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

Vol. I -- Named Accounts

ELIZABETH R. WHEATON

At the age of eighteen I was married to Mr. J. A. Wheaton. We lived happily together, but in two years I was called to give up not only my dear husband, but also our little baby boy. They were buried in one grave, and I was again left alone in the world. O my breaking heart! I was in despair! I did not know then God's wonderful comforting power as I now do. I was scarcely more than a nominal Christian, a fashionable proud woman, moving in high society, left to face the battle of life alone. To try to drown my sorrow I rushed deeper into society and fashion -- only to be plunged into deeper despair. What I suffered during those years is beyond the power of tongue or pen to describe. My anguish of heart and mind were so great that at times reason almost tottered on its throne. And had it not been for the goodness and mercy of God in sending me timely aid through true Christian friends, I should never have been able to have triumphed over it all.

Soon after I was converted, I felt the call of God to His service. I longed to be a missionary ... Several years after my conversion I heard of holiness or entire consecration to God, and the baptism of the Holy Spirit for service. After this, for about ten years, I was under conviction for a clean heart, seeking for a while and then growing careless, receiving little help from the formal professors around me. As I counted the cost, at times it seemed too great. I knew it meant to give up fashionable society, home, friends, reputation and all: and to take the way of the lowly Nazarene.

I heard at this time of a holiness meeting about forty miles from home, which I attended. Here I heard the pure gospel preached, and light shone upon my soul. I saw that none but the pure in heart could see God in peace. After wrestling in prayer until about three o'clock in the morning, I seemed held by an invisible power, pure and holy, and was so filled with awe that I feared to speak or move.

Soon I heard a wonderful sound, soft, sweet and soothing, like the rustle of angels' wings. Its holy influence pervaded my whole being; a sound not of earth, but distinctly audible to both myself and the sister who was in the same room! I listened enraptured. I feared it was death, and my breath grew shorter and shorter. I did not move nor open my eyes.

Presently Jesus stood before me, and O the wonderful look of love -- so far above the love of mortals, so humble, meek and pleading! In the tender voice of the Holy Spirit came these words: "Can you give up all and follow me? Lay your weary, aching head upon my breast. I will never leave you nor forsake you. Lo, I am with you alway even unto the end of the world."

I was enabled by the Holy Spirit to say, "Yes, Lord Jesus." I knew it was Jesus. When I said "Yes. Lord," the power of God fell upon me, soul and body, and I was bathed in a sea of glory. When I had recovered from my rapture, Jesus had vanished as silently as He came; but the blessing and power remained. The sister whispered and asked, "Did you hear that sound?" And then she told me that this was for my benefit. This occurred November 11, 1883.

That day the people looked at me and wondered, seeing the great change God had wrought in me by His power. The night following we had an all-night meeting. Again God spoke to me by His Holy Spirit, saying, "Go and honor my Son's name, and I will go with you." I prayed, "O Lord, if this is Thy voice, speak once more." The same words came again. I obeyed and God did most wonderfully reveal Himself to me. I knew I was called to His service and to work for lost souls.

Source: "Prisons and Prayer or Labor of Love"
by Elizabeth R. Wheaton

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THE END