

# Digging Deeper: The Greater Meaning of Revelation 7:9

Wednesday, October 21, 2026

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*“After this I saw, and look! a great crowd, which no man was able to number, out of all nations and tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, dressed in white robes; and there were palm branches in their hands.” (Revelation 7:9)*

In vision, the apostle John first heard the number of those sealed, 144,000, and then he saw something no one could count: a great crowd from every part of the earth. The main point is that Jehovah is gathering this crowd right now, and our preaching is part of how he does it. As the day's text says, millions attend the Memorial and study the Bible with us

each year, and hundreds of thousands get baptized. Seeing what Jehovah is accomplishing worldwide moves us to keep preaching zealously.

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## **1 “Great Crowd”: Too Many to Count (ὄχλος, *okh'los*)**

The Greek word ὄχλος (*okh'los*) means a crowd or a multitude, a large gathering of people. John added that this crowd was so large that “no man was able to number” it. That stands out, because just before this he heard an exact number for the anointed: “I heard the number of those who were sealed, 144,000.” (Revelation 7:4)

The 144,000 are a set number, but the great crowd has no limit given. The elder told John who they are: “These are the ones who come out of the great tribula-

tion.” (Revelation 7:14) We do not know how many more will yet respond, but we know the crowd keeps growing.

- Each person we help to learn the truth could become part of a crowd that Jehovah himself saw as too large to count.

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## 2 “Nations”: People From Everywhere (ἔθνος, *eth'nos*)

The Greek word ἔθνος (*eth'nos*) means a nation or a people, a group of people joined by their land or their background. John did not stop with one word. He said the crowd came “out of all nations and tribes and peoples and tongues,” piling up four terms to show that no group is left out.

Long before, Isaiah foretold this gathering: “To it all the nations will stream.” (Isaiah 2:2) Today, people from every background stand side by side in the

same worship. Jesus pointed to the size of the work still ahead: “The harvest is great, but the workers are few. Therefore, beg the Master of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest.”  
(Luke 10:2)

- No neighbor, language, or background is outside the reach of the good news, so there is no one we should write off.
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### 3 “Outspokenness”: Bold Speech That Points to Jesus (παρρησία, *par·re·si'a*)

The day’s text points to Acts 4:13, where the rulers saw “the outspokenness of Peter and John.” The Greek word παρρησία (*par·re·si'a*) means boldness, fearlessness, or freeness of speech. The study note on this verse explains that this word and a related verb, often rendered “speak boldly,” show up again and again

in Acts and were an identifying mark of the preaching done by the early Christians.

Peter and John were seen as “uneducated and ordinary men,” yet the rulers “began to realize that they had been with Jesus.” (Acts 4:13) Their boldness did not come from schooling but from time spent with Jesus and from prayer. They asked Jehovah, “grant to your slaves to keep speaking your word with all boldness,” and afterward “were speaking the word of God with boldness.” (Acts 4:29, 31)

- Our zeal and confidence in the ministry can show others that we too have learned from Jesus, and we can ask Jehovah for that boldness just as the disciples did.

## Key Spiritual Reflections

- **The Growing Crowd:** When I think about the millions who attend the Memorial and study the Bible each year, how does that move me to keep going in the ministry? (Revelation 7:9, 14)
- **The Harvest:** Do I see potential in my own territory the way the Master of the harvest does, or have I started to think no one there will listen? (Luke 10:2)
- **Being With Jesus:** When people watch me in the ministry, what would make them realize that I have “been with Jesus”? (Acts 4:13)