

## HERALD OF HOPE QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

### Q28) Who's Who in the New Heaven and Earth?

**S**ince Pentecost there have been three classes of people with whom God has been dealing, the Jew, the Gentile, and the Church. According to 1Cor.10:32 it is clear that these distinctions will continue during the millennial kingdom. However, might it not be that in the new heaven and new earth, when all the saved have resurrection bodies, these distinctions will disappear?

I can find no evidence in Scripture that would suggest that Jews, Gentiles and Church will cease to maintain their special place in the new heaven and new earth. Some have used 1Cor.15:28 to teach that after death has been swallowed up and Christ has *"delivered up the kingdom"* to the Father, then the Son will be subject to the Father, *"that God may be all in all"*. However, Paul's description of the final stage of Christ's victory over death says nothing about distinctions between believers of different ages.

Very little is said in Scripture about conditions in the new heaven and new earth. Little more than two chapters (Rev.chs.21 and 22) tell us all that we know, and we should be careful not to go beyond the details given in those chapters. Since it will be an unspeakably glorious place in an entirely new environment, it is difficult for humans to comprehend this side of the grave.

What we do know, is that in the eternal state the earth will be renovated by fire, there will be *"no more sea"* and *"the former things are passed away"* (Rev.21:4). The new Jerusalem comes down from heaven to earth, and when the angel showed John the ***"bride the Lamb's wife"***, he showed him the new Jerusalem which has *"the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb"* in its foundations (Rev.21:14). Paul wrote that the Church is *"built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets"*(Eph.2:20), and stated, *"I have laid the foundation"* (1Cor.3:10). The Church is espoused to Christ *"as a chaste virgin"*(2Cor.11:2) and is identified in the new heaven and new earth.

The twelve gates of the new Jerusalem will be inscribed with *"the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel"* (Rev.21:12), and through those gates *"the kings of the earth"* will eternally *"bring their glory and honour into it"*. ***"The nations (Gentiles) of them which are saved shall walk in the light"*** of the new Jerusalem (Rev.21:24-26). Christ is still described as the ***"root and offspring of David"***(Rev.22:16), and *"the Spirit and the bride"* (the Church) make a final appeal (Rev.22:17). Maybe the angels of God will occupy heaven, the Church the new Jerusalem, Israel around the new Jerusalem and the saved Gentiles of other ages, the new earth. We will have to wait and see.