

Speaker 1 (00:00):

Life is hard at times. Our hearts often get bruised and battered yet God offers us words that help and heal those hearts when we turn to him. Welcome to the Sweet Selah Moments Podcast, where we study his word and find strength for the day. The Sweet Selah Moments Podcast is a cooperative production of Word Radio and Sweet Selah Ministries.

Nicole (00:30):

Welcome to the Sweet Selah Moments Podcast. This is episode 92, The Steadfast Heart. It's hard to believe we've come to the end of our heart lessons. Sharon, I've loved studying David with you.

Sharon (00:41):

I have loved it as well. There's so much we didn't cover, which is so crazy, but there's been many life lessons that have come out of heart lessons. Let's review and list them before we start. I just wanna hear them one more time in my brain. So, first of all, we learned the importance of a quiet heart. That our love for God grows in stillness and in quiet places like sheep fields where nobody sees us, but we're talking to God.

Nicole (01:10):

We learned that a worshipful heart is possible even when you aren't doing well. And that cultivating a heart that worships God will bring its own kind of joy, even when life is hard.

Sharon (01:20):

We celebrated David's courageous heart and learned that trust in God and truly believing he is BIG helps us fight our own giants.

Nicole (01:30):

Yes, we loved watching Jonathan and David's loyal hearts and discovered that true friendship puts the others needs ahead of our own convenience and comfort. And it doesn't stop when the friends are apart.

Sharon (01:41):

Mm-hmm. We learned to appreciate the abiding heart when we watched David stay close to God in those long, confusing cave years when Saul was chasing him.

Nicole (01:49):

Yeah. We were challenged to have a persevering heart to keep going and going and going. Trusting God's timing even when it seems really slow.

Sharon (01:58):

Slow. We were reminded that God wants us to have humbled hearts, quick to admit when we are wrong.

Nicole (02:05):

We celebrated the noble heart and learned about self-sacrifice and dignity in our dealings with others.

Sharon (02:11):

Sadly, we studied David's rebellious heart and talked about how quickly we can lose our way when we walk off the path that God has called us to.

Nicole (02:19):

Yes. And then we rejoiced to add how God loves and restores those who have repentant hearts and determined to repent quickly when we sin.

Sharon (02:27):

Yes. Yes. Yes. And now here we are at the end of the study looking at what it means to be steadfast, to have a steadfast heart. You know, on either side of my fireplace, in our living room are pictures I just love. My Aunt Nancy gave them to me years ago. She probably got them at a thrift store knowing Aunt Nancy. So they're not like valuable in that sense. But boy, they're valuable to me.

Nicole (02:50):

Oh yeah.

Sharon (02:50):

On the left side is an old woman and on the right side is an old man, and they're kind of doing identical things. They've got a Bible in the background, they've got a bowl of soup, you know? (Nicole: Yeah) And they're praying. And they're just such a symbol to me of steadfastness at the end of life. (Nicole: Yeah) They don't have much. They obviously didn't make a lot of money. They're not living in a mansion somewhere, but they're still steadfast in their love of God. Their hearts are right with him. And they're sort of my reminder that that's how I wanna end up. (Nicole: Yeah) You know, I'd like to at least have soup. Right?

Nicole (03:24):

That'd be nice, Lord.

Sharon (03:26):

A cup of soup, and the word. And still be loving my Jesus.

Nicole (03:29):

Oh, I love that.

Sharon (03:30):

Yeah. Oh, man, I love it. There's a hymn that says, 'Let me never ever outlive my love for Thee'.

Nicole (03:34):

Yes. I love that.

Sharon (03:36):

And it's like one of my favorite lines in one of my favorite hymns. So, Okay. So we can remain steadfast in our love for God, even if like David, we had some pretty huge mess up in the middle.

Nicole (03:46):

Thank you Lord.

Sharon (03:47):

Thank you Lord. Thank you Lord. So can you give us a good working definition of a steadfast heart?

Nicole (03:53):

Yeah. So, the internet says that steadfast means 'Resolutely or dutifully firm and unwavering'. So pretty good. But I like this one better. Merriam-Webster says, 'Firmly fixed in place, immovable'. (Sharon: Yeah) So if we were to have a steadfast heart, a heart that is firmly, immovably fixed in love and devotion, we need to make sure we are setting our heart on someone who won't let us down.

Sharon (04:19):

Oh, yes.

