely nothing to do with the plot. In my experience, when you deviate from the main story and go off on a tangent, it can really hurt your campaign. Players feel like they're playing through "filler" and enthusiasm for the whole endeavor begins to drain away.

That said, if you don't use them, you should pull out the magic items like Orcsplitter and place them in something you are running. To me, this adventure feels stingy on treasure. Especially that dragon turtle hoard in the Temple of the Crushing Wave.

Killing the Prophets: This has confused a lot of people, so I want to lay this out right at the start. Once the group gets into the elemental temples, things go like this:

1. The heroes kill one prophet – their choice. It will probably be Aerisi if the group goes to the Temple of Howling Hatred first.
2. Once that happens, the other leaders hear about it and flee below. One goes to the Fane of the Eye, the others go to nodes. You pick which prophet goes where!
3. The heroes go to the Fane and kill another prophet.
4. The heroes kill one prophet in a node.
5. The last surviving prophet starts a ritual in their node to summon their master. The group shows up and we have a big, epic final battle.

I would guess that for most groups, the Fire Node is the scene of the final battle.

Errors: This adventure has a number of errors in it. Here's a few that affected me:

- The Map Scale is Off: It doesn't match previous maps of the region
- One of the delegates (Teresiel) was supposed to be put in the fire node but she was omitted. It says she's in area W17, but there is no W17.
- There are a lot of situations where, if you look at the map, it doesn't really make sense why the bad guys went all the way to X for Y. It also doesn't seem to make much sense for the heroes to search for the delegates in Red Larch considering where the ambush took place.

Wide Open: In this adventure, the group is free to approach each location how they like. The four elemental temples do not get along and frequently clash. There are a number of options:

1. Murder: Kill everything.
2. Faction Play: Team up with one temple to sabotage or destroy another temple.
3. Stealth Phoenix: Sneak around/infiltrate. This works especially well with the "haunted keeps," especially Scarlet Moon Hall.

New DMs: If you are a new DM, keep in mind that you are free to change anything you want in this adventure. This can be a very bewildering adventure, as it is so wide open. Feel free to streamline it so the group doesn't go to an area you haven't read/prepared yet. If you do go the "sandbox" route, I recommend that at the end of each session you ask the group where they plan to go next session so you can prepare it and have it ready for them.

# Chapter 1: Rise of Elemental Evil

## Listing of Scenarios by Level

I have gone through the book and found the assorted dungeons, adventures and encounters and have tried to sort them in order of when they should be used (if you want to use everything - many of the chapter 6 mini-adventures are very optional):

### Level 1:

- **Red Larch Flavor** (page 41): This kicks off the adventure.
- **Bears and Bows** (page 149): Bandits and a caged bear.
- **Haunted Tomb** (page 149) Small dungeon with undead.
- **Necromancer's Cave** (page 151) Dungeon with undead and a necromancer.

### Level 2:

- **Tomb of Moving Stones** (page 153): Dungeon underneath Red Larch with links to the Earth Cult.

### Level 3:

- **Skyriders** (page 45): Air cult skyriders attack the PCs.
- **The Sighing Valley** (page 50): The PCs might go through the valley to get to Feathergale Spire.
- **Feathergale Spire** (page 46): Air cult outpost.
- **New Management** (page 160): The PCs get involved with an inn and the Zhentarim.
- **Reaver Ambush** (page 45): Water cult bandits on the trail between Red Larch and the Ironford Bridge.

### Level 4:

- **Rivergard Keep** (page 52): Water cult outpost.
- **The Spy's Letter** (page 75): A letter the PCs can find in Rivergard Keep may expose a spy in Red Larch.
- **Iceshield Orcs** (page 163): Orc invaders.
- **Tremors** (page 44): Two ankhegs jump the party on the barren countryside.

### Level 5:

- **Sacred Stone Monastery** (page 59): Earth cult outpost.
- **The Long Road** (page 166): Escort a caravan to Triboar.
- **Fiery Fangs** (page 45): Hell hounds with iron collars hunt the heroes.

Level 6:

- **Curse of the Fire Witch** (page 167): A trap set by earth cultists.
- **Scarlet Moon Hall** (page 69): Fire cult outpost.
- **Temple of Howling Hatred** (page 78): Air temple.

Level 7:

- **Temple of the Crushing Wave** (page 84): Water temple.
- **Dire Tidings** (page 76): The cult uses an orb on a town.

Level 8:

- **Vale of Dancing Waters:** (page 172)A dwarven shrine has been overtaken.
- **Temple of Black Earth** (page 95): Earth temple.
- **Reckless Hate** (page 76): Cultists attack the party's home.

Level 9:

- **Dark Dealings in Yartar** (page 175): A devastation orb is being sold in Yartar.
- **Temple of Eternal Flame** (page 103): Fire temple.
- **Race to Destruction** (page 77): The party is lured into a trap.

Level 10:

- **Rundreth Manor** (page 179): A haunted house.
- **Fane of the Eye** (page 115): A common area/dungeon for members of all of the cults.

Level 11:

- **Halls of the Hunting Axe** (page 180): Quest to find a tomb.
- **The Howling Caves** (page 123): Air node.
- **Downpour** (page 113): The water cult creates a torrential downpour.

