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

Vol. II -- Unnamed Accounts

### ACCOUNT #023

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As your little publication was the means by which God, in his infinite goodness, saw fit to bring me acquainted with the glorious doctrine of entire sanctification, I have wished that you might know the blessing which attended your labors, and the great happiness you were the instruments of conferring. I have had, also, an increasing desire to add my feeble efforts to those of others who are engaged in endeavoring to promote the cause of heart holiness, but I have yielded to the persuasion -- for I dare not neglect known duty -- that it was not required of me to write anything for publication. Various reasons, of a private nature, led me to shrink from this. I could not, however, dismiss the subject entirely, but have been waiting to know what the Lord would have me do; and I have been made willing to take up even this cross, for the sake of Him, who "made himself of no reputation" for me. If enjoying the presence of my Savior is any evidence, I am in the path of duty. Having derived so much benefit from reading the experience of others, I will give you some account of my own, hoping, if you should think best to give it a place in the Guide, that I may, by the blessing of God, encourage some desponding souls to trust in Him at all times, though thick darkness surround their path, or stimulate some one seeking for perfect love to renewed diligence and perseverance. Although blessed with the instructions of pious parents, and the ministration of an eminently devoted servant of Christ, and often the subject of religious impressions, I grieved the Spirit, refused to give my heart to the Savior, and persisted in seeking happiness from every source but that where alone it is to be found. I intended to have religion at some future time, but was not ready to give up the world. God, who is rich in mercy, suffered me not, by this spirit of procrastination, to destroy my soul, as millions have done. In my twenty-fourth year, after several days of deep convictions of sin and earnest prayer, feeling that the Spirit was striving with me for the last time, I deliberately resolved to give up all for Christ, and found peace and joy in believing. The change was so great, I could compare it only to passing from total darkness to the brightness of the sun at noonday. For several months I was very happy, and not expecting to feel any more the stirrings of pride, or self in any form, when I saw in my heart the remains of inbred sin, I was tempted to doubt the reality of my conversion -- a special season of fasting and prayer brought no relief to my mind, and I yielded to the conviction that I never had

known, and never could know, from experience, anything of religion. And now, all the sins of my past life -- my misimproved privileges -- a crucified Savior -- an angry God -- the realities of the eternal world, and the scenes of a future judgment, were presented to my mental vision with a vividness of which I could not before

conceive. I pass over the next nine years, for those who have been in a similar state of mind need not to be reminded of such temptations and deep anguish, and to others, language would be wholly inadequate to convey any idea of the reality.

What added the greatest poignancy to my sufferings, was, that I had destroyed myself. God was just; I felt what it was to be without God, and without hope in the world. But my Savior was even then watching over me in love, though I knew it not. He was present by restraining and sustaining grace, and in his own time, gently lifted me out of the horrible pit and miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and put a new song in my mouth, even praise to his name. Often, during these years, would I have sought religion as one who had felt its power, but the conviction forced upon my mind at first, that I had grieved the blessed Spirit to leave me forever, would return, and I could not. I read not my Bible -- I tried not to pray, for I felt that this would be mockery, and only increase my condemnation, already sure. At last, finding a wounded spirit and bodily infirmities a burden almost insupportable, I resolved to forget the past, and not look forward to futurity, but commence reading my Bible, and endeavor to regulate my daily conduct according to its precepts and commandments, thinking that it might afford me relief while I lived. It was a strange resolve for an immortal being to make, but it bears the impress of that Spirit who dictated it, for it was the only motive that would induce me to use the means of grace. I put this resolution into practice; and the third day, while reading a passage of Scripture, my heart was melted, and, for the first time for nine years, a ray of heavenly light beamed upon my soul, and awakened to life a trembling hope that the work of grace had been begun in my heart. I cherished it, and in less than one week I was in a new world. I saw the love of God in all around me, felt it in my heart, and began to live for God. I now looked back with wonder and admiration at the way in which I had been led, and saw that it was the right way the only way by which such a heart as mine could be humbled, proved, and brought to a right state of feeling. I think my first resolve was, that I would never give up prayer, for by so doing I had been brought under the power of the tempter; and I determined, in the strength of God, that my future life should evince to the church and world the sincerity of my repentance and my love. So long in the habit of driving from my mind, as far as I could, all thoughts of a serious nature, I found myself a babe in Christ -- a babe in knowledge as well as grace, and was obliged to begin with the first principles of the Gospel; but I saw, that by diligence and perseverance, Christians might make great attainments in the divine life. As often as I read the blessed Scriptures, I felt that I did not come up to their requirements, and that God would not require of his creatures what they were unable to perform. I felt my obligations to be wholly the Lord's, and to be able to cry with the spirit of adoption, "Abba, Father," but thought such a state could be attained only by

years of prayer and watchfulness, and a gradual overcoming of sin. Often was I tempted to discouragement by the slowness of my progress. I endeavored to be faithful in the performance of every duty; I had no distressing doubts, but I had not an assurance. I mourned the weakness of my faith, and my want of strength to resist temptation, and to take up the cross. I longed to have Jesus reign without a rival in my heart -- to have my will brought into sweet subjection to the divine will in all things. After about two years, I was, by a train of circumstances, simple in themselves, but plainly marked by the finger of God, placed where I had an opportunity of reading the Guide, and

