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

Vol. I -- Named Accounts

REUBEN A. (BUD) ROBINSON
(Nazarene)

In 1886 Dr. W. B. Godbey held meetings across central Texas. He was called to hold a meeting at Alvarado, in Johnson County, Texas. I lived ten miles in the country and heard that there was a man in to preaching sanctification and that the people said he was crazy. They said he preached that a man could get so much religion that he would never get mad and didn't want to chew tobacco any more and that he couldn't sin if he wanted to. The people almost became wild. They said he was the craziest man on the subject of religion that they had ever heard of. I said, "I am going to hear him." So I saddled my pony and rode into Alvarado and heard him preach on entire sanctification as a second work of grace. After listening awhile I said, "That is the best religion I ever heard a man preach, but a man could not get it." About a week later I went back to hear him again and I said, "That is the best religion I ever heard a man preach in my life and it does look like one might get it." The reader can see that I was growing in grace.

After a few days my heart grew hungry and I went back to hear him the third time. I said, "That is the best religion that I ever heard a man preach and I will have it or die," so I became a seeker then and there for the experience of entire sanctification.

His meeting was far-reaching; people coming from all parts of the country. He closed with a great convention. Rev. L. L. Pickett came all the way from Columbia, South Carolina, and Dr. Dunlap came from Atlanta, Georgia. Brother C. T. Hogan came from Ennis, Texas, with many other fine holiness people. That was my first introduction to a holiness meeting. It was during this convention that I heard Sister Mary Hogan, the wife of C. T. Hogan, preach. It was a great message. I believe that fifty to seventy-five people were at the altar seeking God. For the next four years I did my best to get the experience.

Soon after the close of this convention, I moved from Johnson County to Hill County, Texas, but I went on with my work. After I had sought the blessing for two years, it seemed to me that if I would begin to preach holiness, I could get into the experience, therefore I began to preach holiness as a second work of grace. I told the people that I did not have it but that I wanted it

worse than anything else. I recall that one preacher came to me and told me he did not believe in sanctification and he asked me if I had ever seen a preacher that had the blessing. I told him that I had seen a great many at the convention and that Dr. W. B. Godbey was the first man that I heard preach it.

I said to him, "Now Dr. Godbey has the experience."

He said, "How do you know that he has it?"

"Well," I said, "from the way he acted."

"How did he act?"

"Well," I said, "he did not act like anybody else. The men cussed him on the streets and he didn't talk back, and they broke stale eggs all over him and he didn't even wipe them off his clothes."

"Well," he said, "I would call a man like that crazy."

I said, "No, he was not crazy but sanctified." When he preached he did not even refer to the stale eggs. He preached and shouted and praised God just as though nothing had happened, and I said, "Finally the merchants felt ashamed of themselves and sent for him. They took him to a clothing house and gave him a new suit. They said it would disgrace the town to allow as great a man as Dr. Godbey to come to the city and be egged and cussed and leave with stale eggs on his clothes." They said they did not know what kind of religion he had but of its kind he had more of it and it was the best kind they had ever seen.

I preached holiness two years and that brought me down to the early summer of 1890. The first Sunday of June, 1890, in the morning I preached from 1 Thess. 5:23: "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ." I preached the best that I could on holiness as a second work of grace and told the people that didn't have it but that I wanted it and was going have it at any cost. That night I preached about six miles from where I had preached in the morning, from Heb. 12:14: "Follow peace with all men, and holiness without which no man shall see the Lord." God so burdened me that night for the experience that I wept as I preached and told the people that we were going to have an altar service that night and we were going to have at least one seeker and that was me. At the close of my sermon I came down out of the pulpit and knelt at the altar seeking the experience of holiness under my own ministry. No sooner had I knelt than heard some man's big bootheels coming down the aisle, ker-thump, ker-thump, ker-thump and he fell on his knees at my side. It was F. M. McNary, our school teacher, a Presbyterian elder, the most cultured and scholarly gentleman in the community. He said, "Brother Bud, you don't need this blessing any worse than I do," and began to pray and ask God to sanctify Brother Bud. While he prayed I said "Amen," for that was what I wanted; to get sanctified wholly. When he said, "Amen," then I began to pray for him. I prayed my level best and he said, "Amen," and when I had finished my prayer we got up. Neither of us had got the blessing, but we agreed as we shook hands that we never would stop until God gave us that experience.

