

## Sam. Popoola

**“And Barzillai the Gileadite came down from Rogelim, and went over Jordan with the king, to conduct him over Jordan. Now Barzillai was a very aged man, even fourscore years old: and he had provided the king of sustenance while he lay at Mahanaim; for he was a very great man. And the king said unto Barzillai, come thou over with me, and I will feed thee with me in Jerusalem. And Barzillai said unto the king, how long have I to live, that I should go up with the king unto Jerusalem? I am this day fourscore years old: and can I discern between good and evil? Can thy servant taste what I eat or what I drink? Can I hear any more the voice of singing men and singing women? Wherefore then should thy servant be yet a burden unto my lord the king? Thy servant will go a little way over Jordan with the king: and why should the king recompense it me with such a reward? Let thy servant I pray thee, turn back again, that I may die in mine own city, and be buried by the grave of my father and of my mother. But behold thy servant Chimham; let him go over with my lord the king; and do to him what shall seem good unto thee. And the king answered, Chimham shall go over with me, and I will do to him that which shall seem good unto thee: and whatsoever thou shalt require of me, that will I do for thee. And all the people went over Jordan. And when the king was come over, the king kissed Barzillai, and blessed him; and he returned unto his own place. Then the king went on to Gilgal, and Chimham went on with him...” II Sam.19: 31-40.**

Barzillai, the scriptures recorded was a very great man, II Sam19:32. This man must have been great in several respects. This man had such **“giant”** stature that he must be a prophetic type for instructive learning. The meanings of his name and that of his nativity are all for us as typical examples for a divine purpose. **“Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall”** I Cor.10: 11-12. Every scriptural account serves a specific purpose of God to reveal His will and His mind; the ultimate goal is to facilitate our spiritual walk so we may apprehend that purpose for which He seeks to apprehend us. The entire story of Barzillai sets out to underline the salient and the very subtle points at which great men of note, that are found on the High way of God, have failed. Great men do not fail in big things; they fail, as it were, in small things. They pay attention to big things, but they pay little or no attention to small things. Barzillai was a great man. He serves for us an example of great men; their rise and their fall. In a very short encounter with David, the scriptures had so much to say about this man, Barzillai; his worth, his good, his son, his company, what they brought to the king; how he provided sustenance for the king and a host of other records of the type that this man serves to be. All we should know about the positive aspects of the type that Barzillai served in the first segment of his encounter with the king are recorded for our instruction in I Sam.17:27-29. That the scriptures may be complete, we also have the balance record of this man’s failure, not a failure in morals, but a failure in spiritual judgement.

For spiritual matters, failure in spiritual judgement is as failure in morals if not weightier. The Lord did not spare the religious leaders of his time when he charged, **‘woe unto you, scribes**

**and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cumin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgement, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone”** Mt.23: 23. The ground of failure of great men of God has usually been the neglect of **“small”** matters as it were, which in the eyes of God are the issues at stake! Mint, anise and cumin are herbs whose seeds were used for condiment. They were as common as they were cheap. They could pass for weeds! Paying tithes of such small insignificant things reveal how great men could pay **“detailed”** attention to small issues of religion but neglect the real spiritual matters of eternal significance. Barzillai, we were not only told of his positive side, we were also made to know his failure. This is so, of all Bible characters of note. True spirituality begins in absolute transparency. A spiritual man will not only make known his strength, he also needs to make known his weaknesses, or else he will be worshipped as an angel. Paul said, **“for though I would desire to glory, I shall not be a fool, for I will say the truth: but now I forbear, lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth me to be, or that he heareth of me. And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ’s sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong...”** II Cor.12: 6-10. At some other time, Paul had requested for prayers. **“Pray for us: for we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly... Brethren, pray for us...Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you: and that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all men have not faith..”** Heb.13: 18; I Thes.5: 25; II Thes.3: 1. Spirituality goes with a lot of humility. Spiritual men are only so by Grace alone. They are yet but sheep under the great Shepherd, whatever the height of spiritual greatness they may appear to have attained. They are to be seen as needing to continue to grow in spiritual grace daily just as any other sheep of His great flock. One of the greatest mistakes, which none of the Biblical men of spiritual note, fell into, is the mistake of self-exaltation. Such creates a distance. He who is self-exalted becomes distanced from others; great and small. It is a natural development, which becomes so created consciously or otherwise; this is because **“dignity, honour and respect”** must be accorded **“great men”**? Paul was none of this. He was one among all, for all are brethren. Once a spiritual man succeeds to carve for himself, a niche, it is the beginning of a fall and subsequently, self-destruction is imminent. Once you wear a visible **“rank”**, the end is determined. In historical battles, the commanders are in camouflage, yet their instructions are as forceful as their rank and position justify.

Jesus wore the same attire that his disciples wore, ate the same food with them and slept many times where they slept. This did not make him one **“inch”** shorter in stature than he was. Paul was his pattern disciple. He was an apostle of apostles yet meekest and most humble. He was transparent and made it clear he was one who was still growing in grace. He could be weak; he could be tired; he could be in distress; he could be in despair! Paul was a man of such a spiritual stature, and for him to say such things? **“Brethren, pray for us”** was his answer. How easy it is to neglect our own soul, when we seem to be so **“busy”** with the Master’s **“service”**. How easy it is to forget that we also need prayers. When we seem to present a front of having gotten it all; when we seem to have positioned ourselves in a state, which is always ready to **“minister to**

**others**”; to the dangerous neglect of our own need for spiritual feeding; at His feet and through His hands which He graciously manifests through the hands of other of His servants? Spiritual men must be men of balance.

