

030



# The Father Knows Best

School of the Bible Class

## Isaiah

Isaiah 40 Introduction

030

January 15, 2023

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Indian Hills Community Church

# Detectives looking for Eschatological Evidences in Isaiah

Tribulation and Kingdom Truth



**Continuing**

# Hurting the Cause!

- It has been said that eschatology is difficult and there never will be a Dispensational agreement about the details.
- I hope to differ. Eschatology must be as clear as anything else in Scripture—it is the “glory of God.”

If we would have presented the eschaton without equivocation and ambiguity is it possible that we may have saved some of our own from the trap set by our own uncertainties?

To wit, if we are not sure about the “glory of God,” is it not a small step to conclude that God is not clear about the Abrahamic Covenant either!



# However we may have—

- Help from unexpected quarters. There are “non-dispensationalists” who are speaking out on the question of a restored earth as the “Heaven” anticipated.
- “However, as we will see, the point of such texts is that heaven is meant to be manifested on earth in the present (ethics) [sic] and will be manifested on earth in the future (eschatology); in no case is heaven the final destination of the righteous.”
- Middleton, J. Richard. *A New Heaven and a New Earth* (p. 211). Baker Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.

# However we may have—

- We cannot speak for all of them but some who are not Dispensationalists but **are building an earthly future into their eschatology.**
- Hoekema = an a-millennialist (argues for an earthly eschaton)
- J Richard Middleton (Historic Pre-mill?) convincingly argues for an earthly eschatology in his **A New Heaven and a New Earth.**
- Randy Alcon in **Heaven** is confusing about many things **but clearly advocates for a “heaven” on earth in the eternal state.**

# However we may have Help

- So what the Word says in the literal sense, comes as a “new discovery” by a variety of “scholars.”
- Non-Dispensationalist still handle the text strangely! Go back 2 slides to the “ethics” in the earth that carry into the new earth.
- A-millennialist Anthony Hoekema says, “If God would have to annihilate the present cosmos, Satan would have won a great victory. . . . Satan would have succeeded in so devastatingly corrupting the present cosmos and the present earth that God could do nothing with it but to blot it totally out of existence.”
- Alcorn p. 228. We have made this point to discredit annihilation .

