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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 putting on record my humble testimony to the power of redeeming grace, I would state that I was converted to God in my eighteenth year. Shortly after which I felt impressed with the importance of a deeper work of grace, which I sought with diligence and earnestness. Having, however, no very definite idea of what that work comprehended, and hearing, nothing on the subject, I failed to realize the desire of my heart, though I was favored with many seasons of precious communion with God.

I seemed to settle down in the belief that, while it might be the privilege of comparatively few, to enter into a state of entire sanctification in early life, I could not, however, recognize it as mine; yet there were times when I doubted the correctness of this position. When assuming the vows of the ministerial office, and often, in preaching the Gospel, I felt the need of a baptism of power on my soul, but failed to recognize it as a present privilege.

I sometimes would meet with those who, by the purity of their lives and sweetness of their experience, led me to believe in the superiority of their attainment, and awakened the desire within me, that I might be able to ascend to a higher plane of enjoyment.

As years passed on, the lively emotion of joy which attended my early experience disappeared, except at distant intervals. The light of my justification seemed to be waning, so that often I could only see men as trees walking.

My ministry was not entirely fruitless, but my inner Spiritual life was by no means satisfactory.

I felt the need of inward cleaning, by a conviction as distinct and strongly marked as when first converted to God. But whether this was my present privilege, or whether I must wait until some indefinite period in the future, were question of no ordinary interest. That it was indeed my present privilege, was the conclusion which I finally reached, by the following process:

It is the Spirit alone which has led me to see and feel the necessity of this work. This is presumptive evidence that I may receive it. When God gives a sinner to feel the necessity of pardon that itself is proof of His willingness to pardon. So, also, in relation to the higher attainment of the divine life, then the Holy Spirit inspires the prayer for a clean heart, this may be recorded as evidence that He means to answer that prayer and bestow the favor.

Again, I read the command, "Be ye holy!" "Be ye perfect." "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy soul and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength." I read the promise; "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean." "Christ loved the Church, and gave himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word." "The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin."

I read the prayer of Jesus, "Sanctify them through thy truth;" and that of the Apostle, "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly."

I see no reason why the things here commanded, promised and prayed for, may not be obtained now. I surely need it now; there is nothing in the Scripture opposed to, but much in favor of, present salvation. "Behold, now is the accepted time." I, therefore, reach the conclusion that it is my present privilege.

About this time the works of Mrs. Palmer were read with great interest, in which I saw almost a life picture of my own religious state, and became inspired with a hope of exercising that faith which is the shorter way to full salvation. I, therefore, resolved, by the grace of God assisting me, to be sanctified wholly, and henceforth to glorify God in my body and spirit which are His; and accordingly consecrated myself up to the measure of light I then had, to His service, for time and eternity. This was done with but a small measure of faith, and was frequently repeated without realizing the result I expected to reach; and yet I felt a growing interest in the subject of heart purity. The terms, "sanctification," "perfection," and "holiness," were no longer objectionable; but, on the contrary, they seemed to embody the very substance and power of the Gospel, and often, in reading the blessed word, I found myself lingering over them, and endeavoring to extract from them the sweetness of spiritual life. The word HOLINESS, especially, seemed vested with an interest I cannot describe. I wrote it in large letters on paper, and placed it before me in my study, that when I raised my eyes I might look upon its beauty, and be admonished by the lesson it suggested.

Failing to realize the answer to my prayer, after repeated acts of consecration, I was led into deep heart searching before God, to find the difficulty. I soon became impressed that it was my duty to acknowledge, before my people, here I stood, in relation to the work of holiness.

This, however, I felt unwilling to do; it seemed extremely humiliating to confess that I had so long been living below my privilege, and that I was now definitely seeking purity of heart. This I refused to do, for several weeks, but finding that this was the cross God laid upon me, to humble my pride, I finally concluded to bear it, and availed myself of the first opportunity making a clean breast of the exercises through which I had been passing, for months, and requested to be remembered in their prayers. A great load was at once lifted from my mind, and I soon became

willing, not only to sit at the feet of Jesus, but to receive instruction in the way to holiness, from His humblest disciples; and yet I could not appropriate the blood which cleanseth.

The act of faith, which brings full salvation, seemed exceedingly difficult, but with the increasing light of the Spirit on my mind, and with earnest and imploring entreaty for the grace of God to assist me, as under His own immediate eye and the witnessing hosts of Heaven, I gave myself, my family, my property, my time, talent and reputation, in a perpetual covenant, to be the Lord's for ever, as I had not done before. Every power and energy of my being, as described by the poet, seemed to have been enlisted in the act.

"My heartstrings groan with deep complaint,  
My flesh lies panting, Lord for Thee;  
And every limb and every joint  
Stretches for perfect purity."

With the sacrifice thus placed on the altar I endeavored to trust for its acceptance; unto the power of the enemy withstood me at every effort to believe the promise, "I will receive you." Instead of sinking down into the simplicity of a little child, and trusting in the cleansing blood now, right now I looked for some great thing to be done, but I found I had done my utmost, and I felt sure that Jesus must do the rest.

In this attitude, with all on the divine altar, I seemed to sink down into proportions so small that it appeared as though all my former self was gone, and all that remained was the consciousness that I was the same person, and with this little all of me that seemed left, resting on Jesus, I said, apparently approaching Him,

Just as I am, thou dost receive,  
Dost welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve,  
Because thy promise I believe --  
O, Lamb of God, I come.

Just as I am, thy love unknown  
Has broken every barrier down;  
Nor to be thine, yea thine alone --  
O, Lamb of God, I come."

At this point I entered the Canaan of perfect love, though the transition was so gentle, that I was unable to fix the precise time.

I had expected that God would cleanse me by striking His hand "over the place," and with considerable pomp and demonstration, I should be exalted to the third Heavens; but there was no great emotion or ecstatic rapture, I simple sunk into nothing at the feet of Jesus. The great difficulties which for many months environed me were strangely removed out of the way, and a deep peace settled down on my soul, rendering it as perfectly calm and tranquil as a day without a cloud. The evidence of the work wrought within did not seem to come by a direct witness, so much

as examining into the ground of my faith, and the fruits of the Spirit in my heart and life. I felt satisfied, however, that the work was done.

Blessed be God -- "He that doeth my will shall know of the doctrine." Since then I can say with the Apostle Paul, "The life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who hath loved me, and given Himself for me."

At times, like Abraham, I have been called to go out into a "strange land," a land of dark and mysterious providences, but faith has been to me, the "evidence of things not seen," in many instances, until the objects of divine providence have been accomplished.

I have found, in uttering a direct testimony to the power of Jesus' blood to save from all sin, a great benefit to my religious life, and in my pastoral work, I have often been greatly quickened and blessed in urging, this attainment on believers. There is, indeed, no subject so dear and precious to my heart, as the great theme of present and full salvation.

In preaching the word, I often find myself drawn into this subject, when it was not my intention to allude to it. There is, indeed, no subject so dear and precious to my heart, as the great theme of present and full salvation. And I never preach specifically on this subject without having a good time, and approaching, nearer to the blessed Christ.

Since my return from the Vineland Camp-meeting, I have witnessed, in my charge, the sanctification of about seventy soul, and about the same number of conversion.

And now, after thirteen years experience of this grace, I will say to the glory of God, I realize that the path of the just is as the shining light that shineth more and more of the perfect day. I have never had clearer light or brighter skies, than I have enjoyed for months past.

"Happy, if with my latest breath  
I may but gasp His name;  
Preach Him to all, and cry, in death --  
Behold, behold the Lamb!"

Source: "Pioneer Experiences" by Phoebe Palmer

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THE END