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

Vol. II -- Unnamed Accounts

## ACCOUNT #022

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As I look back on the first eight years of my Christian experience, I see a life of continual condemnation, doing things I ought not, and leaving undone things I ought to have done; temptation overcoming me daily; having only periodical seasons of much enjoyment in religion; duties were crosses; oftentimes the closet cold and dreary, no sensible communion with God; groaning continually, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death;" when I would do good evil was present with me; what I would not do, that I did; far from being satisfied with my experience. I could find no deliverer only in death, as I had received the doctrine that this was inbred sin producing these effects, which constituted the Christian warfare, and could not be eradicated while in the flesh. I tried to enjoy myself as well as I could, and do what little I could for my master with this experience. Beholding my fellow-men perishing, I longed to see them converted, and have the enjoyment even of the flickering hope that I had. I consecrated Myself to the work of preparation for the ministry. Dark as were these years of mourning over sin, and the condition of my fellow-men, I bless God for the little light I had. I saw, at times, so much sin and corruption in my heart, that I was almost inclined to give up my hope, but conversing with older and better Christians, I found their experience similar to mine; and reading such works as the Memoir of Brainerd, I was enabled to hold on.

But bless the Lord, O my soul, a brighter day has dawned. Some four and a half years ago, I was led, by the preaching of President Mahan, to examine the promises of God's word, and after reading, I embraced the belief that the promises are yea and amen, to the believing soul, through Christ. It appeared too much, that I could be delivered from sin, kept by the grace of, God above all temptation; have a conscious assurance of acceptance with God; and have all doubts and fears which had been harassing my soul continually, removed. But I saw the word of God plainly promised this, and to place that honor upon the atonement of Christ that was its due, required the belief. I began to cry for freedom, but soon thought of myself, my corruptions, as Peter did of the wind and the waves, forgetting the Savior. I began to look about, think of my reputation, and ere long I had lost my earnestness for the blessing, yet never gave up the belief. The Lord led me

through scenes of deep affliction. After a long and trying period of sickness, he removed from me the object of my first love, in whom my heart was bound up; it was the cutting of heart strings. I merited the chastisement. My Father, not willing to deal with me as I deserved, had in store for me untold blessings, as the fruits of this affliction. The chain that bound me to earth was now broken, my thoughts were turned inward and upward. I saw myself all corruption, deserving the deepest hell; my unfaithfulness to my covenant vows, how great; my ingratitude to my heavenly Father for His rich temporal blessings, how awful; sinners dying all around me in their sins, and I wrapped up in self; Jesus having imparted something of his dying love to me, how little effort to impart it to others; a throne of grace opened to me freely, by the blood of Christ, and how often forsaken, or the privilege slightly improved; then having been pointed to the bleeding sacrifice, atoning for all my sins, the blood able to cleanse from all sin, and Jesus willing to sustain me by His grace, and yet all slighted. O, such a heart! If God had cut the brittle thread of life and let me perish, I could have praised Him. God's ways are not as our ways, and his thoughts not as our thoughts. He appeared ready and waiting to forgive and receive me. I seemed to see Jesus on the accursed tree, and hear him say, "It is finished;" the Spirit took of the things of Jesus, and presented them to my mind so that He appeared indeed the one altogether lovely; and though I had most unfaithful been,

"Of all who e'er his grace received,"

He waited to be gracious. Sweet accents came to my soul. "Ask what thou wilt in faith, and it shall be done." My whole being cried, " Lord, cleanse me from all sin." Are you willing to give up all earthly good, willing to have your name cast out as evil, and counted as a fool, if need be? Yes, anything, Lord.

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

Deny me what thou wilt of earthly good, grant me thyself to know. I felt conscious of consecrating everything to God: my body, soul, time, talents, property, influence, all to the Lord, for time and for eternity. There was no urging, it was a natural, delightful yielding. I had been seeking for some days previous, a witness of acceptance, and found it not, nor peace, but now I simply yielded the conflict, laid my all at the feet of Jesus, waiting his holy will; happy in the consciousness that I was willing He should order all my circumstances, grant me an evidence or no evidence, peace or no peace; and in such a way as He chose. Jesus now appeared in all his loveliness; my will bowed; my soul yielded; all was laid upon the altar. So sweet was the sacrifice, that, had I a thousand hearts, it would have afforded me have afforded me joy to lay them one after another at the foot of the precious cross of Christ. I left the offering in faith, doubting nothing. There was a serenity reigning, which I had been a stranger to before. I did not think this an evidence, for I looked not for an evidence. Jesus had conquered -- and his love had empowered -- my language was --

"To do or not to do; to have,  
Or not to have, I leave to thee;  
To be or to be, I leave;

Thy only will be done in me,  
All my requests are lost in one:  
Father, thy only will be done."

