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IS MY ETERNAL FUTURE IN HEAVEN OR ON EARTH?

PART 2

Hello, my brothers and sisters, welcome back to the Cog Pod. This is your host, brother Ed. Last week in podcast # 14, “Is My Eternal Future in Heaven or on Earth”, we left you with this scenario:

So, if Jehovah is going to dwell with men, and there will be no sickness, sorrow, pain, death, crime, hunger or any of these things on the new Earth, why leave it for paradise? Is that not what Eden was, paradise? Expanding that paradisaic garden to encompass the entire inhabited Earth was the task that Jehovah assigned to our original parents Adam and Eve, was it not? So where did the influence and interest of man to inhabit the spirit realm come from? Why was it necessary for humans to leave Earth for life in Heaven anyway, and who was the first to do so? Who is going to determine who goes where for all eternity? What do the Holy Scriptures have to say about these matters regarding heavenly life for humans? These issues will be addressed in part 2 of ‘Is My Eternal Future In Heaven or On Earth?’ Are you ready to get started? Wonderful!!! Let’s dig in.

Mankind’s interest in the spirit realm is innate because that is where mankind originated, in the unseen spirit realm. As Heb 11:3 states; **3**By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible. [ESV] Mankind has been in contact with the spirit realm from the very beginning. Adam knew that he had been created by the invisible Jehovah God to live on the Earth, and he and his wife were given various assignments regarding the future of the earth as brought to our attention in part 1 at Gen 1:26-28 which reads; **26** And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. **27** And God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. **28** And God blessed them: and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. [ASV] So here we see that Jehovah directly communicated with the man and woman regarding their God-given commission from the spirit realm.

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From the creation of man forward, mankind has always been aware of and in touch with beings from the spirit realm. In Genesis chapter 3, a creature from the spirit realm, in the form of a serpent, communicated with Eve. So very early on in human history, we see that there has been communication with both wholesome godly spirit entities and unwholesome devilish and demonic spirit entities. That has continued down to this very day. The influence of both is apparent in our day-to-day existence. The first reference of the need for a human to be brought into the spirit realm is found at Gen 3:14&15 which says; **14**And Jehovah God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, cursed art thou above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: **15**and I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: he shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. [ASV] Who in actuality was this serpent? The bible answers at Rev 12:9 which reads; **9** And the great dragon was cast down, the old serpent, he that is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world; he was cast down to the earth, and his angels were cast down with him. [ASV] Ahhh. The scriptures show that the original serpent mentioned in the Genesis account is none other than the Devil, Satan. But how does this scripture in Genesis, so early on, speak to a human or humans going into the spirit realm? The Holy Scriptures plainly show that the seed of the woman was to be non-other than Jesus the Christ. The following scriptures verify that fact, starting with: John 1:14 which says; **The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us. We have seen His glory, the glory of the one and only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.** [NIV] Our brother John identified Jesus as the word in the form of Jesus Christ.

The process by which Jesus became the seed of the woman and why is highlighted at Php 2:6-8 where it says concerning Jesus; **6** Who, existing in the form of God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, **7** but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in human likeness. **8** And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross. [BSB] The word, Jesus, in order to be the seed of the woman who would crush the head of Satan, had to be born as a human being, through a woman. This is supported by Gal 4:4&5 which says; **4** But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, **5** to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship. [NIV] These verses give power to

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Rom 8:3 which says; For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful man, as an offering for sin. He thus condemned sin in the flesh, [BSB] At Heb 2:14 our brother Paul under inspiration masterfully makes a powerful case as to why this was absolutely necessary when he writes; Because God's children are human beings—made of flesh and blood—the Son also became flesh and blood. For only as a human being could he die, and only by dying could he break the power of the devil, who had the power of death. [NLT] This was prophetically foretold in the scripture found at Isaiah 7:14 which says; Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin will be with child and give birth to a son, and will call Him Immanuel. [BSB] The fulfillment of this scripture was recorded by our brother Matthew at Mt 1:23 which states; 23“Behold, the virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call Him Immanuel” (which means, “God with us”). So it is scripturally established beyond a doubt that the seed of the woman in Genesis 3:15 was Jesus, who according to scripture left his place in heaven to be born as a man on the Earth for the purpose of reconciling mankind to Jehovah in order for us to receive a legal adoption, thus becoming heirs of God. Now it's time to consider the scriptural evidence that other humans will also receive heavenly life.

