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

Vol. I -- Named Accounts

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(Methodist)

In the year 1855 I was led to the Saviour, and received the forgiveness of sins. The instruments in my conversion were my Sabbath-school and my devoted father.

The year following I was led to discover that I needed a greater blessing than I had as yet obtained. I longed to be made perfect in love. I was brought more forcibly to see my need of a deeper work of grace from the hearing of a sermon preached by Rev. N. E. Cobleigh, D. D., the former editor of "Zion's Herald." I shall always believe that I did, at that time, experience the blessing of sanctification; but it was soon lost, and nearly forgotten.

Since then my life had been very wavering. I have never entirely backslidden, nor have I ever felt a disposition to give up the struggle against "the world, the flesh, and the devil;" but there been "fightings without, and fears within;" temptations strong, which have often overcome; and my life to me, at least, was a standing proof that the roots of sin remained within me. Oh, how many, many times have I painted for the "living streams," -- for something which I had not!

When I was first converted, I felt it a duty to proclaim Christ in capacity of a minister of the Gospel. Having emigrated to Illinois, I promised God, among strangers, to serve Him more faithfully. At the age of seventeen, I began to exhort; about six months afterward I was licensed to preach; and, in six months more, became a member of the Illinois Conference, in the bounds of which I still labor. Sometimes during my minister I have had such success, and witnessed many conversion to Christ; but I have always felt, even in the midst of revival, that I needed greatly to have inscribed on my banner, "Holiness to the Lord." During the past two years, my mind has been more exercised on this subject than ever before; and I resolved never to rest satisfied short of its attainment.

I then sent for "The Guide," and read works on holiness more than ever before. At one time last year, I established weekly meetings especially for the consideration of this subject. They were very interested for awhile, but failed, for the want of a leader, -- one who could teach

experimentally. Having obtained Mrs. Palmer's little work on "Entire Devotion," I sat down to peruse its pages, praying that God might make it a blessing to my soul. When I came to the "Covenant," I paused, resolved not to cease pleading, until the blessing was obtained.

Thank God, he heard my prayer. It was proposed immediately to my mind, "Why not now believe? Have you not doubted long enough?" I said, "Lord, I will believe." Then it was suggested, "Do you now believe God has accepted the sacrifice?" was again suggested. I said, "Lord, Thou hast promised to accept: how can I disbelieve Thy word? for Thou never didst deceive me." Again the Spirit prompted, "Will you believe without the sensible emotions being given?" "Yea, Lord," I cried; "I take Thee at Thy word: Thou hast said Thou wilt accept. I do believe I am accepted, and leave it to Thy own good pleasure when to give the evidence."

Oh, then, what a sweet peace came over my soul! I realized that God had accepted me, and that all was well, whether any other evidence was given or not. God was not long in giving me the full assurance that I was entirely His. I sat down to copy the "Covenant" in my diary; resolved to make it my own as far as it conformed to my circumstances. When I was writing these to me ever-memorable words, -- "My body I lay upon Thy altar, O Lord! that it may be a temple of the Holy Spirit to dwell in; from henceforth I rely upon Thy promise, that Thou wilt live and walk in me; believing as I now surrender myself," -- God broke in, like a flood, upon my soul, and heavenly joy rested down upon me. Glory be to God!

"Oh, happy bond that sealed my vows
To Him who merits all my love!"

God blesses me daily. It is now over seven weeks since I was made the recipient of this great blessing. I can truly say, not a cloud doth arise between me and my God. The devil tempts me sorely; but I have no disposition to yield; his darts lie harmless at my feet. May God keep me in such perfect peace! and He will so long as my mind is stayed on Him. Oh, that my dear people here in this fold might receive the like precious gift!

Source: "Pioneer Experiences" by Phoebe Palmer

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THE END