



BASED ON 2 SAMUEL 21:1-14

UNTIL THE RAIN CAME



**A RIZPAH
CHOOSE YOUR OWN ADVENTURE
FOR AGES 11-14**

How to Use This Book

Welcome to an adventure where YOU step into Rizpah's story of love, loss, and radical faithfulness.

How it works:

- Start at Section 1.
- Read each section carefully.
- At the end of each section, choose what YOU would do.
- Follow the directions to the next section number.
- Keep going until you reach an ending.

Some paths lead to numbness and escape, some to rage and bitterness, and some to faithful endurance that moves heaven and earth.

Tips:

- You can read this alone or as a group (vote on choices together).
- Try different paths to see how the story changes.
- Pay attention to what happens when you choose faithfulness vs. self-protection, grief vs. denial, endurance vs. escape.
- Keep a Bible open to 2 Samuel 21:1–14 as you read.

Warning:

This story deals with unjust death, grief, and long suffering. It's raw and real.

Remember: Rizpah kept watch over her sons' bodies for months, protecting them from birds and wild animals—and her faithfulness moved a king's heart and brought rain from heaven.

When Justice Feels Like Murder

Section 1

You are Rizpah, daughter of Aiah. You were King Saul's concubine—not his wife, not quite a servant, somewhere in between. Saul is long dead. So is Jonathan. David is king now, and you're a forgotten woman from the old regime.

But you have two sons: Armoni and Mephibosheth. They are your world.

One day, royal soldiers arrive. King David has consulted God about a three-year famine ravaging the land. God's answer? Saul's family broke a treaty with the Gibeonites. Blood guilt must be paid.

The Gibeonites demand seven of Saul's male descendants be handed over for execution. Your two sons are on the list—not because of anything they did, but because of who their grandfather was.

You beg David. You plead with the Gibeonites. You explain that your sons are innocent.

But political calculations and ancient justice systems don't care about your motherhood or their innocence.

They are taken. They are executed. Their bodies are left exposed on a hill at Gibeah "*before the Lord*"—a public display meant to satisfy both the Gibeonites and God.

Leaving bodies unburied is the ultimate disgrace. Wild animals and birds will come. The sight will be horrific. The smell unbearable.

You stand at the base of that hill, staring up. Everything inside you is screaming.

What do you do?

- If you decide to numb the pain—go home, shut the door, and try to survive by not feeling, go to **Section 2**.
- If rage takes over and you decide to publicly protest this injustice, go to **Section 3**.
- If you decide to stay and do the only thing left you can do—protect their dignity in death, go to **Section 4**.

Choosing Numbness

Section 2

You walk away. You go home, close every window, and refuse to go outside. You tell yourself you can't change what happened. You can't bring them back. Staring at their bodies won't help.

You stop eating much. You stop talking to people. You move through your days like a ghost.

Friends try to reach you. "*Rizpah, you have to grieve. You have to process this.*" But processing means "feeling", and feeling is unbearable.

Weeks pass. You hear whispers that the bodies have been ravaged by animals. You feel sick, but you've committed to not looking, not engaging, not breaking open.

Months later, the rain finally comes. The famine ends. David eventually has the bodies buried quietly. Your sons are laid to rest, but you were absent from even that final act of love.

You survive. But survival without presence, without honoring what mattered—is that really living?

END 1 – "The Grief You Refused"

You chose numbness over presence, and the pain you avoided became a wound that never quite healed.

Rage Against the Machine

Section 3

You decide you will NOT be silent. This is murder dressed up as justice. Your sons were innocent. David is a coward. The Gibeonites are vengeful. God is silent.

You march into the city and begin shouting. You accuse David publicly. You curse the Gibeonites. You gather anyone who will listen and tell them this system is broken.

Some people agree with you. Injustice is injustice. But others—especially those in power—see you as a dangerous, unstable woman causing trouble.

David hears about your protests. Instead of being moved, he's irritated. "*She's just angry,*" he says. "*Grief makes people irrational.*"

Your rage burns hot but burns out fast. After weeks of shouting with no change, you collapse in exhaustion. The bodies are eventually buried, but your name becomes associated with bitterness and rebellion rather than love.

END 2 – "The Anger That Consumed You"

- Rage is a valid response to injustice, but when it's the only response, it can consume you and blind others to the love underneath.

Spreading Sackcloth on the Rock

Section 4

You take a large piece of sackcloth—rough, dark fabric used for mourning—and carry it up to a rock outcropping near where the bodies are exposed. You spread it out. You sit down.

You're not here to protest. You're not here to fix the system. You're here because love doesn't end when breathing does. You're here to do the one thing you still can: protect what's left of them.

The sun beats down. It's late spring—the beginning of the barley harvest. The heat is oppressive. You have no tent, no real shelter. Just sackcloth draped over the rock.