Level 12:

- **The Plunging Torrents** (page 128): Water Cult.
- **Tortured Earth** (page 113): Earthquake/purple worm.
- **Counsel of Despair** (page 113): The Cult has infiltrated Westbridge.
- **The Black Geode** (page 135): Earth node.
- **Haayon the Punisher** (page 114): A cloud giant tries to take over a faction of scattered cultists.

### Level 13:

- **Burning Hills** (page 113): The fire cult traps the PCs in a raging forest fire.
- **The Weeping Colossus** (page 141): Fire node.

### The Factions

The five factions are a part of this adventure. That's the Harpers, the Lords' Alliance, the Emerald Enclave, the Order of the Gauntlet and the Zhentarim. There's one representative of each faction in Red Larch, and more spread throughout the region. I went through the book and dug up every faction member I could find I wrote the location they can be found in parenthesis:

#### Harpers:

- (Triboar) **Darathra Shendrel**, Lord Protector of Triboar
- (Red Larch) **Endrith Vallivoe** (page 29, area 22): Merchant. A shy, scuttling man, not cut out for "derring-do."

#### Emerald Enclave:

- (Red Larch) **Haeleeya Hanadroum** (page 27, area 15): Owner of the bath house/dress shop. Caters to local women seeking dresses for special occasions. She hears a lot of gossip.
- (Goldenfields) **Abbot Ellardin Darovik** in Goldenfields.
- (Dellmon Ranch) **Dreena Dellmon** (page 165): A young druid.
- (Dellmon Ranch) **Flamerin Verminbane** (page 165): A lightfoot halfling scout, delegate.

#### Lords' Alliance:

- (Red Larch) **Helvur and Maegla Tarnlar** (page 25, area 7): Clothiers. Helvur acts snobby to everyone but fellow members of the Lords' Alliance. Maegla is a sharp businesswoman.
- (Yartar) **Nestra Ruthiol**, Waterbaron of Yartar

#### Order of the Gauntlet:

- (Red Larch) **Imdarr Ralvauder** (page 22, area 1): Priest of Tempus. A stern man keenly interested in news.
- (Dellmon Ranch) **Erned Stoutblade** (page 165): A Tethyrian human knight, really hates orcs.

#### Zhentarim:

- (Red Larch) **Magobarl Lorren** (page 25, area 8): Town Baker. Thin, energetic, loves gossip.
- (Bargewright Inn) **Nalaskur Thaelond** (page 160, "New Management"): Innkeeper, doesn't trust his employees.
- (Bargewright Inn) **Inglor Brathren** (page 161): Dwarf handyman.

## Chapter 2: The Dessarin Valley

Where is the Dessarin Valley?

This adventure takes place in the Dessarin Valley area. The heroes start off in the town of Red Larch. Red Larch is about 100 miles northeast of Waterdeep (which was featured heavily in the Tyranny of Dragons storyline). Here's a map:

To Sandbox or not to Sandbox?

This adventure is something of a "sandbox" - the heroes are free to wander and stumble on adventure hooks. You as DM will need to decide if you want to let your players roam or if you want to organize it in a more linear fashion. If you are going to go the sandbox route, make sure to familiarize yourself with the NPCs of Red Larch, as they have a ton of hooks which can send your party in many different directions.

If you are going to let your players free roam, the main thing to keep in mind is that it is likely they will head to Beliard once they find out that it is the last place that the delegates were seen. What happens if the players head there is covered on page 42.

Exploration Challenges

Something else you will need to consider is how you want to handle the outposts and the temple. Each of the cult outposts in chapter 3 has an entrance to the temple of elemental evil in it. If your heroes find the entrance, they can go down to the temple. The temple dungeons are generally made for characters 3 levels higher than the respective outpost locations. From what I understand, in theory 5th edition characters can survive such a jaunt.

I decided not to chance it when I ran this and I simply removed those entrances. Likewise, I am removing certain passageways in the temple so that my players can only head to the temple location that most closely corresponds to their level. I am doing this to avoid the possibility that my players will end up in a place that is simply too difficult for them to handle. Also, I don't want them to miss out on the cool core material.

Consider how you want to handle this. If you want to let them wander freely, be sure to read up on places they may stumble on in a session. If you run Rivergard Keep, your heroes may end up delving into the Temple of the Crushing Wave, so read up on that temple area prior to the session just in case. The nice thing about the temple locations is that they each only take up a few pages, so it's not too time-consuming to read and prepare.

## Map Issues

Keep in mind that the map scaling is weird. It does not match up with the maps in other 5e products. Each hex should be 3.75 miles, not 10 miles.

D&D story guru Chris Perkins was asked about this, and he said: "In studying older maps, we've become aware of "scale drift" that has occurred over the years. We're still refining."

## Navigating Red Larch

Red Larch (page 19) has a lot going on. Here is my attempt to give you the essential stuff you need to know to run the town well.

### Fun Facts:

- Named after red larch trees that were cut down when the town was founded.
- Known for crumblecake (page 28) - "This much-maligned but hearty food is useful on the trail."
- A center for stonecutters quarrying slate and marble. Also home to farmers and shepherds.
- Places to Stay: The Swinging Sword (page 22) and Mother Yalantha's (page 24).
- Cult Spies can be found working at The Swinging Sword (page 22) and working at The Helm at Highsun (page 23). Six bandits with ties to the cult are lurking at Mother Yalantha's (page 24).
- The Water Cult Spy: Justran Daehl (page 24) is writing letters to a water cultist named Morbeoth (page 91). The heroes might be able to learn from Justran that Morbeoth makes magic water tanks with "water snakes" in them.

