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

Vol. II -- Unnamed Accounts

ACCOUNT #041

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As I have been much interested, and often profited, by reading the "Guide," and as the experiences it has contained have proved a blessing to me, I am constrained, through sense of duty, to communicate the gracious dealings of the Lord to my unworthy soul. Realizing my own inability, I transmit the following to you, to dispose of as you may think proper.

In taking a retrospective view of the past, my soul is filled with gratitude and praise to my heavenly Father, for his abundant goodness and tender mercy, which have followed me all my days. I was in early life the subject of my serious impressions, but continued to resist the strivings of the Holy Spirit until nearly thirteen years of age; about which time, during a revival of religion, I became deeply convinced of the necessity of the pardoning grace of God, by hearing a sermon from that text of Scripture which declares that "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them." I felt that I had, all my life, been disobeying the righteous command of God, and grieving his holy Spirit; that I was a guilty sinner, already condemned, and every moment exposed to the wrath of a holy and righteous God. I found no rest until I was enabled to cast my wearied soul entirely upon the mercy of him who shed his precious blood even for the chief of sinners. It has been about eleven years since God for Christ's sake forgave my sins. I was for some length of time happy in the Lord; I felt that my sins were all forgiven, my name written in the Lamb's book of life; but I soon found that there were remaining corruptions in my heart. I felt that I had a heart prone to wander from the Lord. My days were spent in doubting and hoping, in sinning and repenting. In this miserable way I lived on for nearly ten years, sometimes reviving, then again being slain. I tried to serve the Lord, but it was with a divided heart, -- I made very little if any progress in the way to heaven. I was taught by older Christians, that there was no better inheritance for Christians while here below, and that death only would free them from this state of bondage. I often resolved to set out anew to serve the Lord, and serve him with all my power, but I as often found my resolutions vain, -- I felt that I was led captive by Satan, at his will. I became sick of living at such a poor dying rate. I felt, it was worse than death my God to love, and not my God alone. I realized that I was not prepared to live or die.

About two years since I commenced reading the "Guide to Christian Perfection." I began to search the Bible with a desire to know the truth and the whole truth. I became convinced that it was the will of God, even our sanctification; that the blood of Jesus was sufficient to cleanse from all unrighteousness. I resolved to seek for holiness of heart for full conformity to the divine requirements.

In the summer of 1841, I became acquainted with several persons who were enjoying full salvation; and I have great reason to praise God for the assistance I received through their prayers and conversation. It had now become the burden of my prayers that God would sanctify me wholly -- that he would "create in me a clean heart, and renew within me a right spirit."

The December following, I had the privilege of attending a protracted meeting. During the meeting some precious souls were brought into the fold of the Redeemer, others received the pearl of perfect love. The meeting commenced on Monday. Day after day of the meeting passed, until Saturday evening came; and my soul was yet under the power of sin and Satan. I had at times, during the meeting, enjoyed much of the presence of the Lord, but I still felt that all was not right within. I had often wrestled at the throne of grace for a clean heart, and at times seemed almost to grasp the prize, but had as often been thrown back into a state of darkness and perplexity. Saturday noon came; the struggles of my mind had become severe. I was tempted to give up the struggle; but that I resolved I would never do. If die I must without this blessing, I resolved to die pleading for full redemption through the blood of Jesus. Darts from the enemy flew thick and fast around me. My mind was like the troubled sea. Sin like a heavy burden wearied my soul. My past unfaithfulness in the cause of Christ came up before me, and seemed to call for the displeasure of a holy God to rest upon me for ever. During the intermission I retired alone to pour out my whole soul before God. I think I felt willing to become anything or nothing, or even a fool, for Christ's sake. The language of my heart was, "As the heart panteth for the cooling water brook, so thirsteth my soul after thee, O my God."

I returned to the prayer meeting in the afternoon, weary of my life, yet with the determination that, though

"Devils rage, and hell assail,
I'll fight my passage through;
Though foes unite, and friends desert,
I'll seize the crown in view."

During the prayer meeting one brother arose and invited those who were seeking for holiness of heart, and who desired to be especially remembered in the prayers of their Christian friends, to rise. That beloved brother then led in prayer. The Lord was present to hear and answer; power was given me to believe. When we arose from prayer, my soul was calmly resting on God; although I did not, at the time, realize that my heart was cleansed from sin. I felt that I had given myself entirely to the Lord, and was safe in his hands. I think I had long been as willing to be entirely the Lord's, as I was at that time; but never before felt such a trusting in him. I soon began to contrast my feelings with what they were a few hours previous to that time. All now within my breast was as serene and peaceful as a summer evening. Not a wave of trouble rolled. At the

evening meeting, I felt it my duty to acknowledge what the Lord had done for my soul. I was blest in so doing. I could freely adopt the language of the poet, where he exclaims,

"My God is reconciled,
His pardoning voice I hear;
He owns me for his child,
I can no longer fear.
With confidence I now draw nigh,
And Father, Abba, Father, cry."

Sabbath morning came. My soul was in perfect peace. I enjoyed that perfect love which casteth out all fear. The fear of death was taken away; I felt it would be a privilege to lay this body down, and rest for ever in the Lord. I did not fear the reproach of a vain world, it being the only desire of my heart to do the will of my heavenly Father.

Several months have passed away, and I feel that Jesus is the same both yesterday, day and for ever -- a present, an all-sufficient Savior to those who believe. I now enjoy his presence; my heart is stayed on God; I find the yoke of Christ easy, and his burden light. My trust is in him who is able to keep me from falling, and to present me full less before the throne of his glory. My peace is like a river. I bathe in the ocean of God's love. I feel a blessed assurance that I am accepted of God, that Jesus is mine, and I am his. Although I have passed through trials, temptations and persecutions, I have thus far been enabled to cast all my cares on Jesus, feeling that he careth for me. At present my motto is, Onward It is my earnest desire and prayer to God, that all Christians may come up to their high privilege, that the same rich blessings which have been imparted to unworthy me, may be enjoyed by every child of God.

Who that has ever tasted of the love of God, and does not desire to have his soul filled with that love? Who that loves, can love enough?

"The love I owe for sin forgiven, for power to believe, --
For present peace, and promised heaven, no angel can conceive.

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

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THE END