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

Vol. I -- Named Accounts

MILTON LORENZO HANEY
1825 -- 1???
(Methodist)

SAVED CLOSE TO AGE 16, JANUARY 1, 1841

My father's inflexible righteousness between man and man impressed me early in life. I believed he would not intentionally wrong a fellow man for any price that could be offered. He was so unlike the world about him, in this regard, that it gave me an intense conviction of the integrity of God! Our altar of prayer never went down. In those days morning worship consisted of reading the Scriptures, a hymn of praise, and prayer. In evening devotion we usually sang a few verses standing, and then knelt in prayer. Business as never so pressing that this had to be put aside, and the presence of visitors or working men never furnished a reason for its omission. This left the impression that one's duties to God were first. Children brought up without prayer are wronged from their infancy.

The home life of my mother was the greatest human factor leading to my salvation. It was well nigh impossible to shake off the impress of her spirit, or to resist the impression that her religion was Divine. Her life of prayer kept a sense of my obligations to God ever before me. Her care for the company I kept, her scrutiny of my habits, her knowledge of my heart life, her pain when I was perverse, and her hold on God for my eternal salvation made her agency more potent than any other that was human in bringing me to Christ. I can hardly remember when I did not really desire an intend to be a Christian.

A sermon by Rev. John S. Barger, preached at Marietta, Ills., in the spring of 1840, made the strongest impression of any heard in my unconverted life. He was our Presiding Elder at the time, and preached about three hours from I Thess. 5: 23, 24. His theme was entire sanctification. That sermon marked me for eternal years! I had been secretly seeking God all along, but the truth fastened on my soul that day, put me where I determined never to rest till I found God. My timidity was perhaps the greatest barrier in my way. I was powerfully impressed at times for years, to publicly renounce a life of sin and give myself to God. Had I yielded to that conviction, I would

have been saved years before. I would have given a great price, had it been possible, for salvation; but it seemed I could not get to an altar of prayer. I alarmed my mother by staying at home when the family went four miles to the preaching services: when the sole object of my remaining was to get opportunity of being for hours alone with God in prayer. One time I prayed a half day in a woodland, and at the end it seemed like the darkness of the second death begun! I seemed ready to do anything but yield to God. I hated a life of sin. There were no overt acts of crime in which I indulged. I often confessed with bitter tears to God the failure of my life but there was one thing I would not do. The early ministers gave special invitation to sinners in nearly every sermon, and had I heeded their call and come right out before the world, as the Holy Spirit led, I would have been saved at any time in all those years.

Reuben Plummer and Richard Walters were our ministers in 1840 and 1841. They were esteemed as messengers of God, and a great work was accomplished at various points on that wide circuit. During the holidays, Mr. Plummer was in a battle north of Knoxville, and the junior preacher was to hold a watch meeting New Year's eve at Harrisonville (now Hermon), Knox County, Ills. It was twelve or more miles away and the weather cold; but my anxious, weary soul could not refrain from going. A niece of my mother, Miss Eleanor Hull, accompanied me. She was a devoted girl and had often prayed for my salvation. The services up to that time from the first settlement there, had been held in Father Long's dwelling. He was a good old local preacher, and Mother Long one of John's elect ladies. I went, all the way hoping I would not return in my sins, that the long-looked-for time when it would be easy to yield to God would come. I was seated in the farthest corner from the preacher, on the steps leading to the stairway, wanting to find God and so deeply convicted I hardly heard the sermon; yet by subtle devil power put myself where it would be most difficult to find Him!

For years the demand of the Holy Ghost had been plain that I must come out publicly and identify myself with God's people. The Methodists urged all penitents to unite with the church on probation as seekers. I had refused to do it, being wiser than my teachers, as sinners generally are. The preaching being ended an invitation was given to all penitents to come to the altar, but I delayed in tears. A brother came by and asked me to go, but left me on my seat. A young man came and asked me if "I wanted religion." I timidly answered that I did. He suggested that I "go at once to the mourners! bench," but to me it seemed nearly impossible. He put his arm around me and said: "Come now, and I will go with you." Those words of love seemed to put strength into me, and in a moment I decided to go and never to leave that spot till I was born of God!