Nicole (04:19):

God is the only safe focus for a steadfast heart. Anyone else or anything else will always fail us. And to focus our heart on someone, we need to know them. And we can only get to know and love God more through daily time with him in his word and by talking with him in prayer.

Sharon (04:34):

Absolutely.

Nicole (04:35):

Just like that cute little couple in your pictures. That is how to have a steadfast heart.

Sharon (04:38):

There it is.

Nicole (04:39):

They just kept up with the word, talking to God.

Sharon (04:41):

That's right. And they're grateful for their daily bread.

Nicole (04:44):

Exactly.

Sharon (04:45):

Oh man. It's that old godly path, not the new-fangled.

Nicole (04:49):

Yes. Those old ways.

Sharon (04:49):

Just keep doing it. Yes. Well, what amazes me about David and so many others who stayed close to God to the very end of their lives is that their love for God clearly wasn't based on an easy life. (Nicole: Yeah) David's wasn't easy. (Nicole: No) It's simply that they knew him and they knew he was with him through it all. And of course, the closer one gets to death and old age, the closer one gets to being actually with him in heaven. So what a joy. And what a joy to end life excited about that.

Nicole (05:17):

Yeah.

Sharon (05:18):

Right?

Nicole (05:18):

Cause you have a good relationship and you're ready to go.

Sharon (05:21):

Yeah. Well, we're gonna turn now to the last sad chapter in David's life.

Nicole (05:25):

I know, poor David.

Sharon (05:26):

He's had so many. It's a direct consequence of his bad choices. David could not have been a totally attentive father with that many wives and concubines. Right?

Nicole (05:36):

It's not possible.

Sharon (05:36):

I don't know how many kids, but a ton. So, but I think he really did love his kids, especially the first few guys who were in line for the throne.

Nicole (05:43):

Yeah.

Sharon (05:44):

Right? They were new.

Nicole (05:45):

Yeah.

Sharon (05:45):

So can you list the first four sons of David and tell us just a little bit about each one of them?

Nicole (05:50):

Yeah. So his first born was Amnon, and his mother was Ahinoam. His second born was Daniel and his mother was Abigail. Abigail, one of our favorites.

Sharon (06:00):

Yes.

Nicole (06:00):

So that's neat that she had a son.

Sharon (06:03):

Yeah, it is.

Nicole (06:03):

And it was a second born, so it's kinda special. (Sharon: Mm-hmm) Third born was Absalom, who was born to Maacah who was a daughter of a local king. So it's kind of, I think that was his political marriage.

Sharon (06:13):

Yes, indeed.

Nicole (06:14):

But he has a son from her. And the fourth born was Adonijah from Haggith.

Sharon (06:20):

Okay. There they are. Yeah.

Nicole (06:21):

And their mamas.

Sharon (06:23):

Yeah. Well, Ahinoam was a woman that David met in the wilderness and at that point, his first wife had been taken away from him and married to someone else. (Nicole: Yeah) So I feel that was pretty legit marriage. Right?

Nicole (06:35):

Yeah.

Sharon (06:35):

I mean, he didn't have his wife anymore at all. So he marries Ahinoam. We've already talked about how I feel about him marrying Abigail, Right? And then Maacah was the daughter of a local king and, yeah, political. And I suspect most of them after that were political. Some kind of an alliance that would mean peace between nations.

Nicole (06:52):

Strengthen his kingdom or something.

Sharon (06:54):

Right.

Nicole (06:54):

And I think, wasn't the daughter of the local king, wasn't she beautiful?

Sharon (06:58):

Probably.

Nicole (06:58):

Cause I remember it describes

Sharon (07:00):

A princess.

Nicole (07:00):

Yeah. But it describes Absalom as being incredibly handsome.

Sharon (07:04):

Well, that's true.

Nicole (07:04):

So I wonder if he took after his mom.

Sharon (07:05):

So probably his mama was gorgeous too.

Nicole (07:08):

Yeah. They had good genes. So interesting. So yeah. I don't know about these guys, but they were his first four, so maybe, you know?

Sharon (07:13):

Yeah. So he probably knew them best.

Nicole (07:14):

I would think so.

Sharon (07:15):

That's, what I thought . So my guess is that early on he was more engaged with them because of the novelty of being a dad too.

Nicole (07:20):

Oh sure. Yeah.

