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

Vol. II -- Unnamed Accounts

ACCOUNT #054

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If you judge it would be acceptable to your readers, I would ask permission to record the great goodness of God, my Savior, to me in my afflictions. I have been laid aside from my ministerial work for more than two months, so that I have made but four very feeble attempts to preach since last January. My disorder has been a deeply seated chronic catarrh, which has reduced my strength so much that I have been able to walk or ride but very little; and there was evident danger, from the extreme prostration of the system, that consumption would follow at no distant period, unless relief could be obtained. But, thanks be to the merciful and wise Disposer of events, my symptoms are now more encouraging; and though I am not now entirely out of danger, yet I and my friends cherish the hope of recovery. The Lord has been peculiarly good to me in my afflictions; but in recording his merciful doings, permit me to revert to the past.

More than twenty years since, and after several months of earnest endeavors, and much prayer for the blessing of entire sanctification of heart, on a fine summer's day, as I was leading my horse down one of the high hills of New Hampshire, a few miles east of Keene, earnestly lifting my heart to God, that he would then give me faith to embrace the blessing, and finish his great work of grace in my heart, he poured upon my longing soul such a full baptism of the Holy Spirit as perfectly assured me that the work I had been seeking was accomplished, and that the inestimable blessing of perfect love was mine. The calm, solemn, sweet joy I then felt was truly "unspeakable and full of glory." So perfectly was I filled and surrounded with the salvation and all-pervading presence of my blessed Savior, that when I lay down upon my bed that night, I felt assured that with such a Savior with me, I should be perfectly safe, even if I lay in the very jaws of Satan. But he was then under my feet; and this assurance of a full and present salvation I enjoyed, with scarce an hour's obscurity, for more than two years, relying solely and steadily on the blood of Christ, which cleanseth from all sin; and being then free from domestic cares, and also from the responsibilities of having the charge of any society, my situation was peculiarly favorable to the enjoyment of that blessed state. And during all the labors, cares, responsibilities, temptations and privations of my humble ministry for these twenty years, this salvation has been my comfort and my

support. It is true, I have been conscious of many errors, defects and short-comings, and I have often had occasion to lament the absence of that fullness of love and sweet emotion which I felt for the first two years; but holiness has always been the most delightful theme of my preaching and meditation. I have frequently had the witness of the blessing clear, and have uniformly felt a cheerful acquiescence with the will of God in all his known requirements; and, while endeavoring to do his will, I have rested my soul on the all-atoning blood. This cordial coincidence of the will with the will of God, as a habit of the soul, is satisfactory and valuable evidence of a heart purified from its evil propensities, though the direct witness of the Spirit may not always be clear. But it would be manifestly unsafe to depend on either as a test of holiness for any length of time without the other. Some seem to seek for what they call sanctification, chiefly for its joys; that their crosses may be fewer or lighter, and their joys greater; and when they acquire a high state of rapturous emotion, they often erroneously suppose they are pure in heart -- but, perhaps, in the first contest with sin or temptation, they lose their raptures, discover some evil in their hearts, and immediately fall into doubt, if not into despondency.

My object in seeking holiness of heart was, that all my propensities which stood opposed to the will of God, which St. Paul calls "the law of sin in our members," might be destroyed; that "the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus might make me free from the law of sin and death;" that I might be prepared cordially and cheerfully to bear my crosses, perform my duties, fulfill my ministry, and be fitted to give up my final account with joy. God gave me the blessing, and since that hour his will has never appeared too difficult to be performed, or too hard to be borne; but his service has been my choice and delight. And now, when called to suffer deep affliction, and to converse with death, this blessing has been a rich source of consolation, and the firm basis of my hope. It has disarmed death of its terrors, and presented the "valley of its shadow" as the gate to endless joy in the presence of my God and Savior. The anticipations and foretastes of that holy and blissful state have often, within a few weeks past, melted and overwhelmed my soul; and though I have been deeply humbled, in view of my many defects, errors and shortcomings, and the little good I have done in the cause of God, yet I have been enraptured with grateful emotions of love and praise, for such great mercy shown to one so unworthy. And it has been a source of peculiar satisfaction to find myself fitted for these spiritual and joyous exercises, without being under the painful necessity of seeking a preparation for my great change amidst harassing doubts and fears, and languor of a sinking body. I have often closely searched my heart to see if I had any choice between life and death, and have found none. The language of my heart is, "The will of the Lord be done;" so that if my Savior should submit to me which to choose, I should at once wish to refer it to his will. He knows, with infinite precision, which will be most for my good, the interests of his kingdom, and his own glory. I should be happy to live and labor for souls; and yet I should exult to hear the summons to depart and be with Christ and glorified beings, beyond the reach of toil and suffering, and the assaults of sin and Satan. The following lines of the immortal Watts most appropriately express my feelings; and in the views they present, my spirit has often been melted with joyful hope of heaven:

"Raise thee, my soul; fly up and run
Through every heavenly street;
And say there's nought below the sun,
That's worthy of thy fee

Thus will we mount on sacred wings,
And tread the courts above;
Nor earth, nor all her mightiest things,
Shall tempt our meanest love.

There, on a high, majestic throne,
The Almighty Father reigns,
And sheds his glorious goodness down
On all the blissful plains.

Bright, like the sun, the Savior sits,
And spreads eternal noon;
No evenings there, nor gloomy nights,
To want the feeble moon.

Amidst those ever shining skies,
Behold the Sacred Dove;
While banished sin and sorrow flies
From all the realms of love.

The glorious tenants of the ace
Stand bending round the throne;
And saints and seraphs sing and praise
The infinite Three One.

Jesus, and when shall that dear day,
That joyful hour appear,
When I shall leave this house of clay,
And dwell amongst them there?"

This testimony to the Lord's inexpressible goodness to me in this time of heart-searching affliction, I wish here to record to the honor of his name and the glory of his grace, that my brethren and friends may rejoice and praise the Lord with me, and pray for me; and that others may perhaps be induced to seek for the same salvation, as the best qualification for their duties as Christians and ministers, and as the only preparation for undisturbed peace and joy on a sick and dying bed. How long a time is allotted to me here, or what will be the issue of my present disorder, is quite uncertain, nor am I solicitous to know. I hope I may live more to the glory of God while I remain on earth, whether in doing or suffering his will; and when he shall call me away from earth, I hope, through grace, to meet the message with joy. But all my salvation hitherto, and all my hope for the future, has been, and still is, through the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Since the last conference, Rev. J. O. Dean has gone to his reward. He was a devoted and useful minister, and, I doubt not, is now with the glorified. And that beloved brother, Rev. E. M. Beebe, has just gone up to take his robe of white. We labored harmoniously together in former days; I have always loved him much, as a faithful minister, and when I heard of his death my soul

melted in joyful anticipation of soon meeting him in glory. He has gone, perhaps, but a little before to try his harp in new strains of praise.

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

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THE END