The decision of that moment was more than equal to all those years of struggle. The preacher had said if any would come, he would remain with them till sunrise, if need be. The Holy Spirit threw light on the pathway of my life, till my past sins rose as mountains before me. Others found Christ, but my sins, as a deep, dismal cloud, obscured everything but the displeasure of God. Midnight had come and the minister was anxious to close, and made several proposals for all the seekers to rise. I remembered his promise and did not obey. I had come to stay till I heard from heaven. All who were seeking had found, and my condition had never seemed so terrible as now. There was a period when it did appear the pains of hell had taken hold upon me and I had such a view of the damnation of the wicked that it has never been erased from my mind. Despair had seized my spirit as though my feet had entered hell's door and all was lost!

At that juncture the minister said: "The Methodist Church is an asylum which receives wounded souls and all who have got religion, and any who are earnestly seeking, can now be taken into the church on probation by giving me your hand and name," at the same time drawing near to where I knelt. The Holy Spirit suggested, "Will you now obey?" I answered, "Yes, Lord I will," and, without rising, turned and gave him my hand, and in less than ten seconds was standing on my feet in the new heavens and the new earth, God's happy and forgiven child! The last point of disobedience having given way, Christ instantly came before me as my sin-pardoning Saviour. He had been there before but the door was closed; now He found it open, and He came in. Rev. 3:20. The change apparent to my sensibilities was the utter and instant removal of my guilt load. Not even a symptom of condemnation was left Rom. 8:1, 2. I found myself consciously possessed of a new life which I had never had before.

I stood in silence before God. Not a word did I utter. The quiet of eternity seemed to be within. The first active emotion was an unspeakable desire to put my arms about all that were there and bring them to Christ! Sixty-two years have come and gone, and I have never lost that desire. The peace then given was a new possession and a new love, never before possessed, flowed back to God and out to universal man. I was now consciously God's own child, as witnessed by His Holy Spirit, and He my Father. Since that time I have never had one minute's trouble about my conversion! Even the devil has never questioned that I was born of God! This great transaction took place in the first hour of 1841.

"O sacred hour, O hallowed spot,
Where love divine first found me,
Wherever falls my distant lot
My heart shall linger round thee,
And when from earth I rise to soar
Up to my home in heaven,
Down will I cast my eyes once more
Where I was first forgiven."

ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION in 1847 AT AGE 22

It has been stated in previous chapters that I had been awakened to the subject of Christian holiness, and since my nineteenth year [since 1844] had been a seeker of that grace. My entrance on the work of a minister brought such responsibilities that I seemed compelled to come nearer to God. The books assigned me to study, by the church, led toward that experience. The vows I would be expected to take required that I be at least an earnest seeker. My people all knew I was a seeker, and many of them were seekers with me.

The fathers of Methodism prescribed the persistent use of all the means of grace. They specified much secret prayer, daily reading of the Scriptures, fasting, giving thorough attention to gospel preaching, special attention upon the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, etc.: as the highway leading to sanctification. They also said when you have done all this, come to God by simple faith as though you had done nothing, and receive it as the gift of God through Jesus Christ.

I followed to the letter this prescription month after month, without wearying. I prayed five times in secret, when it was at all practicable, each day. I usually fasted twice each week. I visited nearly, if not every, family in the bounds of my circuit, including saints and sinners, and talked to them about God, and usually prayed in every place. I usually rose at, or before, four o'clock in the morning to pray, and read the Scriptures on my knees, and had wondrous fellowship with God. For ten months I think there was not a minute when I felt the sting of Divine condemnation, or doubted that I was His child. I was often exceedingly happy and carried the conscious witness that my past sins were all forgiven, and during this time I think one hundred souls were converted under my ministry: but all this did not sanctify me!

As seen afterwards, there was a sense in which all this time I was seeking this grace by works! So I faithfully kept the first injunction of the fathers, but utterly failed to reach the second. Why this long delay to find what ought to have been reached in the first hour of seeking?

1. It was not for want of earnestness. There have been but few more earnest souls.

2. It was not for want of prayer. I prayed enough to sanctify a thousand souls.

3. It was not because of known sinful indulgences--there were none, as far as I knew, as I would have to state if I were dying!

4. It was not because I failed to be fully justified, or that I was a backslider in heart or life. I never had had a Christian experience before so rich and glorious as during this ten months; and surely I grew more in grace in that time than in all my life preceding it.