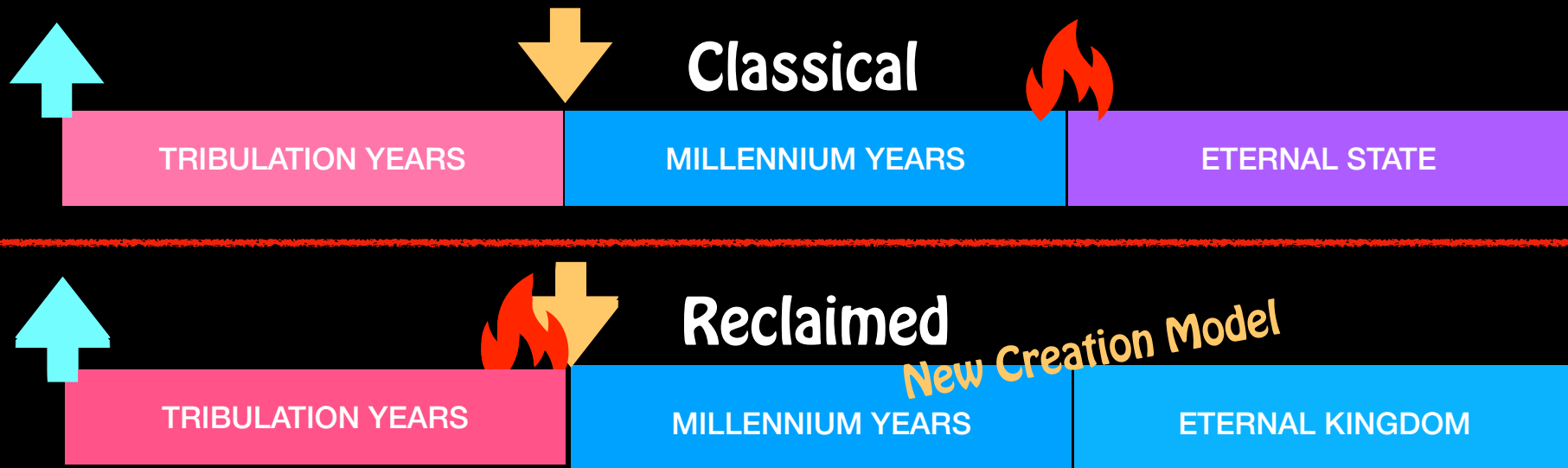
# A Paradigm Sift

- Evangelical (H. Pre. M) Alcorn tries to bridge the reclaimed ground for others.
- Paul Enns (Moody Handbook) see other listing of books:
- Marshall, Paul— Heaven Is Not My Home: Learning to Live in God's Creation. Nashville: Word, 1998.
- Moon, Gary. Homesick for Eden. Ann Arbor, Mich.: Servant Publications, 1997.
- Wolters, Albert M. Creation Regained: Biblical Basics for a Reformational Worldview. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985.

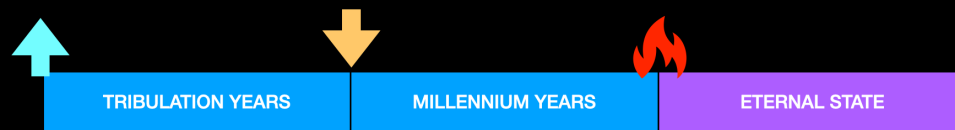


# Shockingly?

- Is it possible that an eschatological help comes from outside the Dispensational elites—teachers who have no “history to live down.”
- These writers are independent and free to propose a preposterous thing, that is a better rendition of the glory of God? (Still a mixed blessing.)

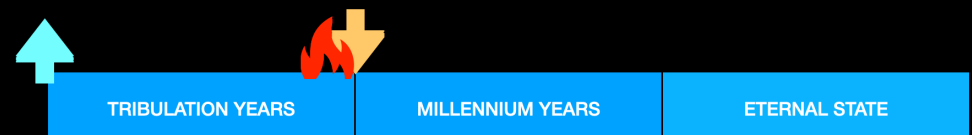


- We have presented two models of the “end times” eschaton—and the physical earth.
- Issues: The 1) **timing** and 2) **nature** of the conflagration— with the corresponding descent of the 3) **New Heaven and Earth with the New Jerusalem** attached to the earth—these are the primary differences in these models. The Eternal State is understood as otherworldly (a Heaven) in the non-physical world in the Classic Model.



## Classic Model

## Reclaiming the Earth



- The left is the Classic Model held by the majority of Dispensationalists.
- On the right is the challenge position Reclaiming the Earth that is “gaining ground.”
- Gaining Ground? Again the Pre-Trib Conference—



# Pre-Trib 2022 2 Peter 3:3-15

- A fine presentation was made by Andy Woods (Sugarland Bible Church Huston TX) entitled, “**Prophecy’s Positive Impact on the Believer’s Walk**” based on 2 Peter 3:3-15.
- A key development in that passage is that it **ends with the new heaven and earth**—the passage states that our hope after earth’s judgment is in a new heaven and earth—the motivation for godly living.

# Uncertain Use of some Words

- 2 Peter 3:10 “But the day of the Lord **will come** like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be **destroyed** (luw) loose) with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up. See Rev. 6-19 for the same images.
- <sup>11</sup>Since all these things are to be **destroyed** (luw, revealed) in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness,

## 2 Peter's Text 3:12-14

- <sup>12</sup>looking for and hastening the **coming** of the day of the God, because of which (DOL) the **heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements (that which belongs) will melt (perish) with intense heat (suffer from great heat)!**
- <sup>13</sup>But according to His promise (Isaiah 65:17 etc.) we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells.
- <sup>14</sup>Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless,

