

Demons vs. Earth Dwellers
Demons 1,400,000,000 Earth Dwellers 0
Revelation 9:13 – 21

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Unseen Reality

There are three “important things to accept as “real” at this point are (1) fallen angels and demons exist; (2) they are ethereal beings, normally invisible to us; and (3) both have a long history of interacting with humanity in various ways: angels are known to have the ability to take on physical form whereas demons are known primarily to act on human consciousness via possession or manipulation of our bodies and minds (Heb. 13:2; Matt. 17:18)” (Tramm 2014, Kindle Location 2472)

Revelation 9:13–14

Then the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, one saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, “Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates.” (NASB95)

The sixth angel sounds his horn and unlike all the previous trumpet judgements, this angel becomes a participant. As the horn blast fades, John hears a voice from the golden altar in the throne room, specifically from the four horns of the golden altar.

What is the golden altar?

Exodus 30:1–8

“Moreover, you shall make an altar as a place for burning incense; you shall make it of acacia wood. Its length shall be a cubit, and its width a cubit, it shall be square, and its height shall be two cubits; its horns shall be of one piece with it. You shall overlay it with pure gold, its top and its sides all around, and its horns; and you shall make a gold molding all around for it. You shall make two gold rings for it under its molding; you shall make them on its two side walls—on opposite sides—and they shall be holders for poles with which to carry it. You shall make the poles of acacia wood and overlay them with gold. You shall put this altar in front of the veil that is near the ark of the testimony, in front of the mercy seat that is over the ark of the testimony, where I will meet with you. Aaron shall burn fragrant incense on it; he shall burn it every morning when he trims the lamps. When Aaron trims the lamps at twilight, he shall burn incense. There shall be perpetual incense before the LORD throughout your generations.” (NASB95)

Moses copied the one which wound up in the Tabernacle and the Temple, from the original, the same one we see here in Revelation 9. Per Stephen in his final sermon:

Acts 7:44

“Our fathers had the tabernacle of testimony in the wilderness, just as He who spoke to Moses directed him to make it according to the pattern which he had seen.” (NASB95)

1 Kings 1:50–53

Adonijah feared Solomon, so he got up and went and grabbed hold of the horns of the altar. Solomon was told, “Look, Adonijah fears you; see, he has taken hold of the horns of the altar, saying, ‘May King Solomon solemnly promise me today that he will not kill his servant with the sword.’” Solomon said, “If he is a loyal subject, not a hair of his head will be harmed, but if he is found to be a traitor, he will die.” King Solomon sent men to bring him down from the altar. He came and bowed down to King Solomon, and Solomon told him, “Go home.” (NET)

Exodus 21:14

“But if a man willfully attacks another to kill him by cunning, you shall take him from my altar, that he may die.” (ESV)

1 Kings 2:28–34

“When the news reached Joab (for Joab had supported Adonijah, although he had not supported Absalom), he ran to the tent of the LORD and grabbed hold of the horns of the altar. When King Solomon heard that Joab had run to the tent of the LORD and was right there beside the altar, he ordered Benaiah son of Jehoiada, “Go, strike him down.” When Benaiah arrived at the tent of the LORD, he said to him, “The king says, ‘Come out!’” But he replied, “No, I will die here!” So Benaiah sent word to the king and reported Joab’s reply. The king told him, “Do as he said! Strike him down and bury him. Take away from me and from my father’s family the guilt of Joab’s murderous, bloody deeds. May the LORD punish him for the blood he shed; behind my father David’s back he struck down and murdered with the sword two men who were more innocent and morally upright than he—Abner son of Ner, commander of Israel’s army, and Amasa son of Jether, commander of Judah’s army. May Joab and his descendants be perpetually guilty of their shed blood, but may the LORD give perpetual peace to David, his descendants, his family, and his dynasty.” So Benaiah son of Jehoiada went up and executed Joab; he was buried at his home in the wilderness.” (NET)

This is the real, not the copy of, Altar of Incense in the throne room.

We saw this altar before, remember, all the believers who have been killed during the period after the rapture up to the current moment are “under the altar.”