The Holy Scriptures, and Jesus himself, indicated that other humans will also be chosen to inherit eternal life in heaven. Notice the following scriptures:

First, let's consider the words of Jesus when speaking to Nicodemus at John 3:12&13 where he pointedly says; 12 I have spoken to you of earthly things and you do not believe; how then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things? 13 No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven—the Son of Man. [NIV] It is noteworthy that Jesus said that prior to him, no one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven, the Son of Man. Yes, this scripture shows that Jesus knew that he came from heaven and that it would be necessary for him to return to heaven and that no one prior to him had done so. He also indicated at Jo 14:2&3 that some of his followers would also go to heaven when he said; 2 My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. [NIV] Now, also notice what He says in prayer at Jo 17:24; 24 “Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me

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because you loved me before the creation of the world. [NIV] Here Jesus again states that He wants those that the Father has given Him to be with Him where He was going, and that was going to be in heaven. Again at Mt 19:28 Jesus said; **28** Jesus replied, "I assure you that when the world is made new and the Son of Man sits upon his glorious throne, you who have been my followers will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. [NLT] Obviously, from the afore cited scriptures, Jesus has made it very plain that those among his followers would receive heavenly life.

Notice what our brother Paul also notes with regard to the resurrection to heavenly life at 1Cor 15:35-38 where he writes; **35** But someone will ask, "How are the dead raised? With what kind of body will they come?" **36** How foolish! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. **37** When you sow, you do not plant the body that will be, but just a seed, perhaps of wheat or of something else. **38** But God gives it a body as he has determined, and to each kind of seed he gives its own body. He continues in vss 42-54;

42 So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable; **43** it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; **44** it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. **45** So it is written: "The first man Adam became a living being"; the last Adam, a life-giving spirit. **46** The spiritual did not come first, but the natural, and after that the spiritual. **47** The first man was of the dust of the earth; the second man is of heaven. **48** As was the earthly man, so are those who are of the earth; and as is the heavenly man, so also are those who are of heaven. **49** And just as we have borne the image of the earthly man, so shall we bear the image of the heavenly man. **50** I declare to you, brothers and sisters, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. **51** Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed— **52** in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. **53** For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. **54** When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: "Death has been swallowed up in victory." [NIV] There is so much to digest in the afore cited section of scripture, but it is very evident that a spirit

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body of Jehovah's choosing will be given to those resurrected to heavenly life to rule over the Earth with the resurrected Jesus.

Philippians 3:20&21 says this about that spirit body to be given: **20** But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, **21** who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body. [NIV] Doesn't that remind you of what Jesus told Mary in Jo 11:25&26 where he said; **25** Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; **26** and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?" [NIV] Our brother Paul at 2 Corinthians 5:1-4 gives this testimony; **1** For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands. **2** Meanwhile we groan, longing to be clothed instead with our heavenly dwelling, **3** because when we are clothed, we will not be found naked. **4** For while we are in this tent, we groan and are burdened, because we do not wish to be unclothed but to be clothed instead with our heavenly dwelling, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. [NIV] An enlightening reference regarding those who will receive life in heaven, wouldn't you agree? The insight that Jehovah through Jesus gave Paul is also manifest regarding heavenly life at 1 Thess 4:16-17; **16** For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. **17** After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. [NIV] Then there is Rev 20:4-6 which says; **4** I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony about Jesus and because of the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years. **5** (The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended.) This is the first resurrection. **6** Blessed and holy are those who share in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years.

Without a doubt, these scriptures have reference to those selected for life in heaven with Jesus. Vs 4 indicates that those from the Earth have been given authority to judge.

