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

Vol. I -- Named Accounts

FRANCES RIDLEY HAVERGAL
(Church of England)

One day Frances received in a letter a tiny book with the title, "All for Jesus." She read it carefully. Its contents arrested her attention. It set forth a fullness of Christian experience and blessing exceeding that to which she had yet attained. She was gratefully conscious of having for many years loved the Lord and delighted in His service; but there was in her experience a falling short of the standard, not so much of a holy walk and conversation as of uniform brightness and continuous enjoyment of the divine life. "All for Jesus" she found went straight to this point of the need and longing of her soul. Writing in reply to the author of the little book she said: "I do so long for deeper and fuller teaching in my own heart; 'All for Jesus' has touched me very much. I know I love Jesus, and there are times when I feel such intensity of love to Him that I have not words to describe it. I rejoice, too, in Him as my 'Master' and 'Sovereign,' but I want to come nearer still, to have the full realization of John 14:21, and to know 'the power of his resurrection' even if it be with the fellowship of His sufferings. And all this, not exactly for my own joy alone, but for others. So I want Jesus to speak to me, to say 'many things' to me, that I may speak for Him to others with real power. It is not knowing doctrine, but being with Him, which will give this."

God did not leave her long in this state of mind. He Himself had shown her that there were "regions beyond" of blessed experience and service; had kindled in her very soul the intense desire to go forward and possess them; and now, in His own grace and love, He took her by the hand and led her into the goodly land. A few words from her correspondent on the power of Jesus to keep those who abide in Him from falling, and on the continually present power of His blood ("the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin") were used by the Master in effecting this. Very joyously she replied: "I see it all, and I have the blessing."

The "sunless ravines" were now forever passed, and henceforth her peace and joy flowed onward, deepening and widening under the teaching of God the Holy Ghost. The blessing she had received had (to use her own words) "lifted her whole life into sunshine, of which all she had previously experienced was but as pale and passing April gleams, compared with the fulness of summer glory."

The practical effect of this was most evident in her daily, true-hearted, whole-hearted service for her King, and also in the increased joyousness of the unswerving obedience of her home life, the surest test of all.

To the reality of this I do most willingly and fully testify. Some time afterward, in answer to my question, when we were talking quietly together, Frances said: "Yes, it was on Advent Sunday, Dec. 2, 1873, I first saw clearly the blessedness of true consecration. I saw it as a flash of electric light, and what you see you can never unsee. There must be full surrender before there can be full blessedness. God admits you by the one into the other. He Himself showed me all this most clearly. You know how singularly I have been withheld from attending all conventions and conferences; man's teaching has consequently had but little to do with it. First, I was shown that 'the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin,' and then it was made plain to me that He who had thus cleansed me had power to keep me clean; so I just utterly yielded myself to Him and utterly trusted Him to keep me."

I replied that it seemed to me if we did thus yield ourselves to the Lord we could not take ourselves back again, any more than the Levitical sacrifices, once accepted by the priest, were returned by him to the offerer.

"Yes," she rejoined, "just so. Still, I see there can be renewal of the surrender, as in our communion service, where we say: 'And here we offer and present unto Thee, O Lord, ourselves, our souls and bodies.' And there may also be a fuller surrender, even long after a surrender has once, or many times before, been made. He has brought me into the 'highway of holiness,' up which I trust every day to progress, continually pressing forward, led by the Spirit of God. And I do indeed find that with it comes a happy trusting, not only in all great matters, but in all the little things also, so that I cannot say 'so and so worries me.'