## Leadership and the Law

The town is run by a constable and a group of town elders. The town elders are wealthy business owners who belong to a secret group known as The Believers, with ties to the cult.

- **Harburk Tuthmarillar:** The constable who runs the town. He is a judge and the commander of the town guard.
- **Town Guard:** Four people who are based out of the butchery (page 26) where Harburk lives.
- **Town Elders:** A group of wealthy people who advise Harburk. They are secretly "The Believers," a group who is being warped by the cult.

## The Believers

- **Elak Dornen** (page 26): The de facto leader. He is stern and inflexible.
- **Ilmeth Waelvur** (page 27): Hard-drinking and sullen.



- **Albaeri Mellikho** (page 28): She is jovial and a "whirlwind."
- **Ulhro Luruth** (page 28): Runs a storage place, has no sense of smell.
- **Grund** (page 29): This goofy half-orc is a sort of hired goon for The Believers.

#### Adventure Hooks

Here is a listing of where adventure hooks are found in Red Larch, by scenario.

Bears and Bows: **Harburk** (page 26) will want the PCs to check out some bandits.

The Haunted Tomb: **Minny Mhandyver** (page 27) has a granddaughter who ran into a "ghost" near a tomb. **Mangobarl Lorren** (page 25/26) checked out the granddaughter's claims and spotted a goblin.

Lance Rock: The owner of The Swinging Sword, **Kaylessa** (page 22), thinks something is up in the region. She will pay the heroes to check out Lance Rock. **Helvur Tarnlar**, clothier (page 25): He's a snob, his wife is nice. Their kids met a grizzled dwarf who warned them about a plague at Lance Rock.

Tomb of Moving Stones: **Stannor Thistlehair** (page 25 & 27) A carpenter who knows stuff that could lead the heroes into the dungeon under Red Larch.

#### Mirabar Delegation Hooks

- **Brother Eardon** (page 23): A customer at the Helm of Highsun, says he saw the Mirabar delegation at Beliard (leads to "Beliard," page 42).
- **Zomith** (page 24): A drunk customer at The Helm at Highsun who spotted the Mirabar delegation 15 days ago (leads to "The Dessarin Road," page 42).
- **Larmon Greenboot** (page 28): Hangs out at Gaelkur's, has a hook that can lead the heroes to freshly-dug graves (leads to "Shallow Graves," page 43)
- **Endrith Vallivoe** (page 29): Has a book that links to "Womford Rats" (page 43).

#### Weird Side-Encounters

- **Albaeri Mellikho** (page 28) and Elak Dornan (area 12) both have hooks that send the PCs to "Bloody Treasure." It is a cave with stirges in it.
- **Endrith Vallivoe** (page 29) can send the PCs to "The Last Laugh" (page 150). It leads to a skull that does stuff I won't spoil here.

## Chapter 3: Secret of the Sumber Hills

### The Mirabar Delegation

This is the thing that confused me the most about this adventure, so I am going to try and put all the information right here for you to use as a resource. The delegation is the main hook that leads the heroes into the whole elemental evil plot.

What the Heroes Know: A delegation was traveling from Mirabar to Waterdeep. It stopped in a tiny village called Beliard (see page 33 for a description of Beliard, and page 42 for what happens when the PCs go there). The delegation was last seen at the west end of the stone bridge, turning south to proceed overland through the heart of the Sumber Hills. It has been a month, and the delegation has not turned up.

What Happened to the Delegation: According to "The Missing Delegation" (on page 40) and Bruldenthar's tale (on page 67), the earth cultists ambushed the Mirabar delegation and killed most of the guards. Air cultists attacked and stole Deseyna from the earth cultists. The earth cult brought the rest of the delegates to the Sacred Stone Monastery and the earth temple below. From there, the poor delegates were further snatched by various cults to be imprisoned, put to work, or sacrificed.

The location of the delegates is revealed on page 115, "Saving the Delegates." It says Teresiel is in The Weeping Colossus room W17, but there is no W17 on the map!

Where the Heroes Can Find the Delegates: The factions are interested in different delegates, which is covered on page 41. This is the delegation:

**Bruldenthar:** A shield dwarf historian who was transporting his collection of manuscripts to Waterdeep. Five of his books about Delzoun are now in the possession of water cultist Shoalar Quanderil, who can be encountered in "Womford Rats" (page 43) or in Rivergard Keep (page 56, K12). Two more of the books are in Gar Shatterkeel's vault (page 94). Bruldenthar is imprisoned in the Sacred Stone Monastery (page 67, M19).

**Teresiel:** A moon elf from Silverymoon. Has a coded Lords' Alliance document. She also has magical seeds that the Emerald Enclave wants to bring to Goldenfields. According to page 115, she is in the Weeping Colossus, room W17. But there is no W17. I don't see her anywhere. It seems like you could just put her in the prison, which is room W6 on page 144.