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This is a very important and loving aspect of Jehovah's judicial process. Why? Let's look at 1Cor 6:9-11 to get a clue. It says; **9Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who submit to or perform homosexual acts, 10nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor verbal abusers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God. 11And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.**

[BSB] What a wonderful provision!!! All those born of Adam are sinners. We are all inherently addicted to sins of some sort. A former cocaine addict once told me that he learned in a meeting for addiction, 'All men and women are addicts, we're just addicted to different things'. And according to Rom 3:23 he was correct, for it says; **23For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard. [NLT]** It is noteworthy that the best sponsors for those suffering from addiction are former addicts. Whether one is addicted to sex, alcohol, drugs, theft, greed, gambling, lying, fraud etc., Jehovah has arranged for a jury of our peers to judge and assist us in overcoming our addiction to sins of various sorts, because these individuals have suffered from and overcome their addictions to the very same things. They, can compassionately understand, having experienced the struggle. Perfect angels, who have never experienced the struggle, are in no position to do that. Ro 11:33 is most apropos when it states; **33Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out! [NIV]** Jehovah has thus arranged for us to be judged and assisted to overcome our sinful nature by our peers. This is forcefully brought to our attention in vss 2&3 of 1Cor 6 which points out; **2Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if you are to judge the world, are you not competent to judge trivial cases? 3Do you not know that we will judge angels? How much more the things of this life! [BSB]** So now, in God's wisdom, we can see and understand why those who have had a sinful human existence are needed in heaven as judges and, if you will, our addiction sponsors. They will comprise the bride of Christ, and the two shall be one as Eph 5:31&32 states; **31"For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." 32This mystery is profound, but I am speaking about Christ and the church. [BSB]** The scriptures also point out why Jesus is uniquely qualified to be part of this judicial process at Heb 2:14-18 which states; **14Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might break the power of him who holds the power of death—that is, the**

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devil— **15**and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death. **16**For surely it is not angels he helps, but Abraham’s descendants. **17**For this reason he had to be made like them, fully human in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people. **18**Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted. [NIV] Who but Jehovah possesses the love, wisdom and power to accomplish a just arrangement such as this? To this we say Amen!!!

Inasmuch as a circumspect study of the scriptures indicates that there will be those that will live forever on earth and those that will live forever in heaven, who is it that will determine where eternal life for those selected from among mankind will be, whether in heaven or on Earth?

Jesus gives us a very solid clue at Mt 20:23 when speaking to his closest disciples. It reads; **23**Jesus told them, “You will indeed drink from my bitter cup. But I have no right to say who will sit on my right or my left. My Father has prepared those places for the ones he has chosen.” [NLT] This very important point is repeated in scripture at Mk 10:39,40 where it is again recorded; **39**“Oh yes,” they replied, “we are able!” Then Jesus told them, “You will indeed drink from my bitter cup and be baptized with my baptism of suffering. **40**But I have no right to say who will sit on my right or my left. God has prepared those places for the ones he has chosen.” [NLT] Jesus points out that even he has no say as to where individuals will be placed for all eternity. That, according to Jesus, is the sole responsibility placed in the jurisdiction of Jehovah God only, and rightly so.

When you are invited as a guest in someone’s home, you don’t pick out your room. They show you your room. It may or may not be to your personal liking, but your stay will be in the place they designate or assign.

None of us are in a position, and we would be way out of line to try and dictate to Jehovah where we are going to reside in His exquisite mansion. Every room in His mansion is beyond exquisite. He personally will assign our place of stay as He has determined, and we would be wise and blessed to appreciate wherever we will be assigned, is the best place for us.

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So, will my eternal future be in heaven or on Earth? Well, that's honestly not for any of us to decide. In fact, attempting to do so would be a form of rebellion regarding Jehovah's determination and decision as to where our eternal future will be. We do well to remember what is stated as 1Sam 15:23 which says; **For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as idolatry and teraphim. Because thou hast rejected the word of Jehovah, he hath also rejected thee from being king. [ASV]**

Whether our future will be in heaven or on earth, the promise of Psalm 145:16 will hold true when it says regarding our Wonderful God and Father Jehovah; **You open Your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing. [BSB]** So then, let us all rest assured that eternal life for each one of us as determined by our God and Father whether in heaven or on Earth will be exquisite far beyond our current comprehension. Amen!!!

In podcast # 15 we will look into whether it is appropriate to pray for vengeance. It's important to for us to know this, because when we have been the victim of egregious ungodly injustice, and it seems that the perpetrators are getting away with it, is it appropriate to pray for Jehovah to punish the perpetrators? That is a question many have struggled with. Join us next week as we delve into this topic. It's gonna be goooood!!!! So until then my brothers and sisters this is brother Ed saying so long for now and I look forward to our next week's journey.