

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

ELIZABETH RAYNER (Methodist)

Elizabeth Rayner, wife of Rev. John Rayner of Piqua, Ohio, was born in Newark, England, in 1795, of pious parents. She was left motherless at the age of three years. Her mother taught her infant lips to pray. She was converted when only six years old, and was taken into church-fellowship at the age of thirteen. In her twentieth year she first commenced speaking, but not until after her marriage was her name regularly enrolled on the "Local Preacher's Plan." In company with her husband, she joined the Primitive Methodists, because they encouraged the women of their church to preach the gospel. She was popular, and so zealous that she would carry a child in her arms several miles rather than fail in filling her appointment to preach to sinners. After her emigration to this country, in 1820, she exercised herself in the public ministrations of the word. When settled at Piqua, Ohio, she still preached in the country churches.

She was always deeply interested in the work of the church, and, as I well know, in times of revival labored earnestly and successfully at the mourners' bench with seekers of religion. But it was in times of spiritual dearth and coldness in the church that she exerted herself with greater earnestness and zeal. Her faithful and appropriate words of exhortation in the prayer-meeting, the love-feast, and the class-room were often blessed to many Souls. And also in her own house, where some like-minded with herself met for prayer, she dropped words of cheer or warning-always intent, everywhere, on doing something for Christ.

And she did not neglect her own household. Seven of her children were converted at home, in answer to her unceasing prayers in the wild woods of Mercer County, Ohio, in a log-cabin, before even Methodist itinerants had found their way into the settlement. A very remarkable fact I wish here to record is that two of her children were happily converted to God at what Mother Rayner called "the little bed-time prayer-meeting."

Her son says: "I think it was in 1833 that my mother experienced the blessing of a clean heart; or, if not the first time, it was a renewal of the all-cleansing blood. I remember it well. I was home helping her with the work. The struggle was so great that she could not conceal the inward agony of spirit from her children. But the joy that followed was greater still, her soul was full of

glory and of Christ. And she lived in that blessed light and comfort the balance of her earthly pilgrimage."

She was a firm believer in divine providence -- that God does hear and answer prayer. In many instances he interposed to the supply of food and clothing in cases of extreme necessity, and by means the most unexpected.

In the latter part of her life her regard for God's law touching the sanctity of the Sabbath was severely tested. Her husband had engaged to keep a toll-gate on a pike coming into Piqua; and although the directors gave orders to collect toll on the Sabbath, she never did it. She would go out when people stopped, and tell them they did not take toll on the Sabbath; and more than that, she did not think it was right to do so. Her faith and trust in God triumphed over cupidity.

About two years before she died she had a slight paralytic stroke, which considerably affected her mind. Her bright days after that were fewer; and she sometimes gave way to doubt. Her son said: "Father died about a year before her; and I could but think of that passage where it says, 'Behold, an angel strengthened him.' She sat by his bed with his hand in hers, and seemed to hand him over to the angels. She had a wonderful regard for father; and after they were separated she would arrange their chairs, as night closed, as they used to be in the evening, and sit in sweet remembrance of former years." The suddenness of her departure precluded the possibility of leaving a dying testimony.

"Sudden came the mortal foe--
Soon the parting pang was past;
Sainted spirit, gladly go
To thy heaven, gained at last.

Firmly on the field of strife,
She the conflict long maintained--
Struggled hard for endless life--
Now the victory is gained."

Source: "Saintly Women And Death-Bed Triumphs" by Maxwell Pierson Gaddis

* * * * *

THE END