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

Vol. II -- Unnamed Accounts

ACCOUNT #048

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Being deeply impressed that in order to be a Christian in the full meaning of the term, one must be a student, a constant student, I have, with all decision, made it my one employ, to live understandingly; and would be happy in contributing something to the interest of the "Guide," with my favorite signature. At the age of twelve years, my attention was attracted from the ordinary lessons of the world to that given by our great Teacher. At that period I learned the present effect of repentance and trust in Jesus for the pardon of all the sin and folly of a childish life. From this I proceeded onward to further knowledge, (not, however, being a close student,) sometimes seeing clearly -- more frequently as through a mist, while attempting to know the meaning of this or that Christian grace. For the six years subsequent to the time mentioned, I realized gradual advancement in the justified way: yet deeply oppressed at times, while thoughts of dissatisfaction and discouragement arose, occasioned by my too frequent vacillations. I knew, I felt often, in deep anguish of spirit, that my soul was not deeply fixed, by faith, in him whom I desired to love. In such exercises, I saw my need of gaining that point, here the will of the creature is lost in that of the Creator, and entire or perfect love is the element of the being. But here, the love of self, inasmuch as there existed a fear of the responsibility of great profession, hindered my examining the subject of Christian holiness with deep and sincere interest, as one in which I should engage myself, until the autumn of 1836. (I had, from childhood, been so situated as to hear such blessedness frequently spoken of.) At that time, while witnessing the exercises of some devoted ones seeking inward purity, my own state was compared with theirs. I saw the distance between myself and them as seekers of the grace of life. I saw, too, and O! how searching! the vast difference between myself and him whom I had called Father! At this time I took this subject -- entire consecration, with the application of the promises, closely in mind; secluded myself for its consideration, when, to my own astonishment, I found myself a wavering believer in it. Some, a few special ones, may realize this great attainment; but so nearly angelic is it, it cannot be suited to human nature everywhere -- was my mental language. But my wearied, unsatisfied soul, rested not here with the subject. By a train of mental exercises, too tedious to be mentioned, I came to the full and unwavering belief that Christ Jesus would save an and all of his desiring people from their

sins, would they but believe. Yet, strange to be said, I did not then decide to come to the very point -- make the entire consecration at the very time, now, though deeply impressed with a sense of the great want I was suffering, and yet bringing upon myself. My former devotion appeared superficial. I had indulged a selfishness; a reserve of the heart, of some portion of the heart, at every consecration heretofore made! so that for weeks, and months, I unceasingly cried for a willingness to be made holy. I could not wonder, should the reader exclaim, What a prayer! for my soul would repeat it, What a prayer! But to come to the point of my meaning, I should say I was willing for all, except a certain responsibility of walking in so narrow a way as would be implied in a profession to live free from sin. For a time I sought a resting place in good decisions; resolving to live heartily near my Savior, -- much in prayer, -- but would take the course of the majority of Christians, in reference to the subject of sanctification, for the present. Need I say, this was a dangerous place? What spiritual eye cannot see the danger? A heart unyielding to clear and known duty cannot be ever justified in his sight who requireth the whole soul. Thus I found it, to the deep regret of my heart, now not justified. Clouds and darkness rolled upon me; and while attempting to carry my decisions into practice, my undesirable state was kept in open view; and though for a time my resolutions for prayer, and separation from that which was unholy, were kept rigorously, discouragement had unseen influence, insomuch that unconsciously my purpose was yielded, and general decline was perceptible. The passing of days and weeks, was but the constant reminding that the influence of the creature's will brings death-like blight, and lays low the cultivation of every Christian grace. The winter had passed which brought me to March, 1837, but the dreariness and bleakness of the mind had not gone; neither was there any sign of verdure, pure waters, or fruit. Yet seeing my state, having no rising hope for the better, while in that position, my judgment was called upon to compare the points -- that of living in part to self, with that of entire, constant and everlasting consecration to the King of kings and Lord of lords. In answer to earnest supplication, the value of eternal things, with the privilege of walking with Christ, were brought near, so that my judgment saw the exceeding benefit of living for holiness. At this time, in this light, I made the decision. I felt, I now feel, at by divine grace, it was a final decision. I desired only to be prepared to live so as to fulfill the blessed commands, to live for souls: by my hand it was recorded, by my heart it was repeated: to seek entire death to all but that which should please my Lord. Now my heart was set upon unreserved living to him who is invisible -- upon a life of faith, purity of heart, present salvation from all sin. Here commenced my seeking this distinct, comprehensive attainment. Now my unutterable desire was realized. Searching the heart by the holy word, successive hours in prayer became absorbing; meantime, I fell into many errors; such as seeking a preparation to be made holy -- to be prepared by good works and good emotions, in order to exercise the true faith And again, so great inconsistency did I see in happiness without holiness, that I resolved to be unhappy in mind, until pure in heart; (I mention these particulars, thinking, perhaps, they will meet the eye of some one thus inclined,) thus I condemned myself most rigorously for feeling the least rising of joy, until thoroughly pure in heart. Gloomy agonizings and despairings were the companions of all my hours. Autumn again returned, and found my state not perceptibly changed. Now I seemed in a thicket. Not having had personal instruction from those who understood the deep workings of the heart when firmly set for that it does not fully understand, my errors had become multiplied. Where am I? Have mercy, Lord! was the language of my heart. At this time I resolved to go to a "tented grove," where much, probably, would be said and felt of the "precious faith." My thirsty soul panted for instruction. This I received; and from those, too, who had in clear remembrance the darkness from which they had