**Rhundorth:** A shield dwarf from Mirabar. Has a coded Lords' Alliance document. Rhundorth is in the Black Geode page 140, room G15. He is being forced to make weapons

**Deseyna Norvael:** A noble from Waterdeep. Has a coded Lords' Alliance document. She is in the Howling Caves page 126, room N17. She will be tied to a rock column and sacrificed if our heroes aren't quick on their feet.

**The Body of a Knight:** This corpse is of a Knight of Samular killed by orcs at the Spine of the World. The corpse is to be interred with honor at Summit Hall, which is detailed on page 36 and 43. The location of the body was apparently omitted from the adventure, so you'll need to make something up.

There's evidence of who else was on the caravan:

- **Dwarf Assistant:** A male dwarf in artisan robes: A dead body found in "Shallow Graves" on page 43. It seems like this is an assistant of Rhundorth.
- **Warrior:** A female human warrior dressed in a red surcoat with a black axe: A dead body found in "Shallow Graves" on page 43. Probably the captain of the guards.
- **Soldiers:** A dozen more soldiers in black surcoats with red axes: More dead bodies found on the road where the delegation was attacked.

The Haunted Keeps

Feathergale Spire (page 46): I had a hard time understanding how to access the spire. It can only be accessed by a walkway/drawbridge above the sighing valley. In the valley is a whole mess of encounters, as well as an entrance to the temple of elemental evil.

If your heroes go into the spire under false pretenses, they can go on a mantichore hunt with the knights and that can open the door to explore the valley.

Rivergard Keep (page 52): This place is interesting. It's run by a wereboar and you can get to it by water if you like. When I ran this, by far the most fun part was a huge battle on the boats.

**Shoalar Quanderil** is detailed in three different sections of the book. See pages 56, 44 and 208.

I found K22 to be a confusing location. You can get to it by a secret door in K16 or through a grate at K13. This stream eventually leads to the temple of elemental evil.

Sacred Stone Monastery (page 61): Be warned, if your group takes the hack and slash route, you're in for a lot of dull fights. I circumvented this by having the place be under attack by the fire cult. There's a few interesting things about this place:

- This is where one of the delegates is kept. Bruldenthair is in M19 (page 67).

- There's a lich here behind an arcane locked door. You may want to supply your PCs with knock spells in advance. This lich is not necessarily a bad guy at all. You may also want to foreshadow his story - he has deep ties to the knights of Samular at Summit Hall (page 36). Remember, as noted on page 67, the lich's phylactery is actually back beneath Summit Hall.
- The battle in M21 can be pretty epic. Remember about the lever in there. If the bad guys can send some of the PCs down the stairs, they can collapse it and sick an umber hulk on them! Note that the hulk has messed up eyes, so it can't use the confusion power.

Scarlet Moon Hall (page 69): This is, in my opinion, the best of the four outposts. The fire cultists are posing as druids, putting on a phony ritual involving a giant wicker man that is on fire. Camped on the hill all around the wicker man are potential recruits.

- Hazy: The fires cause a haze over the whole area, making it lightly obscured, which means that the heroes have disadvantage on perception checks.
- Scaffolding: The tower is a little odd. Remember that the door at the base is choked with rubble (which is being burned by magmins). The actual entrance is up on the scaffolding.
- Crumbling: Don't forget about the crumbling floors in the tower - that goes a long way in making the place exciting.

**Dangerous Battle:** The main encounter in this area is the battle by the wicker giant, involving a big pile of bad guys (and at your discretion, you could add some more from inside the tower). I was worried it would be too tough. The guardians have a 17 AC that proved to be tricky for my party to hit. They had a ton of healers though, so they won out in the end. You might want to consider having the four druids at HC1 come up to help if things are going badly. I gave them both healing word and cure wounds.

## Chapter 4: Air, Earth, Fire, Water

The first thing you should definitely look at is "counterattack" on page 76. It lists what happens when heroes try to rest in the different temple sections.

**Temple of Howling Hatred** (page 78): This is a cool place full of kenku, air cultists suffering in the name of Yan C Bin, and a gigantic pyramid surrounded by cool encounters.

Aside from the stairs to the sighing valley by A1, There are 4 exits to be aware of:

- There's a tunnel to the **Fire Temple** above A7.
- A20 leads to the **Temple of the Eye**.
- The shaft in A18 leads to the **air node**.
- On the bottom right of the map by many of the A14's is a tunnel that leads to area C20 (page 92) in the **Temple of the Crushing Wave**.

Other things I noticed:

Direct Line to Villainy: There is a good chance your party will end up right at Aerisi's pyramid (A10) very quickly. It's a little weird to fight the 'big boss' of the whole temple before exploring most of the complex, but I guess it doesn't matter.

A11 (page 82): The moat is really cool. Remember that there's treasure in the water. You might want to place the platinum chalice right by the waterfall to create a really scary encounter, especially if you add in the giant dwarf statue. That statue is incredibly tough! It is immune to non-magic weapons and does piles and piles of damage. Use it with caution, 6th level PCs simply may not be able to defeat it.

**Temple of the Crushing Wave** (page 84): The heroes might end up rowing around in here, which could be awesome, with bad guys shooting arrows at them from bridges overhead and a dragon turtle attacking their boat.