**“And Barzillai the Gileadite CAME DOWN from Rogelim”**. The presentation and the order of words here are not some accident or some coincidence. The Hebrew root meaning, which expresses **“DOWN”** as in coming **“down from Rogelim”** is in a negative sense. It means, **“to descend”**; it means, **“to go downwards”**; it expresses the sense of moving **“to a lower region”**; it means, in a figure of expression, **“to fall”**. It is as though the lifetime testimony of a man packs up as dust before the wind in one mistaken step of error in spiritual judgement. Esau only lusted after porridge in the face of a biting hunger and he was dubbed, **“a fornicator”**. Esau in that instance became a subject for admonition, a negative type, a negative example for instructive learning. **“Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears”**. Heb.12: 16-17. Spiritual walk goes beyond service. It calls for personal attention to one’s own soul. He, who must find a place in the Father’s heart, must have his eyes on eternal inheritance in Christ Jesus and must have to pay greater attention to the matter of His soul than he does to mere religious activities called **“spiritual service”**. Paul’s words, **“know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: but I keep my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway”** I Cor.9:24-27.

The scriptural presentation in **“Barzillai the Gileadite came down from Rogelim”** expresses the point of reference with respect to **“coming down”**. He came down from Rogelim. There was a spiritual descent from the estate or the spiritual Platform of **“Rogelim”**. Rogelim relates to the **“ministry of the fullers”**. A **“fuller”** in spiritual type is a man whose goal is pleasing God in a walk of righteousness. The whole purpose in a Christian journey is to become **“like him”**. **“Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, WE SHALL BE LIKE HIM; FOR WE SHALL SEE HIM AS HE IS. AND EVERY MAN THAT HATH THIS HOPE IN HIM PURIFIETH HIMSELF, EVEN AS HE IS PURE”**, I John 3: 2-3. **“For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, THAT IT MAY BE FASHIONED LIKE UNTO HIS GLORIOUS BODY, ACCORDING TO THE WORKING WHEREBY HE IS ABLE EVEN TO SUBDUE ALL THINGS UNTO HIMSELF”**, Phil.3: 21. **“But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, ARE CHANGED INTO THE SAME IMAGE FROM GLORY TO GLORY, even as by the Spirit of the Lord”**, II Cor.3: 18. **“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, That Ye Present Your Bodies A Living Sacrifice, Holy, Acceptable Unto God, Which Is Your Reasonable Service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, THAT YE MAY PROVE WHAT IS THAT GOOD, AND ACCEPTABLE, AND PERFECT WILL OF GOD”** Rom.12: 1-2. The whole counsel and purpose of God which He has purposed in Christ Jesus is

that, in this age, the church age, or the age of Grace, a people shall be found who shall be like him, that is, like Christ; both in his image and his likeness. All great men are typically set out for us, as examples such that we can learn from their spiritual principle that facilitated their victory, and their error of judgement to avoid their pitfalls. A great man or he who desires to be great is none other than someone who has seen or is able to perceive correctly what this eternal purpose of God is and sets out to pursue it with the intention of being a glorious partaker with the saints in light. A great man in Bible context or in spiritual rating, is not necessarily one famous man of God located somewhere on the planet earth. A great man is a man with humble heart and contrite spirit. “The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart O God thou wilt not despise”, Ps 51:17.

The true spiritual ministry is not in mounting podium as a great preacher. It is neither in **“compassing sea and land to make proselytes”** rather than **“sons in his image and likeness”**. The greatest **“calling”** as of **“ministry”** is to be fashioned like unto him, to be able to stand where our vessel is unto honour, where we can minister to the Lord, lifting up holy hands. God wants men whose lives do worship him. True service is having God’s lordship over our lives. True service is having our lives to be the true expression of His in morals, in character, in mannerism and in testimony. Setting for us, the sons of Zadok as prophetic types, God said: **“but the priests the Levites, the sons of Zadok...they shall enter into my sanctuary, and they shall come near to my table, to minister unto me, and they shall keep my charge. They shall have linen bonnets upon their heads, and shall have linen breeches upon their loins...”** Ez.44: 15-19. God’s emphasis to His true sons is not in religious activities called service to God, it is having **“linen bonnets”** upon the head, and **“linen breeches”** upon the loins for that is what qualifies a man to minister to the Lord; sanctified mind that translates to a walk in righteousness. A great many become so restless too soon. The concern is in being **“occupied”** for God. The best way to be occupied for God is to make our lives teachable by Him.

Becoming obedient to the instructions of the Holy Spirit in the small details of the matters of life on a daily basis counts more than running from one crusade ground to another. If only we understand God’s phases in His divine dealings with man, we will be a lot quieter today than we are and a lot more effective and more productive in matters of the Spirit. One man whose life is separated and consecrated to God in a true walk in righteousness counts more than a hundred who are so **“busy for God”** that they cannot even hear when He calls; so much of paradoxes that are in Christian walk. Many times, that which looks like God is not God. Many things are gold plated which are not gold. There is a lot of plastic Christianity covered in religious facades; may all our religious activities abide and stand the true test of spirituality in the days of reckoning.