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

Vol. I -- Named Accounts

AUNT GARRETT
(A Blind Methodist Saint)

"Aunt Puss" Garrett, as she is familiarly known, would be surprised if any one called her an Evangelist, as she feels neither worthy nor competent to share the honors of that sacred office. But in her own intense, fervid and terse manner she is being used of the Lord to do a gracious work.

Her gifts lie chiefly in the realm of song and testimony, and in a quaint and inimitable style she pours out her soul through these two channels. Time and again have we seen audiences thrilled under her burning utterances.

Until a few years ago she was content to work in a local way doing what she could in her church and community. But one day as she was engaged in prayer the Lord whispered in her heart, "go," and she has been going from that day to this as never before. In fact, she devotes most of her time now to assisting in revival meetings and she finds supreme joy in traveling over the country in evangelistic work. It is hardly necessary to say that she is a sanctified woman, for what we have already said could not be true if she had not received the gift of the Holy Ghost.

She was born of devout parentage, near Nashville, Tenn., July 17, 1838. Of her parents she says: "My father died July 11, 1854. He was a devout Christian, a faithful soldier of the cross and his end was peace. My mother died May 23, 1867. I can never tell what my precious mother was to me. I remember still the touch of her hands on my face. They soothed my pains and sufferings, as nothing else could do. Precious mother! I feel and know that she has gone to that bright world, that haven of rest where the tears never flow. Five dear, good brothers and one sweet lovely sister have passed over the river; but I know they are all safely housed in the 'Palace of the King,' waiting and watching for me."

The following extracts from her experience mark the successive steps in the revelation of Christ to and in her heart:

BORN AGAIN

I was converted (or professed faith in Christ) in September, 1854, and was baptized by immersion, by Rev. James I. Crawford, a local preacher. My conviction was powerful. I was at a little church called Forest Grove, sixteen miles from Nashville. There was no revival service, only a regular church meeting. I remember very distinctly how the church and everything looked. I was on my knees with my face to the door praying. Everything looked so gloomy, the lights shone so dim, and out through the open door it looked so dark. It was as dark in my heart, and a tremendous struggle was being carried on in my soul. I was praying as I thought, to myself, but my friends and relatives told me afterwards that I was praying aloud. I was so entirely lost to my surroundings that I knew not that my prayer was spoken aloud. But just at that moment of agony and darkness, when self was helpless, Jesus, my great High Priest, spoke peace to my soul. Then it was that the old tin reflectors glittered like silver, and the sperm candles looked like gas jets, and the walls of the old log church looked like gold, and the faces of my friends and relatives shone so bright and lovely while I was rejoicing and praising God. I know I was soundly converted, that I passed from death to life.

In October, 1856, after a year of intense suffering, she became totally blind. In January, 1867, she had a marvelous revelation of Christ on the cross. She says:

I was sitting in my mother's room alone. Suddenly there appeared before my left eye a snow-white cross with the Saviour on it. The cross was about an inch in length and imbedded in a cloud of mist. The whole picture was not larger than the palm of my hand, but O how beautiful! It startled me at first. I thought it was a warning to me that I was soon to die; and at that time, as in the case of many other Christians, I feared death.

Though thirty-three years have elapsed since this wonderful vision first dawned on my soul, I still see it and O how beautiful!

It has been a great comfort to me in my Christian life. God has wonderfully blessed His blind child. I feel it every day, and I can say, "Blessed be God for blindness!"

SANCTIFICATION

I had been trying for a long time to get higher in the Christian life. The year 1895 I began to hunger and thirst after righteousness, and I felt that I must go higher. At a praise meeting at Tulip Street, I arose and told my pastor that I was trying to live a Christian life, and that I was all on the altar -- but I was not. I had at different meetings consecrated my life to God, and I would reconsecrate and dedicate, but I was not on the altar -- I had not laid down every weight. About this time I heard of the Second Blessing, or entire Sanctification. I had never heard a sermon on it, but was hungering for something better than I had, and I was determined if there was anything more for me, by the grace of God I was going to have it. I heard Bro. Crump preach on this wonderful gift, the second work of grace in the heart. At this meeting I got up and testified, and said I knew something about the first blessing, but nothing about the second. I was in total darkness about it. I couldn't see at all -- was as blind as a bat.

I talked with Bro. Crump, and he told me that Dr. Carradine was coming to Nashville in November, and for me to go and hear him. Dr. Carradine did come, and I went to hear him. On Thursday I went to the altar. When Dr. Carradine gave his first invitation for Christians who wanted the blessing of entire sanctification to come to the altar, I went as quickly as a blind person could get there. I gave up all -- mind, spirit and body, relatives and friends, the world -- gave up all for Christ. Friday I went back to the altar again. A friend came to me and asked: "Miss Puss, what is your trouble?" I told him I had given up all for Christ, but there was something that worried me. Saturday I went back again.

Dr. Carradine asked me if I believed that the altar sanctified the gift, and I told him yes! My death was a very hard one; I was not quite dead yet. You know, God wants the whole heart. This something that worried me was a plain gold ring that I wore on my left hand. Pride was still lurking in my heart. On Sunday morning I took off my ring and kissed it goodbye. By this time the "old man" was nearly dead. Glory be to God! Sunday evening I went to the altar again, and while there, glory to God! hallelujah! I died stone dead to sin, the world, the flesh and the devil. I reached across the bench and said to my friend, "Miss Annie, I've got it." Then wave after wave of sweet peace rolled in on my soul, glory to His name forever and ever. Then it was that I was all on the altar, and Jesus sanctified the gift. And now I know that I am bound to that altar by love's strong chord.

When I got this wonderful pearl, the white stone, I was wrapped in a blaze of God's glory. For days and days I could look into my heart and see the white flames of God's love. Glory to God, I was burned up, I tell you. I know what I am talking about, hallelujah! Now I can sing,

"Oh happiness, it is no dream,
For glory's opened in my soul,
And love divine shall be my theme
Long as eternal ages roll."

I know that my hands are clean and my heart is pure. I know I shall see the King in His beauty. Now I can sing,

"The blood, the blood, is all my plea;
Hallelujah! It cleanseth me!"

Now I can glory in my afflictions and say thank God for blindness. They tell me I shall see when I get to that bright world; but it makes no difference whether I see or not. If I am in the dark a million of years, I will be satisfied, just so I can be with my Christ and put my hands on His face. Glory to His name!

I got the double portion, the second work of grace in my heart. With me it is a second work of grace. I had many blessings while in the converted state; but with all these I felt at times that I was down in the valley of humility. But glory be to God, on the 10th day of November, 1895, between three and four o'clock, I got the double portion, and ever since then I've been in the land of Canaan.

The promise is that whosoever hungers and thirsts after righteousness shall be filled. Glory to God, I know that I am filled.

"Oh 'tis glory, oh 'tis glory, oh 'tis glory in my soul,
For I've touched the hem of His garment,
And His power has made me whole."

And now I want to say that my Savior keeps me every minute. If I had a million tongues I couldn't praise Him enough for His keeping power. The Holy Ghost did come to me in such a wonderful baptism of fire. I know I am saved, sanctified and kept by the power of Jesus.

"I have plunged beneath the crimson tide,
Washed in the blood of the Lamb,
And now by faith I'm sanctified,
Washed in the blood of the Lamb."

"And here I stand this very hour,
Kept by Almighty keeping power;
Temptations come the blood's my plea --
That precious blood now cleanseth me."

Source: "Chosen Vessels" by J. O. McClurkan

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THE END