"I would distinctly state, that it is only as and while a soul is under the full power of the blood of Christ that it can be cleansed from all sin; that one moment's withdrawal from that power, and it is again actively because really sinning; and that it is only as, and while, kept by the power of God Himself that we are not sinning against Him; one instant of standing alone is certain fall! But (premising that) have we not been limiting the cleansing power of the precious blood when applied by the Holy Spirit, and also the keeping power of our God? Have we not been limiting 1 John 1:7, by practically making it refer only to the 'remission of sins that are past' instead of taking the grand simplicity of 'cleanseth us from all sin?' 'All' is all; and as we may trust Him to cleanse from the stain of past sins so we may trust Him to cleanse from all present defilement; yes, all! If not, we take away from this most precious promise, and, by refusing to take it in its fullness, lose the fullness of its application and power. Then we limit God's power to 'keep'; we look at our frailty more than at His omnipotence. Where is the line to be drawn beyond which He is not able? The very keeping implies total helplessness without it, and the very cleansing most distinctly implies defilement without it. It was that one word cleanseth which opened the door of a very glory of hope and joy to me. I had never seen the force of the tense before, a continual present, always a present tense, not a present which the next moment becomes a past. It goes on cleansing, and I have no words to tell how my heart rejoices in it. Not a coming to be cleansed in the fountain only, but a remaining in the fountain, so that it may and can go on cleansing.

"Why should we pare down the commands and promises of God to the level of what we have hitherto experienced of what God is able to do, or even of what we have thought He might be able to do for us? Why not receive Gods promises, nothing doubting, just as they stand? Take the shield of faith, whereby ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked; He is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things"; and so on, through whole constellations of promises, which surely mean really and fully what they say.

"One arrives at the same thing, starting almost from anywhere. Take Philippians 4:19, 'your need': well, what is my great need and craving of soul? Surely it is now (having been justified by faith, and having assurance of salvation,) to be made holy by the continual sanctifying power of God's Spirit; to be kept from grieving the Lord Jesus; to be kept from thinking or doing whatever is not accordant with his holy will."

"Oh what a need is this! And it is said 'He shall supply all need;' now shall we turn around and say all does not mean quite all? Both as to the commands and the promises, it seems to me that anything short of believing them as they stand is but another form of 'Yea, hath God said?'

"Thus accepting, in simple and unquestioning faith, Gods commands and promises, one seems to be at once brought into intensified views of everything. Never, O never before, did sin seem so hateful, so really intolerable, nor watchfulness so necessary, and a keenness and uninterruptedness of watchfulness too, beyond what one ever thought of, only somehow different, not a distressed sort but a happy sort. It is the watchfulness of a sentinel when his captain is standing by him on the ramparts, when his eye is more than ever on the alert for any sign of the approaching enemy, because he knows they can only approach to be defeated. Then, too, the all for Jesus comes in; one sees there is no half way; it must be absolutely all yielded up, because the least unyielded or doubtful point is sin, let alone the great fact of owing all to Him. And one cannot, dare not, temporize with sin. I know and have found that even a momentary hesitation about yielding, or obeying, or trusting and believing, vitiates all; the communion is broken, the joy vanished; only, thank God, this never need continue even five minutes; faith may plunge instantly into the fountain open for sin and uncleanness,' and again find its power to cleanse and restore. Then one wants to have more and more light; one does not shrink from painful discoveries of evil, because one so wants to have the unknown depths of it cleansed as well as what come to the surface. 'Cleans me thoroughly from my sins'; and one prays to be shown this. But so far as one does see one must 'put away sin' and obey entirely; and here again His power is our resource, enabling us to do what without it we could not do.

"One of the intensest moments of my life was when I saw the force of that word 'cleanseth.' The utterly unexpected and altogether unimagined sense of its fulfillment to me, on simply believing it in its fullness, was just indescribable. I expected nothing like it short of heaven. I am so thankful that, in the whole matter, there was as little human instrumentality as well could be, for certainly two sentences in letters from a total stranger were little. I am so conscious of His direct teaching and guidance through His Word and Spirit in the matter that I cannot think I can ever unsee it again. I have waited many months before writing this, so it is no new and untested theory to me; in fact, experience came before theory and is more to me than any theory."

From a tract published by James H. Earle, Boston, written by the sister of Miss Havergal,
and entitled "F.R.H.'s Experience."

Source: "Forty Witnesses" by S. Olin Garrison

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