Sharon (07:21):

You know with your first born, you're like, Wooo! A child! And also knowing they were most likely to follow in his footsteps. So we read a lot about Amnon and Absalom particularly, and their sad fates because they're in the line for the throne. Last week we read the Prophet Nathan's prophecy that there would be rebellion and heartache in David's own household because of his great sin. And we are gonna see this play out terribly. There are several scenes to look at in the sad part of our story. David was totally forgiven, yes, but the Bible warns us that the sins of the father are visited on their children. When we sin, they see it. They often respond in negative ways by their imitating it or walking away in disgust. It's not good. (Nicole: Mm-hmm) You know, it's not so much that God makes them sin, it's just that when we sin, our children are likely to repeat that sin.

Nicole (08:09):

Cause they're watching us.

Sharon (08:10):

Yes, they are.

Nicole (08:11):

And they model their lives after what we do.

Sharon (08:12):

I can remember one time being really irritated with the girls because they hadn't walked the dog when I got home after being exhausted myself. (Nicole: Yeah) And their excuse was an excuse I had all the time, Mom, I was busy. I was busy doing good things. Right?

Nicole (08:28):

Right. Oh yeah.

Sharon (08:29):

Where the poor dog needed help. Right? But where did they get that from? Where did they get them from? Because one of the besetting sins in the Gamble household that Ray and Sharon both are guilty of is getting out of doing unpleasant things by excusing it with busyness. We're good at that. We're still good at that, sadly. So there's a sin that the girls have seen us do, not wanting to do some tasks and, and kind of hiding under the cloak of busyness.

Nicole (08:59):

Right.

Sharon (09:00):

That I saw them live it out. It's not fun to watch your kids do what you did, do.

Nicole (09:06):

Oh no it isn't. Even with little, I know. Well, even my little ones, they'll say a phrase and I'll go, where did she learn that? Like, Oh, I say that all the time.

Sharon (09:12):

I say it, rats.

Nicole (09:13):

I say that all the time. And she just picks it up. And it may not even be a bad phrase. It's just something that she says, or they'll sigh a certain way. And I'm like, I make that sound. Children are watching.

Sharon (09:23):

Exactly. They're watching. So the sins of the fathers are visited on the children.

Nicole (09:27):

Yes.

Sharon (09:27):

Because that's the natural way it is.

Nicole (09:28):

It is. It's the environment they grew up in. Well, let's start with Amnon. So Amnon is his firstborn son. And, we have Absalom, which is his half brother, cause they all have different moms. And among them is Tamar, who is a half sister to Amnon, but a full sister to Absalom. So they have the same mom.

Sharon (09:47):

All right.

Nicole (09:47):

So Tamar is this beautiful princess in the palace, David's daughter. And, I'm not sure how it started, but Amnon becomes completely obsessed with Tamar and she must be beautiful, I don't know, but he starts lusting after her.

Sharon (09:59):

Well, Absalom's sister, probably. Yeah.

Nicole (10:02):

Yeah. Just kind of, Oh, they live in the palace together, seeing each other. But he becomes completely obsessed with her. And he devises this scheme to get her alone by pretending to be sick and then asking her to come and care for him. And when the servants are gone, he asks her to lie with him. And she says, No, she refused and tells him how wrong this would be. But Amnon doesn't listen, and ends up raping her. It's awful. And afterward it says in the text that now he hated her and tries to send her away. So after all that, just like, it's?

Sharon (10:31):

Unbelievable.

Nicole (10:32):

So she begs him not to send her away and to try to make it right by marrying her, which that doesn't sound lovely for her. But because, you know, now she's defiled and this leaves her with no respect and few options in this time and place in history.

Sharon (10:45):

So sad.

Nicole (10:45):

It's awful. But he refuses. So we pick up this terrible story in 2 Samuel 13 verse 19.

Sharon (10:51):

Alrighty.

Nicole (10:52):

Where we find Tamar. "But now Tamar tore her robe and put ashes on her head. And then with her face in her hands, she went away crying. Her brother Absalom saw her and asked, Is it true that Amnon has been with you? Well, my sister keep quiet for now since he's your brother. Don't worry about it. So Tamar lived as a desolate woman in her brother Absalom's house. When King David heard what had happened he was very angry. And though Absalom never spoke to Amnon about this, he hated Amnon deeply because of what he had done to his sister." Sharon, what do you think of Absalom and David's responses?

Sharon (11:29):

Oh my goodness. Well, first of all, there's a coverup going on here. Don't talk about it.

Nicole (11:34):

Yeah.

Sharon (11:34):

He's, you know, we gotta keep this in the family. I tell you what, Nicole, so much damage is done with family secrets.

Nicole (11:40):

Oh yeah.