just emerged; they taught the way of faith; all was clear to me, but one dark step; this my philosophizing feelings would not assent to. Such a week I had never experienced; fasting, praying, and hearing, seemed alike fruitless, for I stopped at the main point, "believe that ye have the things that ye ask, and ye have them;" and so tenacious did I find myself of my supposed understanding of the way to receive the blessing for which I plead, that a kind of triumph frequently arose, that I had been kept from so great an inconsistency, saying, a thorough work I must have, if life itself must be a sacrifice. The privileges of this meeting had passed, and my object was not attained. How insecure and wretched did I then feel myself to be! One day, with a journey of sixty miles, brought me to another meeting of the same character as the former. Through the privileges of this, I passed in like exercises, until nearly the last day of social exercises there. Increased inclinations to despair of becoming free from the bondage of sin, with a dread untold of a future life, long or short, without holiness, produced emotions unutterable. Not the excitement of the exercises of others did I seek, but close and convincing teaching. I now found that I had gained nothing by long seeking, and by my repeated trials to get the heart placed aright. I seemed now farther from the salvation than at any moment before. While feeling that the point of decision must soon turn in general despair or victory, I called the promise to mind, "believe that ye have the things ye ask," &c., and asked, can it be that it should be taken coldly, intellectually? would it, could it be thus? I saw my infidelity in this; decided to it, hazarding all, for no other resort did I know; all else had come short. I took the blessed Book, turned to the promise, retired where no human eye was seeing, no human ear was hearing;

knelt, holding forth the hand of faith; resolving intellectually to believe it, to continue to believe it, and yet believe irrespective of emotion; for my emotions now seemed dead; I must take it thus, or have it not at all. One half hour, and yet without perceptive change; constant intellectual exercise of counting myself dead to sin, and free therefrom, as I performed the condition required for it; (which is the simple believing, in itself,) without my evidence of it, save the veracity of him who had promised:-- believing absolutely, hoping against hope, with an effort to remember the Father is ever the same, the Fountain for cleansing, opened by the crucified Jesus, ever the same. A long time elapsed, and I had yet to say, coldly intellectual yet I will, I do believe. Now a resting of spirit I began to realize, as I forgot self, while gazing at Christ; remembering, when we cease from our own works, (or efforts,) we enter into rest, the rest of faith. And lo! the darkness is gone! the way is clear! all was done by my Lord, and had been done since the promised redemption, would I only "believe unto righteousness." Then, in a sense not known to me before, did I feel "the sacred awe that dares not move, and all the silent heaven of love." All is God, was my spirit's language. It is enough! All is well! Salvation! Self is gone and Christ liveth! Deep, unbroken, hallowed peace, with a silent triumph filled the soul, and more and more so, while confession was made thereof. Having received Christ Jesus by faith, my purpose was and is, so to walk in Him. (By faith we stand, by the moment! How dependent! Every moment the blood of sprinkling we believe for, by which we have acceptance.) Having, with all His creatures, the constant aid of divine grace, irrespective of sight, my soul shall ever ascend in faith; though it sometimes be upon

