

All Rights Reserved By HDM For This Digital Publication
Copyright 1994 Holiness Data Ministry

Duplication of this CD by any means is forbidden, and
copies of individual files must be made in accordance with
the restrictions stated in the B4Ucopy.txt file on this CD.

* * * * *

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

Vol. I -- Named Accounts

MRS. MARY D. JAMES
(Methodist)

This account was prepared for this volume by the son and biographer of Mrs. James. As far as possible the narration is given in her own words, as indicated by quotation marks, the passages in the third person having been so written as a matter of her taste.

Born in Trenton, New Jersey, August 7, 1810, died in New York City, October 4, 1883. She was reared in a Christian home and was an unusually thoughtful, conscientious child. She was clearly converted at a little more than ten years of age, February 18, 1821. Of her early experience she wrote:

"My peace and joy in the Lord abounded, and for some weeks I felt nothing contrary to perfect love." Afterward she "felt the rising of depraved nature, which, though subdued, still remained, and was constantly striving to gain the ascendancy and the throne of which the adorable Redeemer had possession. To prevent sin from having dominion over me was my unceasing effort, and my soul was pained and grieved exceedingly to feel the workings of this vile enemy within."

A few months after her entrance upon the Christian life the Rev. Joseph Lybrand became her pastor, and "most clearly, forcibly and constantly preached the doctrine of a full salvation as the privilege of all the children of God." He also took pains to explain this experience to "little Mary," the youngest lamb of his flock. She writes:

"From the hour in which it was first presented as my privilege I sought it with unremitting diligence. I presented myself to God 'a living sacrifice,' in the bonds of an everlasting covenant, and began to reckon myself to be 'dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.' This, I think, was about six months after my conversion. I did not at that time receive the evidence that the work was fully wrought."

In her diary she wrote, January 3, 1823: "I thirst for full redemption in the blood of the Lamb. O Jesus, give me power to lay hold of Thy promise by faith. I cannot rest till I am wholly sanctified."

Two days later she attended a prayer-meeting in which she was called upon to pray, but "was tempted to refuse." "As the leader of the meeting said the second time, 'Pray, Sister Mary, God will help you,' she looked up to Jesus, casting herself upon Him, and began her supplication. Having uttered only a sentence or two her spirit was caught up into the infinite presence, and, for more than an hour, she was talking with Jesus face to face, unconscious of all earthly things. Her body was prostrated as if lifeless. It was during that memorable hour that the all-cleansing blood was applied and her heart was made pure."

January 10, 1823, this child, then less than thirteen years of age, wrote in her diary: "Glory to God in the highest! He has heard my prayers, and this night my soul rejoiced in that 'perfect love' which casteth out fear.' O how happy I am! Where shall I begin to praise my Saviour for His goodness to me? It is now more than a year since I enlisted under the banner of Jesus, and He has kept me by His power until this time. I have had many temptations and trials, and sometimes have not lived as near to God as I ought to have done, but, blessed be His dear name, He has upheld me by His gracious hand, and I am at this moment a witness that His precious blood cleanseth from all sin."

While yet a young woman, Mary Yard wrote in a letter to a friend: "To describe the difference between my feelings at the time of my justification and sanctification would be impossible. Indeed, I believe that sanctification is but the extension or fullness of the former blessing, the brightness of meridian splendor compared to the dawn ... But the figure will not hold good any further than the sun's meridian, for the Christian having the fullness of perfect love still goes onward. 'Higher mounts his soul and higher.' His capacities enlarge, and he abounds in love yet more and more."

Twice the brightness of the evidence of this experience was dimmed. While yet a little child she listened to the advice of older persons and ceased to speak definitely of the grace given her, and "had a season of spiritual darkness, which, however, was of short duration." Again in 1835, upon her removal to Mount Holly, N. J., as the wife of Mr. Henry B. James she ceased to bear testimony specifically in regard to full redemption." She sincerely believed herself justifiable in withholding her testimony to the power of the blood that cleanseth. For a long time she pursued this course without compunctions of conscience, but wondering why she was shorn of strength when she attempted to speak or pray, and why she felt that there seemed an intervening mist, half concealing the brightness of her Saviour's face, while she felt the same ardent love to Him and devotion to the interests of His kingdom. The consciousness that His presence was a less vivid realization caused her deep sorrow." This sorrow was increased when Mrs. James learned that her course in this regard had hindered others.

In 1840, during a visit to the home of Dr. and Mrs. W. C. Palmer, in New York, this matter was set forever at rest." From this visit she returned to her home full of holy energy and strong purpose to work for God. Her glowing soul longed to show forth His praise who so gloriously revealed Himself to her. "She at once began to speak in unmistakable terms of the doctrine and

experience--a course from which she never deviated during the forty-three years that remained to her on earth. She never professed to be "sinless," or "perfect," or "holy," but loved, on all occasions when she thought it would honor her Master, to confess that Jesus saved her completely and filled her with His perfect love.

In a letter to a friend she wrote: "In the retrospect of sixty-two years it gives me unspeakable pleasure to know that my entire life has been consecrated to His blessed service. O, if I had served Him more faithfully, more acceptably! It is the sweetest joy of my heart to look up to my Saviour and say:

"Thy righteousness alone
Can clothe and beautify,
I wrap it round my soul;
In it I live and die."

After threescore years of useful, happy living in the consciousness of this full salvation, she sat one morning talking with those "of like precious faith," in regard to the great salvation, when she "was not, for God took Her."

Source: "Forty Witnesses" by S. Olin Garrison

* * * * *

THE END