By evening, you're sunburned and dehydrated. As darkness falls, you hear movement in the brush. Eyes gleam in the shadows. A pack of wild dogs approaches, drawn by the scent.

This is going to be harder than you imagined.

What do you do?

- If you decide one night is symbolic enough and go home at dawn, go to **Section 5**.
- If you decide to stay as long as it takes, no matter the cost, go to **Section 6**.

Symbolic Gestures

Section 5

You make it through the night, fighting off animals, barely sleeping. By sunrise, you're exhausted. "*I stayed one night,*" you tell yourself. "*That's meaningful. That shows love.*"

You gather your sackcloth and head home. That night, without you there, animals return. By the next morning, significant damage has been done.

You tried. You showed up once. But faithfulness that stops when it gets too hard isn't really faithfulness—it's just good intentions.

END 3 – "The Vigil You Started But Didn't Finish"

Showing up once is better than not showing up at all, but love that endures is love that doesn't quit when exhaustion hits.

The Long Watch Begins

Section 6

You stay. Day after day, week after week, you remain on that rock.

By day, you wave off vultures and crows. You throw rocks, shout, stand and wave your arms until they fly away. The sun blisters your skin. You're hungry, thirsty, and exhausted.

By night, you fight off jackals, hyenas, and wild dogs. You barely sleep—just short naps during the hottest part of midday when fewer animals approach.

People pass on the road below. Some mock you: "*Crazy woman.*" Some pity you: "*She's lost her mind.*" Most just ignore you.

One month passes. Then two. Then three. It's been nearly six months.

Your body is wasted. Your grief is a constant weight. But the bodies remain untouched, protected by your stubborn, aching love.

Then, deep into your vigil, you face a crisis moment.

What happens?

- If bitterness finally breaks you and you start questioning everything, go to **Section 7**.
- If you find a way to turn your vigil into prayer rather than just endurance, go to **Section 8**.
- If you stay faithful but silent, letting your actions speak, go to **Section 9**.

When Bitterness Wins

Section 7

After months of suffering, you can't hold it together anymore. You stand on the rock and scream at the sky:

"Where are You, God? I've done everything! I've been faithful! And for what? My sons are still dead! David still doesn't care! The rain still hasn't come! WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM ME?"

Your anger pours out in waves—at God, at David, at Saul, at the Gibeonites, at yourself for not being able to save them.

People hear your breakdown and report it to David. But instead of your faithfulness moving him, your bitterness makes him dismiss you. *"She's just angry and broken. She doesn't represent something noble—she's just traumatized."*

The rain eventually comes. The bodies are eventually buried. But your story is remembered with a footnote of bitterness, not beauty.

END 4 – "The Vigil That Ended in Rage"

You endured for months, but bitterness at the finish line stole some of the power of your sacrifice; the last chapter matters as much as the first.

Prayer Without Words

Section 8

You realize that this vigil—this brutal, exhausting act of love—is the most honest prayer you've ever prayed. You're not just enduring; you're “*speaking*” to God through presence.

Every time you wave away a vulture, you're saying, “*I still believe dignity matters.*”

Every night you fight off wild dogs, you're saying, “*Love doesn't quit.*”

Every sunrise you're still there, you're saying, “*I trust You even when I don't understand.*”

Your vigil becomes a living psalm—a lament, a protest, a declaration of faith all at once.

People who pass by don't just see a broken woman. They see someone wrestling with God and refusing to let go. Like Jacob at Peniel. Like Job on the ash heap.

Your faithfulness moves King David's heart. He orders the bodies taken down and buried with honor in the tomb of Saul and Jonathan.

He also retrieves the neglected bones of Saul and Jonathan and buries them properly.

And then—after months of drought—the rain comes.

The sky opens. Water pours down. The famine ends. Your vigil becomes legend: the mother whose love moved a king and unlocked heaven.

END 5 – "The Vigil That Became a Prayer"

When you turned endurance into prayer, your faithfulness didn't just protect bodies—it moved hearts and changed history.

Silent Strength

Section 9

You don't shout prayers. You don't explain yourself. You just stay.

Your presence on that rock becomes a silent rebuke to everyone who walks by: to the Gibeonites who demanded blood, to David who allowed it, to a world that moves on too quickly from injustice.

You are a living picture of “*chesed*”—Hebrew for covenant love, the kind that doesn't calculate cost or quit when it's inconvenient.

Months pass. Word reaches King David about the woman who refuses to leave. At first he ignores it. Then it starts to bother him. Then it pierces him.

He realizes that while he made a political decision, you made a human one. While he moved on, you stayed.

David orders the bodies taken down and buried honorably in the family tomb. He also retrieves Saul and Jonathan's bones, giving them proper burial too.

After that, God answers prayer for the land. The rain comes. The famine ends.

Your silent faithfulness becomes the story people tell when they need to remember what love looks like when everything is broken.

