

I was the king's cupbearer.**F.B. Meyer:****I was the king's cupbearer. Neh. i. 11.**

THE post was an important one. It gave its occupant the opportunity of coming into close contact with the king; it implied a character of unusual trustworthiness, since Oriental despots were very afraid of poison. But no one expected a royal cupbearer to do anything very heroic. He lived in the inner part of the palace, and was necessarily excluded from the great deeds of the stirring outward world. Nehemiah also was evidently a humble and retiring man. His response to the story of the ruined condition of Jerusalem was just a flood of tears and prayer to the God of heaven. And had you seen those tears and heard that prayer, you might have thought that just another flower was drooping, another seed falling into the ground to die.

But this was not all. These prayers and tears were supplemented by an earnest purpose, which was maturing with every hour. He gave himself to God to be used, if God would have it so, as an instrument in the execution of his recorded purpose. He was a man of faith. It mattered little enough that he was only a cupbearer, for that was no barrier to God; indeed, God might work more efficiently through a frail, weak man, than through the prince, the soldier, or the orator, since He cannot give his glory to another. What a glorious faith was his, which dared to believe that through his yielded life God could pour his mighty rivers! Why do we not yield ourselves in our helplessness to God, and ask Him to work through us, to fulfil his mighty purposes?

"We kneel, how weak! We rise, how full of power!

Why therefore should we do ourselves this wrong,

Or others ‑‑ that we are not always strong!"