



The Playbill of Revelation*

Team Dragon in Babylon

BABYLON: Mission is to embody the way of the dragon. Rides on the wild thing. Characterized by royalty, idolatry, opulence, murder, status, arrogance, power, military might, murder, and economic exploitation. Kills those in the way of the Lamb. Gathers under her power the kings of the earth, merchants of the world, and sea captains. Serves as a timeless metaphor for empire and injustices and idolatries. In John's day, Babylon is Rome. Babylon falls. Also known as the great prostitute.

THE DRAGON: Has a mission of accusation, deceit, death. Chases the woman but loses her. Wages war with the woman's children. Battles Michael the angel and loses. Has control of the wild things, significant control with the political powers embodied in Babylon. Defeated by the Lamb and by the allegiant witnesses. Bound for one thousand years, released, and then destroyed in the lake of fire. Also known as Satan, the devil.

WILD THING #1 (FROM SEA): Mission is to embody the will of the dragon. Represents chaos, power, deception, and opposition to the Lamb. Ruler of evil empires. One of the dead-heads of the wild thing is raised from the dead. Worshiped by humans. Its rule is temporary. Makes up one third of the unholy trinity: dragon, wild thing #1 and #2. Aka the beast from the sea.

WILD THING #2 (FROM EARTH): Mission is to embody the will of wild thing #1 and dragon. The sycophant in chief, the propagandist. Looks like the Lamb, acts like the dragon. Forces worship of wild thing #1, does fraudulent miracles, deceives the world. Forces humans to accept the "mark of the wild thing." Its name is its number, 666. Aka the beast from the earth.

666: Represents Roman Emperor Nero and many others.

OTHERS: Jezebel and the Nicolaitans/Nicolaus and Balaam. These are representative names, serving as stereotypes for idolatries and sexual immoralities and false teachings.

The five principles of reading Revelation

- 1) Correct reading of the bible leads to the fruit of the spirit and not fear
- 2) Revelation should be interpreted symbolically unless you are forced by the text to read it literally. Numbers, particularly are very symbolic.
- 3) The most important key to Revelation is understanding the Old Testament and what the over 200 allusions to the Old Testament mean in that context
- 4) Reading Revelation requires imagination.
- 5) Revelation was written to shape people as dissidents who give their allegiance not to the world but to the Kingdom of God.

Team Lamb in New Jerusalem

GOD ON THE THRONE: The God of Israel, the Father, the sovereign God over all, who orchestrates the events of history toward the new Jerusalem. God's might is matched by God's gracious love. This God will defeat the dragon, banish death, and establish life in New Jerusalem. To God belongs all worship and praise and honor and glory because this God brings salvation through the Lamb. Trinity: Father, Son (Lamb), and Spirit.

THE SEVEN SPIRITS: Though some question this, the Seven Spirits are John's language for the Holy Spirit. The number represents perfection or completeness, and it corresponds to the missions of the Spirit.

THE LAMB: In the center of the throne room and the center of the action in Revelation. The Lamb is the Lord Jesus Christ, who has many names and attributes, including: Jesus, Messiah, faithful witness, first born from among the dead, ruler of the kings of the earth, loves us, liberates us, Alpha and Omega, who is-who was-who is to come, like a son of man, first and last, living one, holds keys of death and hades. Lion, Lamb, Logos, Light: all of these represent the Lord over all lords and King over all kings. He is the Savior/Redeemer by his blood.

THE ALLEGIANT WITNESSES: These are the believers and followers of Jesus in the way of the Lamb. The seven churches are faithful (allegiant) witnesses in life and word to the way of the Lamb and the rule of King Jesus. They suffer for their witness. They are known for their works of goodness and love and kindness.

THE WOMAN: She appears to morph in Revelation 12 from Eve to Israel to Mary, mother of Jesus, and finally to the church. She is opposed by the dragon, who tries to kill her and the baby boy born to her (Jesus). She escapes under protection from God. Her offspring is opposed by the dragon.

ENVOYS/ANGELS: Abundant in Revelation, they perform missions for God in this world for the redemption of humans.

TWENTY-FOUR ELDERS: They surround the throne, wearing white clothing with gold crowns. The number twenty-four suggests two times twelve, representing Israel and the apostles. Altogether they represent the redeemed people of God in worship of God.

FOUR LIVING THINGS: They surround the throne, cover their eyes, have six wings, and praise God endlessly. They intercede, and at times guide John through the three times seven judgments/disciplines. They echo the living creatures of Isaiah 6 and Ezekiel 1's four living things and represent all creation worshipping God.

MYRIADS: Those who worship God are innumerable.

NEW JERUSALEM: This future, ideal city is the world as God designed it to be. It is inhabited by those who want to dwell in God's presence and with whom God dwells. It is better than the visions of the Greco-Roman visions of society (Plato, Aristotle, Cicero), it fulfills the expectations of Israel's prophets and more, and it takes the old Jerusalem and becomes the heaven-with-us kingdom of God.

* Taken from "Revelation for the Rest of Us" pages 37-39



The Outline of Revelation

Introduction

1:	Introduction
2&3:	Letters to the churches
4&5:	The Heavenly Reality

The Judgements and Interludes

6:1 - 8:1	The seven seals
8:2-11:19	The seven trumpets
15:1-16:21	Seven shallow bowls
7:1-8	Interlude 1: Marking 144,000
7:9-17	Interlude 2: Universal Acclamation by Witnesses
8:3-5	Interlude 3: Petitions of the Devout Ones
10:1-11	Interlude 4: Little Book Eaten
11:1-14	Interlude 5: Two Witnesses
12:1-17	Interlude 6: Woman and Dragon
13:1-18	Interlude 7: Dragon's Two Wild Things
14:1-13	Interlude 8: Allegiant Ones
14:14-19	Interlude 9: Judgment Announced
15:2-4	Interlude 10: Conquerors

The end of the battle

17-19:10	The Fall of Babylon
19:11-21	The defeat of the Beast and the false prophet
20:1-10	The defeat of Satan
20:11-15	The judgement of the dead and death itself

New Creation

21:1-7	New Heaven and New Earth
21:7-8	Final Judgement
21:9-27	New Jerusalem
22:1-5	Eden restored
22:7-21	Final encouragements