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

Vol. I -- Named Accounts

### **A. B. EARLE**

I have learned that a minister may be very anxious for souls, and even weep over lost men, and yet not have a full outfit for his work. He may earnestly believe he is fully in the work, and prepare to lead his flock, and yet not have any real soul-travail himself.

Some years ago I was holding united missions, alternately between the Baptist Church and the Congregational. I visited from house to house, and prayed with the different families, and felt very anxious for a revival; I worked hard, and looked pale from hard work. It seemed to me I would have been willing to die for souls, and yet I found my heart was not thoroughly melted.

I preached quite a number of times to the churches in all earnestness of my heart and tried more earnestly to get them near enough to Christ to have a revival. I wondered why they did not melt down; I was half discouraged. After prayer and fasting and much labor, I went alone before God and inquired what the matter was, and what more we could do.

Then God seemed to speak to me by the Spirit and say, "You are just as cold as the churches to whom you are preaching."

It startled me.

"Am I cold?!" I said.

"Your heart has not really been broken up for years."

I said, "Did I not weep while preaching this afternoon?"

"You did, but it was water running from ice when the sun is on it."

Then I saw it all; I saw the difference between anxiety and soul-travail. I then saw why souls were not saved and God's work revived. The fault was largely with the minister, and in this case I was the minister.

I went to the Congregational pastor and told him what I discovered. After a little, as he looked into his own heart, he said, "I am in the same state." No wonder there was no more done. Ministers had not had the upper-room power; they had but little power with God.

We prayed with and for each other for some days, but my heart did not melt. I knew there was power enough in Christ to break up the fountain of my heart, and there was efficacy in prayer. So I resolved to spend the night alone with God.

What a night it was! I think, twenty seasons of prayer that night, but my heart seemed to rebel and grow harder. After four hours I had used all my arguments with God, and my heart had not melted...I did not detect any immorality in my life, but I lacked the anointing; I needed the baptism of pain, the real birth-pain that brings souls into the kingdom.

Toward morning the fountains broke up; my heart melted as it had not done for years. Christ seemed to breathe on me and say, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." And oh, what a fulness of love! My heart was full. I said, all alone, "I've got it! The long-sought blessing is mine."

In the morning I went out and said the very words I had used the day before. Now the wicked broke down. I preached a little sermon to the churches, and they broke down, and the work broke out with power.

I found the fault had been with the preacher, and I myself was in the way when I was so anxious and working so hard. I could not say the deacons and members of the churches were right; but how soon they melted when the ministers melted!

For more than sixty years since then I have noticed that, as soon as the pastors have melted down and led the way, the churches have usually followed, and I have worked with about ten thousand ministers in twenty-three denominations over the country. If the pastors with whom I have worked have not melted down and received the baptism of real soul-travail, the work has usually been light and unsatisfactory; but if they have received the baptism of pain, so that they really travailed in birth for lost men, I have never known a failure.

Source: Contributed By L. S. Boardman, Author Unknown

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