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

Vol. I -- Named Accounts

**J. N. STOCKTON**  
**(Methodist)**

In 1843, I was appointed class-leader by the Rev. D. D. Lore, and the following, year licensed to exhort. I exercised in the capacity of an exhorter and class-leader until the 12th of December, 1846, when there came another still heavier cross as licensed to preach the glorious Gospel of Christ.

In the year 1852, twenty years after my conversion to God, I was led into a more extended field of labor. I was called upon by the Rev. John K. Shaw who sent me to Englishtown Circuit, New Jersey Conference, as a supply, where I labored pleasantly and successfully during the year. About one hundred soul were converted to God and joined the church. In the spring of 1853, I attended the New Jersey Annual Conference, for the first time, which was held at Bridgeton, Bishop Morris presiding. It was a precious feast to me. I was received on trial the 19th day of April, and appointed to Middlesex Mission at that Conference. It was a hard field, but I was strong and vigorous, able to labor. I went to work in faith. God greatly blessed me, and the people. During the year, one hundred and twenty souls were converted, many of them advanced in life, several over seventy year of age. The following, spring I was appointed to the same field.

I have now reached a period in my religious experience of great interest. I have passed over my early religious life, and approached a time when my mind was fully awakened to the necessity of a clean heart I refer to the morning when I stood before Bishop Waugh, to be addressed before the Conference, previous to being ordained for the solemn work of the ministry. O what a day! O what an address! and during that address, the Bishop put the following searching questions to the class, which fully aroused me to the important qualification for the work of the ministry, and I had heard these same questions put to every candidate for the ministry, previous to being ordained. O Lord help every minister to remember the answers given to these questions.

I have always been a reader and believer of Methodist theology and discipline, which contain the theory of Bible holiness and I don't understand how it is that Methodist preachers and people can ignore holiness of heart and life, and call it a "new light" To do so, it seems to me such

person must cut out about one-third of the hymns in our hymn books, deface the discipline, and mutilate the Bible on almost every page. Such a Christian would have a sad looking set of tools to work with in the Lord's vineyard. But it was not so with me, I wanted all the best helps I could get, and when the Bishop asked me, "Have you faith in Christ" I could answer positively in the affirmative. And when he put the next question, "Are you going on to perfection?" I had no difficulty, as I supposed we were to grow on and on, until we reached it, just as some are now contending for a "growth into it" and then came the third question, "Do you expect to be made perfect in love in this life?" -- this did not puzzle me, as I supposed the Lord would finish the work before death. But when the following question came, "Are you groaning after it?" I confess I was confounded. I did not know what to reply. I was afraid to say no, and I was not prepared to say yes. The good Bishop's eyes were upon us, and God's eye was looking at us; a definite answer seemed to be required; my mind had to work quickly, and I think I began at that very moment to groan, and I said yes, faintly, and I groaned on and on, but groaning did not bring the blessing. I prayed for it, I wept for it, I read for it, I consecrated for it, but did not obtain it. I heard no one talk about it, I heard no one preach it. Thus I worked along in my on poor crippled way, until August of that same year, when I resolved to attend a Camp-meeting to be held at Titusville. I said nothing to my wife or any one else, but I resolved in my own mind to go to that meeting, in order to seek the blessing of "perfect love."

As I had no reached a point when I must have it, I could not do any longer without it. Everything seemed dry and unsatisfactory. I had reached a point of necessity. The Spirit brought me just there, and since I have experienced the blessing, I have seen many other led by the Holy Spirit in the same way.

I had that intense thirst for the blessing, that I cannot describe. No sense of guilt or condemnation, such as I had for pardon many years before, but an intense desire for "heart purity," "perfect love," "holiness," or "entire sanctification," so much so, that it was an immediate necessity. I could not go home without it, I could not preach without it. But I did not obtain it by groaning after it, neither by desiring, thirsting, hungering, praying, tears, or consecration. I was led to go into a tent where a few brethren and sisters were holding a prayer-meeting. I deliberately took up a small Bible, and turned, almost without thinking, to the 36th chapter of Ezekiel 25th, 26th, 27th, and 28th verses. I laid my finger on those precious promises, and said, I want all in the tent who are willing to consecrate themselves this moment, entirely to the Lord, and believe these promises as I would read them to kneel. I kept my finger on them as we knelt down on the straw. I commenced reading and believing. "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to dwell in my statutes, and keep my judgments and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers, and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God."

