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

Vol. II -- Unnamed Accounts

### ACCOUNT #074

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### PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

Dear Brother in the Lord, -- I love the cause you advocate in the columns of the Guide; and as a witness for Jesus, I would give my unvarnished testimony of the Lord's dealings with my unworthy soul; and if you think them worth a place in the Guide, you are at liberty to use the following for that purpose.

At the age of eleven years, I doubt not but that I was slain by the law, and made alive by Christ; and well do I now remember the realizing sense I then had of my depravity of heart, my extreme sinfulness before God, and his justice, had He banished me for ever from his peaceful presence. My distress of mind continued for two weeks, when the Lord spoke peace to my troubled soul. My evidence was as bright as my conviction had been pungent, and I continued rejoicing in God my Savior, for a number of months, and then by degrees I lost my enjoyment, and returned to the weak and beggarly elements of the world. From that period to the age of nineteen, a vainer person, nor yet a more unhappy one, perhaps, was not to be found. I experienced all the wretchedness of a backslider's life, but I shall ever have reason to praise the Lord, that he did not then sever the cord of life and launch my soul into the eternal world.

In August, 1835, I attended a camp-meeting, held at Martha's Vineyard, and there the Lord arrested me by his Holy Spirit, brought me back to his fold, and restored unto me the joys of his salvation. I returned home strong in the Lord, and soon after united myself with the church. Had I then obeyed the apostle's injunction, -- "as ye have received the Lord Jesus, so walk ye in Him" -- I should have glorified my Lord and Master more, and laid up a greater treasure in heaven; but, like many other professors, I relapsed into a state of inactivity, and rested in the form without the power, until the spring of 1842, when the Lord again revived his work in my heart, and again gave me to feel the joys that flow from a living faith in Christ. I was then enabled to see where my former errors had been -- in trusting to my feelings as a guide, rather than serving the Lord from

principle. I resolved, in the strength of the Lord, that I would take the Bible as the man of my counsel, and strive to live a life of faith.

By prayerfully perusing the Word of God, I became convinced that I had lived far beneath my privilege, and I found that Christ had erected a higher standard than I had ever before realized. I was not at that time a believer in the doctrine of entire sanctification. I asked myself, was this for me to aim at, with no expectation of reaching it? or was I required to come up to it. The latter, I was convinced, was the will of God, and that He required me to be holy in heart and in life, and I also saw that the promises were equal to the demands made.

The Bible seemed like a new book. I had never entertained an idea that it contained so much to support the doctrine of Holiness, but how was I to obtain it? Could it be for me? I continued reading, praying and hoping that some day God would grant to cleanse me from all sin, till September, 1842, when one evening I went to our weekly prayer-meeting, and felt a good degree of the Spirit in my soul.

Our preacher in charge was present, and gave out an invitation, for all those that desired the blessing of sanctification to rise. I arose -- we knelt in prayer. The Lord gave me a greater struggle than I had ever before felt. I beheld an infinite fullness in Christ, a willingness in God through Christ to grant even me that great blessing, at that moment, if I would but believe. But here I was repulsed with this suggestion of the enemy: You will be deceived; you will wound the cause of holiness, and you had better say nothing more about it. But, blessed be the Lord, though defeated I was not discouraged, and He who had begotten those desires did not let me rest satisfied where I then was.

The next day I felt the same desires. The language of my heart was, "Create in me a clean heart; wash me in the atoning blood of the Lamb, and I shall be clean; cleanse me, O Lord, from all sin." In this way I spent three days.

On the evening of the third day, I attended our general class-meeting, and had faith to believe that God would at that meeting grant me my heart's desire. After I entered the house, I had a sore conflict with the enemy, who assailed me with all his former suggestions: You will be deceived; the work will not be genuine -- you will never live it. But I was now enabled to resist the devil, and he fled from me. I said, Lord, if thou doest the work it will be genuine. Lord, cleanse me from sin -- let the work be thorough. I had consecrated all, the sacrifice was made, and I began to believe that God did then, for Christ's sake, cleanse me from sin. Strong and unwavering was my faith. The victory was won, the blessing gained, and my soul filled with all the fullness of God.

O, the unspeakable glory! and all I could say was Glory! Glory! I had often been blessed, had often felt the Savior's love shed abroad in my heart; but I had never conceived that a mortal body could be made partaker of so much glory as then filled my soul. I then realized the meaning of those words, "Rejoice evermore; pray without ceasing; in every thing give thanks."

Since that eventful night, unspeakable have been the blessings I have received. I have found the grace of God sufficient for me, and can now say, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped me." I live by

faith, and no longer look upon frames and feelings as my guide and criterion. God often tries my faith by withholding feeling, but I know that the trial of my faith is more precious than gold.

As I have often had the question asked me, if I was not reclaimed from a backslidden state, I would say, that I had not lost the witness of my justification for six months previous to this; and, blessed be God, I can testify that the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin.

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Source: "The Guide to Christian Perfection" For March, 1845

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THE END