This was January 17, 1842. At the close of the next day, after a busy day's work, on my way home, my soul was illuminated to such a degree, by a view of the blessed Jesus, that all my heart could utter with the voice, was, "Blessed Jesus," "Precious Savior," "Lovely of the loveliest," and like expressions.

Then I felt my Lord had indeed visited me, and with tears of love I cried, "Abba, Father," "My God and my Redeemer." And now, as I look back on that holy hour, and trace the way the Lord has led me ever since, I exclaim, O, the loving-kindness of the Lord, how great! mercy and goodness has flowed upon my poor unworthy soul, drawing me out continually in love and filial obedience. How can I express the benefits derived? Previous to that gracious hour of baptism, my natural temperament of fretfulness or impatience preyed upon me constantly; diffidence, had prevented activity in the service of my Master; urged to take part in meetings, but always avoided as much as possible, and it was ever a cross to pray before others, (though this had not the power then as formerly,) all my life time subject to bondage from the fear of death; these and other things had power over me, but, as it were, in the twinkling of an eye they were gone. From that hour scarce an inclination to fretfulness has found a place in my bosom. Diffidence is a stranger; in meetings now I can scarcely keep my seat. I long to speak of the goodness of God, the glorious plan of redemption, and of a precious Savior. To be with my Savior has been the desire of my heart. Death has lost its terror. Glorious change! freedom for the soul! How shall I account for the change, so entire? It could have been accomplished in no other way, than the clear apprehension, by faith, of the blessed Jesus through the Spirit's influences. His image seemed impressed on my heart; his Spirit pervaded my soul; constrained by his love, my heart seemed to beat in unison with his heart of love, in the great work of redeeming a world: to labor for souls, was my delight; to pray, food. His blessed word was never so full of meaning; the promises of that word how unspeakably great and precious: the Spirit how consoling; the Savior how lovely; God how holy, and what kindness and compassion in his character! Sin I was not conscious of; I felt I was cleansed. Faith, how simple its exercise, how powerful its influence. Resting all on Jesus, and the word of his grace, every want was met; his grace was sufficient; my peace as a river. Call it a delusion who may, a blessed reality it is to my soul. Jesus is a full, free and present Savior to every soul that is staid upon Him. I know it, and must proclaim it.

The blood of Christ cleanses from all sin. I feel it, and must declare it. His grace is sufficient in every hour of need. I have tried it, and must tell of it. My heart is full: Jesus is love. I feel its constraining power. O, praise the Lord for such a salvation -- such a sonship -- such an inheritance on earth, what must Heaven be. My heart longs to see this grace filling the hearts of the professed followers of Jesus. O, how they would then love to get down before the Lord and plead with Him for the salvation of souls; how delight in the services of our holy religion! Deadness, stupidity and coldness would be strangers in their experience. No longer would they have their harps hung on the willows, or sing in mournful strains

"Look, how we grovel here below,  
Fond of these earthly toys;

Our souls can neither fly nor go,  
To reach eternal joys."

"Where is the blessedness I knew,  
When first I saw the Lord," &c.  
"Do I love the Lord, or no?"

but praise lofty would vibrate the strings,

"Thou know'st I love thee, O my Lord;"  
"O, for this love let rocks and hills  
Their lasting silence break."

In view of what the Lord has done for my poor, hell-deserving soul, -- delivering it from the bondage of sin, giving power to overcome the world, the flesh and the devil, imparting such peace and joy; causing to spring up such earnest desires for the salvation of a perishing world; leading away from worthless self, and an arm of flesh, into all the fullness of God; inspiring such a childlike confidence, that the soul hangs upon his promises to have every real want met, so that it forsakes all for God, and abides in Jesus, as the branch abides in the vine, bringing forth, from the ocean of his love, living fruit; purifying the heart, and lifting the spirit to communion sweet with God and his son Jesus:-- in view of this, I say, can it be expected, that I should, were it possible, keep silence? I love the followers of Jesus, of whatever name or denomination: especially dear are those of our own church; and knowing that many of them, from their own confessions, are groaning in the same bondage that I experienced for eight years, how can I but long for their deliverance, and plead and pray till the desire of my heart is accomplished, and the will of God, even their sanctification, manifested in their lives. Knowing something of the doctrine of holiness by simple faith, by blessed experience, love constrains me to

"Tell to all around,  
Of the dear Savior I have found."

It is so positively and clearly taught in the Bible, that it is the will of God, that we should be sanctified wholly; cleansed from all sin; made partakers of all the fullness of God; dwelling in God, and God dwelling in us, in this life, that I am astonished that I have been so blind; and then the promises are so full, on this very point, I am constrained to say, blindness has happened unto Israel. May God have mercy on Zion, hear her groans, and take the scales from her vision, that she may see the exceeding great and precious promises; and seeing, may she behold to her joy, that they are all yea and amen, through faith in Christ Jesus.

Source: "The Blessing of Perfect Love"  
by D. S. King

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THE END

