Articles by Robert Hazel

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Jesus is Coming Again (Dec 1957)

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“But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah,…out of thee shall He come forth unto Me that is to be Ruler in Israel” (Micah 5:2). With this designation the prophet Micah foretells the birthplace of the Ruler of Israel, foretells the first coming of Christ. While thus announcing our Lord’s first advent as a man, it is with great care that the prophet assures us of His eternal person and Godhead. Several hundred years of human history, with all its changing events, would pass before the fulfilment of this prophecy. At the close of this period Israel would be expecting Him; they would know, when asked, the facts incident to His coming. Nevertheless, when He eventually did come, the record of their unbelief was appalling and remains a blanket indictment on the human family: “He came unto His own, and His own received Him not” (John 1:11). It seems strange that there should be such universal indifference to the first coming of this Heavenly visitor. True, Heavenly Hosts acclaimed Him, shepherds thrilled at the news of the event, and men from the East visited Him, but mankind in general presented an indifference resulting from unbelief and callousness.

By contrast with Who He was, He became known as the carpenter’s son, this deceiver and imposter, a pretender to the throne of Israel, the friend of publicans and sinners, the Man of Sorrows, the acquainted with grief. Men made sure that their enmity and hatred were clearly understood, not only while He was present with them, but after His departure. Their message of hate

ascended to the throne of God in the martyrdom of Stephen. That event is recorded by one who saw it, “When the blood of Thy martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by” (Acts. 22:20).

The Apostle Paul reminds us that while in time passed God spoke unto the fathers by the prophets, He has in these last days spoken unto us by His Son. No word ever spoken by the Son of God could be sweeter than His promise, “I will come again.” We recall the words of the nobleman of Luke 19, “Occupy till I come.” It is most significant that our Lord personally makes the announcement of His second advent.

We wonder, in the light of current happenings, whether or not we will be any more expectant, or in any different condition of heart, than those to whom He came at Bethlehem Ephratah. It is well to remind our hearts that, “He came unto His own, and His own received Him not.” How many of us will use our talents in our Nobleman’s absence to bring honour and glory to His name? Thoughts of His second coming should cause us to be “stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord” (1 Cor. 15:58). They should cause us to have respect unto the recompense of the reward, “Forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.” Furthermore, they should mitigate our sorrow (1 Thess. 4:13) and be a source of great comfort (1 Thess. 4:18). Such thoughts should be uppermost in our hearts along with the last prayer in the Bible, “Even so, come, Lord Jesus” (Rev. 22:21). These thoughts should become a part of our very being as long as we live.

The poet beautifully unites the two appearings of our Lord Jesus in the words of the familiar hymn:

“Who is this Who comes to meet me on the desert way?
As the Morning Star foretelling God’s unclouded day.
He it is Who came to win me on the cross of shame;
In His glory well I know Him evermore the same.”