- Going on in context—
- <sup>15</sup>and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation; [i.e. a way or means of safety (rapture?)] Liddell, H. G., Scott, R., Jones, H. S., & McKenzie, R. (1996). In *A Greek-English lexicon* (p. 1751). Clarendon Press.] just as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you,
- <sup>16</sup>as also in all his letters, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction. (As if the Day of the Lord had come 2 Thess 2.)
- <sup>17</sup>You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, be on your guard so that you are not carried away by the error of unprincipled men and fall from your own steadfastness, 2 Peter 3:14–17



# Back to Andy Woods

- Here is a short clip of a question asked at the end of his presentation.
- Although nothing in the talk would have prompted this question—as I remember it.
- It just shows how 2 Peter 3 still does not have a settled interpretation.
- Andy makes an attempt by explaining it from his point of view—



**To pick the spot move to 1:11 sec.**

<https://www.pre-trib.org/articles/dr-andy-woods/message/prophecy-s-positive-impact-on-the-believer-s-walk-2-peter-3-3-15/watch>

# Commentary

- Notice how Andy uses his definition of the Day of the Lord as applied to the Tribulation and the Kingdom. He says that Judgment (Tribulation) is followed by peace (Kingdom) the DAY figure, night followed by day. So far so good! But—
- Andy says **2 Peter 3 is not about the Tribulation AND he adds a second earth judgment at the end of the “Millennium.”** But why?
  - Matt. 24:21 “never before or ever again” (Flood before, Trib now and not ever again rules out the conflagration after 1000 yrs.)
- Notice, **that fire at the end of 1000 years does nothing to the earth, it just removes the unrighteous (Rev.20:9).**
- Much more convincingly 2 Peter 3:10f is revealing what happens to the realms of the heavens and earth— there is in purging.
- Yet, we are to believe that when the Bible is silent about a conflagration judgment (2x) after a 1000 years there really is one? Is this an acceptable conclusion?

# A Short Fix—Much more can be said

- “Although many Christians throughout history have read 2 Peter 3 as if it describes the annihilation of the entire cosmos, this does not make sense of the fact that the earth is not destroyed in verse 10. “Burned up = Discovered, revealed”
- “As we saw in the preceding chapter, the earth is not “burned up” (as pre-NIV English translations had it). Rather, “the earth and everything that is done on it will be disclosed” (NRSV); or, to be more literal, “the earth and the works in it will be found.”
- Middleton, J. Richard. *A New Heaven and a New Earth* (p. 190). Baker Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.

# Standing the Gap or Standing in the Way

- The man that asked the question is commonly confused wants clarification of the meaning of the 2 Peter 3 passage.
- It was a missed opportunity for Andy to explain that 2 Peter is indeed a description of the Tribulation followed by the Kingdom—using his definition of the DOL.
- He actually said this but quickly corrected the idea (according to him) that 2 Peter 3 is not the Tribulation—but he cannot deny that the Tribulation is followed by the glorious kingdom.
- It is noted that Tommy Ice attempted to clarify Andy Woods' statement —DOL when God interviews.

# Pay Dirt for Me!

- At the end of Andy's Q/A session, he was aware that the 2 Peter 3 question had different answers than he had given—graciously, he suggested for any to see such a presentation of the alternative view was to consult the Theological Journal Bibliotheca Sacra (BibSac) issue 2014:171 for an article that does the best job of supporting “the other view point”—as to the timing of the conflagration and the New Heaven and Earth and the descent of the New Jerusalem.

# The Missing Recording!

- I ran our video of the Q/A to the end (some of which you saw) but found that Andy's comments had been cut off therefore I could not verify exactly **why he included that information.**
- But I know he said it because, while sitting there in a few moments I had located a copy (2014 vol. 171) on Amazon and ordered it—it arrived a few days after we returned.