There's a few entrances & exits in here:

- C1. The river goes up and connects to **Rivergard Keep**.
- C10. The hallway past this room with a magic fountain leads to B11 in the **Temple of Black Earth**.
- C20. There's a locked gate here, and a connecting tunnel to the **Temple of Howling Hatred**.
- C28. This room has a mezzoloth guarding a stairwell that leads down to F6 in the **Fane of the Eye** (page 116). Remember, this dungeon is for level 10 PCs.

Other Observations:

Captured: If the heroes are defeated/captured, they are put in C5. If Gar is around, they'd probably be brought before him in C25. Their stuff would probably get put in C26. If Gar is gone, maybe the hag Thuluna Maah in C14 would get to question them. A likely fate would be that the bad guys would decide to hand the PCs off one at a time to the ghouls in C4. Remember, the pool in C25 is connected to the culverts in C24, so that could make for a cool escape scene.

Arrow Slits: PCs making noise by C8 will probably attract the attention of the guards in C9, who will open the slits and fire on the poor PC at the front of the group.

Fight on a Bridge: The bridges over the water, like the one at C6, are screaming for an encounter. Maybe have the cultists in C13 just happen to be coming out of their room as the PCs cross the bridge.

Bronzefume the Dragon Turtle: The dragon turtle at C21 is very powerful! Remember that it goes for boats first, taking d4 rounds to destroy it. The heroes have the chance to run. If they stay, they might die. The dragon turtle has a pretty lousy treasure hoard. You might want to put something cool in there.

### **Temple of Black Earth** (page 95):

Entrances and Exits:

- B1 has The Ancient Stair that leads up to M24 in the **Sacred Stone Monastery**.
- B11 has a hallway that leads to C10 of the **Temple of the Crushing Wave**.
- B16 is an ogre-filled room with a tunnel to E30 in the **Temple of Eternal Flame**.
- B17 has a stairway with a magic trap on it, and it leads down to F11 in the **Fane of the Eye**.
- B24 This area is guarded by a stone golem and has a passage that leads to E5 in the **Temple of Eternal Flame**.

Things to Note:

Chasms: Remember that the chasms have sloping walls, which means if your heroes fall in over the side, they won't necessarily plummet to their doom - they'll be tumbling down an angled hill.

Mud Sorcerer: Miraj Vizann in C8 (page 97) is a mud sorcerer! "The Mud Sorcerer's Tomb" (Dungeon magazine #37 & a D&D Next playtest adventure) is considered one of the best adventures of all time. It is a death trap-filled dungeon that has all sorts of fun stuff you can steal, including a boat that can sail through mud.

Prisoners: If the PCs are defeated, they could end up imprisoned in B14, the torture chamber. You could have all sorts of shenanigans involving the NPC prisoners in there. Being hauled before Marlos is grim. The heroes are likely to be turned to stone.

Metal Gear Elemental Evil: The heroes can disguise themselves as cultists and do quite well in these temples. The bad guys all have passwords that the heroes may need to acquire or bluff their way past.

Factions: Most temples have disgruntled NPCs who will team up with the heroes to take out the prophet.

All of the temple have arrow slits, so make sure you know how that works. Cover rules are in the Player's Handbook page 196.

Temple of Eternal Flame (page 103): I found this level to be a little underwhelming. Lots of treasure, though.

Getting In & Out:

- E1 has lava tubes that connect to **Scarlet Moon Hall**.
- E5 has ogres in plate mail (!) and a tunnel that connects to B24 in the **Temple of Black Earth**.
- E14 has a hovering disk that will lower the heroes into F15 in the **Fane of the Eye**, or even further down into W1 in the **fire node**.
- E27 contains 6 hobgoblins protecting a tunnel to A7 in the **Temple of Howling Hatred**.
- E30 is guarded by a chimera, who watches a tunnel to B16 in the **Temple of Black Earth**.

Notes:

NPC Army: E11 has azers and salamanders who might fight alongside the heroes. Think carefully on whether or not you want all those NPCs accompanying the party.

Brown Mold: E18 has brown mold, which is detailed on page 105 in the Dungeon Master's Guide. Once someone gets within 5 feet of the mold, they make a DC 12 Constitution save or take 22 damage (half damage on a successful save!). Brown mold is immune to fire and actually expands when exposed to it, which could lead to some awesome hijinks here in the fire temple.

## Chapter 5: Temple of the Elemental Eye

**Fane of the Eye** (page 115): Remember, there's supposed to be one prophet down on this level. The prophet is lurking in F21 (page 122).

Exits and Entrances:

- F1 has a skeleton-stairwell that leads to A20 in the **Temple of Howling Hatred**.
- F2 contains a shaft in the floor that, if climbed, leads to N1 of the **Howling Caves**.
- F6 has stairs that lead to C28 in the **Temple of the Crushing Wave**.
- F8 has a waterfall that plunges into P1 of the **Plunging Torrents**. There's also stairs that head down there.

Notes:

**Violet Fungus**: F9 has three violet fungi, which are on page 138 of the monster manual. They look like normal fungus, but spring to life and make d4 rotting touch attacks per round.

**The Howling Caves** (page 123): Now we're in the nodes! This is where it gets really fun. This dungeon is overloaded with awesome ideas.