Revelation 6:9–10

“When the Lamb broke the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God, and because of the testimony which they had maintained; and they cried out with a loud voice, saying, “How long, O Lord, holy and true, will You refrain from judging and avenging our blood on those who dwell on the earth?”” (NASB95)

Revelation 8:3–5

“Another angel came and stood at the altar, holding a golden censer; and much incense was given to him, so that he might add it to the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, went up before God out of the angel’s hand. Then the angel took the censer and filled it with the fire of the altar, and threw it to the earth; and there followed peals of thunder and sounds and flashes of lightning and an earthquake.” (NASB95)

In heaven, the prayers of the saints are as incense before the Lord.

From ch. 16:7 it would appear that the voice probably proceeded from the altar itself, represented as uttering the cry of vengeance for the blood shed on it; cf. ch. 6:9, with which cry of the martyred saints the whole series of retributive judgments is connected. (Alford 1976, 644)

Revelation 16:7

“And I heard the altar saying, “Yes, O Lord God, the Almighty, true and righteous are Your judgments.”” (NASB95)

John hears, speaking from the altar of incense, the voices of all the prayers speaking as one. This is the altar where “the prayers of the saints had been offered by the angel, (see Rev 8:3, 5) and the voice is the result of those prayers, in accordance with which those judgments are inflicted.” (Alford 1976, 644)

This voice provides direction to the angel who blew the sixth trumpet, unlike all the previous angels sounding their horns, this angel is provided instruction and has a task to accomplish, there are apparently four fallen ones to release from a special prison.

The inference is that this judgment like those preceding is partially an answer to the prayers of the persecuted saints on earth and a token of divine response and preparation for their deliverance. (Walvoord 2008, 164)

One would think that after all the seal judgements, as well as the first five trumpet judgements, that there would be a massive worldwide revival taking place and millions coming to Christ, but sadly, that is not the case.

The hearts of all of those recently tortured by demons just grow harder and harder. Why should we be surprised?

Jeremiah 17:9

“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?” (ESV)

Once the heart is set in its hostility toward God not even the scourge of death will lead people to repentance. (Mounce 1997, 198)

Exodus 10:27–29

But the LORD hardened Pharaoh’s heart, and he would not let them go. Then Pharaoh said to him, “Get away from me; take care never to see my face again, for on the day you see my face you shall die.” Moses said, “As you say! I will not see your face again.” (ESV)

Joshua 11:20

“For it was of the LORD to harden their hearts, to meet Israel in battle in order that he might utterly destroy them, that they might receive no mercy, but that he might destroy them, just as the LORD had commanded Moses.” (NASB95)

Proverbs 28:14

“How blessed is the man who fears always, But he who hardens his heart will fall into calamity.” (NASB95)

Sin is just like this, it is deceptive, it looks attractive, the first few times you engage in a sin it may possible deliver everything that you thought it would, your think you are in control, but, someone else is, and he has a totally different plan for your life than the Lord has.

One of the witnessing tools I learned to use as a student at Biola was a little give away pamphlet called the Four Spiritual Laws written by Bill Bright of Campus Crusade for Christ. Law one – God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life. For many, that is a sticking point

4 Laws

1. God loves you and created you to know Him personally (John 3:16; 10:10).
2. Man is sinful and separated from God. Therefore, he cannot know and experience God's love and plan for his life (Rom. 3:23; 6:23).
3. Jesus Christ is God's only provision for man's sin. Through him you can know and experience God's love and plan for your life (Rom. 5:8; 1 Cor. 15:3 - 6; John 14:6).
4. We must individually receive Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord; then we can know and experience God's love and plan for our lives (John 1:12; 3:1 - 8; Eph. 2:8 - 9; Rev. 3:20). (Bright 2017)

The most common theme heard – **I have a plan for my life** and **I have** goals and things **I want** to achieve and **I am afraid** that if I were to look to God for that plan, then **I would miss out** on what **I have planned**. Let's be straight about this – when someone says that, they are agreeing with the counterfeit presented by Satan and they have believed the lie, they are not in control, they only appear to be.

From a spiritual perspective, there is no in-between world whereby exercising your free will outside of the plan of God you can do your own thing, ultimately, you wind up serving someone else's cause.

The reality played out to the full here in Revelation 9, Satan has a horrible plan for your life...he wants you dead.