Sharon (11:41):

Just so much damage. And look, it didn't do any good. We all know about it now anyways.

Nicole (11:44):

No. Right.

Sharon (11:45):

Absalom did treat Tamar right in that he gave her a place to live.

Nicole (11:50):

Right.

Sharon (11:51):

You know? So I guess that part was nice. But David's anger, I'm glad he was angry. He did nothing. (Nicole: Mm-hmm) He did nothing (Nicole: Mm-hmm) other than be angry. That doesn't say that Absalom was disciplined in any way.

Nicole (12:04):

Right. Or even that David talked to him.

Sharon (12:05):

Right. Or that he told him, you've gotta make this right.

Nicole (12:08):

Right. Yeah.

Sharon (12:09):

So, it was just like, Oh, that was awful. Shhh, let's be quiet about it. (Nicole: Mm-hmm) Which is a terrible way.

Nicole (12:14):

I know.

Sharon (12:15):

To treat. So, and Absalom didn't speak with Amnon then, but he festered, he festered, that bitterness was there.

Nicole (12:23):

Yes.

Sharon (12:24):

I suspect with Tamar living in his home, a disgraced woman due to no fault of her own, kept him constantly angry.

Nicole (12:30):

Oh.

Sharon (12:31):

Because he saw her all the time.

Nicole (12:32):

Right.

Sharon (12:32):

And this was a beautiful princess who could have had a romantic relationship with someone in a happy life.

Nicole (12:37):

Right. And everything was done.

Sharon (12:41):

So to rape her was wicked. To then reject her and not even give her the covering of marriage meant she would be barren and unmarried for life, I guess. I don't know, Nicole.

Nicole (12:48):

I know.

Sharon (12:49):

What would be worse though? I think marrying Amnon sounds hideous too.

Nicole (12:53):

I know.

Sharon (12:53):

Which was the other solution.

Nicole (12:55):

She must have felt desperate. Right, Right.

Sharon (12:56):

But that's what she had asked him to do so her disgrace would be covered. At least she would've had a child.

Nicole (13:01):

Right. That's true.

Sharon (13:02):

So it's all horrible. All of it. There are no good answers. (Nicole: No) There just aren't. Anyways, two years later, Absalom is still angry. And that anger has hardened into such a hatred that he plots to kill his brother. Instead of dealing with it rationally. See what happens when you hide things? They build.

Nicole (13:19):

Oh, it's awful.

Sharon (13:20):

So he invites all the king's sons to a feast along with King David who declines to go, which also must have ticked Absalom off. Dad, I'm having a feast. He won't even come to my own feast. (Nicole: Right) Anyway, at the feast, he commands his men to kill Amnon. And they do. It's horrifying. Word travels back to David, and as per usual, it gets garbled. (Nicole: Mm-hmm) The first message is that all David's sons were killed. But of course it was just Amnon.

Nicole (13:47):

Right, Right.

Sharon (13:48):

But let's just pause, just Amnon. I mean, any death is horrible. Murder's worse. And Amnon was David's firstborn son, heir to the throne. And he was killed by his brother. (Nicole: Yeah) Who was probably second in line to the throne at this point, as there's no mention of Daniel, Abigail's son again.

Nicole (14:04):

Yeah.

Sharon (14:05):

So they think that he must have died early on.

Nicole (14:07):

Oh. (Sharon: So yeah) That's sad.

Sharon (14:08):

Anyway, let's pick up the story as the remaining sons come home from the feast that turned into a murder.

Nicole (14:15):

Goodness.

Sharon (14:16):

Good gravy. So I'm reading now from 2 Samuel 13:35-39. "Look, Jonadab told the king, There they are now, the king's sons are coming just as I said. The sons arrived weeping and sobbing and the king and all his servants wept bitterly with them. And David mourned many days for his son, Amnon. Absalom fled to his grandfather, Taimai, son of Ammihud, the king of Geshur. He stayed there in Geshur for three years. And King David now reconciled to Amnon's death, longed to be reunited with his son, Absalom.

Nicole (14:50):

Oh.

Sharon (14:50):

So Nicole, talk to me about David's responses here.

Nicole (14:53):

Yeah. He goes through a whole range of emotions. I mean, obviously at first he's completely devastated. They're all mourning and weeping. He lost his firstborn son, his heir, his hopes, he probably poured most of his fatherly attention to his firstborn son.

Sharon (15:06):

He did.

Nicole (15:06):

And now he's dead and he was killed by his brother.