Exits and Entrances:

- N1 is a climbable shaft/tunnel that connects to F2 in the **Fane of the Eye**.
- N3 has a shaft that leads to A19 in the **Air Temple**. There's a very angry air elemental down here that cultists give sacrifices to.

Notes:

**N2. Deadly Pool** (page 123): This room is freezing and there's an icy pool. We are told to refer to the DMG for details on extreme cold and slippery ice. I've got it for you right here:

- **Extreme Cold** (DMG page 110): At the end of each hour, make a DC 10 CON save or gain a level of exhaustion.
- **Slippery Ice** (DMG page 110): When a creature moves onto slippery ice for the first time on a turn, make a DC 10 DEX (Acrobatics) check or fall prone.

In this room, there's a 10% chance per minute of a temperature shift to:

- **Extreme Heat** (DMG page 110): After an hour, make a DC 5 CON save or gain exhaustion. There are penalties depending on how you're dressed.



This room on its own isn't much of a hazard. The heroes are likely to just go around the lake. It seems your best bet is to have some monsters attack, or put a glowing treasure in the frozen lake.

N9. Mushroom Forest (page 125): This is a great room with edible toadstools. Some give you potion effects, others will poison you! You might want to think about whether a nature or arcane check will aid the PCs or not. You also might want to come up with details on how the poisonous toadstools look, as it will come off as suspicious when you describe the aqua-spotted one and the two amber ones, but then go blank on the others.

N10. The Stalagmite Garden (page 125): This room conjures images of people struggling against air. The whole thing is kind of left up to you. You might want to show images of a battle your heroes had against air cultists, but in this one it goes horribly wrong.

Or you could have a scene where Yan-C-Bin using scary powers to tear the heroes apart one by one (see page 221 for Yan-C-Bin's powers - creating torrents of debris, throwing heroes around with wind, dropping the temperature to cover the heroes in sheets of ice, etc). This would be a nice way to foreshadow a possible threat and build anticipation for a big battle.

N11. Hero's Tomb (page 125): We better check out Yellow Mold...

- **Yellow Mold** (DMG page 105): When touched it ejects a spore cloud that fills a 10 foot cube. DC 15 CON save or take 11 damage and be poisoned. You keep taking 5 damage each round until you save. Sunlight or fire destroys yellow mold instantly.

N17 Sacrifices (page 126): Finally! A member of the Mirabar delegation! She's tied to a thingie and guarded by invisible demons.

The Plunging Torrents (page 128): This is a great dungeon. My only beef is that there's a few too many rooms that just have monsters to be killed. Kind of dull. That said, there's a billion cool concepts crammed into one dungeon. The most major thing to keep in mind is that the heroes can take a water globe right at the beginning and pretty much bypass most of the encounters.

Exits and Entrances:

- W1 connects to F8 in the **Fane of the Eye**. The watery globe in here can take a single hero to P20. When the globe leaves the cave, another one plops up out of the water. I talk about this more below.

A Lot of Things to Juggle: There are quite a few things to remember when you're running this place, all listed on page 128. The main ones:

Currents: Entering a strong current means you roll a DC 15 Strength save. Fail means you are pulled 10 feet. It is entirely possible that the boat of the heroes might get pulled into one of the P19 vortexes, and they'll be teleported to a random room in the node!

Waterfalls: Falling over the side of a waterfall causes no damage, but you might get restrained underwater where you'll be making DC 15 strength saves.

Aboleth Whispers: In each new area, roll a d6. On a 1, one character sees a vision of room P4, P5 or P6. The aboleth can link to the PC's mind and mess with him or her, causing madness.

"Madness" is on page 258 of the DMG. Have your PC make a WIS or CHA save - DC 15, maybe? If they fail, they roll on the short-term madness chart on page 259 of the DMG.

Symbol of Water: Certain creatures have this inscribed on them. It gives them a swim speed equal to their ground speed, immunity to currents and waterfalls are not a problem for them. Inscribing the mark on someone gives them one point of damage. The mark can be removed by healing magic.

P1. Waterfall Basin (page 128): This area has a watery globe that can carry the heroes right to P20. The globe fits a single hero, but once the globe begins its journey another globe pops up to carry a second hero. Basically, you can end up with your heroes taking a weird sort of Disney ride through the dungeon. It might go like this:

1. Corpse: The most likely route would be from W1, over the waterfall to P12, where they'll pass over a floating corpse.
2. Screams: It's not likely the ghouls will be alerted. They'll pass by P14, and hear the screams of those that the one-eyed shiver is torturing.
3. You Have Besmirched My Honor: Then they'll float on to P16, here a Dark Tide Knight is standing guard. The knight is likely to call upon the other knight, summon their water weird mounts, and attack.

Remember, you could throw in a wrinkle by having a monster from the random encounter table attack them while the heroes are globing around. A giant octopus pulling a PC out of a globe sounds like a pretty epic scene!

P18. Wrecks (page 133): This room is awesome. The heroes battle a hydra among "the shattered hulks of sailing vessels" leaning on their sides. This is one where you will need to figure out the map/terrain on your own. You should think about stuff like whether you want it to be possible to swing on ropes from ship to ship, and whether there's a working ballista on a ship. Stuff like that. Maybe have a scene where a hydra's head explodes up through the deck of a ship and tries to bite a hero.

