

All Rights Reserved By HDM For This Digital Publication
Copyright 1994 Holiness Data Ministry

Duplication of this CD by any means is forbidden, and
copies of individual files must be made in accordance with
the restrictions stated in the B4Ucopy.txt file on this CD.

* * * * *

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

Vol. I -- Named Accounts

A. M. STEELE
(Methodist)

From the very first of my religious awakenings, I had a desire to be holy. This may not, and probably does not, accord with the experience of others: nevertheless, it is my own. I remember, then but a little boy, being in attendance at a Camp-meeting, here the power of God was evidently manifested; and, as I beheld others falling like dead men, under the outpouring of the Divine Spirit, I earnestly coveted such a blessing, for myself I longed to have some one converse with me, and lead me as a little child to the Saviour of sinners; one of which I felt I was, even then. But no one spoke a word to me on the subject of my soul's salvation; supposing, doubtless, that I was too young to realize anything about the truth of God.

I grew up in sin. The family altar, the Sabbath-school, the social meetings to which I was often led, the faithful preaching, of the Word of God, -- none of these saved me from being a very wicked boy. It was my nature to be sinful. I loved to transgress law. So far as I have my recollection of the matter, I went astray as soon as I was born.

When I was about eleven years old, God took my eldest sister, at about thirteen years of age, to himself. She was the first one I ever saw launch out over the dark river: and I am glad she was; for death has seemed much like a kind friend to me ever since. Her triumphant exit fastened the truth in my soul, -- "God's children die well."

But after a little, except at interval, these serious impressions left me; and, at the age of sixteen, I was hardened and impenitent sinner. One young man, my most intimate associate, went to the State Penitentiary, convicted of high crime; with whom my association had been providentially broken off only a little while before. While he went to prison, God sent me into the mining district of Lake Superior. While there, away from my companions in sin, my conviction of guilt took a deep hold upon my heart. It was a dreadfully bitter cup I drank of, until one night in December, while bowed at my mother's side in the log-cabin of a copper-miner, a flood of joy overwhelmed me. I praised, I shouted, I laughed, I cried aloud for joy. There seemed to be no bottom to the depth of

that well which had sprung up within me. My happiness continued for weeks. It did seem to me at time that the angels could know no higher rapture than filled my heart as I sung, --

"But now I am happy in Him,
December's as pleasant as May."

I had great freedom and great comfort in offering salvation through Christ to all I could meet.

Soon after my conversion, I left home again for school. Here, amid the excitements of earnest study, and an unguarded ambition to be first in my class, religion soon became a secondary matter. And thus it continued until the winter of 1855 and 1856, then, while teaching, and I was feeling the necessity of a better qualification for my responsibilities, Mr. Palmer's "Way of Holiness" fell into my hands. It brought me the clearest light I had ever found on the subject that had always, whenever I turned my thoughts towards it, taken so deep a hold upon me. A revival broke out in an adjoining district; and, during, its progress, I entered the way of holiness. God saved me; and I was able to declare all that He had done for my poor soul, even before those who did not believe the truth.

But that divine blessing went away. At the time, I did not know how. I desired, above all things, to retain it. But praying nor fasting nor groaning could hold it. I lacked faith. After the blessing was gone, I drifted loosely for years I entered the traveling connection; I took the solemn vows of the sacred office; I was examined especially upon this point by devout and godly men; I studied and prayed and preached: but, if I went either way, it was backwards, from God. None were awakened, none converted, under my labors. I feared I had mistaken my calling. In this state of mind, I attended our district Camp-meeting, held near Quincy, where I was laboring in the summer of 1863. My condition at this time really alarmed me. I felt that I was not even in a justified state. My convictions for holiness, at the same time, were never so deep, so clear, so distressing; nor did the way ever seem so dark, so concealed. All I could do was to sit down, and

"Sigh to think of happier days,
When thou O Lord! wast nigh,
When every heart a tuned to praise,
And none more blest than I."

The powers of darkness were let loose upon me. In spite of myself, my thoughts, at times, were blasphemous. I felt that I must curse God and die. But, oh! how could I die with the memory of those blessed days upon me? Oh, to be damned, when once I had been so completely saved! -- to go to perdition in holy order! A good brother, filled with the Holy Ghost, was giving instruction to several inquiring ones just as I entered a tent of prayer. The Spirit signified that his words were for me by applying them at once to my heart. I felt that my hour had come. He told us of the consecration we must make. I understood that perfectly well, nor was I long in bringing all to the altar. Then he began to speak about faith. How many enter not in because of unbelief, even after they have brought their all to the borders of the promised land! My great struggle was for faith. Could I believe God would trust me with that great blessing again? Presently faith came. Oh, the blissful assurance! Blessed be God! how my soul mounted up! how it sunk down too! When I

returned to myself, I found the house swept and furnished. I felt so clean in my heart! The Purifier had passed through me; and He left it written in the chambers of my full soul, "I will; be thou clean."

It is a wonder God saved me; and oh, the treachery of this poor doubting soul! I lost the blessing even then, again I know where I lost it this time. I went home from the camp-ground one night. My wife and little ones were safely in their beds. I never loved them before as I did then. "Now," said the Spirit, "before you sleep, do tell the companion of your joys what God has done for you on the camp-ground." Oh! how could I have halted at so plain a duty? But I stopped, and said, "Thou knowest, Lord, my good wife is not of this way of thinking. She does not believe in this thing at all. Would it not be better for me first to convince her of the reality of this state of grace by my life? I will confess it in the class-room; I will preach it in the pulpit; I will live it at home, and in a very little while she will acknowledge and embrace it." Just as if I knew better than God! But even then the blessed Spirit bore with me. It revealed my error; but I lost the blessing. Winter came. Revival efforts commenced. I went home from meeting, where God had been blessing the people, one night, and found my companion weeping. I soon learned the cause of her trouble. "Oh, husband!" said she, "how unfaithful to God I am living! Will you pray for me?" We prayed, and the Lord blessed her. She had heard my witness before the congregation, and as deeply convicted for the blessing of holiness. Could I have borne the cross then, and told her all the Lord had done for me, and urged her to a full consecration to God, who blessed would it have been for us both! At the Coldwater Camp-meeting, last July, I had to go over the same ground again. God again set me at liberty and at rest. I cannot ask to have my own way now: God knows best. If the blessed Spirit impresses me with a sense of duty, I must not stop to parley. I am becoming established. Sinners are being converted; and, bless God! His dear children are being renewed in love. May it never be that I shall again grieve Him by doubting His grace! Thus the long deferred hope of my life is deferred no longer. My sick heart is made well in Jesus.

This perfect love. -- 'tis perfect, perfect bliss.

All is well! All is well!

Oh, what a happy, happiness is this!

All is well! All is well!

My Jesus whispers, thou are mine,

And all in me, my child is thine,

All, these are transports all divine!

All is well! All is well!

Rise! -- Rise my soul, and onward, onward still.

All is well! all is well!

God, will with all, -- with all His fullness fill.

All is well! All is well!

Stronger than death, His love to thee,

And thou to all eternity

A monument of grace shalt be,

All is well! All is well!

Source: "Pioneer Experiences" by Phoebe Palmer

* * * * *

THE END