



A SIGN OF THE DAY OF GOD.

A CONVERSATION.

ADVENTIST. My friend, while we are waiting here at the depot, let me call your attention to these cars. They are certainly a wonderful invention, the admiration of all the world. This is an age of wonders; but there is nothing more wonderful than the cars.

STRANGER. Very true, indeed. I always look on them with feelings of awe and admiration. It seems as though they were worthy of being a subject of prophecy. I have sometimes thought they might be a sign of the millennium.

ADVENTIST. My friend, I think they are a remarkable fulfillment of an ancient prophecy. As I have the Bible here, I will read it. I verily believe that the man cannot be found, however familiar with this invention, who could give as accurate a description of a railroad train in so few

words as are employed in the book of God for that purpose.

STRANGER. I am interested to see such a prophecy, if there be one. I never heard our minister mention it.

ADVENTIST. If you look to popular ministers for information on the prophecies, you may be kept in the dark. They say that the prophecies are sealed; that they cannot be understood. You must look for yourself. However, let us read this prophecy, Nahum 2: 3-5: "The chariots shall be with flaming torches in the day of His preparation, and the fir trees shall be terribly shaken. The chariots shall rage in the streets, they shall jostle one against another in the broad ways; they shall seem like torches, they shall run like the lightnings." I understand that this prophecy is fulfilled before our eyes.

"The chariots shall be with flaming torches." This, you will readily see, shows that they will be propelled by fire, or at least that fire will be used on them for some purpose while running.

"They shall seem like torches;" that is, they shall look like torches in the dark. How exactly this is fulfilled by the cars! See! there comes a train now. I am glad that it is night, so that you can see the force of this prophecy. There! see that illuminated train approaching. Does it not seem like a flaming torch in the dark?

STRANGER. I must confess that it does seem to be a fulfillment of the prophecy. But has there never been anything like this before the running of the railroad cars?

ADVENTIST. No, my friend; fire was never applied to the propelling of any carriage till these railways were invented, which was less than fifty

years ago. The cars not only fulfill this part of the prophecy, but the whole of it. "The chariots shall *rage* in the streets." To *rage* is to act vehemently, to make much noise and ado. There! look at that train as it passes us, and hear what a deafening noise it makes when it whistles. How the ground shakes, and everything trembles as it passes! How could it be more appropriately described than by saying that it *rages*? Then, again: "They shall jostle one against another in the broad ways." There, you see those switches and side tracks. There are side tracks enough for several trains to pass each other at the same time. Hence, these may very appropriately be called "broad ways," wider than the ordinary track. Now watch that freight train as it switches off to unload and load again. Says the prophecy, "They shall jostle one against another in the broad ways." See them run one against another, making everything ring, in switching off, backing up, and starting again.

STRANGER. Well, it does seem to fit very well so far, I confess. "They shall run like the lightnings." That certainly is true of the cars. It is astonishing with what rapidity they do run. In almost the words of the prophecy, some trains have been called "lightning trains." I believe there never was any carriage invented before that could run anywhere near so fast, was there?

ADVENTIST. Certainly not. Swift-footed animals were the fastest means of conveyance which men could have till the railway was invented. Till within fifty years, it took long weeks and months to travel a few hundred miles, which can now be traveled in a few hours. Nothing in the past could fitly fulfill this prophecy—"They shall

run like the lightnings"—but the cars do strikingly fill the picture.

STRANGER. I am pretty well satisfied that this prophecy does refer to the cars. If we deny this, it seems to me we might deny the fulfillment of any prophecy; for I do not see how it could well be much plainer.

ADVENTIST. There was never anything in the past that would fulfill this prophecy. But the cars do fulfill every particular; hence, we are satisfied that they are what the prophecy pointed to. Having settled this point, I now wish to call your attention to another point in this prophecy, one which makes it of great interest to me. When was this prophecy to be fulfilled? and what was it to be a sign of, when fulfilled?

STRANGER. Is there anything by which we can tell?

