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

Vol. I -- Named Accounts

HARRY J. ELLIOTT

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CHAPTER 14

MY CONVERSION

My brother Jim, who was a preacher of the gospel, was in Colorado at this time for the purpose of helping to care for his wife's father in his illness, but on Sunday afternoon, about three-quarters of a mile from home, he preached at a schoolhouse. He said to me, "Harry, would you like to hear your brother preach a gospel sermon?" I said, "Yes, Jim, I would be pleased to hear you."

Sunday afternoon I went with my brother to the little schoolhouse and they sang and prayed. I thought everything was so strange. Then brother took the good Book and read some more good news out of it, then began to tell how God had power to save men from sin and what a change takes place in a man's life when he has Christ in his heart. He told how God had saved him from drink and from gambling and from many other things, and I sat there and said in my heart, "I will have this thing that Jim has." While he preached and wept and other folks in the congregation wept, I began to feel I was the meanest man on earth.

After Jim got through preaching he said, "Is there any one here who will raise your hand, signifying that you desire the prayers of God's people that you may be a Christian?" and before I knew what I was doing I raised my hand right up as high as I could raise it. Jim fell on his knees and prayed and cried, then got up and dismissed the congregation and we went home.

After arriving at the house brother walked up to Isa and said something about Harry having a hook in his heart, and Isa began to weep and laugh and look happy and I wondered what a hook in the heart was. That was a day of rejoicing in brother's home. Isa's father seemed to rejoice in it as much as others that Harry had raised his hand for prayers. That evening at family worship I

noticed that brother and his wife said nothing to the Lord other than praising Him for the way He was looking after Harry and the way He was leading him. Afterward, Jim instructed me more thoroughly as to how to find Christ and about two evenings after raising my hand in the schoolhouse, I dropped on my knees in my own room after family prayer, and wept before the Lord, telling Him I wanted what Jim had; but it seemed as though all the sins I had ever committed in all my life rolled on top of me and for a few minutes I seemed sorry I had ever started to find what Jim had, for here now I was face to face with God. I had to confess to Him everything. I could not leave out a sin; but I had no more than said, "Lord, I will quit the whole thing; I want what Jim has; I want Christ in my heart," when the whole burden of sin rolled away and I became a new creature. I began to rejoice in my room for the peace God gave me in my heart, knowing at last beyond the shadow of a doubt that all desire for the old life had gone. Isa and Jim out in the other room knew what took place immediately. There was a great campmeeting going on in that cabin. Not only did angels rejoice, but dear grandpa, who was lying close to death's door, joined in with the rest and rejoiced.

I said to Jim the next day after my conversion, "Why didn't somebody tell me this long ago?"

As I would walk out in the fields and in the woods, it seemed as if the very trees would clap their hands, and everybody seemed to rejoice that Harry had found the Christ. Then brother was kept busy writing to friends who had been praying for eight years with him for my conversion.

Now as I am a Christian I felt that I must find some work that a Christian man could do, so corresponded with a man in Chicago to go on the road for them as a drummer.

While waiting for the answer from this firm God began to lay a burden on my heart for other men and women who were down in sin; to testify before them and tell them that the God who had saved me could save them; and the burden got so heavy on my heart that I couldn't rest till I had said to Him, "Though this position is given to me, if you want me to give the rest of my life telling of the great things you have done for me in saving me I will start out this spring with my brother in his evangelistic work."

A few days later the letter came offering me the place with a hundred dollars and expenses. I said, "Jim, what would you do?" He said, "Take it to God in prayer," and as I took it to God in prayer all I could see was a lost world, and thousands of men in the same life I had been, till I settled it there, once and for all, that it was not money or wealth I wanted, but God's smile and souls.

THE "OLD MAN" SHOWS HIMSELF

My brother's next meeting was to be in a tent at Perry Park, beginning June 7th. This was now four months since my conversion. We went early enough to put up the tent ourselves, as it was his own tent; so on the night of the sixth the tent was up, seats in, platform built, and everything in readiness for the meeting which should begin the next evening.

If you ever saw a happy young man it was this boy. After the tent was up I walked around it, for I had never been under a gospel tent before. I had been under a circus tent many a time previous to my conversion; but this seemed to be the finest tent I had ever seen.

Before retiring that night we all got together and prayed that God would convict men and women, save souls, and sanctify believers, and give us a great meeting. I went to bed and dreamed all night about our first tent meeting and got up in the morning, and wondered who would be our first seeker; but it wasn't long before we found out who it was.

At the breakfast table a little boy about nine years old said something to me, and before I knew it something rose up in my heart that made me fly off the handle. I left the table and went out in the yard. When Jim came out he found me weeping. I said, "Jim, I'm the meanest man on earth. I thought I was converted. What made me act that way at the table?" He said, "Harry, that was the 'old man,' the carnal mind that we have been preaching about." I said, "Jim, tell me how to get rid of it." He said, "Come on down to the tent." I went down, and after instruction from Jim I fell in the straw and cried unto God if He could possibly deliver me to do so, and not very long afterward I had the sweet peace in my heart again. Then I said, "Now I want that thing taken out of my heart," and Jim prayed and I prayed, and I asked God to take the damnable thing out of my heart. It was not long after that prayer the thing was gone, and it seemed to me that all heaven was rejoicing when God sanctified me.

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Source: "From Sinking Sands" by Harry J. Elliott

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