If you are a believer...he wants you ineffective and dead.

John 8:44

“For you are the children of your father the devil, and you love to do the evil things he does. He was a murderer from the beginning. He has always hated the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, it is consistent with his character; for he is a liar and the father of lies.” (NLT)

Currently, nothing happens to the believer unless it is Father filtered and now, we see that graphically displayed in Revelation 9.

Embedded in his directions on how to detect and determine spiritual deception as believers, John tells us why we are not subject to the same problem as those in the world are.

1 John 4:1–6

“Dear friends, **stop believing every spirit**. Instead, **test the spirits to see whether they are from God**, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. This is how you can recognize God's Spirit: **Every spirit who acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God. But every spirit who does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God**. This is the spirit of the antichrist. You have heard that he is coming, and now he is already in the world. Little children, you belong to God and have overcome them, because **the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world**. These people belong to the world. That is why they speak from the world's perspective, and the world listens to them. We belong to God. The person who knows God listens to us. Whoever does not belong to God does not listen to us. This is how we know the Spirit of truth and the spirit of deceit.” (ISV)

As believers, we belong to Jesus and we are called on to actively test and discern the teaching we allow ourselves to hear.

When the world in general praises someone who says they are a Bible teacher, check the fruit. They may be, but then again, they may be working for the other side. So called evangelist Marjoe Gortner, allowed filmmakers to record him swindling people out of money. Raised to be a child preacher on the revival-tent circuit, Gortner made a small fortune for his parents. Later, he began preaching on his own in a lively, rock star-influenced style, but, since he lacked actual faith, money became his sole motivator. As

he staged his final revival tour, Marjoe provided a rare glimpse inside the business of fake evangelism. There are many others out there today.

Matthew 7:16–20

“You will recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus you will recognize them by their fruits.” (ESV)

Jesus keeps His own and protects His own, thus the simple fact; these demonic attacks cannot and will not touch any believers.

Revelation 8:13

Then I looked, and I heard an eagle flying in midheaven, saying with a loud voice, “Woe, woe, woe to those who dwell on the earth, because of the remaining blasts of the trumpet of the three angels who are about to sound!” (NASB95)

The four angels being released are not good angels. In addition, some of them may also have a background like Apollyon.

The article τούς (tous) indicates that these four angels are familiar figures, but the reason for their familiarity is unknown. (Thomas 1995, 43)

A mythological speculation found in Enūma eliš V 55 says that the Euphrates and the Tigris sprung from the eyes of Tiamat, the divine antagonist of Marduk. An esoteric commentary from the first millennium BCE specifies that “the Tigris is her right eye, the Euphrates is her left eye” (SAA 3 [1989], no. 39 r.3). Since both Tiamat and the Tigris are known as deities, such speculation may imply the same for the Euphrates. The gradual reduction of the Babylonian pantheon did not leave room for the Euphrates as an independent deity. But it retained a divine function, as is shown by a statement in a theological speculative text saying that it is the Euphrates “which served Shamash” (RA 60 [1966] 73:10). (van der Toorn 1999, 314-315)

The analysis of the place of the Euphrates in Mesopotamian mythology is complicated somewhat by the fact that the god Niraḥ/Irḥan has been identified with the Euphrates. Niraḥ/Irḥan is both a river-god and a snake-god. Apparently dNiraḥ is the deified snake and dIrḥan is the deified river Euphrates represented as a snake (WIGGERMANN 1997:43 n. 89). In an Akkadian hymn to Nisaba, the grain-goddess, he is called ‘father of all the gods’, which shows that he is a form of the primeval River (RLA 6, 220). The lexical series Antagal identifies him with the Euphrates (MSL 17 [1985] 233 no. 24.2:6’); the series Erimḥuš with the Araḥtu, a branch of the Euphrates passing through Babylon (MSL 17 [1985] 82:48). Identification with the Euphrates suggests that Irḥan came to be regarded as female. In incantations, she is referred to as “river Irḥan with her banks” (CT 23 Pl. 1:7; 2:20; BAM no. 124 iv 7//127:7) and credited with powers of healing, since a drawing of Irḥan is used in therapeutic rituals (CT 23 Pl. 1:2.12). (van der Toorn 1999, 315)

So is it possible that those fallen angels being released have a background in the area? Absolutely, we know they were ready to go. They have been held here specifically for this time and reason; God knows their hearts just as he knows ours.