determined to examine for myself what this new doctrine was. I commenced with a prayerful desire to be taught of the Spirit, and that I might, without prejudice, receive truth from any source. In connection with the Guide I studied the Bible, and soon my objections -- the result of ignorance -- vanished before the light of truth. I saw that the doctrine of entire sanctification was as plainly taught in the Bible as any other, and that the blessing of perfect love was just what I needed, to enable me to follow the footsteps of my divine Master, in that narrow path where the Bible and my own conscience taught me I ought to walk; and that it was alike the privilege and duty of every Christian to possess it; but it was some weeks before I could resolve to seek it, for I saw that the way of holiness was indeed a narrow way, and the blessing must be sought for life. Satan was busy with his temptations, so well known to all seekers of holiness. He told me, that if I had the blessing, I could not retain it, and by losing it, should greatly dishonor the cause of Christ -- placed all that I must give up in the most alluring point of view, and magnified every cross. One consideration bore with much weight upon my mind -- that I had solemnly covenanted to give up all unreservedly, and as long as I kept back any part of the price, was living in disobedience; and by the grace of God I was enabled to overcome, and make this resolve that I would earnestly and perseveringly seek for entire sanctification, not that I might be happy, but prepared to glorify God. Reading that it was obtained by faith, and only partially enlightened as to the way, I tried to believe, but could not. I then learned that there must first be an act of entire consecration, and looked to God for strength to give up all; I examined my heart -- my idols were shown me, and I was astonished and alarmed to find with what tenacity self clung to these; but God is faithful, and I continued to plead the promises, and was, I trust, after many severe struggles with self, enabled to lay them all upon the altar. From the first, I tried to form my conduct according to rules which I knew must govern me if I obtained the blessing, or I should lose it, and was now endeavoring to seek the glory of God in

all I did; but afraid to say that I would, not knowing what situation I might be placed in. I thought I must look forward to the end of life, and resolve, that under all circumstances I would deny self and take up every cross, and it seemed impossible to have grace sufficient for this; and God showed me that He did not require it, but I must live by the moment. This was hard, but after many weeks of earnest prayer for faith, unbelief -- the last strong hold -- was given up. One morning while reading some marks in the state of those who had consecrated all to God, the hope that I had done so increased, and I resolved to begin, that moment, to seek the glory of God, and trust Him for the future. Immediately faith sprung up in my heart, and I could say, with confidence, my Father, and my Savior. I had no rapturous emotions, but love, and joy, and a delightful peace filled to overflowing my soul. I had no idea that this was the blessing I had so long been seeking, but felt that God had granted me an increase of faith to encourage me to persevere -- a blessing I had received, and felt that I held it by the moment, and hardly dared speak or move, for fear of grieving the Spirit. The effect of it was much nearer access to the throne of grace: a more realizing sense of the presence of God at all times; the Scriptures seemed to have a new meaning, especially the promises, the passages relating to holiness, and to the Savior in his different offices, and enlarged views of the fullness of the atonement, and of the privileges of every believer. With regard to the future, I felt like a little child in the care of a kind parent, and could trust my all with God. As I read the experience of others, and looked into my heart, I hoped that God had indeed given to me that "perfect love which casteth out fear," and I felt that it was wholly for his own glory that he had bestowed this grace upon one so unworthy, and that no moment of my future existence was my own, but all was to be devoted to his service. Some days after, while thinking of the crosses I had been enabled to take up, I trembled in view of those before me, when the still small voice of the

Spirit spake, "The Lord that delivered me out the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine." I was strengthened, and often since, when in heaviness through manifold temptations, these words have afforded much consolation and support. Seven months have passed, and so far as I have lived in the exercise of entire consecration and implicit faith, my peace has been as a river, and I have, -- in the strength of God, overcome my spiritual enemies. I have learned much of the subtle wiles of the adversary, -- and should many times have cast away my confidence, had it not been for the instructions received from the experience of others. I returned to my friends with a fixed determination to tell them what God had done for me, and urge

them to seek the same grace; for the Spirit had shown me plainly my duty in this respect; but owing to the excitement, fatigue, and want of retirement attendant upon a journey, I did not enjoy so clearly the witness of the Spirit as I had done, and it was suggested to my mind that I had better not say anything respecting it until I felt more, and my friends should see the effect in my life. I listened to this plausible reasoning, for how could I profess that I loved God with all my heart, unless I felt and manifested this love I kept my all upon the altar, and waited many days for the fire to enkindle a flame of love in my heart, but in vain. I -- felt no condemnation, but had no longer nearness of access to a throne of grace, and the distance between God and my soul seemed to increase. I inquired why it was thus, and found that I had been listening to the tempter, and yielding to distrust, and could not expect a blessing without perfect obedience. A resolve to embrace the first opportunity for speaking of the goodness of God to me, and trust him for grace to maintain the honor of my profession, restored sweet peace to my heart, and brought my Savior near; and I have since often been blessed while speaking of this precious doctrine. I learned from this to "try the spirits." When, through the strength of temptation, and the power of past habits, I have yielded, it has not discouraged me as heretofore. Alarmed at the possibility of losing a treasure so inestimable, I have sought, by immediate repentance, and a new consecration, pardon, and a new cleansing of the atoning blood, and begun again to walk in the narrow way, with a renewed sense of my entire dependence, and I trust, deepened humility. While I daily feel more and more my need of the momentary intercession of my Savior, and that without Him I can do nothing -- while I mourn the slowness of my progress in the divine life, and that I possess so little of the spirit of my Master -- that my gratitude, love, zeal and humility are so little proportioned to the goodness of God, I think that I am becoming more established in this blessed way of living faith; and my hope and expectation increase, that I shall continue to walk in it to the end of life. The Spirit witnesses with my spirit that I am born of God. I cannot doubt that I am accepted in the Beloved. I feed on heavenly manna, and draw water with joy from the wells of salvation. What I have received stimulates me to press forward, for I know it is but a drop from the exhaustless fountain of Infinite Love. But it is all of grace. God began, and he has carried on the whole work. To Him be all the glory. I love the cause of holiness, and rejoice in every new effort to promote it.

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

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THE END