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

Vol. II -- Unnamed Accounts

ACCOUNT #040

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For your encouragement, and those now thirsting for full salvation, permit me to declare (in humility) what the Lord has done for my soul, though of all the most unworthy. In view of the goodness of God to me, I can but exclaim with the Psalmist, "Praise the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me praise and bless his holy name." Truly the forbearance of God is great, in sparing so long the barren fig tree, while justice has cried, "cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground?"

When fifteen years of age, I experienced a pardon of sin, and was connected with the Methodist Episcopal Church. For five years following, I lived as many others doubtless live -- at times would enjoy much peace of mind; then yield to temptation, fall under condemnation, and feel the keen pangs of sorrow; my confidence in God and myself would be lost; darkness would enshroud the mind, and the reconciled countenance of my Savior would be hid from my weeping eyes. Thus I spent five years, sinning and repenting, and was unwilling to obey the call of God, to leave all and follow Christ. In the spring of 1839, I resolved to do my duty to God and my fellow men, and commence preaching the everlasting gospel. But in order to warn the sinner of his danger, I felt the importance of being saved entirely myself. I thought somewhat on the subject of holiness, but not sufficiently. One year since, I was led to feel more deeply on the subject, by reading Mahan, the Guide to Christian Perfection, Bro. Rice's experience, and also by conversing with him on the subject, as to the nature and importance of entire sanctification in this life. After mature consideration, I came to the conclusion that it was possible to be holy in this life, and that without it I could not be of much use to the church or world.

I commenced seeking for the "baptism of the Holy Ghost," for a clean heart, an entire consecration to God! My prayer, I trust, was answered; my soul was filled with love, joy, and constant peace; my communion with God was continual and sweet. For two weeks

"Not a cloud did arise to darken my skies,
Or hide for a moment my Lord from my eyes."

it was glory from the rising of the sun until its going down. At this time a query arose in my mind like this, -- "Is it my duty to publicly acknowledge what the Lord has wrought for my soul?" I began to distrust the omnipotency of my blessed Lord, and the adversary of all good gained a bearing. He reasoned in this way, -- "You are young, exposed to many temptations, of a lively temperament, and a cheerful disposition: if you make so high professions, you will be watched by the church and world with jealous eyes, and you will likely fall from this height, and great will be your fall: but you may keep it to yourself; then if you do lose the blessing, you will not wound the cause publicly." Alas for me! I listened to these crafty insinuations of Satan, and thereby lost the heavenly treasure. I deeply mourned the loss, but concluded to live in the enjoyment of a tolerable degree of religion, and not think of being holy till about to leave this world. Then I would seek for holiness, "without which no man can see the Lord." But this did not pacify my conscience when I read on the subject, or heard the sanctified soul exult in the joys of a full salvation. It would pain my heart, knowing that once the same joy was mine. At times I was troubled much on this point, and would try to content myself with my present enjoyment, and think that some individuals, from their peculiar circumstances in life, or from their being differently constituted, having fewer besetments, might be holy. But it was too much for me. Thus I reasoned, and thus I lived, full of hope and fear. At times on the mountain top, and then far from my Lord -- by the side of Babylon's cold waters.

Last month I left my charge, taking some of the church with me, and found my way to "Millennial Grove," with the intention of regaining the costly pearl, the loss of which had so long and grievously afflicted me. But the enemy followed me even to the grove, and told me there the same old story, "If you regain the blessing you cannot retain it." But we were told on Wednesday afternoon, (the second day of meeting,) that we could retain it as long as did Enoch of old. His short but powerful arguments, by the application of the Spirit of God, allayed my fears, dispelled all my doubts, and I resolved that from that moment, with divine assistance, I would be wholly the Lord's. I felt much of the power of God before the close of that exercise, especially while a brother was singing after the sermon. The public exercises of that afternoon closed; I repaired to my tent, but still continued to look to the Lord. I resolved, like Jacob of old, to wrestle till I prevailed. I saw my heart as it was, discovered many things wrong, sinful; my prayer was, "Lord, show me what I am. Tear every idol from my heart; cleanse me from all sin." I plead not for joy, for happiness, but for a clean heart, for pure love to God. One enemy after another was driven from my heart; my faith increased; gradually and silently I sunk out of self into God. My heart I believed was purified, the roots of sin taken out, and I was filled unutterably full of love and of joy; heaven seemed to come down to earth; my soul was full of glory and of God. Two others, at the same time, were prostrated by the mighty power of God, and drank with me at the same fountain, or rather were plunged into the same pool. The rest of the meeting to me was, in truth, a heaven on earth. The worship of God never seemed so delightful before; communion with saints never so sweet. Wherever I could behold the image of Christ it was indeed lovely. Whenever I met an individual enjoying a full salvation, I met a true friend. No matter by what sectarian title known, we were one in Christ Jesus. Glory to God in the highest, for that perfect love which can destroy selfishness, pride, envy, and the spirit of unjust emulation. This is the "balm for every wound, the cordial for every fear." This cement of perfect love will unite the whole Christian church, of whatever name or order. O that I could describe the feelings of my heart; the gratitude which flows continually to God for past mercies, present favors, and future prospects.

It seems that the set time to favor Zion has come. The work has commenced where it should, in the church, in its ministry and membership. They should be holy. Too long already have we been apparently unconcerned for ourselves and others, but we have reason to rejoice that increasing interest is now felt. In many churches we hear an almost universal cry for holiness of heart. In this place many are seeking this inestimable blessing. From every direction we hear the cry, "O Lord, create in me a clean heart." Many are now swimming in the ocean of perfect love. Hundreds, in various places, can now testify in sincerity that the blood of Christ does cleanse from all sin, even in this life. And by the assistance of divine grace we can retain the blessing; yes, glory to God, we can continually feel that "all is well." My peace of mind is now constant; my confidence in God unshaken; my faith is strong -- it claims the blessing now. Communion with God -- O, how sweet! The Bible unfolds new beauties. A new and stronger relish for divine truth seems to have been formed; especially where it treats of holiness of heart and life. No subject is so interesting as this; no topic of conversation so delightful to dwell upon. I find it now easy to perform any and every religious duty. Once it was very crossing to converse with individuals, directly and pointedly, on the subject of religion -- especially to exhort the Christian to greater diligence; but now it is a pleasing, a delightful task. It is now easy preaching the word of life; of salvation, free and full. Difficulties that previously were insurmountable, now are light, hardly worth noticing; if noticed at all, they serve rather to stimulate than discourage. We care but little what the world say or think of us. The question is not who and how can I please, but rather, how can I be instrumental in the advancement of my Redeemer's kingdom? What can I do for the souls of others, and for the glory of God? Love to God and man is the mainspring that impels to virtuous action. Love, perfect love, filling the heart, constitutes the fountain from whence streams of kindness and Christian philanthropy continually flow. My heart can truly say, "Praise the Lord" for the rich provision made, so that man, fallen man, can have a full supply of grace, rich grace, to drive all his wants away; that we, unworthy worms of earth, can so near approach to God as to be adopted into his family; be purified by his blood, and constantly cry, Abba, Father -- my Lord and my God. Glory to God; while I write, the fire of God's love burns within, on the altar of my heart: the sacrifice, I trust, is all consumed, and "Christ reigns without a rival there." Christian friends, go on; "be steadfast, unmovable; always abounding in the work of the Lord." Let us continually pray that the entire church may be baptized with the Holy Ghost -- especially those whose duty it is to bear the vessels of the Lord. Truly we can sing,

"O, how happy now are we,
Since we gained the victory."

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

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THE END