Why, then, was I not sanctified?

1. Because I sought it simply as a wonderful blessing, an immense gust of glory! I got these again and again, but each time found I was not sanctified. The Divine, inwrought work of God called sanctification is more than ten thousand gusts of blessing. There are millions of blessings, but only one new birth. The new birth is not simply a blessing which makes you happy; it is a work of God which brings you into a new state, in which you are to live billions of years. You are in that state in sorrow, as well as in joy, and can never be out of it without committing sin. Sanctification does not consist at all in emotional upheavals. It often produces them, but exists without them. If this is not true, every time a soul is under trial, or in sorrow, he has lost the experience!

2. I failed to find this grace in three years of seeking, because I never met God's conditions for sanctification. He has not promised that any man who will pray five times each day, fast twice each week and wear his life out working for the church shall be sanctified. If he had, all who do these things would be sanctified. But millions have done, and are doing, all these things who have not been, and are not now, wholly sanctified.

Then why insist that God's dear children must tread this Roman route, that by their works, and sufferings and sacrifices they may make themselves holy, when holiness is the gift of God? Why did not my teachers tell me I could, and ought to be sanctified, before I got half way through my first prayer, or had time to get hungry on fast day? Prayer is blessed both before and after being

sanctified, and fasting is right in its place: but when used as substitutes for entire consecration to God for heart purity and faith in Jesus to make you pure, they will hinder your sanctification. Prayer and fasting, if used to help you to comply with God's conditions, will hasten your sanctification. When these conditions are met, we are at once infallibly sanctified.

In the summer of 1847 I heard of three or four persons in Knox County, Ills., who had reached this experience, and that they were going to attend a camp meeting on the Dempsey ground. My brother Freeborn was then the "preacher in charge" on that circuit, and Roswell Morse was his helper. As I desired to meet those persons so recently sanctified I determined to go to that camp meeting.

It was a hundred miles away and the sun was hot, but that little trip across the prairie was nothing to my hungry soul. I had several seasons of shouting on the way, when no one heard but God. I was so filled with love for souls and the desire to help them that I was constrained to turn my weary horse out of the way to converse with children who were seated on a fence some distance off, and went on feeling that some of them would be saved as the result. The camp went forward with power and blessing, and souls were converted nearly every time we met. I became so absorbed in helping penitents, and so happy in God, that I forgot about my own needs.

Being appointed to preach in the afternoon, the Lord so filled me with glory that I praised Him with a very loud voice while preaching and there was a shout in the camp. I think the preaching must have been a small affair, but God was there in great power. Thirty souls, I would think, rushed inside the altar enclosure seeking pardon, and most of them cried aloud for mercy. My happy soul tumbled down among them, and the impression has followed me for many years that they were everyone converted in a few minutes! It was wonderful.

Before the night service it was determined to march around the ground with singing instead of preaching, and wind up with an altar call. I think my brother Richard led that night, and at least thirty penitents, largely all new seekers, were crying to God. A storm was approaching and our chances in those days for shelter in camp, were poor. I knew the meeting must close in the morning, and it distressed me that these seekers should be driven away without salvation. I hastened to two of those fully saved brothers, and plead with them to join with me in prayer that God would send the storm round and not allow those souls to go without being saved.

The whole appearance indicated a drenching rain. My brother seeing its near approach, gave orders that the penitents be taken to the tents, and he did not know that God was going to handle the storm. Bro. Freeborn, Bro. Morse and myself laid hold of four young men and took them to Barton Cartwright's tent. I saw each of them beautifully converted in a little time, and praised God aloud, when each came through.

The last one being converted, I looked around to see if there was any other I could help, and Richard Haney's wife, Adaline, was crying for a holy heart at the east side of the tent. I hastened to kneel by her, as though I were a veteran in the experience, and assured her that God would sanctify her; I knew he would! She stepped into the fountain and was unspeakably filled with God. Her face I shall never forget. Her life to its close was a burning lamp. No one who knew her closely ever doubted the genuineness of her testimony.

As soon as I got through shouting I looked, and my brother Freeborn was in tears and crying for a holy heart. I prayed and put my arms about his neck and felt I must push him right into the fountain. When the Holy Ghost came in and applied the blood and filled him with love, he sank down as though the boy did not have a bone in his body. He seemed awestricken and incapable of giving expression to the glory which filled his bloodwashed soul!