They all are prepared for their hour of activity much as the whale was prepared to swallow Jonah and effect divine discipline upon the prophet. These are wicked angels designated to execute the great judgment of the sixth trumpet but prevented from doing so until the proper moment. (Walvoord 2008, 165)

The definite article in the original, “the hour,” indicates that the time had been set long before, and the imprisoned spirits were chafing to be released, long awaiting their chance for partial vengeance on mankind. (Morris 1983, 168)

In Rev 9:14, the river is the boundary between the world of the living and the realm of the dead: four death-dealing angels were kept in check on the Euphrates. (van der Toorn 1999, 315-316)

Revelation 9:15–16

“And the four angels, who had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, were released, so that they would kill a third of mankind. The number of the armies of the horsemen was two hundred million; I heard the number of them.” (NASB95)

Revelation 9:16

“The number of mounted troops was twice ten thousand times ten thousand; I heard their number.” (ESV)

Revelation 9:16

“καὶ ὁ ἀριθμὸς τῶν στρατευμάτων τοῦ ἵππικοῦ δισμυριάδες μυριάδων, ἤκουσα τὸν ἀριθμὸν αὐτῶν.” (Nestle, et al. 1993, Rev 9:16)

Did you pick up on the preparation and planning God has put into this moment? These four fallen angels being held prisoner have been placed there by God. They “had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year...” There is no chance, no mistake, this is well planned out because not only is God sovereign, but He is also meticulous.

God has left nothing to chance. These events are depicted as taking place exactly when God has appointed them to take place. (Hamilton, Jr. 2012, 215)

Once again, we see that we can absolutely rest in God and His providence for us.

Hebrews 13:5–8

“Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.” So we can confidently say, “The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?” Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.” (ESV)

Do we live that way?

Do we live in the knowledge and the comfort that God is with us?

Romans 8:31–32

“What shall we say about such wonderful things as these? If God is for us, who can ever be against us? Since he did not spare even his own Son but gave him up for us all, won't he also give us everything else?” (NLT)

We need to live and believe daily trusting that God is truly the one who is in control. As we do so, we will have the privilege of seeing Him move mightily on our behalf everyday.

Psalms 118:14–15

“The LORD gives me strength and protects me; he has become my deliverer.” They celebrate deliverance in the tents of the godly. The LORD's right hand conquers,” (NET)

Here in chapter 9, God is protecting those who belong to Him, and He desires to see the earth dwellers come to Him, to that end, He judges.

How many earth dwellers are to die in this judgement – 1/3 of population of the time. So how many people are we talking about this time?

Again, remember, the Lord has already opened all the seals to the deed of planet earth and earth dwellers (unbelievers) are among those who must be evicted.

Just as Israel was charged with evicting the Amorites and the giant clans from the promised land, and did not do a really good job of it, Jesus is also proceeding with eviction actions, except He will achieve His goal with perfection

This is a job Jesus started when he was here on planet earth the first time.

Time and time again Jesus intentionally engaged with the enemy starting with Satan in the wilderness (Luke 4) and then casting out demons everywhere He went (Matthew 8:16). Intentionally going into enemy territory more than once. He cast out over 2000 demons from one man and ruined the idolatry economy in the process (Mark 5:1-20.) He took His disciples to demon central in Caesarea Philippi letting them know that the church would be built by changing the destination of millions who were ultimately headed to hell; and then He presented Himself on Mount Hermon in His glorified form calling out the fallen powers and principalities.

He egged those powers on; and they were the ones to influence the men in power in Jerusalem to have Him crucified; not knowing they were defeating themselves in the process.

1 Corinthians 2:6–8

“Now we do speak wisdom among the mature, but not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are perishing. Instead we speak the wisdom of God, hidden in a mystery, that God determined before the ages for our glory. None of the rulers of this age understood it. If they had known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.” (NET)

As we enter the final stages of this war, we see what removing the squatters from earth truly means.