END 6 – "Until the Rain Came"

Your silent, stubborn love moved a king's heart and brought rain from heaven; sometimes the most powerful witness is simply refusing to abandon your post.

All the Endings

Check them off, then read the wisdom that goes with each one.

- **END 1 – "The Grief You Refused"**
 - Avoiding grief doesn't make it smaller—it just makes it harder to heal; presence in pain is an act of love toward yourself and others.
- **END 2 – "The Anger That Consumed You"**
 - Anger is a valid stage of grief, but if it's the only stage, it consumes both you and your witness; rage needs a companion—like love or lament—to stay redemptive.
- **END 3 – "The Vigil You Started But Didn't Finish"**
 - Good intentions are a start, but endurance is what transforms a moment into a legacy.
- **END 4 – "The Vigil That Ended in Rage"**
 - The last chapter matters as much as the first; finishing well is part of faithfulness.
- **END 5 – "The Vigil That Became a Prayer"**
 - When suffering becomes prayer—when presence becomes worship—faithfulness moves mountains.
- **END 6 – "Until the Rain Came"**
 - Sometimes the most powerful witness is simply refusing to abandon your post; silent faithfulness speaks louder than a thousand words.

Five Truths You Can Carry

- **TRUTH 1: Presence in pain is an act of worship.**
 - Rizpah couldn't fix anything, but she could be present; sometimes staying when everything in you wants to run is the most faithful thing you can do.
- **TRUTH 2: Love doesn't end when breathing does.**
 - Rizpah couldn't save her sons, but she could honor them; how we treat people after they're gone reveals the depth of our love.
- **TRUTH 3: Silent obedience can change systems loud protests can't.**
 - Rizpah didn't organize, didn't petition, didn't lobby—she just stayed, and her presence moved a king; sometimes quiet faithfulness is more subversive than rage.
- **TRUTH 4: Faithfulness is choosing to show up again after you've already shown up a hundred times.**
 - Month after month, Rizpah woke up and chose the rock again; endurance isn't one heroic moment—it's a thousand small choices to not quit.

- **TRUTH 5: Your faithfulness can unlock breakthrough far beyond you.**
 - Rizpah's vigil moved David to act and brought rain to end the famine; sometimes your obedience is the key that unlocks blessing for an entire community.

Discussion Questions

Use these questions after going through at least one path:

1. Which ending did you reach first, and what does that reveal about how you typically respond to hard things?
2. Rizpah faced unjust suffering—her sons died for someone else's sin. Where do you see similar injustice today, and how should we respond?
3. Compare END 2 (rage) and END 5 (prayer). Both involve strong emotion. What's the difference?
4. "Presence in pain is an act of worship." What does that mean in real life—at a friend's hospital bed, with a grieving family member, in your own hard season?
5. Rizpah's silent vigil moved David more than protests might have. When is silence more powerful than words?
6. The rain came after months of waiting. What are you still waiting for God to answer, and how does Rizpah's story speak to that?
7. If you knew no one would ever thank you, praise you, or even notice—would you still do the right thing? Why or why not?
8. How do you distinguish between "faithful endurance" and "staying in something you should actually leave"? (abusive relationship, toxic job, etc.)

Prayer

Lord God,

Thank You for Rizpah's story—for showing us what faithfulness looks like when everything is broken and nothing makes sense. Help me to stay when everyone else walks away. Give me the strength to be present in pain instead of running from it.

Teach me that love doesn't end when breathing does, and that honoring people and things—even when I can't fix them—matters to You. Help me turn endurance into prayer, presence into worship, and faithfulness into a quiet witness that moves hearts.

When I want to quit—when I've shown up a hundred times and nothing's changed—remind me of the rock where Rizpah sat and the rain that finally came. Give me grace to depend on You every single day, not to "*be strong*" in my own power.

Let my life become a living prayer. Let my faithfulness unlock breakthrough for others. And when the rain finally comes, help me remember that You see every moment of obedience, even when no one else does. Make me faithful until the rain comes.

In Jesus' name, Amen.



Contact

Shalom Philou Media Inc.
www.shalomphiloumedia.ca
info@shalomphiloumedia.ca



Step into Rizpah's story as a mother who loses everything and must choose between numbing the pain, raging against injustice, or staying faithful through months of lonely suffering. Along the way, you'll face choices between self-protection and presence, anger and prayer, giving up and enduring to the end.

Inside, you'll:

- Step into one of the Bible's rawest stories of grief, injustice, and faithful love
- Explore six different endings showing how we respond when life breaks us
- Discover five truths about faithful endurance, presence in pain, and silent obedience

Scripture basis:

2 Samuel 21:1-14

Recommended age:

11-14

“From the beginning of the harvest till the rain poured down from the heavens on the bodies, she did not let the birds touch them by day or the wild animals by night.”

2 Samuel 21:10