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

Vol. I -- Named Accounts

LEONIDAS LENT HAMLIN
1797 -- 1???
(One of the Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church)

Leonidas Lent Hamline was born May 10, 1797 in Burlington, Connecticut, and he was converted October 5, 1828. Concerning his joining the Methodists, he writes: "Sunday, October 26, 1828, was a day of days. I joined the Methodist society on trial. God blessed me in it."

Bishop Hamline was sanctified wholly in March of 1842. His sanctification came in the height of his labors and his usefulness, and while he was fulfilling all of his known duty to God. He says that he "had been attentive to the means of grace in the closet and in the sanctuary." Still, he felt that he had been too formal in his devotions, lacking in spiritual vitality, lacking in full confidence toward God, and he felt within himself a proneness to wander, tempers not always equally subdued, and the roots of evils in his heart which, springing up, troubled him.

As the perception of his inward, spiritual need became clearer, he increased in prayer and wrestling with God. He said: "I spent several weeks much of the time before God. I felt that without a clean heart I should soon fall." Through his drawing nearer to God, God drew nearer to him and he felt an increase of spiritual power and the fruits of the Spirit. He saw the beauty and desirableness of holiness and the loveliness of God's character. Still he was not satisfied.

In March of 1842, Bishop Hamline went to New Albany, Indiana where he hoped to obtain counsel from Rev. W. V. Daniels, the pastor of the church there, who had the experience of entire sanctification. He reached New Albany on a Saturday and that evening heard a sermon on perfect love. After the sermon, he bowed with others at the altar who were seeking the blessing. On Sunday his deep struggle to obtain a pure heart continued, but still he was not sanctified wholly.

On Monday morning he rose early and continued to plead for the baptism of the Holy Ghost until breakfast time. After hastily partaking of a light breakfast, he returned to his chamber and fell upon his knees. How he received the mighty baptism of the Holy Ghost is described in his own words:

While entreating God for a clean heart my mind was led to contemplate "the image of Christ" as the single object of desire. To be Christ-like, to possess "all the mind that was in" the blessed Savior; and this became the burden of my earnest prayer. "And why do you not take this image?" was suggested, "for he has taken yours. Look at the crucified Lamb. Why does he there hang and bleed, his visage so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men? Is it for himself? No, O no! He is innocent, immaculate. It is for me. There on the cross he bears my sin, and shame, and weakness, and misery and death. Any why does he bear them? To give me, in their stead, his purity, and honor, and strength, and bliss, and life. Why then not take this image? Give him your sin, and take his purity. Give him your shame and take his honor. Give him your helplessness and take his strength. Give him your misery and take his bliss. Give him you death and take his life-everlasting. Nay, yours he already has. There they are bruising him and putting him to death. Nothing remains but that you take his in exchange. Make haste! Now, just now, he freely offers you all, and urges all upon your instant acceptance."

Suddenly, I felt as though a hand omnipotent, not of wrath but of love, were laid upon my brow. That hand, as it pressed upon me, moved downward. It wrought within and without, and wherever it moved it seemed to leave the glorious impress of the Savior's image. For a few minutes the deep of God's love swallowed me up; all its billows rolled over me.

While experiencing this transforming baptism of the Holy Ghost, Hamline fell to the floor and in joyful surprise cried out in a loud voice. The work was done. The struggle and triumphant outcry were heard in his host's house, and momentarily the bishop was tempted to feel that his liberty and noise were inappropriate among strangers, but the Divine work wrought in his heart was clear and the experience was undoubted. As have many others, he learned afterward that he must openly testify to the experience if he was to retain the blessing, but to the end of his life he referred to the time of his entire sanctification as the great epoch of his life.

Source: "Biography of Rev. Leonidas L. Hamline,
F. G. Hibbard

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THE END