

Spiritual Palms.



THOUGH the palm starts bolt up from the burning sand, the sand is not its sustenance. The dust may have swept hot and stifling round its stem; but clear that dust away. The sand grows damp as you dig, and, by the time you reach the white fibres of the tap, the veins of

water flow. And as, by-and-by, you gaze on the rootlets floating in the well, you discern the secret of its joyous growth. No matter that the sky is brass and the desert dust, when crystal life is throbbing perennial and plentiful below.

Doubtless this is a dry and thirsty land; but it is the land where ever and anon the eye is gladdened by some goodly palm. In strange and unexpected places you meet with fresh and lofty Christians. You wonder how they thrive. They do not grow as the lily; for the lily is found in green pastures. Nor do they spring as the willow; for it springs by the water-courses. They are trees of the desert; like Enoch among the giant sinners of an early world; like Joseph among the wizards and beast-worshippers of Egypt; like Daniel in voluptuous Babylon; like David Brainerd among Indian savages; like Henry Martyn in stony-hearted Persia. Their life is hid. So pure amidst depravity, so loyal to God amidst idolatry, so devout and fervent amidst atheism and blasphemy, their heavenly-mindedness is a miracle.

But beneath the dusty surface of this godless world, there is a well of water springing up to everlasting life. There is no spot so barren, and no soil so burning, no place nor period so adverse, but faith can find the Holy Spirit there. It needs only faith's penetrating root to descend beneath the things which do appear, to fetch up spiritual refreshment, where others pine and die.

You, my friend, who lead a life of drudgery—you who are often sighing, "Lord, what a wretched land is this!" remember that it is the land of the Bible, the land of prayer, the land of the promises, and, above all, the land of the Comforter's presence and power. To say nothing of the regular public means of grace, a

daily text and a daily prayer, with the whole heart in them, would make you flourish like the palm. You would realise something of the life of God in your own soul, and your shining, healthful aspect would draw forth the exclamation, "O Lord of hosts, blessed is the man whose strength is in Thee."

SELECTED.

Why Will Yo Die?

GOD the Father does not wish you to die in your sins, for we read that "God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have Everlasting Life." "For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved." Thus we see that God desires not the condemnation of the world, but its salvation. So we are right in saying that God does not wish you to die in your sins.

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, does not wish you to die in your sins; for we read:—"this is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom," says the Apostle St. Paul, "I am chief." His mission, then, was to *save sinners*, without mentioning whether they are old or young, great or small, white or black. Thus we may truly say that the Lord Jesus Christ does not wish you to die in your sins. He said to the Jews, "If ye believe not that I am He, *ye shall die in your sins.*" (John 8: 24).

The Holy Spirit does not wish you to die in your sins. This is evident from the fact that on the day of Pentecost, when the disciples were filled with the Holy Ghost, He spoke through Peter, saying—"Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the Name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the Holy Ghost." (Acts 2: 38). John also, by the Holy Spirit, said—"Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." (Rev. 22: 17). Thus, we have the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit practically saying "I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked." Then why will ye die? Sit down and reflect. Count the cost. "What is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul; or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Matt. 15: 26). There is no subject so important for you as the welfare of your own soul. Then why will you reject God's word? Why will you turn away from Christ? The Lord Jesus says: "Come unto Me, all ye that labour, and are heavy-laden, and *I will give you rest.*" (Matt. 11: 28).

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