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

Vol. II -- Unnamed Accounts

ACCOUNT #058

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At a certain camp meeting in the South, one of the preachers in a sermon at night held up the dreadfulness of concealed iniquity. The discourse fell upon the ears of a profoundly awed and conscience smitten audience, although there was but little outward demonstration at the altar. It seemed that a number shrank from coming forward after such a fearful delineation, lest such a movement would be to spot and mark themselves as acknowledged criminals and violators of law in the grossest sense.

Next morning the writer was in his tent, engaged in preparation for the morning sermon, while the Testimony meeting was in progress at the Tabernacle about an hundred feet away. Suddenly a shriek of agony, ascending from the place of worship, literally rent the air. The scream came from a woman, and we knew from the shocked, horror-stricken accent that whoever gave it was a heart-broken person. We scarcely ever heard a cry which so deeply moved us. It carried its own misery with it, and the listener could not but respond in spirit to nature's wail over the incoming of a colossal sorrow.

After this startling interruption there was a profound silence of an half hour, and then came the sound of the people leaving the Tabernacle and their scattering along the tent-lined streets. Glancing out, we saw that all were talking earnestly and knew that they were discussing the incident of that morning.

Recognizing a gentleman, we called him aside and asked why the woman had given that fearful scream. He replied, "Her husband made a confession this morning," and then related the circumstance.

It seemed that this husband, whose name was D, was one of the convicted ones in the audience of the night before. Next morning he accompanied his wife to the Experience meeting, to

her great joy, as she fancied she saw in his gloomy face signs of conviction, the natural precursor of salvation.

He took his seat just behind her, and after a number had testified, he arose to his feet as pale as death, and with a faltering, voice said.

"I have kept a load of guilt on my heart for thirty long years. I cannot stand it any longer. It is killing me by inches. I want to say here before everybody, that just after the close of the war I killed a man!"

Whether he intended to say more or not we do not know, for just as these last words were uttered, the wife gave the agonized cry we heard in the tent, and fell upon the ground at the feet of her husband unconscious.

Something of the shock may be imagined, when the thought rushed over her:

"The father of my children is a murderer! The man with whom I have been most intimate on earth, who has gone with me through life side by side, has his hands red with the blood of a fellow creature!"

No wonder she went down senseless in the dust.

We next asked our informant where the woman was and was told that she had been borne to an adjacent room by sympathizing friends. Our following question was, "Where is the man?" and the reply was, "He has gone to his tent."

In a few minutes we found him there, lying on a cot and looking more like a dead than a living man. Taking a camp stool by his side we laid our hand upon his and found it cold and clammy, while his body was trembling as with a chill. With a heart full of pity, we said:

"My brother, are you not glad that you made a clean breast of your guilt today?"

Turning a pair of despairing eyes upon us he answered:

"Mr. C., the law will hang me."

"Hang or no hang," we replied, "are you not glad that you have gotten that black stuff out of your heart which has been weighing it down for thirty years?"

Grasping our hand, and with a look of unspeakable relief upon his face, he said in a firm, manly tone:.

"God in heaven knows that I am."

It is not necessary to dwell on other particulars of the case occurring, at this immediate time. Suffice it to say that D. went home, submitted to arrest, was cast into jail, and underwent his trial.

The Scripture plainly teaches that when we do what God bids us, He will take us up, fight our battles and deliver us from all our trouble. This was what took place with D. The Lord touched the heart of judge and jury; moved on men here and there; brought first one thing and then another to pass, and completely delivered the man.

The words of the Psalmist could have been truly appropriated and repeated by him in description of what had been done for him and in him: "He hath delivered my some from death, mine eyes from tears and my feet from falling." There was a strange literal fulfillment of the verses in his case. His feet did not fall through the trap door of the scaffold; his eyes were saved from weeping through the pardoning and consoling love of Christ, and his spirit as well as body were not given over unto death, but were both brought forth from imprisonment and bondage, into life and liberty according to the promise of the Almighty.

Such was the man's gratitude for the salvation of his soul while in prison, and for the rescue of his life from the law soon after, that he would not wait for the next camp meeting to obtain holiness of heart, but sought the blessing at once, and months before the regular annual encampment he had swept into Beulah Land and was one of the strong ones in Canaan when we next beheld him.

Repeatedly the writer and his Singer met this doubly redeemed man during the camp which followed the one mentioned in the beginning of this sketch, and we both had to admit that among the bright, restful faces we beheld in the meeting, that the most peaceful one of all was that of the man who the year before had made such a startling and terrible confession.

Source: "Remarkable Occurrences"
(Chapter 22--"A Startling Confession")
By Beverly Carradine

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THE END