Sharon (15:08):

I know.

Nicole (15:09):

Just, and all his other sons witnessed this, like, what a terrible thing to have in your family.

Sharon (15:13):

Horrifying.

Nicole (15:14):

Just awful.

Sharon (15:15):

Yeah.

Nicole (15:15):

So I do think it's interesting that, you know, his son fled and he was gone for three years and then it said that, and King David, now reconciled to Amnon's death. So I wonder if it took him those three years to reconcile it.

Sharon (15:27):

Probably did. And you know, Nathan had told David this would happen, and so David's not only grieving the death of his firstborn son. He's grieving his role in it.

Nicole (15:37):

Oh, that's right. (Sharon: Right?) Yeah.

Sharon (15:39):

That his dysfunction has created some dysfunction too.

Nicole (15:44):

These are his consequences. Yeah. Oh, so he must have been feeling pretty low. But he says he wants to be reunited with his son Absalom. So maybe he's looking to start to like heal his family again and patch it back together.

Sharon (15:54):

Yes.

Nicole (15:54):

You know?

Sharon (15:55):

Yes, yes, yes, yes. So he finally is trying to get it back together.

Nicole (15:59):

Yeah.

Sharon (15:59):

You're right. You're right. You're right.

Nicole (16:01):

Well, the story continues to get worse, unfortunately, Sharon.

Sharon (16:04):

Oh, great.

Nicole (16:06):

Just as we were hoping for that nice reconciliation.

Sharon (16:08):

Yes, yes, yes.

Nicole (16:09):

So the story continues now five years after that terrible thing was done to Tamar. And Joab, who is David's nephew, can see how much David wants to see Absalom again. And so he cooks up this wild scheme to have this wise woman come and pretend to mourn and try to get David to go see Absalom and to even see Absalom in a different light. It's kind of a similar way to what Nathan did.

Sharon (16:30):

Another story.

Nicole (16:30):

Story, yeah, to get David to see his own sin with Bathsheba.

Sharon (16:33):

David must have been most manipulated by stories.

Nicole (16:36):

Like, another story. But it must have been what spoke to David. So.

Sharon (16:41):

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

Nicole (16:42):

So finally David tells Joab to go and get Absalom and bring him back to Jerusalem. But he tells him that Absalom is not allowed to come into David's presence. He can just live in town.

Sharon (16:51):

Oh for crying out loud.

Nicole (16:52):

So there's awkward, like, okay.

Sharon (16:52):

You know, let's think, family. How does that make you feel as the son? (Nicole: Yeah) My daddy doesn't wanna see me.

Nicole (16:58):

Right. You can go back to Jerusalem, but you cannot come into my presence. So he's back in Jerusalem. So after a little bit more time of Absalom trying to convince his cousin Joab to speak to David on his behalf again, and then he sets fire to Joab's field when he wouldn't help him. So a little,

Sharon (17:12):

Okay.

Nicole (17:12):

So it's a lot of family drama going on here again.

Sharon (17:13):

Drama again.

Nicole (17:15):

Absalom is finally allowed to see King David, and they seem to be reconciled. But immediately after the end of chapter 14 where it says Absalom was bowing before David and David was kissing him, the very next chapter, is all about Absalom's rebellion and how he starts hiring bodyguards and gets chariots and horses. And he starts campaigning hard for himself as king!

Sharon (17:37):

Good grief.

Nicole (17:37):

So he's going through the town and he's telling people, Oh no, no, don't bow to me. And he's, you know, kissing their hands and tells them, you know, tell me all your troubles and oh, if I was your judge, I could solve this problem, make it right for you.

Sharon (17:48):

The consummate politician.

Nicole (17:50):

Oh, such a politician.

Sharon (17:51):

Kissing babies.

Nicole (17:51):

Yes. I thought the same thing when I read this. Oh. And to boot, he's incredibly handsome the, the scriptures say. And he has this gorgeous hair that he only cuts once a year, and when they cut it, there's five pounds worth of hair afterward.

Sharon (18:03):

What? Five pounds.

Nicole (18:04):

So, I mean, he's got nice thick hair apparently.

Sharon (18:06):

And evidently that that is attractive (Nicole: Yes) to people back in those days for men to have thick, curly hair.

Nicole (18:12):

Isn't that so funny that they note that he cuts it once a year. Like five pounds of hair. That's a lot.

Sharon (18:16):

Wow.

Nicole (18:16):

But anyways.

