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

Vol. II -- Unnamed Accounts

ACCOUNT #033

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I trust I was converted about seven years since. The Lord then became the life and delight of my soul. I served the Lord with some degree of faithfulness, according as my mind was enlightened in the truth at that time. I however panted after a clearer vision of truth, and greater conformity to the will of God. About the year 1840, the Lord in his providence brought me to Oberlin, and placed me in circumstances favorable to getting a better understanding of the gospel. The preaching which I then heard, was searching, pungent, "piercing to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit," and was attended with a demonstration and power which I had never before experienced. I endeavored to hasten and follow on after the truth. But still I was so tardy and the truth was gathering upon me with such rapidity and clearness, that conviction ripened in my mind, and I saw myself far behind my privileges. I was fully convinced, that there was a depth of meaning and reality in almost all the promises of God, to which I was an entire stranger. There certainly was a deep spiritual experience promised which I had not attained. This conviction was ripening in my mind for a number of months, and pressing me more and more.

In this state of mind I sometimes waxed stubborn and rebellious, and appeared to myself more wicked and abominable than I had ever been before. I could enjoy no religion. In short, God would not let me rest until I arose and sought a higher spiritual state. I said to myself, I will arise and seek God with all my soul, and will never rest till I experience what he has promised. I sought the Lord day and night for weeks. I became more and more impetuous in my prayer. I said I will die but that I will find God. Many things came up to prevent my seeking God. I had just entered college; my studies demanded much of my time; my health failed:-- indeed it seemed sometimes that I must give up the search. But no, said I, this is a matter of life and death. I will know God, health or no health; study or no study.

Just at this time a powerful revival of religion took place in the institution. But this only made me more and more anxious. Almost every body was praying. When I arose in the night to call upon God, I could hear, from the adjoining rooms and the surrounding woods, the voice of prayer,

which broke the stillness of the night with awful solemnity. As I went through the halls, my ears were constantly assailed with deep-toned, heartbroken prayers, which pierced my heart as a sharp sword. Frequently, when hearing these prayers, my spirit was so broken and wounded that I would hasten to my room, and fall upon my face as a wounded man, and cry to God for mercy. But God had mercy upon me. As I was one day calmly reflecting in my room, the thought came very distinctly to my mind, that without faith it is impossible to please God. Immediately the way of faith was suggested to me. I took my Concordance and selected the most important passages that speak of faith. I studied these passages, and sought the Lord to show me the way of faith as it is taught in his word. After some reflection, and with great calmness of mind, I had a distinct apprehension of what faith is, and how I could exercise it, and that by so doing I could not fail to receive the blessings which I sought. I immediately stopped forth into faith in God, like stepping from a miry slough, upon a broad and solid platform. I saw that I had nothing to do but to keep my confidence in God. I had no contention but with those things that would hinder my faith. Now, the Lord seemed to say, if you have any requests, bring them forward. I did so. My wants were no sooner named, than met. I knew that I had found the way to God. This was a time of harvest. For days and weeks, as my wants arose, I carried them to God, and found them met immediately -- met fully and abundantly.

My first request was that God would heal my head, so that I might pursue my studies. I had been troubled a number of weeks with confusion and pain in my head, so that I was entirely unfitted for study. I had used, and was then using means for my recovery, but to no effect. I judged that God could do it. I presented my request; the work was performed immediately, and so thoroughly that I have felt no symptoms of that complaint since that time, which was about five years ago.

This however appeared to me but a small thing. God had greater mercies in store for me. The way had now become open before me, and I went forward to those great things which I had so long sought. To know God, to have communion with him through our Lord Jesus Christ, to have complete victory over my sins, to love my fellow-men, to know God as my Father; these things I sought and realized in a sense which I had never known before. In short, the Lord made a complete era in my experience. He commenced a new period, which in many respects has been different from what I had passed through before.

In looking over my experience for the last five years, I discover three prominent facts which distinguish this period of my religious life, from my former experience.

1. I have uniformly had a clearer apprehension of truth. The great facts in religion, and its practical truths, have an indefinitely greater impression on my mind than formerly. The fact that we soon must die, meet God in judgment, that eternal life awaits the righteous, and eternal misery the wicked; the awful guilt of sin; the fact that Christ died for sinners: such facts have in my mind passed from shadows to substances; from mere matters of theory to facts; from the obscurity of twilight, to the clearness of the risen sun.

2. In another respect my experience has been marked for the last five years. There has been a permanent encouragement to live and labor for God in the world. My natural constitution is such, that I am easily tempted to discouragement and despondency. I have often indulged in these gloomy

forebodings, and found them ruinous in their tendencies. But the effect of God's grace is to encourage me to hope. In times of general spiritual declension, in times of great trial, or great temptation, my soul says, "Hope thou in God." Even when I have sinned, (for I have in some instances fallen under temptation since God has enlarged his grace to wards me,) I still remember that God can forgive: that his mercy is higher than the heavens, and his faithfulness unto the clouds.

3. Another effect of God's grace has been to deepen conviction whenever I fail to do my whole duty. If I see any want of conformity to the will of God, or short comings, or sins of any description, conviction takes fast hold of my soul.

This conviction is deeper, more pungent and awful, than I ever experienced, either at my conversion, or at any time in my past life. These I take as evidences of God's grace, and of the progress in holiness which he is pleased to effect in my heart.

O that the benefits of God's grace were more appreciated. I cannot now speak of the thousands of daily mercies, precious visits, holy anointings, and spiritual favors of various kinds which a benevolent God has bestowed upon me through the merits of his dear Son. My desire is, and my effort shall be, to go forward and enlarge my experience in the boundless grace of God. By faith in Christ it can be done.

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

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THE END