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HOW THEY ENTERED CANAAN  
(A Collection of Holiness Experience Accounts)  
Compiled by Duane V. Maxey

Vol. I -- Named Accounts

### **ABSUG -- A TROPHY OF GOD'S GRACE**

A young man in my native state, unfortunately born in affluence, envired by everything heart could wish; unfortunately yielding to temptations becomes a drunkard in his teens, in a saloon killing a man in a debauch, so drunk he didn't know it and his poor victim in the same awful plight, ushered into eternity. The criminal court fails to find a case of murder, but pronounces it homicide; sending him to the penitentiary two years.

Born and reared in affluence and never hardened by manual toil, he finds the rough, heavy work and the austere fare a decisive transition, compared to his delightful luxuriant, Kentucky home. Fortunate for him he can get no intoxicants; meanwhile he has ample opportunity to sober down and reflect. In his meditations he finds himself soliloquizing "Oh, my awful fate! Is it possible I am a penitentiary convict! Disgraced and anathematized forever. If I do not die under the hard toil and rough fare of this dreary prison, and should survive my dark biennium and go out into the world, everyone will point the finger of scorn at me; with a hiss of contempt, saying, 'Yonder goes Absug, just out of the penitentiary! Keep away from him, I hope he will not come to our house.' "

In the sequel of his gloomy soliloquies, he settles down into the conclusion, "I have made a failure so far as this world is concerned; it has treated me very roughly, covering me with ignominious scandal; I have heard the preachers and the Christians talk about Heaven; if God in His mercy will only let me live to get out of the penitentiary, I will set out for Heaven and devote the remnant of my days in an humble faithful effort to get there when this fleeting life winds up."

[Following his release from prison] He comes to our meeting at Robards, Ky., and at once comes to the mourner's bench, an honest and importunate seeker. After successive days agonizing and pleading for pardoning mercy; about 3 o'clock in the morning it seems that the bottom falls out of Heaven and floods his soul with unearthly joy, inundating him with transporting raptures.

He runs to the preacher, pulls him out of bed, shouts on till he wakes up everybody and actually captures the village of five hundred, and the day dawn has the whole community on foot,

responsively to his trumpet voice filling the town and environments with his vociferous Hallelujahs! By the rising sun, it seems that he has actually gathered them all and they are hanging spellbound upon his eloquent lips, as he was quite a gifted youth, and immediately developed into a powerful preacher. He at once goes for sanctification and enters Beulah land with the brilliancy of a meridian sunburst.

With your humble servant we were holding a glorious revival in a county seat. That was the pioneer age of the movement, when the persecution was rife and they flooded the Holiness people with promiscuous falsifications. It so happened that he had lived a debauched life in that town, thus acquiring notoriety. Therefore the popular ipse dixit was ringing everywhere: "You know these Holiness people are a bad lot, they will not do, here they have Absug up in the pulpit preaching, the worst scoundrel ever in this town."

The saints, few, unknown and persecuted were laboring assiduously to persuade the people to desist; observing, "The poor fellow can't help it now, as 'tis past and gone, and you ought to drop the curtain over it and encourage him if possible to make a new departure and lead a better life."

Then when he ascertained that the saints were thus apologizing for him, he prefaced his evening sermon to a packed audience, with this appeal: "Please desist from all your efforts to prevail on the people to no longer bring up my desolate life in order to depreciate my ministerial efficiency; while with the devil I served him with all my heart, soul, mind, and strength; when I left him I gave him back all my meanness, profanity, debauchery theft, drunkenness, and murder, therefore all this black catalog they now parade against me belongs to the devil, constituting his stock in trade. Therefore I intreat you to rest easy and bother Diabolus no more; let him make all he can, on his own merchandise; as it is all he will ever get. Praise the Lord He has delivered me out of his hands forever! I will have my head cut off, if necessary to be true to God and do His will on the earth; as the angels do it in heaven."

Source: "Repentance" By W. B. Godbey

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THE END