

HAPPY DAYS

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SAND OF THE DESERT IN AN HOUR-GLASS.

BY H. W. LONGFELLOW.

A handful of red sand, from
the hot clime
Of Arab deserts brought,
Within this glass becomes
the spy of time,
The minister of thought.

How many weary centuries
has it been
About those deserts
blown!

How many strange vicissitudes
has seen,
How many histories
known.

Perhaps the camels of the
Ishmaelite
Trampled and passed it
o'er,
When into Egypt from the
patriarch's sight
His favourite son they
bore;

Perhaps the feet of Moses,
burnt and bare,
Crushed it beneath their
tread;
Or Pharaoh's flashing
wheels into the air
Scattered it as they sped;

Or Mary, with the Christ of
Nazareth
Held close in her caress,
Whose pilgrimage of hope
and love and faith
Illumed the wilderness;

Or anchorites beneath
Engaddi's palms
Pacing the dead beach,
and singingslow their old Armenian psalms
In half-articulate speech;

Or caravans that from Bassora's gate
With westward steps depart,
Or Mecca's pilgrims, confident of fate,
And resolute in heart!

These have passed over it, or may have
passed!
Now in this crystal tower
Imprisoned by some curious hand at last,
It counts the passing hour.



THE SHIP OF THE DESERT.

And as I gaze, these narrow walls expand,
Before my dreamy eye
Stretches the desert with its shifting sand,
Its unimpeded sky

And borne aloft by the sustaining blast,
This little golden thread
Dilates into a column high and vast,
A form of fear and dread.

And onward and across the setting sun,
Across the boundless plain,

The column and its broader
shadow run,
Till thought pursues in
vain.

The vision vanishes! These
walls again
Shut out the lurid sun,
Shut out the hot, immeasur-
able plain,
The half-hour's sand is run!

THE TURNING POINT.

Boys, never be ashamed
to pray! Never shrink from
acknowledging God. Let
not the laugh and jeer of
comrades deter you from the
path of duty. You know
not what important results
depend upon your example.

Many years ago a youth
named John was apprenticed
in the town of Poole. John
had been piously
trained by his good parents,
but unhappily he yielded to
temptations, neglected the
reading of his Bible, disre-
garded the Sabbath and
gave up praying. John was
gradually going from bad to
worse when one night a new
apprentice arrived. On
being pointed to, his little
bed the youth put down his
luggage, and then, in a very
silent but solemn manner,
knelt down to pray. John,
who was busily undressing,
saw this and the sight
troubled him. He did not
raise a titter, but he felt
ashamed of himself. Con-
science troubled him, and
God's Holy Spirit strove
with him. It was the turn-

ing point in John's life. He began again
to pray; he felt the burden of his sins to
be great, but he sought that Saviour who
died for poor sinners, he cast his helpless
soul, by faith, on the atonement made on
Calvary, and was enabled, at length, to
rejoice as one of God's forgiven children.
A few years afterwards he began to preach
to others, and he became one of the most
successful and honoured ministers of the
Gospel ever known. This was the Rev.
John Angell James.