## Isaiah 65–66: The Destiny of God's Servants in a New Creation

Gary U. Smith is Professor of Old Testament, Bethel Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota.  
Bibliotheca Sacra, 171(681–684)

- “Many early prophecies in the Book of Isaiah seem to refer to amazing changes that will occur in a marvelous future era when God transforms this sinful world into a completely new creation. These include (a) the coming of people from many nations to Zion, God personally teaching them His ways, and the end of war (2:2–4); (b) the gathering of all Hebrews who are holy to Jerusalem, plus the presence of God Himself in a cloud and flaming fire (4:2–6); (c) the establishment of a just and righteous Davidic king who will rule on the throne of David forever (9:6–7); and (d) hints of a fundamental change in the nature of human and animal relationships (11:6–9).
- Smith, G. U. (2014). Isaiah 65–66: The Destiny of God's Servants in a New Creation. Bibliotheca Sacra, 171(681–684), 42.

## Isaiah 65–66: The Destiny of God’s Servants in a New Creation

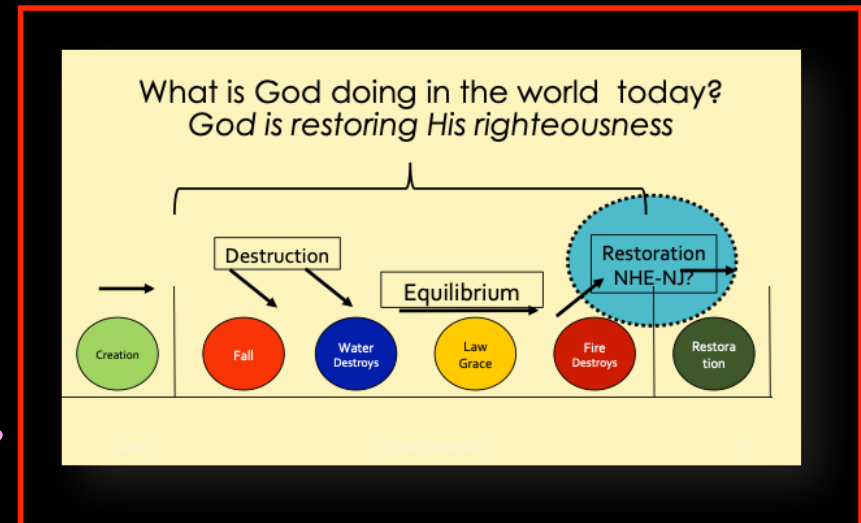
Gary V. Smith is Professor of Old Testament, Bethel Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota.  
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- “Space does not permit even the briefest treatment of all the astonishing new eschatological changes mentioned in chapters 12–39 (see 19:18–25; 24:1–27:13; 32:1–8, 15–20; 35:1–10) or in chapters 40–48 (see 40:1–11; 41:17–20; 43:1–7; 44:1–5; 45:14–17), but these passages orient the reader to the idea of God’s new creation mentioned later in chapters 65–66. Most of Isaiah 49–55 includes poems about the future Servant who will bring justice to the nations (42:1–9; 49:1–7; 50:4–11; 52:13–53:12), as well as proclamations of salvation describing the “good news” about God’s future reign when every knee shall bow before Him (45:20–25; 49:26; 52:7–10). God has a plan that involves both devastating judgment on the wicked (63:1–6) as well as unfold wonders in a new creation for the righteous (chaps. 60–62).
- Smith, G. V. (2014). Isaiah 65–66: The Destiny of God’s Servants in a New Creation. Bibliotheca Sacra, 171(681–684), 42.