Authority in the 4th seal judgement was $\frac{1}{4}$ of the world's population at the time. At present, the world population is 7.55 billion and climbing, or 7.6 billion come 1/1/2020.

- Let's say 600 million are raptured.
- Of the remaining population there are about 675 million below the age of 4 and another 664 million between 4 and 9.
- So, let's conjecture that the remaining world population, post rapture on day one is around 5.6 to 6.3 billion people.
- That means the 4th seal death toll is at least 1.4 billion people.
- The largest death toll disaster in history to that time.

How big is the demon army? Really? Is it really 200,000,000?

The number reflected in the Greek is *δισμυριάδες μυριάδων*.

Literally - “and the number of the armies of cavalry [was] twenty thousands of ten thousands; I heard the number of them.” (Thomas 1995, 45)

This is a number that did not exist in antiquity. John hears the number and reports it to us.

Trying to visualize this demonic army, demonic cavalry, “when one tries to visualize such a cavalry, which at one mile wide would be about eighty-five miles long! Thus John simply concludes, I heard their number.” (Fee 2011, 135)

It could be even larger than 200,000,000 since it is not a specific number. Remember with the fifth trumpet John simply used the term locust. John sees this cavalry and he will provide a description of the combatants.

...the safest interpretation is to see this as a literal 200 million strong army, but a demonic army invading earth. This continues the idea of the demonic army like locusts described earlier in the chapter. (Guzik 2013, Re:9:16-19)

So, post 4th seal, the world population is roughly 4.2 to 4.9 billion. Being conservative with numbers from the remaining seals as well as the first four trumpet judgements and let's conjecture that at the beginning of the 6th seal, the world population, which only covers 2/3 of the planet now, consists of 3.5 to 4.2 billion people.

This trumpet judgement will account for another 1.4 billion dead, earth dwellers only (Rev 8:13,) reducing the world population, as we approach the middle of the tribulation, to between 2.1 and 2.8 billion people, this is assuming 7.6 billion prior to the rapture taking place.

If you recall, earth dwellers are squatters and need to be evicted. They are not followers of Jesus and as such cannot remain on the planet with the takeover that is coming, at this point in the tribulation, in less than 4 years.

John hears the 6th horn blow and hears the instructions to release the four angels. He hears the size of the demonic army and makes sure we know he heard the number of them. Let's just say, it is a bunch.

Now he turns to what he saw.

Revelation 9:17–19

“And this is how I saw in the vision the horses and those who sat on them: the riders had breastplates the color of fire and of hyacinth and of brimstone; and the heads of the horses are like the heads of lions; and out of their mouths proceed fire and smoke and brimstone. A third of mankind was killed by these three plagues, by the fire and the smoke and the brimstone which proceeded out of their mouths. For the power of the horses is in their mouths and in their tails; for their tails are like serpents and have heads, and with them they do harm.” (NASB95)

The cavalry John sees are not human but have heads like lions and tails like snakes, and they snort out lethal fire, smoke, and sulfur. In Greco-Roman circles these monsters would have recalled stories about the fire-breathing Chimera, which had a lion's head and a snake for a tail. (Koester 2014, 473)

You could also, as some have, say this is a description of modern weaponry, such as armor, mobile missile launchers and tactical nukes.

Chimera - a fire-breathing she-monster in Greek mythology having a lion's head, a goat's body, and a serpent's tail. (Merriam-Webster Inc. 2003)

In mythology, Typhon was the father of Chimera who was in turn, killed by Bellerophon. Suffice it to say, without going into a whole lot of detail, this all starts rolling mythology into some elements of truth pertaining to giants, antichrist, the watchers and genetically modified creatures.

