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

Vol. I -- Named Accounts

JAMES E. SCHOOLFIELD

We now give the experience of one who is well and most favorably known in the Virginias and Carolinas and elsewhere, as one of the most unselfish, earnest, spiritual, and successful lay evangelists in all our land James E. Schoolfield, of Danville, Va. We are sure that the thousands whom he has led to Christ or helped to a better life will be glad to look into his inner experiences which are the secret of his wonderful success. Mr. Schoolfield says:

"I was converted in 1869, at the age of nineteen. I know about the time, but never could locate the exact day or place; I do know the fact, however. I enjoyed religion for a year or two, but then began to lose, and finally lost my consciousness of acceptance, and became absorbed in business, making Christianity a secondary consideration. I never lost my respectability or churchianity, but did lose my spirituality. I was moral, honest, upright, a steward in the church, and was considered by the community and the church as a consistent and exemplary Christian. And I was, as far as morality, etc., are concerned.

I was awakened to my real condition in 1885 (February, I think). I saw I was trying to do an impossible thing, viz., hold on to the Lord and the world at the same time. Here commenced the real struggle of my life, which continued, unknown to any one, for several months. But God gave me the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. "The joy of God's salvation" was not only restored, but in a much larger degree than ever before. I know definitely the time and place, and there can be no mistake about it in my own mind And in the next few days I had several unmistakable effusions of the Spirit.

"A meeting commenced in my church. I tried to work (do personal work) for the first time in my life. I also testified in public for the first time. I would go to different unconverted persons I knew. I knew that they believed in me -- had confidence in me -- but somehow I was conscious that I had no power. I was distressed about it, and one night, feeling thoroughly discouraged, I quit work. I went and sat down on the chancel cushion in the old Main Street Church, Danville, Va., and there buried my face in my hands and commenced to pray, about after this fashion: 'Lord, there is something I need, something I lack. I don't know what; but whatever it is give it to me. I am

willing to do anything,' etc. The meeting closed for the night. I went home in the same frame of mind and immediately retired, and there, continuing the prayer, I felt that the Spirit was silently stealing over me and filling my whole being with his glorious presence. I was gloriously conscious of the divine presence filling my soul. I immediately told my dear wife about it, and, so far as I can recall, I slept but little that night -- was perfectly quiet, but oh, so happy!

From that moment my life revolutionized, and if I had not had, only a few days or weeks before, such positive, unmistakable evidence of my acceptance, conversion, and restoration, I would have doubted whether I had ever been converted before. I know THIS WAS NOT CONVERSION. [Nor was it restoration.] To me it has always been a distinct baptism of the Holy Ghost -- a different and more decided work than conversion or the renewal had been, before alluded to. You may wish to know what I call it I answer: To me it was and always has been a distinct baptism of the Holy Ghost. What reference it has to salvation I don't know. I do know it was a powerful spiritual uplift, and that it revolutionized my own life, and that the joy of conscious salvation was abiding probably for three years, and the effects are abiding to this moment, July 7, 1898, or for thirteen years.

"Was this your call to the evangelistic work?" I answer, NO. I never thought of going into the evangelistic work until four years later, when I received a positive, definite, and even more distinct manifestation, but of a different character. It was not so much of a spiritual uplift as it was a distinctive call to a specific work. The second radical work was in 1885 -- the call to the evangelistic work was in 1889 or 1890.

"When I received the baptism in 1885 I had never heard of the 'second blessing,' sanctification, etc.; or, if I had, it was in such a vague and indefinite way that I knew nothing in the world about it."

Source: "Scriptural Sanctification" by John R. Brooks

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THE END