

Rizpah, A Mother Who Stood Her Ground
Mother's Day 2016
2 Samuel 21:1-14
May 8, 2016

There was a famine during David's reign that lasted for three years, so David asked the LORD about it. And the LORD said, "The famine has come because Saul and his family are guilty of murdering the Gibeonites."

² So the king summoned the Gibeonites. They were not part of Israel but were all that was left of the nation of the Amorites. The people of Israel had sworn not to kill them, but Saul, in his zeal for Israel and Judah, had tried to wipe them out. ³ David asked them, "What can I do for you? How can I make amends so that you will bless the LORD's people again?"

⁴ "Well, money can't settle this matter between us and the family of Saul," the Gibeonites replied. "Neither can we demand the life of anyone in Israel."

"What can I do then?" David asked. "Just tell me and I will do it for you."

⁵ Then they replied, "It was Saul who planned to destroy us, to keep us from having any place at all in the territory of Israel. ⁶ So let seven of Saul's sons be handed over to us, and we will execute them before the LORD at Gibeon, on the mountain of the LORD"

"All right," the king said, "I will do it." ⁷ The king spared Jonathan's son Mephibosheth, who was Saul's grandson, because of the oath David and Jonathan had sworn before the LORD. ⁸ But he gave them Saul's two sons Armoni and Mephibosheth, whose mother was Rizpah daughter of Aiah. He also gave them the five sons of Saul's daughter Merab, the wife of Adriel son of Barzillai from Meholah. ⁹ The men of Gibeon executed them on the mountain before the LORD. So all seven of them died together at the beginning of the barley harvest.

¹⁰ Then Rizpah daughter of Aiah, the mother of two of the men, spread burlap on a rock and stayed there the entire harvest season. She prevented the scavenger birds from tearing at their bodies during the day and stopped wild animals from eating them at night. ¹¹ When David learned what Rizpah, Saul's concubine, had done, ¹² he went to the people of Jabesh-gilead and retrieved the bones of Saul and his son Jonathan. (When the Philistines had killed Saul and Jonathan on Mount Gilboa, the people of Jabesh-gilead stole their bodies from the public square of Beth-shan, where the Philistines had hung them.) ¹³ So David obtained the bones of Saul and Jonathan, as well as the bones of the men the Gibeonites had executed.

--2 Samuel 21:1-14 (NLT)

Someone once said: An ounce of mother is worth a pound of preacher.

When I think of tragedies from the pages of the Word, my mind generally is drawn to those men or women who made poor choices over spiritual matters:

_____—Wished for God's approval AND Balak's money (Numbers 23:10)

_____—Wished for God's approval AND the church's approval with his lies
(Acts 5:3-5)

_____—Wished for God's power AND his own ability to buy it (Acts 8:19)

_____—Wished for God's power AND to control the church (3 John 9)

_____—Wished for Paul's brotherhood AND longed to love the world (2
Tim. 4:10)

The _____ Builder—Wished for earthly security on a shaky foundation AND spiritual success (Matt. 7:26)

I think that there are some 3 valuable lessons to be drawn out of this terrible story that prove to us that even in the most difficult of situations, if a mother will stand her ground, God has something in store for her:

1. Rizpah understood that her _____ in life did not preserve her from trouble.
2. We can see the _____ of a woman who is in dire straits.
3. The _____ of a mother's love.

It honors a host of things that every mother needs in our generation:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____