At the close of the service he said, "Go home with me and let's talk it over." We got on our horses and galloped across the prairies several miles to his home and sat up and talked until one o'clock in the morning, each telling the other what we thought it would do for us when we got it. He brought out an old book written years ago by the Presbyterians in which they had called this experience "The Rest of Faith." He told me that was the Presbyterian name for the experience I was preaching. I told him the name the Methodists gave it was "Sanctification or the Second Blessing properly so-called." When one of the early Methodists received this experience John Wesley said, "God did give you the second blessing properly so-called." The historians tell us that this was a new word John Wesley had coined; that the second blessing had never been heard of until he named it.

After we had talked until one o'clock in the morning, trying to make it plain to each other, we knelt and had prayer together and went to bed. At a very early hour I was up, had my pony saddled and rode home by the time my good mother was getting ready for breakfast. I unsaddled my pony and turned her into the big pasture, went to my room and hung up my saddlebags, and changed my clothing, getting ready for my day's work on the farm. When breakfast was over mother and I had prayer together and I went to the field and began to preach to Bud Robinson from the text I had used the night before: "Follow peace with all men and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." I would pray awhile and thin corn awhile and then preach to Bud Robinson awhile. I did not get much corn thinned, though that was what I was supposed to be doing. My corn was up then beginning to tassel and silk, and I was pulling out the big weeds and taking out the corn where it was too thick. That was a good place to get sanctified, but beloved, the devil never allows any man to get the experience of sanctification without putting up a mighty fight. He fought me to the last ditch.

While I was thinning corn and preaching to Bud Robinson I could hear my brothers a few hundred yards away as they were plowing cotton. I could hear the rattle of their cultivators, the braying of the mules and the boys driving the teams. But as long as I heard anything that was going on I did not get the blessing. I finally knelt and offered prayer. I tried to consecrate soul, spirit and body. I remember that I stood up and the last thing that I turned loose was my hoe handle. I saw everything I had: my farm, my mules wagons and plows, and the crib of corn, the ricks of hay, and the pen of black hogs, and everything else floating off on the clouds.

I had begun to seek this blessing in 1886 and this was now the second day of June, 1890. There were four years that I had struggled trying to get perfect victory. I had often consecrated all that I had; I would put my mules, cows, hogs, corn and barn, and everything else on the altar and climb up on the pile and ask God to take us all, but that did not bring the victory. Beloved, the blessed old Book says, "Whatsoever touches the altar is made holy," and I had not touched the altar. There was a stack of hay, and a corn crib, and several big mules between me and the altar, but when I saw everything I had drift away and I was left alone with God in the cornfield it seemed to me I could hear the Lord say, "I will bring everything back and leave it here with you and I will go; or, if everything else goes then I will stay with you." I said, "Lord, let everything else go." Then I had that strange, peculiar feeling that God was so close to me that my soul trembled in God's presence and it seemed that God kindled up a fire in the very bottom of my heart.

The only way that I can describe the feeling is that anger boiled up, and God skimmed it off, and pride boiled up, and God skimmed it off, and jealousy boiled up and God skimmed it off, and envy boiled up and God skimmed it off, until it seemed to me that my heart was perfectly empty. I said, "Lord, there won't be anything left of me." God seemed to say, "There will not be much left, but what little there is will be clean."

When my heart was emptied, then it seemed that a river of peace broke loose in the clouds. It was as sweet as honey and the honeycomb. It flowed into my empty heart until a few minutes later my heart was full and overflowing and the waves of heaven became so great and grand and glorious that it seemed to me that I would die if God did not stay His hand. How little we know about the fullness of God and the greatness of God's power. Not half an hour before God cleansed me and filled me I had told the Lord that I wanted Him to come with all the power that He had and sanctify me. Then I had told the Lord that very morning that I had read in His Book that if I would bring all the tithes into the storehouse and prove Him He would open the windows of heaven and pour me out a blessing that there would not be room enough to receive it. Out of a hungry heart I had said, "O Lord, you cannot satisfy me with the windows of heaven; you will have to open the doors of heaven to pour out a blessing big enough to satisfy my hungry heart and soul;" but beloved, I did not know how large God's windows were and how small my heart was. God had never used that language but one time before and at that time God opened windows, of heaven and poured out a flood on the earth. If God's windows are so large that He can pour out a flood through them, then you can see at a glance that God's windows are large enough, to pour out a blessing into the heart of one of His believing children to the extent that he cannot receive but little of it. As the waves of heaven rolled over my soul I finally got down on the ground and stretched out and as wave after wave of glory rolled over me, told the Lord that if He didn't hold up a bit there would be a dead man in the cornfield.