I not only read it but I believed it and I sang it for it was at that meeting here I first sang the chorus, which is now sung all over the land to that good old hymn, "Come thou fount of every blessing," etc., with the chorus,

"I will sprinkle you with water,

I will cleanse you from all sin,  
Sanctify and make you Holy:  
I will come and dwell within."

We sang heartily and believed it. The Lord has blessed hundreds while singing that promise. I don't know how many received the blessing of "perfect love," in that meeting, but I do know, that while claiming that sweet promise, my soul entered into perfect rest.

It did not come as I expected it would, with overwhelming, power but a sweet calm, resting down on Christ -- fully satisfied. The struggle was over. I had the witness that I was all the Lord's. I had not been seeking properly before that time. I was trying to get help, instead of resting down on God's promise, but as soon as I rested my all on God's Word, something said "That is it, the blood now cleanses." O what perfect satisfaction I had with Jesus. I returned to my work with new life, new power, new gifts for usefulness. Truly it as the gift of power received by faith. O how light and easy everything seemed to move with me. The Bible was illuminated -- I had heard of such Bibles for sale, but I never saw one before -- prayer was easy, preaching was easy, visiting was easy, talking to sinners was easy -- everything was just right. "I lived by faith," which is the only way to live.

I was not so emotional as some are, and yet it has pleased the Lord, at times, to fill me with the Spirit. I have had much more of the Spirit's manifestations since, than when I first received the blessing, of a clean heart. I believe the heart must be cleansed by faith in the blood of Christ, before the baptism of the Spirit and power is given. I often hear our good-brethren pray most earnestly for the baptism, when they have made but little sacrifice or consecration, and not bound their offering on God's altar, nor appropriated the promises. Now, if we understand the promise by which God gives the baptism -- or the gift of power -- all the tithes must be brought into the storehouse first.

O, if all the Church would do this, including, the ministry, what a baptism would fall upon us; the Pentecost would be repeated. That is what the entire Church did on that day when the promise of the Father came. Over twelve years have passed away since I received the blessing of "perfect love," during which time I have not been exempt from trial and temptation, but I have been enabled to say, "The will of the Lord be done." "Faith and its Effect" have been of great service to me, and I have been wonderfully blessed, in helping, others into the fountain of full salvation.

It is my greatest pleasure to do good. I find it exceedingly profitable to the Church, and my own soul, to hold special meetings, one night in the week in my charge, for the promotion of Christian holiness, notwithstanding the outcry against specialties. They are good for me and my people. Those of my members who oppose them, cannot stay away from them long, and finally they experience the blessing of "perfect love," and then they like those meetings in which holiness was taught the most. So, also, in preaching on the subject, some of our fastidious brethren think we are doing harm in preaching Holiness definitely, but when they experience it for themselves, they wonder how we can get along without preaching it, and how people can live without it. Many of the members of the church I am now serving have obtained this blessing -- the most of my official board -- and others are now earnestly seeking. Praise the Lord! When I came to this charge, there

was not a single professor of the blessing of "perfect love." To God be all the glory for his wonderful work.

Thy power and saving truth to show,  
A warfare at Thy charge I go,  
Strong in the Lord and in Thy might,  
Gladly take up the hallowed cross,  
And suffering all things for Thy cause  
Beneath thy bloody banner fight

A spectacle to fiends and men,  
To all their fierce or cool disdain,  
With calmest pity I submit;  
Determined nought to know beside  
My Jesus and him crucified,  
I tread the world beneath my feet.

O God I let all my life declare,  
How happy all Thy servant are,  
How far above all earthly things;  
How pure when washed in Jesus' blood;  
To intimately one with God,  
A heaven-born race of priests and kings.

Source: "Pioneer Experiences" by Phoebe Palmer

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THE END