In giving an account, in the August number of the Guide, of my experience in the "narrow way," I briefly spoke of certain errors; thinking that some one might be benefited by the mention of them. Some of those errors I will now more particularly refer to; for, once, twice and thrice, I have found myself pursuing a course, which, if long followed, though in a deep sincerity, would have proved, in the result, fatal to my object. At one time, less than one year after my entering a state of perfect faith and love, my feelings were deeply excited in view of the destruction awaiting the

thoughtless, soul-neglecting multitude; so that it was a subject of wonder that I had previously felt their case no more. Accordingly, upon this point I fastened my mind, renewing and repeating my petition to my heavenly Father, -- to bestow upon me as deep a sense of their state as I could bear and live, in order that my spirit might be so exercised in behalf of souls exposed to everlasting destruction, as henceforth to feel unutterable promptings to labor unceasingly for their rescue. In this strain I continued to supplicate: grasping, as it were, infinity of feeling upon this point; not once thinking of the possibility of not being approbated by Him who knew my object was, to be prepared to labor for the greatest good of the greatest number of my kindred travelers. O! for a deep and close view of the awful "end of the wicked," to be constantly before me, was the cry of my heart. My Father, who doeth all things in wisdom, and maketh even our very errors lead to wisdom, if the heart be wholly consecrated to Him, took me at my word; my spirit trembled at the view which He gave me; my heart quaked. My soul, deeply oppressed, got utterance only in bewailings and lamentings. Language I could not use. In society I could do nothing, for presence of mind had nearly gone; and in retirement, nothing was accomplished. Days passed. The brain became feverish; the nerves tremulous; the whole system prostrated. Yet so absorbed, and utterly absorbed was my mind in the view which had been presented to me, that I thought not of the cause of this physical debility, and mental confusion, until after receiving the instructions and admonitions of a Christian friend. At that moment my eyes were opened, and I saw something of the import of my ill-judged prayer. Astonished, deeply humbled, I now must look up for the blood of sprinkling, that the error be laid not to my charge: henceforth, saying, Give as Thou wilt:-- as much, or as little, of this or that sensation; for I have no wisdom with which to come to Thee. Amen!

Notwithstanding, in this case, I had forgotten my residence in a house of clay, and as brought to remember it, by learning that I had asked a degree of feeling which would unfit, instead of preparing me for the work so desirable, I again proved my liability to fall into other errors of a similar kind. While yet in the first year of my experience in the deeper things of God, I was impressed that I had not received the baptism of the Holy Ghost as mortal might receive: as others had received. So, for this, particularly, I set my heart; that I might be better prepared to labor with power and effect. Night and day, at morn, and the midnight hour, I plead for this until my petition for it took the place of all those which I was accustomed to offer other things. I hardly need say here, that in this case I lacked discernment; not thinking that I had, perhaps, already as much as I could bear. For some time, my pining spirit sighed for that it did not understand, or the entire effect of which it had no conception of, until its zeal for this obscured the blessings already possessed, -- a sense of purity and peace. Here, I saw, nay, felt, the strugglings in which I once verged on despair; and now, by this intimation, I saw myself stepping upon critical ground. Ignorance! Blindness! were my appropriate exclamations. Lord Jesus! what, and how much shall I ask I The holy Sabbath came. My morning and retired exercises were indescribable. During church service nothing touched my case; no light shone upon that point, until, when at the library with my Sabbath scholars, an angel of mercy came for my strengthening -- my rescue. Its form was "Fletcher on Christian Perfection." The most emphatic words which I heard that time, I will quote. (He spoke as if one with us at the time): "Do not confound Angelical with Christian perfection. Uninterrupted transports of praise, and ceaseless raptures of joy, do not belong to Christian, but to Angelical perfection. Our feeble frame can bear but a few drops of that glorious cup. In general, that new wine is too strong for our old bottles that power is too excellent for our earthen cracked vessels but, weak as they are, they can bear a fullness of meekness, of resignation, of humility, and of that

love which is willing to obey unto death. If God indulges you with ecstasies and extraordinary revelations, be thankful for them; be not exalted above measure by them; take care, lest enthusiastic delusions mix themselves with them; and remember that your Christian perfection does not so much consist in building a tabernacle upon Mount Tabor, and enjoying rare sights there, as in resolutely taking up the cross, and following Christ to the palace of a proud Caiaphas, -- to the judgment-hall of an unjust Pilate, and to the top of an ignominious Calvary. You never read in your Bible, Let the glory be upon you which was also upon St. Stephen, when he looked stedfastly into heaven and said, 'Behold I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.' But you have frequently read there, 'Let that mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who made himself of no reputation, took upon him the form of a servant, and being found in fashion as a man, humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross.'" -- At this, my waiting spirit cried, Amen! and amen!

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

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THE END