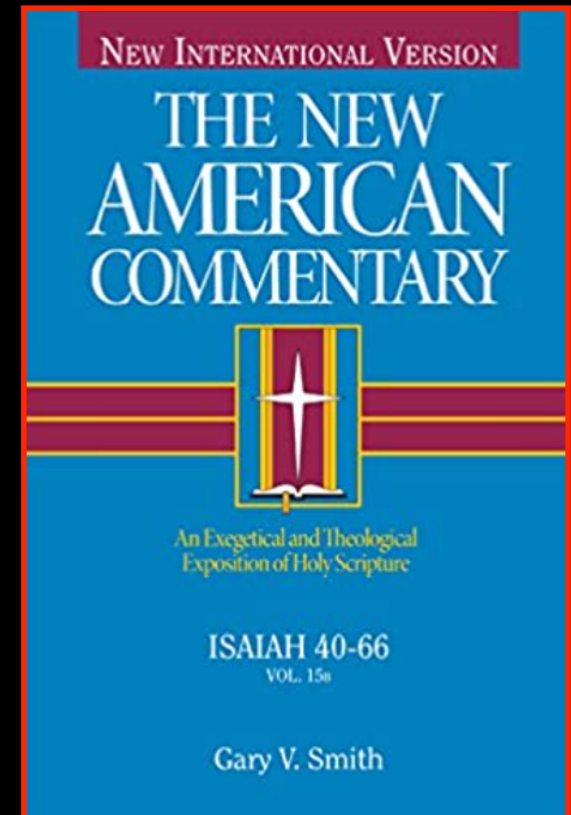
# Gary Smith's Summary

- Notice that there is only one earthly judgment not two, that is one “of the Tribulation” and not another one at the end of the 1000 years.
- Advance note: In all his (Smith's) writing I could not find one reference to a **conflagration after the 1000 years**.
- According to Isaiah there is one cataclysmic world wide judgement followed by one radical restoration in the new creation.



# Isaiah in Two Volumes!

- With the BibSac article, I began to search for other materials written by Gary V Smith.
- I found that he had newer (2014) two volume commentary on Isaiah.
- Since Twila orders our books, I asked her to order vol 2 covering Isaiah 40-66. Our future study.
- To my pleasant surprise—it was **on the shelf at Sound Words in the American Commentary Series.**



# Isaiah in Two Volumes!

- Volume 2 starts where we are in our study. So I began there and worked through the text to the end of Isaiah 66.
- What joy and delight here I found a writer that had not adopted the Classic View we have been challenging.
- He does a good job with the Isaiah 65:17 (NHE) followed by the qualities of the Kingdom

# Isaiah in Two Volumes!

- By now I also had Volume 1 (1-39) and scoured it for his references to the same event in the early chapters.
- We covered these earlier, but we were not as fully alert to Isaiah's treatment of the NHE that had already been common language for the first 39 chapters of Isaiah.
- The pattern is as we have suggested—



# Tony Garland says text cannot be Untangled

- He never suggested that the text is confusing—that is not knowing which restored feature is in the Kingdom or in the Eternal State.
- He does not resort to the lynch-pin—the “state of ambiguity” which acceptably stops any further inquiry.
- So whenever a difficult text is encountered, he does not use the claim that the text goes back and forth, rendering any further investigation useless rather he solves the problem.

# The Fly in the Ointment

- Tony Garland says that Isaiah 65:17 is not chronological because it contradicts Rev. 21:1. Therefore another “interpretation of Isaiah must be found. (I say, why not relook at Rev. 21:1?) But he gives the NT priority, the result is that it is tiring to follow his buzzy bee line of thinking but he “gets it done” his way. But wait—maybe Both are chronologically correct if one would see Rev. 20 as describing details that happen in the “probationary” period of the Kingdom.

# The Fly in the Ointment

- Rev. 20 events
- 1. Satan jailed in the beginning (for 1000 yrs)
- 2. the martyrs of the Tribulation are raised in the beginning
- 3. Satan's eventual release at the end of 1000 yrs
- 4. The Great White Throne judgment at the end of 1000 yrs.
- Not one word is given about the quality of the kingdom itself!
- No idea of time progressing. Only that these events are in the probationary period of the kingdom that lasts 1000 years.
- So at Rev 19:1 the last "After this" (the antecedent is the Tribulation) next (Second Coming 19) and Kingdom 21) on a made new earth in Rev 21:1



- But what are we to make of the 1000 years of the first part of the Kingdom?
- While the full curse is lifted and the Messiah has perfectly executed the Kingdom with the rod of iron, **NO ONE IS HURT**—What can still be lacking?
- A. There are unrighteous mixed in with the righteous Matt. 13:30 collectively waiting for an opportunity to act.





- We know that they (the unrighteous) are removed at the end of the 1000 years SO it is clear that these years are **PROBATIONARY YEARS FOR (LOST) HUMANITY**.
- THEY HAVE A limited time—to believe the Son (Kiss the Son Ps. 2:12) lest He be angry with you.
- With all hinderances removed (Satan) this is the final chance for all humanity to become servants to the most High God—they will have an unfettered choice—but they are on probation.