**The Black Geode** (page 135): This dungeon feels a bit shorter than the others. I'd definitely use the effects in the random encounters quite a bit and in general the whole idea of this place spawning mephits (G11 page 139), that kind of thing.

Entrances and Exits:

- G1 (page 135) is a guarded room (elementals with purple glowing veins!) and contains a twisting tunnel that lead to F13 in the **Fane of the Eye**.
- G5 (page 136) has a tunnel to the **Underdark**. It's up to you what to do with this. A drider lurking nearby? A drow patrol? Or maybe a tunnel collapse? Heck, maybe you could link this to Out of the Abyss. Teleport Circle could send the group to the library of Gravenhollow, for example. Or maybe Menzoberranzan! Although – Menzoberranzan is blocking teleportation during the events of Out of the Abyss.

**Random Encounters**: The environmental random encounters might be awesome to use to add a wrinkle to a combat. A fireball spell causes a ceiling collapse, a missed attack causes a crystal extrusion, or a fissure opens up under a random participant in a battle.

**G4. The Crystal Forest** (page 136): What a great room. It is a vast crystal forest. The glowing causes confusion.

- Confusion is on page 224 of the PH. Victims make a DC 10 WIS save or they have to roll on the confusion chart (PH page 225).

You might want to consider writing down the wisdom saves of your heroes at the start of this session. That way you can roll their saves in private. Oftentimes players find this type of scenario difficult not to metagame. They may not want to send their character in the room once they have an ally who went in a succeeded on a saving throw. You could also try telling the hero who succeeded that they feel slightly confused and disoriented, an in-game clue they could relate to their allies.

**G8 Cavern of the Lost Crown** (page 138): The dwarf ghost in here has the plot hook for the side adventure "Vale of Dancing Waters." The crown is the lost crown of Besilmer (page 223). The crown gives you resistance to psychic damage, advantage on saves vs. charm, and you can use a bonus action to give an ally +d6 to a roll.

This is your classic D&D scenario where the heroes get their hands on an artifact and are expected to go give it to someone else. Be wary of the idea of the ghost possessing a PC to force it to happen. In my opinion, that needs to be handled carefully out of game. Some players will fight it tooth and nail. The whole session can become unpleasant.

**G15. Arcane Foundry** (page 140): A delegate is in here! Rhundorth the dwarf is being forced to make weapons.

**The Weeping Colossus** (page 141): This is a pretty short dungeon, but features tons of cool and dangerous things. There's a prison made of fire, a red dragon, and a "...miniature sun with motes of fire swirling around it."

Entrances and Exits:

- W1 (page 142) has a magic disc that will bring you up to F15 in the **Fane of the Eye**. There are guards in here and really cool pillars that rise out of the lava.

Lava: This place has lots of lava. It seems like lava does a different amount of damage in every D&D adventure. Here, lava does 6d10 damage.

Random Encounters: Once again, the random encounter chart (page 142) has a bunch of cool ideas that you should definitely work in somehow. The crust break, lava rain and smoke cloud should definitely be a part of some encounters.

The Missing Delegate: This is the place where one of the delegates is supposed to be, but was accidentally left out of the book. She is Teresiel, a moon elf from Silverymoon.

W3 and W4 are a little confusing. There's a walkway over the lava between the two areas. It leads to nowhere. Vanifer forces prisoners to cross it, then she hits the gong (I think the gong is the brown line two squares under the "w" in "w4" on the map). The gong summons a roper made of magma (!!!) who is lurking in W4.

It seems to me that a really cool idea would be to have the heroes stumble on cultists forcing Teresiel to cross the causeway. During the resultant battle with the roper on the causeway, you could add in flame gouts from the random encounters section for added danger.

W6. Prison (page 144): This is a good place to put Teresiel if you don't decide to use her in some other way.

## Chapter 6: Alarums and Excursions

Bears and Bows (page 149): Don't forget to read the wilderness flavor text just above this entry if this is the first time your heroes have left Red Larch.

Haunted Tomb (page 149): The half-ogre and the goblin can be memorable NPCs. I ran it so the goblin rode on the half-ogre's shoulders. Remember, they'd rather rob the PCs than fight them.

Lance Rock (page 151): This is a neat little mini-dungeon with undead and a necromancer. You might want to have the "Dancing Dead" on page 152 cause some kind of hypnotic effect when they perform.

Remember that the necromancer has a wand of magic missiles - an awesome item that could drop a number of characters, and also a great piece of treasure. The necromancer has a cool background on page 211.

Tomb of Moving Stones (page 154): This dungeon ties into elemental evil a little bit. The beginning of the adventure seems like a good way to kick off the whole campaign. Things to note:

- Ceiling Cat Watches You Try to Visualize This Area: The hallway ("Cage Trap" page 155) is tricky to describe. It is one of the coolest areas in the dungeon, so try to make sure you understand it well.
- Pickle Vendor: Grund is here. IMO, he is a fun NPC. You might want to play him up a bit in Red Larch prior to this adventure.
- Epic Battle: The final battle (page 158) can be really cool with the hovering, rotating stones. You might want to have the bad guy on a stone as it hovers and rotates - might make for an epic battle.
- His Knowledge of the Land Shall be Great: Remember that Larrakh was part of the assault on the delegation, so he knows a lot of priceless information as far as this adventure is concerned. He can get your PCs on the right path. He'd probably be happy to send the PCs right at the air cult at Feathergale Spire, as the air cult dared to attack the earth cult during the delegation trip (and they even stole Deseyna, one of the delegates).