ADVENTIST. There should be, or the prophecy would be of no use to us. Read again: "The chariots shall be with flaming torches *in the day of his preparation.*" "*His preparation*" means the Lord's preparation, as may be seen by the previous verse. What this day of preparation is, may be learned by looking back a little farther, in the fifth verse of the previous chapter: "The mountains quake at him [the Lord], and the hills melt, and the earth is burned at his presence, yea, the world and all that dwell therein." Verse 7 speaks of the day of trouble. Verse 9 says that the Lord "will make an utter end." Verse 15 says, "Behold upon the mountains the feet of Him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace." By Isa. 52:7, 8, we see that this is when "the Lord shall bring again Zion." When will this happen? Manifestly, in the day of God, when

the Lord comes to save his saints, and to destroy the earth. Nahum is speaking of the same that Isaiah is, when the latter says, "Behold the day of the Lord cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate; and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it." Isa. 13:9. This, then, is the day for which God is preparing.

STRANGER. Can it be possible, then, that these wonderful cars are a sign of the day of God? and that this sign is even now so remarkably fulfilled before our eyes?

ADVENTIST. Yes, my friend, it is not only possible, but it is true; for God has said that the chariots should be with flaming torches, &c., in the day of his preparation. This world has stood for almost 6000 years; great men have lived, talented men, men of genius, yet they never invented anything to fulfill this prophecy till within less than fifty years. Men needed, wanted, and greatly desired, something like the cars to travel with, in the past, as much as now. Yet no man could invent them. Why not? God had said they should be a sign of the day of wrath. His word could not be broken. For nearly half a century, this marvelous sign of the day of the Lord at hand has gone thundering and raging through the great cities and towns of the world. Every time a train of cars goes by "like the lightnings," it says, "The day of his preparation has come." Every time the old engine whistles, it says, in thunder tones, "The day of God is at hand." Fearful day! Day of wrath! Who shall be able to stand?

STRANGER. I have long thought that many things indicate the end of the world near at hand, though I did not know how near.

ADVENTIST. This is very plain to be seen by those who study the word of God, and compare it with the signs of the times. It is remarked by all that this is an age of wonders. Numerous great and wonderful inventions have been brought out here, within a few years' time, as it were, all together. The railroad, the steamboat, the telegraph, the printing press, and many other improvements in everything, have been developed within the past few years. Why is this? God's word tells why—they are signs of the last days. In the "time of the end," says Daniel, "many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." Dan. 12: 4.

STRANGER. That prophecy is certainly being fulfilled now. I am inclined to believe that the Lord has a design in all this.

ADVENTIST. Yes, it is the day of his preparation, and he is using these instrumentalities in preparing the world for the harvest of the great day. The merchant and man of business think the cars a good thing, because they can make gain out of them; the politician, because they aid him in his work; and the pleasure-seeker, because they contribute to his enjoyment. God and his word of prophecy are not thought of. But God will use them in his own sacred work, in carrying his light and his message to the world.

STRANGER. I fear these things are so, and there are other signs which seem to indicate the same thing.

ADVENTIST. Oh, yes; there have been signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars, and upon the earth everywhere. For nearly thirty years, there have been hundreds of men proclaiming the coming of the Lord nigh at hand. Thou-

sands of tons of books and tracts have been scattered all over the world. Multitudes are looking for Jesus soon to come in the clouds of heaven. If the Lord should come as a thief, he and his saints would be clear. The world has been warned.

STRANGER. If these things are so, they certainly are worthy of attention. I must look into them. But what is meant by the day of "His preparation?"

ADVENTIST. While Noah was preaching and preparing the ark during the 120 years, that was the day of God's preparation for the destruction of the world by the flood, was it not?

STRANGER. Yes, of course.

ADVENTIST. So it was at other times we might mention; and so it is now. For nearly half a century, God has been preparing the world for the coming of his Son, by the preaching of his servants, and by numerous signs in heaven and earth. This is what is meant by the "day of his preparation."

STRANGER. If this be so, it is important that we also be preparing for it. The mass of the world are far from being prepared, except it be for destruction, where they seem to be fast going.

ADVENTIST. Well, my friend, I must now go. May the Lord impress these things upon your mind, help you to look into his word, to discern the signs of the times, and may we finally be saved in the coming kingdom of God.

D. M. C.

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