Typhon appears in Greek myths as the opponent of Zeus or even of all gods. He is the youngest son of Tartaros and Gaia and has several names (Typhōeus, Typhōs, Typhaōn and Typhōn), which were used interchangeably. In antiquity his name was derived from typhōō 'to be crazy' (e.g. Plutarch, De Iside 2, 351F) or typhō 'smoke', which is bound up with the idea that Typhon was the personification of vulcanism. The name resembles Zaphon and there seem to have been connections between Typhon and Baal-zaphon (EISSFELDT 1932; BONNET 1987). According to Apollodorus, Bib. 1.41, Typhon flees to Mount Kasios, the mountain of Baal-zaphon. The myths about Typhon may be influenced by oriental forerunners like Ullikummi in Hurrite texts (SEIPPEL 1939; VIAN 1960). Typhon is described as a primaeva monster which was defeated by Zeus, but lived on beneath the earth after his punishment (under vulcanos or in the Tartaros). He has gigantic proportions, often a lower part consisting of the bodies of snakes, further wings, a hundred arms, a hundred snakes' heads (according to Apollodorus, Bib. 1.39, there were a hundred kephalai drakontōn attached to his hands), and a human head as well. He spits fire and is called a Dragon (e.g. Strabo 16.2.7). His terrible voice(s) and insolent behaviour are often emphasized (see for an extensive description SCHMIDT 1916–1924). (van Henten 1999, 879)

Had real cavalries been described, swords and arrows would have been in their hands. But these are not war-men, but war-demons... (Whedon 1880, 399)

These are not the kings of the east. They are yet to come. A third of the earth dwellers are killed by this demonic cavalry and they are killed by fire, smoke and sulfur (brimstone) which proceed out of the mouth of these creatures or machines. Each element on its own will kill and combined they account for a 1/3rd of the population of the earth at that time.

We would love to see what we see in the book of Jonah “When the word reached the king of Nineveh, he arose from his throne, laid aside his robe from him, covered himself with sackcloth and sat on the ashes.” (Jonah 3:6, NASB95) But no.

For the first time, we see John discussing the impact of the judgement on the world. Remember, 1 in every 3 earth dwellers have perished in this judgement.

Revelation 9:20–21

“The rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, so as not to worship demons, and the idols of gold and of silver and of brass and of stone and of wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk; and they did not repent of their murders nor of their sorceries nor of their immorality nor of their thefts.” (NASB95)

Obviously, we do not see the outbreak of revival.

Those entities behind the worship of the day, the false religion of the Great Religious Whore Babylon, and just about everything else we see beginning to advance in society today; the very ones who just tortured their clients for 5 months and now killed 1 in 3; whatever the lie is it's good; their clients, the earth dwellers, continue on without any change at all.

This time the human response is in spite of the severity of the judgment, not because of it. The point is made twice (vv. 20, 21) that these terrible judgments did not bring about repentance or a change of heart among those who were not killed. (Michaels 1997, Re 9:20)

John wants his readers to know what the top sins of the Tribulation period will be. What is it that earth dwellers are willing to die for, because they have, are and will do so in the future? What sin do we cling to. What habits do we have that we are unwilling to part with, even when they are not healthy?

Sin Willing to Die For

Works of their hands

- Worshipping demons
- Gold, silver, brass, stone and wood

Murder - φόνων

Sorcery - φαρμάκων

Immorality - πορνείας

Theft - κλεμμάτων

People don't worship the work of their hands today, do they?

We may not see a society around us that is hung up on graven images, or are we?

It is interesting to note, that in the light of the recent burning of the Cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris, the comments regarding the architecture and style of the building have walked right up to terms reminiscent of idolatry.

What are the work of our hands?

Today we worship our jobs, the things we can make or create, the new car we just obtained and are now driving, or the new house. Anything that comes before God is an idol, like the pool, or golf, or football, or the beach, or money, or prestige, or...

And they made for themselves molten images, and everyone worshiped the icon which they made for themselves as a molten image. And they began making graven images and polluted likenesses. And cruel spirits assisted them and led them astray so that they might commit sin and pollution. (Jubilees 11:4) (Charlesworth 1985, 78)

So, the number one sin of the Tribulation is idolatry; the job, the boss, the achievements, the awards, the recognition, the striving, the ambition, the winning at any cost, any and everything that has been placed in front of God.

John, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, connects that to and equates that to, the worship of demons
John, thank you for crushing my world view and destroying the philosophy we get taught these days about how to get ahead.