New Management (page 160): I didn't use this one. I think if you have PCs who are members of the Zhentarim and you like the idea of the heroes running an inn then this can work for you.

Iceshield Orcs (page 163): This one involves rampaging orcs attacking farms. It ends up in a cool scenario where the heroes defend a compound from the orcs. One thing you should

decide on is how the orcs spend their time in the woods between probing attacks. Are they all in one group? Do they sharpen sticks to make more javelins? Do they spread out and watch the compound? There is a good chance your heroes may try to sneak up to the orc camp, so be ready.

I ran this one and so much of the attack is ill-defined that I struggled to keep it making sense.

I don't have much to say about the rest of the book. It is pretty straightforward.

## **Acknowledgments**

Thanks for picking this up! I hope it is helpful for your game. This .pdf grew out of my blog:

### **Power Score RPG**

<http://powerscorerpg.blogspot.com/>

<http://thecampaign20xx.blogspot.com/>

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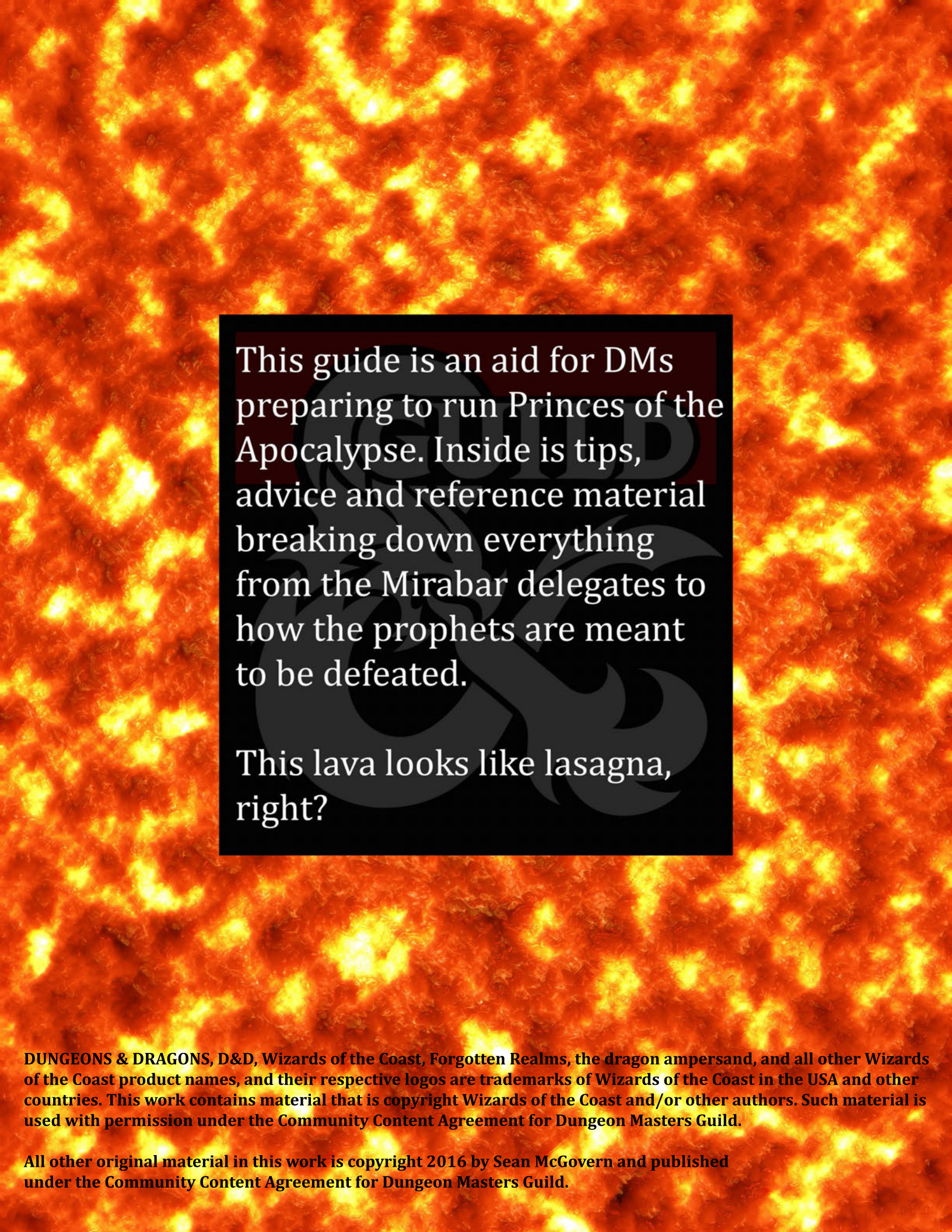
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Thanks everyone!



This guide is an aid for DMs preparing to run Princes of the Apocalypse. Inside is tips, advice and reference material breaking down everything from the Mirabar delegates to how the prophets are meant to be defeated.

This lava looks like lasagna, right?

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