

Restoration of the Kingdom of God – 24

Last time we reviewed the Scriptures which show that Elijah has joined all the other of Adam's descendants who have died and are unconscious in the grave. We are not informed when Elijah died, nor, more pointedly, where he was buried. There is a human tendency to heap excessive honour on some people, and to make them celebrities.

- After the death of famed and renowned people, their tombs have become shrines and objects of pilgrimage. God had evidently decided to nip in the bud any possibility of this for Moses, and *"buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, opposite Beth Peor; but no one knows his grave to this day" - Deuteronomy 34:6.*

There was the distinct possibility of men later making Elijah's grave a place of veneration. So he was taken *"by a whirlwind into heaven" - 2 Kings 2:11.* But we ask, into which of the three places called *"heaven"* in Scripture was he taken? Certainly not to **God's dwelling-place**, where only Jesus has gone, as the apostle states in **John 3:13.** Nor would there be any point in Elijah's body being sent to float freely about in **outer space** or being dropped on the moon or one of the other planets in the second place Scripture calls *"heaven"*.

- A *"whirlwind"*, Hebrew *ca`ar* = a hurricane, Strong 5591, can only exist in **the atmosphere**, the third meaning in Scripture of "heaven". In this way Elijah was transported through the air to his place of burial in the earth, and like his ancestor Adam, his dust returned to the earth, his breath, Hebrew *ruwach* returned *"to God who gave it" - Ecclesiastes 12:7.* And so he awaits the resurrection, when he will be *"made perfect"* with all the other faithful - **Hebrews 11:40.**

The apostle John wrote about the time of resurrection in **Revelation 20:4** *"...And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. 5 But the rest of the dead"* - those who died after the return of Christ - *"did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. 6 Blessed and holy is he who has part"* (Greek, *meros* = portion, inheritance, or lot) *"in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years."*

- Elijah will be brought before the judgement seat of Christ. Also there will be all the others who have known the will of God, and have been called upon to submit to it. Each one will *"...receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad" - 2 Corinthians 5:10.* The disobedient will first suffer *"indignation and wrath, 9 tribulation and anguish" - Romans 2:8,* before being finally obliterated in their *"second death"*.

But the faithful will be made immortal - **1 Corinthians 15:51-55** and then be made administrators of God's authority over all nations in the restored kingdom of God - **Revelation 5:10; Acts 1:6; Daniel 7:27,** when they will *"inherit the earth" - Psalm 37:29; Matthew 5:5. James 1:18* calls them *"a kind of firstfruits of His creatures"*, in other words, in God's program, these are the advance crop of those immortals who will become the permanent population of the earth. The result of their work during the thousand years will be the enlightening of the nations.

- At the end of that time will be the resurrection of *"the rest of the dead"* - those who have died during the thousand years. In the final judgement, the numbers of those found worthy will be the final *"harvest"* of immortals who will be the permanent inheritors of the earth. Then will be fulfilled **Numbers 14:21** *"as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD."* More next time, God willing.