Sharon (18:17):

So he's glad handing everyone while he struts around looking pretty handsome.

Nicole (18:20):

Oh yeah.

Sharon (18:21):

Where David's old at this point and also (Nicole: Oh right) He's kind of been disgraced. He's trying to be a good king still, but.

Nicole (18:26):

Yeah. And all those troubles have probably really worn on him. Like it ages you.

Sharon (18:30):

My goodness. Yes it does. So you've got the strong, vibrant heir to the throne saying if I were king now.

Nicole (18:36):

Prancing around, Oh yeah, whipping that hair around.

Sharon (18:37):

Goodness.

Nicole (18:38):

But all this works, all of his prancing around works, because after four years of this, it says that he stole the hearts of the people of Israel. So Absalom's little schemes are working.

Sharon (18:47):

Wow. And David doesn't even know about this, evidently.

Nicole (18:50):

No, he doesn't. Nope.

Sharon (18:50):

He has no idea what his son is doing.

Nicole (18:52):

No, cause I mean, so what happens next shows that David had no idea. So at this time he asked David if he can go and make a sacrifice somewhere, but instead he secretly stirs up a rebellion against his father. Word finally gets back to David that the people are starting to call Absalom the king. So David and all his household flee the palace, except for ten of David's concubines that he leaves to take care of the place. Shortly after that, Absalom sets up tents on top of the palace roof and proceeds to sleep with all ten of his father's concubines. Therefore, showing the people of Israel that he cannot be reconciled to David, and that they really should back him as king.

Sharon (19:27):

Oh my goodness. He's claimed them.

Nicole (19:28):

He's claimed them. He's claimed his father's palace.

Sharon (19:31):

This thing with women. Honest to Pete! That's awful.

Nicole (19:32):

These poor women. Oh yeah. And that was said, that was said to David.

Sharon (19:35):

Yeah, it was. Nathan said that.

Nicole (19:35):

Didn't Nathan say that? (Sharon: Yep) That someone else will sleep with your wives. So right here we show a fulfillment of that.

Sharon (19:41):

Wow.

Nicole (19:42):

Just crazy. So finally, finally, Sharon, we get to the big battle.

Sharon (19:46):

Oh boy.

Nicole (19:46):

David's men are fighting bravely for David, saying that he is worth more than 10,000 of them. So he still has all these loyal men that love him.

Sharon (19:53):

Yes. Yeah. That are like, so they fled Jerusalem, but then they've turned to fight.

Nicole (19:56):

They've turned to fight and tried to reclaim his palace and his claim of king.

Sharon (20:02):

Wow.

Nicole (20:02):

Absalom's men are fighting. And then in all this chaos, Absalom is riding along on his mule and he gets his hair, that beautiful hair, caught in a tree and his mule keeps on going. And then Absalom is left there dangling in the air by his hair from the tree.

Sharon (20:17):

Talk about humiliating.

Nicole (20:18):

Yes. So that gorgeous hair was his undoing.

Sharon (20:21):

It sure was. Oh wow.

Nicole (20:23):

And so Joab, his cousin, who he burned his field, told the men they should have killed Absalom instead of leaving him dangling there. But none of them wanted to kill the king's son.

Sharon (20:31):

Well, you know how David gets when you kill anointed people.

Nicole (20:34):

Yeah. Right. We saw it happen with Saul.

Sharon (20:35):

Yeah. Yeah.

Nicole (20:35):

So Joab goes over and stabs him three times in the heart, and then his armor bearers finish the job.

Sharon (20:41):

Good gravy.

Nicole (20:42):

What a way to die.

Sharon (20:43):

I know.

Nicole (20:44):

Oh, it's awful.

Sharon (20:45):

Yeah, yeah, yeah. Wow, wow. Wow.

Nicole (20:47):

We'll pick up this lovely tale. I'm gonna read in the scriptures now.

Sharon (20:50):

Okay.

Nicole (20:50):

2 Samuel 18:33-19:8, "So the king was overcome with emotion. He went up to the room over the gateway and burst into tears. And then he cried, Oh, my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom, if only I had died instead of you. Oh Absalom, my son. My son." Oh, you can just hear his sadness.

Sharon (21:12):

He's just weeping. Yes.

Nicole (21:13):

He's so broken.

Sharon (21:14):

And even though this is the son that had deceived him, slept with his concubines and ran him outta Jerusalem.

Nicole (21:20):

Yes. And here he is still mourning him.

Sharon (21:23):

Yeah. Oh, David.