Matthew 20:21–28

“He asked her, “What do you want?” She said to him, “Promise that these two sons of mine will sit, one at your right and one at your left, in your kingdom.” Jesus replied, “You don’t realize what you’re asking. Can you drink from the cup that I’m going to drink from?” They told him, “We can.” He said to them, “You will indeed drink from my cup. But it’s not up to me to grant you a seat at my right hand or at my left. These positions have already been prepared for others by my Father.” When the ten heard this, they became furious with the two brothers. But Jesus called the disciples and said, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them and their superiors act like tyrants over them. That’s not the way it should be among you. Instead, whoever wants to be great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first among you must be your slave. That’s the way it is with the Son of Man. He did not come to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many people.”” (ISV)

Jesus teaches a concept that was also taught, and ignored, in Officer Training School, servant leadership. To lead, serve. To get ahead, be humble and serve.

Sin number 2 – Murder

Yep, that one we know about as a result of the 5th seal, the 6th seal and the 6th trumpet.

Recall that as we looked at the seal judgements, we saw a term used that referred to the ritualistic systematic slaughter of animals for Temple worship applied to what is happening to believers after the rapture. As part of the worship involved with the false end times church, the Great Whore of Babylon, it appears that murder is part of the package

Murder – φόνων - murder, killing. (Arndt, et al. 2000, 1063)

The number three sin reads, in my translation, as sorceries. In the Byzantine text of the Greek New Testament the word used is φαρμακειῶν (pharmakeion) which comes from the root word φαρμακεία (pharmakeia) from which we get the English word pharmacy. This word means “a drug, which in the Greek writers is used both for a curative or medicinal drug, and also as a poisonous one. Pharmakeía means the occult, sorcery, witchcraft, illicit pharmaceuticals, trance, magical incantation with drugs.” (Zodhiates 2000)

The word used in some other Greek texts is φαρμάκων which is “a harmful drug, poison, a drug used as a controlling medium, magic potion, charm, a healing remedy, medicine, remedy, drug. (Arndt, et al. 2000, 1050)

Combining the two words and considering that there are slight differences between some Greek texts, **but nothing that impacts doctrine**, we see that yes, sorcery or magic could indeed be one of the issues. Pharmakeion is a broader word. As we look at the seemingly worldwide drive to legalize the use of various substances, such as marijuana and other drugs, we can see easily the other definition coming into play.

The sin of sorcery requires the use of substances to place one's mind into an altered state of consciousness. This would open one's mind to the other side. This is done prior to approaching the altar of a false god, which, in the time of John, also included a sex act with one of the priests or priestesses of the god. After five months of torture, it is conceivable that many of the earth dwellers are flying without the benefit of aircraft as they rely on various compounds and substances to curb the pain and dull the mental turmoil going on and while in that state, indulge in the Tribulation Number Four sin of immorality

Immorality – πορνείας (porneias) - unlawful sexual intercourse, prostitution, unchastity, fornication, participation in prohibited degrees of marriage, immorality of a transcendent nature. (Arndt, et al. 2000, 854)

Idolatry is number 1, so we are not talking about earth dwellers turning from God to something else, they never followed Him to begin with, this is an embrace of all that is meant by the use of the word porneias.

The last sin on the list is thefts and yes, it is plural.

The sins of the Tribulation for those who dwell on the earth starts off with a violation of the greatest commandment.

Not only are the earth-dwellers unrepentant of their sins against the first table of the Mosaic law through their worship of other gods, but they also have a general disregard for the cardinal principles of the moral code. (Thomas 1995, 54)

Three of the Ten Commandments—the sixth, seventh, and eighth—explicitly prohibit three of the four vices listed—murder, fornication, and theft (Ex. 20:13–15). (Thomas 1995, 54)

I am sure that they are hitting all ten, but John points out these three and then there is the entire sorcery/witchcraft/magic/drugs thing.

Deuteronomy 18:10–12

“There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, one who uses divination, one who practices witchcraft, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, or one who casts a spell, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead. For whoever does these things is detestable to the LORD; and because of these detestable things the LORD your God will drive them out before you.” (NASB95)

The Lord did not want a repeat of Genesis 6 or Genesis 11 but since that is what the earth dwellers want, so we see the days of Noah reference, He will give them what they want.

With that we are at the center of the Tribulation and have encountered the 7 seal judgements, seen the opening of the deed to planet earth, and are almost done with experiencing the first half of the judgments that are part of the seventh seal. There is still much more to come.

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