From that day to this I have been convinced that God can kill a man with His glory just as quick as He could kill him with lightning. On one occasion Moses said to the Lord, "Show me thy glory," and the Lord said, "You cannot see my face and live." That proves to me that to behold the glory of God would be to look upon His face and no man in the flesh could behold God's face and His glory and live. Therefore, in order to keep company with God, we will have to be glorified and this mortal will have to put on immortality.

After lying there in the field about three hours, for it was about nine o'clock in the morning when God sanctified me, it was about twelve when I got up and walked to the house. My beautiful old mother, who has been in heaven for a number of years, was an old-fashioned, shouting Presbyterian. She believed, "Once in grace always in grace," and she also believed that we could not be sanctified until we come to die, so for four years my precious old mother had argued with me that I would never get the blessing until I died. When I walked up the hill and into the dining room my mother was putting dinner on the table. It was one of those, old-fashioned country dinners cooked on the big wood stove. There was a big stove kettle nearly full of snap beans and streaked country bacon mixed with them; then mother had scraped two or three dozen new potatoes and laid them on the beans and as I went in and stood by the table my mother took up a large dish of beans and bacon and potatoes. I told mother that I had met Jesus Christ in the cornfield and He had sanctified my soul. My mother did not shout over the news of my being sanctified, bless her

precious heart. She took up her checked apron and wiped a few trickling tears off her beautiful old face and went back to the stove and took out the big stovepan full of brown cornbread...

My mother took out the big breadpan, set it on the stove, got her knife and a big bread platter and cut out the bread in big square pieces till she had filled up the big platter. She came back and set it on the table. Next she went and got a big two-gallon crock full of buttermilk and then brought on nearly a dozen pint cups for her boys and girls to drink milk out of. Now dinner was ready.

My mother looked sad. She would look out of the window and her chin would quiver and her eyes would fill up with tears. It looked to me like my mother thought that her preacher boy had lost his mind and would have to go to the insane asylum, for she had believed all the time that you never could get sanctified until you die and now I had got the blessing and behold I was wonderfully alive. But thank the Lord, after holding on in prayer and faith and believing God, and living the experience to the best of my ability, it wasn't many years until mother was gloriously and powerfully sanctified.

Beloved, it pays to get the blessing and to live it and preach it and sing it and shout it, for we have the best thing in the wide world, and why not let the world hear about it? The first man that I met after God sanctified me was one of the stewards of our church. I told him about my being sanctified in the cornfield. It seemed to insult him. He did not rejoice with me, but said with a vim in his voice that I will never forget, "Brother Bud, you had better go mighty slow about that sanctification business." He told me that it was nothing in the world but fanaticism, and wild fire and that if I didn't give it up I was ruined.

In a few weeks I started a meeting in the community and one of his boys who had been wild and reckless was beautifully saved in my arms. I had prayed many hours for the young man and God wondrously saved him, but his father then joined in with the Methodist circuit rider who was very bitterly opposed to holiness, and that dear father fought holiness until his boy backslid. That man lived to see the day when his son that he had caused to backslide was brought home from a night's carousal with a bullet through his body. His own father was the man that caused him to give up his experience and backslide.

Beloved, I have often said that a man had better fight a buzzsaw open-handed than to fight holiness. In a fight with a buzzsaw he might lose a hand or two, but to fight holiness he is liable to lose his precious immortal soul...

Beloved, I thank God that for all of these thirty-seven years as a holiness preacher, though the preaching has been very poor, yet my heavenly Father and the devil know that I have been dead in earnest. I have never rounded off a corner, I have never called it, by any name that I thought the rich, worldly people in the church would accept instead of the real experience, but I have called it entire sanctification; I have called it scriptural holiness; I have called it the second blessing; I have called it the baptism with the Holy Ghost and fire; I have told the people that the old man had to be crucified and that the body of sin had to be destroyed; that there was no such an experience as what as been called suppression; that there was not any such experience as counteraction...

Thank God, the new birth cleans a man up while the baptism of the Holy Ghost cleans him out. And if we are cleaned up and cleaned out, then we can be filled up and sent out, and there is no use to go if you don't go on fire for God.

If a preacher has no fire only what he carries in his pipe or on the end of his cigar, he may start a fire that will burn up the forest and burn down houses but he will never start a revival fire that will causes sinners to weep their way to the foot of the cross and find pardon...

Thank God, since He put the fire in my soul I have scarcely been out of a good revival in thirty-seven years ... I praise God that I was converted in time to get into the holiness movement and sanctified in time to get the movement into me ... Glory to His name! I think the first year after God sanctified me I had more people saved than I did during the ten years that I preached as a licensed exhorter and a licensed preacher without the experience of holiness...

Source: "My Life's Story" by Reuban A. (Bud) Robinson

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