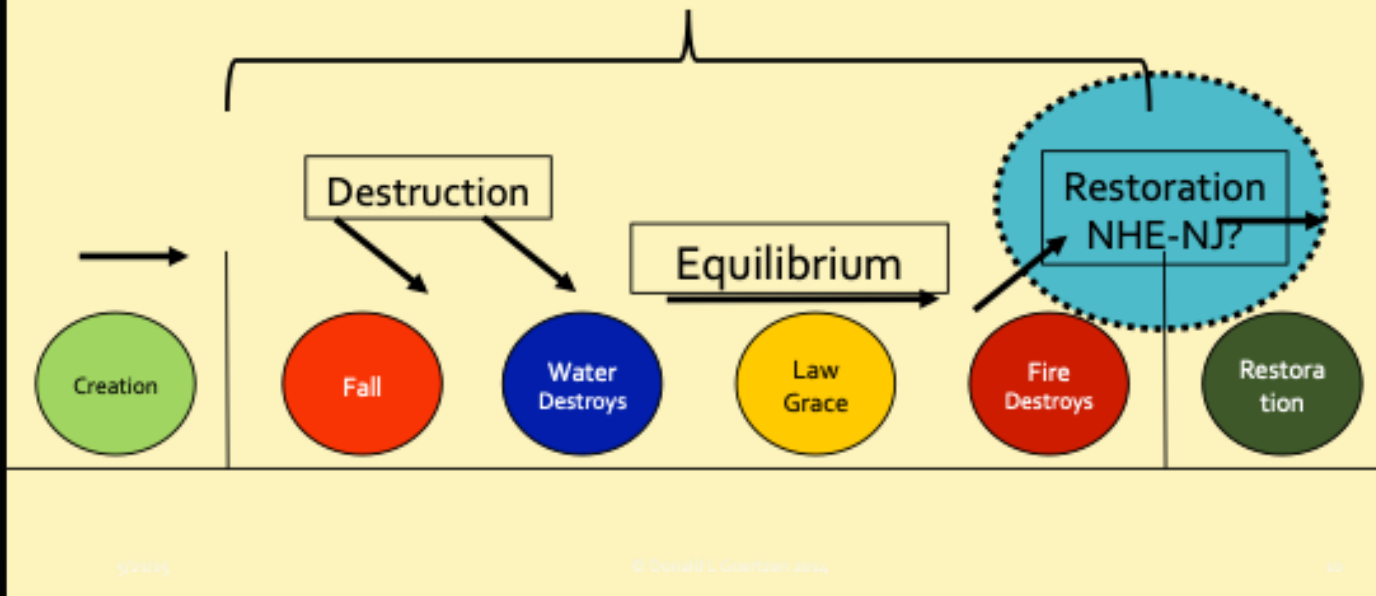
# **“Creation Of A New World Of Joy And Abundance”**

- **“Now God repeats many of the earlier promises (chaps. 25; 35; 60-62) he made to all those who choose to be his servants. This new situation and these new things are part of what are now called a "new heavens and a new earth" (65:17).**
- **“This way of describing God's glorious kingdom emphasizes the radical transformation that will take place when God establishes his kingdom. Indeed, the past world will not only be forgotten (65:17b); it will pass away and be replaced. (Rev.21:1)**
- **Smith, Gary U. Isaiah 40-66: Volume 15 (The New American Commentary) (p. 729). B&H Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.**

## **“Creation Of A New World Of Joy And Abundance”**

- **“This new creation will engender feelings of joy and gladness, the end of sorrow; people will live long, there will be peace among men, and there will be clear communion between God and his people and a period of peace among the animals. This sounds almost like a return to the paradise of the garden of Eden before sin entered the world.”**
- **Smith, Gary U. Isaiah 40-66: Volume 15 (The New American Commentary) (p. 729). B&H Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.**

What is God doing in the world today?  
*God is restoring His righteousness*



Thus far—