Nicole (21:25):

"So word soon reached Joab that the king was weeping and mourning for Absalom. As all the people heard of the king's deep grief for his son the joy of that day's victory was turned into deep sadness." (So David was winning the battle. I think I forgot to mention it.)

Sharon (21:41):

Oh, so David wins.

Nicole (21:42):

David was winning. And then Absalom gets stuck in a tree. (Sharon: Yeah) "They crept back into the town that day as though they were ashamed and had deserted in battle."

Sharon (21:50):

All those poor soldiers. They were defending David and now they feel like jerks.

Nicole (21:54):

Yeah. Right. Because his son died and he's devastated. Isn't this awful?

Sharon (21:57):

Yeah.

Nicole (21:58):

"The king covered his face with his hands and kept on crying, Oh my son Absalom. Oh, Absalom. My son. My son. Then Joab went to the king's room and said to him, We saved your life today and the lives of your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your concubines. Yet you act like this, making us feel ashamed of ourselves. You seem to love those who hate you and hate those who love you. You have made it clear today that your commanders and troops mean nothing to you. It seems that if Absalom had lived and all of us had died, you'd be pleased. Now go out there and congratulate your troops for, I swear by the Lord that if you don't go, if you don't go out, not a single one of them will remain here tonight. Then you'll be worse off than ever before."

Sharon (22:36):

So Joab was related to David, right?

Nicole (22:38):

He was. He was a nephew. Yeah. That's how he has the gall to go up and say this to him.

Sharon (22:43):

I know. It's like, get out there and tell the troops they did a good job.

Nicole (22:46):

Yeah. I keep waiting for the sword to like slice Joab. But I think it's because he is his nephew. He's allowed to. "So the king went out and took his seat at the town gate and the news spread throughout the town that he was there. Everyone went to him."

Sharon (22:58):

Okay. So finally David does the right thing.

Nicole (23:01):

Finally does the right thing. Oh, Sharon, this must have been so hard for David to go back out there after this awful loss. It would've been so easy to understand at this point if David had just up and quit, you know, gone back to his palace and cried for his son. But, you know, gave up on a loving God and a loving life and just found a hole to crawl into.

Sharon (23:19):

Right. Right. I mean, how much could one man take?

Nicole (23:21):

I know.

Sharon (23:22):

Right? Right. And yet, wow!

Nicole (23:25):

He doesn't.

Sharon (23:25):

He doesn't. Talk about suffering, for all that David was a man after God's own heart, he surely had his share of troubles, didn't he?

Nicole (23:32):

He certainly did.

Sharon (23:32):

He really did. Some of his own making. But it still hurts, especially if you know you're in some way responsible for the mess, which he was. Although, you know, Amnon and Absalom will have to answer for their own actions. They can't point point to David and blame it all on him at the judgment seat. We all answer to God for our own actions. We don't get to blame our parents.

Nicole (23:50):

No. No.

Sharon (23:51):

Which actually kind of is, was a relief to me when I was taking on too much guilt from my children's actions.

Nicole (23:56):

Oh yeah.

Sharon (23:57):

God said to me, They're not gonna be allowed to blame you. They're gonna have to stand on their own two feet and tell me why they made the choices they made.

Nicole (24:06):

Wow.

Sharon (24:07):

And I thought, okay, that's right. No matter what our background is, we still have choices. (Nicole: Right) And Absalom and Amnon chose very poorly.

Nicole (24:14):

Right.

Sharon (24:15):

And they're held responsible for that. So anyway, David keeps that steadfast heart of love for God.

Nicole (24:24):

Yes.

Sharon (24:24):

Even now.

Nicole (24:25):

Even now.

Sharon (24:26):

Even now. So we're gonna read one last Psalm as we close that showcases this beautifully and highlights that there's just never a time when David isn't turning to God either in remorse and repentance, thanksgiving and joy, or in this case a lament over his son. David always went to God.

Nicole (24:45):

He did.

Sharon (24:45):

That's the bottom line. He was no great shakes in terms of living the perfect life. I mean, Joseph, if you wanna look at the good guy in the Bible, Joseph was much tidier than David.

Nicole (24:56):

Right.

Sharon (24:56):

Or, Daniel, Daniel's another great guy.

Nicole (24:58):

Oh yeah.

Sharon (24:58):

David's full of all these faults.

Nicole (25:00):

Right.

Sharon (25:01):

But his heart always went to God.

Nicole (25:04):

He did.

Sharon (25:04):

He just did.

