

“The Past Recast”

“He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away. And he who was seated on the throne said, ‘Behold, I am making all things new...’”
(Revelation 21:4-5)

From Bitter to Blessed

Ruth 1:19-21 – (19) “So the two of them went on until they came to Bethlehem. And when they came to Bethlehem, the whole town was stirred because of them. And the women said, ‘Is this Naomi?’ (20) She said to them, ‘Do not call me Naomi; call me Mara, for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me. (21) I went away full, and the LORD has brought me back empty. Why call me Naomi, when the LORD has testified against me and the Almighty has brought calamity upon me?”

Ruth 4:13-15 – (13) “So Boaz took Ruth, and she became his wife. And he went in to her, and the LORD gave her conception, and she bore a son. (14) Then the women said to Naomi, ‘Blessed be the LORD, who has not left you this day without a redeemer, and may his name be renowned in Israel! (15) He shall be to you a restorer of life and a nourisher of your old age, for your daughter-in-law who loves you, who is more to you than seven sons, has given birth to him.”

The God-Centered View

Genesis 50:15-21 – (15) “When Joseph’s brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, ‘It may be that Joseph will hate us and pay us back for all the evil that we did to him.’ (16) So they sent a message to Joseph, saying, ‘Your father gave this command before he died, (17) ‘Say to Joseph, Please forgive the transgression of your brothers and their sin, because they did evil to you.’ And now, please forgive the transgression of the servants of the God of your father.’ Joseph wept when they spoke to him. (18) His brothers also came and fell down before him and said, ‘Behold, we are your servants.’ (19) But Joseph said to them, ‘Do not fear, for am I in the place of God? (20) As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today. (21) So do not fear; I will provide for you and your little ones.’ Thus he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.”

Key Point: Choose to View the God-Version of the Past

Recasting the Past:

Takes Time

“I will take my stand at my watchpost and station myself on the tower, and look out to see what he will say to me, and what I will answer concerning my complaint. And the LORD answered me: ‘Write the vision; make it plain on tablets, so he may run who reads it. For still the vision awaits its appointed time; it hastens to the end—it will not lie. If it seems slow, wait for it; it will surely come; it will not delay.’”

(Habakkuk 2:1-3)

Involves Faith

“Behold, his soul is puffed up; it is not upright within him, but the righteous shall live by his faith.” (Habakkuk 2:4)

Requires a Worship Orientation

“Though the fig tree should not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines, the produce of the olive fail and the fields yield no food, the flock be cut off from the fold and there be no herd in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the LORD; I will take joy in the God of my salvation. GOD, the Lord, is my strength; he makes my feet like the deer’s; he makes me tread on my high places...” (Habakkuk 3:17-19)

Questions:

What impacted me the most in this message?

Do I tend to view the past through a self-centered or God-centered lens?

(Ps. 143:5)

Do I choose to worship God despite difficult past events? (Job 1:20-22)