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

Vol. I -- Named Accounts

THOMAS COOK

[I did not discern whether or not the Thomas Cook of this account and the Thomas Cook of the following account are the same person. Therefore I present this account separately. -- DVM]

In later life my brother often quoted the old saying, "Never pitch your tent twice in the same place." He believed in progression, and the growth that is ever pressing on to maturity. In no life was it more manifest than in his own. At this period, although a singularly earnest Christian, he was not satisfied with his experience. There was at times a conflict between self and God, the flesh and the spirit, belief and unbelief, that caused him real heartache. His own words are:

"My experience was full of fits and starts, changeable and uneven. I was conscious also of a mighty want; there seemed a vacuum in my nature which grace had not filled, a strange sense of need, which I cannot describe, but which all who love the Lord Jesus with less than perfect love will understand."

He yearned for that perfect love, and wanted always and everywhere to have that purity of heart which sees God and evokes the joyful cry, "My will is the will of my Lord."

Thus in the providence of God he was brought into contact with Mr. Joshua Dawson, of Weardale, who afterwards became his father-in-law, my brother's first wife being his daughter, Mary Ann, who lived but thirteen months after marriage. Mr. Dawson was not only a mighty Revivalist, but a preacher of Full Salvation on the lines of Wesley, Fletcher, and the early Methodist preachers. Tom had already been reading all he could upon the subject, and now he began to search and study his Bible as well as his own heart. The result was that the conviction grew upon him that there must be something higher and holier than he had yet attained. Contact with Mr. Dawson made him the more sure and the more anxious. He determined, cost what it might, he would not only be saved, but he would be saved to the uttermost.

This was now his one fixed aim and purpose. The Bible was his greatest guide, and he centred his mind upon these great passages: "I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be

clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes, and ye shall keep My judgments, and do them" (Ezekiel xxxvi. 25-27); "Wherefore also He is able to save to the uttermost them that draw near unto God through Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Hebrews vii. 25); "If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanseth us from all sin" (I John i. 7).

Having already tasted of the grace and power of God, all his instincts and conceptions of the divine nature told him that behind such words and promises there was actuality and fact. It was not a shadowy ideal, now looming and now lost, but an experience that harmonized with all he knew and believed of God. He felt that the Thrice-Holy One, who had said, "Ye shall be holy; for I am holy," would make the provision and do the work that was beyond the power of unaided mortal. So he asked, and sought, and strove, and -- he found!

This was three years after his conversion. He used to say that it was his own fault the interval was so long; he sought it by works instead of by simple faith. I know how diligently he did seek. He went forward again and again in prayer-meetings and in the house of God to obtain the Blessing. Then at last, by a simple effort of faith, deliverance came, the last enemy was cast out, sin's stain was cleansed away, and great peace filled his soul.

"Oh, the indescribable sweetness of that moment!" he wrote years afterwards. "All words fail to express the blessedness of the spiritual manifestation of Jesus as my Saviour from all sin. My heart warms as I write at the remembrance of the event which transcends all others in my religious history. It was not so much ecstatic emotion I experienced as an unspeakable peace; 'God's love swallowed me up.' For a few moments 'all its waves and billows rolled over me.' So much afraid was I lest I should lose the delightful sense of the Saviour's presence, that I wished those with me not to speak or disturb me; I wanted to dwell in silence, as my heart was filled with love and gratitude to God."

Yes, and for more than thirty years he lived in this Land of Beulah, and his sun never set and the moon never went down! During the years he enjoyed the experience he often quoted the lines:

" I've reached the land of corn and wine,
And all its riches freely mine;
Here shines undimmed one blissful day,
For all my night has passed away."

And yet Mr. Smart truly represented the facts of the case when he wrote as follows in Joyful News:

"Never did he speak boastingly of this experience, but he maintained his witness to it throughout his Christian life, and was himself such a beautiful illustration of the doctrine that if

some persons doubted the possibility of living up to all that it involves, and knew Mr. Cook, they were obliged to confess that he himself had found the pearl which so many others spurned."

Source: "Thomas Cook, Evangelist -- Saint"
by Vallance Cook

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THE END