His colleague, Rev. R. Morse was now in agony of struggle about six feet away. The death of the old man in him seemed like crucifixion, but it was not long till he was overwhelmed and swept by the great power of God. He wept and shouted and was more demonstrative than either of the others. His whole experience was exactly in harmony with my conceptions. So another flood of praise went up to God from my happy soul.

When all was quiet and I became quiet enough to hear the Holy Spirit whisper: "It is now time that you give attention to your own soul." I had come one hundred miles to that meeting to get the experience of holiness, and had been so lost to myself in helping others, that the last night had come and I was without the experience.

I at once began to pray and prayed all night without ceasing. About daybreak I was so exhausted I was unable to struggle any more, and became quiet as a well conquered child. As soon as I was out of His way He began by giving me a fearful view of the carnal nature which was in me. In contrast with His holiness it seemed to me as black as ink. Here was the white light of His holiness, there the deep, black, indwelling evil deposit. called the carnal mind. I was not condemned in the slightest, for I knew every sin I had ever committed was blotted out, that God was my Father, and I His fully forgiven and His accepted child; but I loathed this vile nature as never before, and unspeakably desired its instant removal.

I had not thought of crying for pardon, for my whole soul plead to be made clean, but how should I get there? The Holy Spirit whispered: "Two things are necessary, only two--first, consecration; second, faith in Jesus." How glad I was to find the terms so easy, and my heart exclaimed: "O, my Lord, is that all?" My love for Him was so great I knew I could easily give to Him anything I had. I was utterly shut out from every human being, though Christians were all about me: and was alone, with God as a quiet listener.

The Holy Spirit then probed me with searching questions, asking would I do this, and that, go here or there, and my whole soul said yes. He then asked: "Should I be pleased never again to make you happy once, and allow you to live to old age," (and it looked nearly one hundred years away); "Will you be all mine, and trust my blood to cleanse you from all sin, and testify to this wherever I ask you to?" To this my heart answered. "O, my Lord, how can I do this?" I had been an exceedingly happy Christian, and to give up all religious joy, how could I do it? It seemed worse than death. But the question was repeated, and my whole heart answered yes! I then had a clear, definite inner sense that I was wholly given to God, and my consecration was a finished fact.

Now I said only that step of faith and I will have the blessing. So I began to make a desperate effort to believe, as I had often done before; but my heart went in advance of my plans, and took Jesus as my complete Sanctifier then and there and I arose to my feet. A brother said to

me: "Brother Haney, where are you now?" I answered: "I am all the Lord's and I believe the blood of Jesus cleanses me from all sin!" This was near sunrise in the morning and I had lain on the ground from about 10 o'clock the previous evening, and the struggle had left its impression on my physical force.

My new experience was at first a sense of utter emptiness. My sense of joy was not half equal to any one of the three days preceding. I had the rest which results from settlement. There seemed to be nothing unsettled. I was all the Lord's, and believed without mixture of doubt, that I was cleansed from all sin. The closing exercises of a great camp meeting, with shouts of praise, the shedding of tears, cries of penitents, and victory in the air, did not seem to move me. I was so exhausted that, like the disciples in Gethsemane, I fell asleep several times, and when awakened by my nodding, Satan hurled the statement into my soul that I was a pretty specimen of sanctification, going asleep in such a meeting as that! My heart responded: "Sleeping or waking, I am all the Lord's!"

I traveled thirty miles that day and testified four times that I was all the Lord's and believed the blood cleansed me from all sin. It was not till late in the day that the sense of emptiness began to merge into a realization of cleanness, but in no moment did my faith give way.

Stopping with a Brother Headstrom, who knew nothing of my exercises, I led in family prayer that night. While praying the Holy Spirit witnessed to what had been done about sunrise that morning on the Dempsey camp ground, and flooded my soul with glory such as I had never experienced. I had believed for sanctification fourteen hours before, and received it, and retained it by faith during the day. Now my faith was turned into knowledge. I was as truly and as perfectly saved when I rose from the straw in the morning as I was when the witness was given, and in fifty-six years I have not experienced a doubt as to the genuineness of the experience.

Source: "Pentecostal Possibilities, or
Story of My Life" by M. L. Haney

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THE END