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

Vol. I -- Named Accounts

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(Methodist)

I feel, an inextinguishable desire to communicate a knowledge of the unspeakable blessing which I have received. In 1846 I read "The way of Holiness." It was the first book, aside from the Bible, that gave me tangible views of the great doctrine of entire sanctification. In this I saw the blessing standing out before me in a substantial, practical form. I commenced seeking it in earnest, and I now see was on the eve of embracing it, but my faith staggered, and the precious gift seemed to take a position at a distance from me. Still my determination was to direct my desires and efforts toward it long as life endured, spurred on by the fear that should I fail to attain it, my soul would be lost.

Still I failed in bringing it to the point that I would sell all for this pearl of great price, and while lingering thus from month to month, I was often the object of painful doubts as to whether I was really justified before God. It is true I preached the doctrine with all the power I had, my arguments and appeal on the subject all the time lashing me with terrible effect.

In this state of things a ministerial friend sent me by mail, "Faith and its Effects." This, by the blessing of God, was made my Joshua to guide and urge me into the promised land of perfect love. I commenced reading the book one evening, and resumed it again the next evening, with no settled plan of seeking the blessing, which the book described. I read to the sixteenth section, when I became alarmed in view of the danger and awful consequences of delay. Immediately I knelt down with a fixed purpose to make an effort, and extend it as far as my ability should reach. That moment I could say,

"Already springing hope I feel,
God will destroy the powers of hell."

I commenced making an entire consecration. The first object that presented itself was the best beloved of my heart. After an earnest effort I succeeded in getting her on the altar. Next came

my library, which had often been a snare to me. This, also, was given up. Other objects were then presented, all of which were laid upon the altar,-- till, at last, came my own will.

Then passed before me various circumstances here I had resisted the will of God, for the gratification of my own will. Among other things, through almost my whole Christian course, I had indulged a shrinking from continuing long in prayer, as my Saviour did, when He spent the whole night in prayer for me and a lost world. But I now consciously gave up my will on this and every point without reservation.

The Holy Spirit then impressed upon my mind the vast importance and duty of believing the offering, thus given to God through Christ accepted and sanctified. Glory be to God! grace was given, and the great bar was past! Next the Holy Spirit brought before me the duty of believing that God would keep by His power that which I had now committed Him, on condition that I would continue, by faith, to keep the offering in His hands.

The exercise of this glorious faith through the stupendous mercy of God became a conscious reality. The solemn engagement was then made and ratified between God and my soul, that His Spirit would lead me, and that I, assisted by His grace, should follow on, till time with me should be no more. And now I am kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. "Satan cometh, and hath nothing in me." Still he is permitted to tempt, but not over-come. I had a terrible struggle with this adversary recently. I had been praying for a greater fullness and clearer light. I commenced my evening devotions at a very early hour. The unutterable breathings of my soul were for light! light! the words of my Saviour meanwhile sounding in my ear, "If ye abide in me, and my word abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you."

The tempter not questioning my sanctification, suggested that my request was within the limits of the promises, and that if I did not realize what I was praying for my sanctification would die out. I was greatly distressed at the thought. An agony ensued, Calling into requisition every power of mind, soul, and body. The roaring of the fiend during this conflict was at its height when the words came as from more than angel lips, "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation, for when he is tried, he hath receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him." In a moment the battle was turned to the gate, and the enemy left me in the calm confidence of triumphant, unshaken faith. Though the description that some have given of this precious state of holiness is glowing, yet I can truly say the half has not been told.

And all I slight my Father's love,
Or basely fear His gift to own?
Unmindful of His favor prove?
Shall I, the hallow'd cross to shun,
Refuse His righteousness to impart,
By hiding it within my heart?

Source: "Pioneer Experiences" by Phoebe Palmer

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THE END