Nicole (25:06):

Oh! Well, we're gonna be reading from Psalm 3. As usual, although in the (New Living Translation), the word interlude is used, we use Selah.

Sharon (25:15):

Of course we do.

Nicole (25:15):

Of course we have to. And that shows us where we're supposed to stop and think about the words. So we'll read until a Selah, and then stop and think about it together. So I'll start. Psalm 3, A Psalm of David Regarding the Time David Fled from His Son Absalom. "Oh Lord, I have so many enemies. So many are against me. So many are saying God will never rescue you. Selah" So it almost seems like David has a little bit of PTSD in this first section. (Sharon: Uhhuh) I mean, how many times has he fled from his enemies throughout his life and here he is again (Sharon: Yes) being pursued by enemies and it's his own son.

Sharon (25:57):

Must have been devastating for him.

Nicole (25:59):

Yeah. So broken heart right here.

Sharon (26:00):

Yep. And also the people saying, no one's gonna rescue you. You know? So trying to make him feel like there's no hope.

Nicole (26:07):

Yeah. He's not getting encouragement at this point. It's just him and God.

Sharon (26:10):

Nope.

Nicole (26:10):

He's just telling him.

Sharon (26:11):

But he's telling God how he's feeling again.

Nicole (26:13):

He is.

Sharon (26:13):

God, I've got enemies again.

Nicole (26:15):

They're saying, You're not gonna rescue me. And here I am.

Sharon (26:19):

Yeah. So we just sit with that for a while (Nicole: Yeah) in the Psalm like, okay, there are times when we're gonna feel it's hopeless. What should we do in those times? Tell God we feel it's hopeless.

Nicole (26:28):

Yeah. He's the only safe place for our grief and our sorrows like that.

Sharon (26:32):

Okay. Next little section. But, this beautiful word, but, "But you oh Lord, are a shield around me. You are my glory. The one who holds my head high. I cried out to the Lord and he answered me from his holy mountain. Selah" Okay. So no matter what they're saying to him, no matter what the circumstances are, he's gonna declare the truth of the moment. God is a shield around him. (Nicole: Yes) Nothing touches David unless God allows it. My goodness, David should have been slaughtered half a dozen times.

Nicole (27:05):

Oh, I know.

Sharon (27:05):

Goliath, I mean, you know, to start with.

Nicole (27:08):

Maybe the lion that, he was, you know, defending, his sheep from.

Sharon (27:11):

The lion, when he was-- all those times.

Nicole (27:13):

He could have been killed many times over.

Sharon (27:14):

But God's been a shield around David. (Nicole: Yeah) And what God allows in is the only thing that's gonna get in. It's a shield otherwise. And I remember that too myself when I get nervous, you know, I'm shielded. The only things that are gonna hurt me are things that God allows for a greater purpose. (Nicole: Yeah) and so then he keeps going, You were my glory, the One who holds my head high, David is not gonna slump. (Nicole: Mm-hmm) he's gonna hold his head high and say, You are my glory. And basically, you know, whether I'm restored or not, the glory isn't in being king. You're my glory.

Nicole (27:47):

Oh, that's so good.

Sharon (27:48):

You, you. So there's that steadfast heart for God. But as it turns out, I cried out to the Lord and he answered me from his Holy mountain.

Nicole (27:56):

Bonus!

Sharon (27:56):

Yay!

Nicole (27:58):

Wow. So the next part he says, "I lay down and slept, and yet I woke up in safety for the Lord was watching over me. I am not afraid of 10,000 enemies who surround me on every side. Arise, Oh Lord, rescue me my God. Slap all my enemies in the face. Shatter the teeth of the wicked. Victory comes from You. Oh Lord, may You bless your people, Selah." Oh, he remembers who his God is.

Sharon (28:25):

He does.

Nicole (28:26):

I love seeing him. He goes, he tells in his heart and how devastated he is, he sits in it. And then he remembers what God did for him. And then he praises God for who he is.

Sharon (28:35):

And he even sleeps.

Nicole (28:36):

And he sleeps in the midst of all of that turmoil. And he's fleeing from his son Absalom again and heartbreak.

Sharon (28:43):

Yeah, yeah. And he's got all these wives and most of concubines with him that he's gotta protect. And yet he goes to sleep because he remembers who God is.

Nicole (28:50):

Yes. And God comforts and protects him.

Sharon (28:52):

His steadfast heart always, always, always went to the Lord.

Nicole (28:57):

It did.

Sharon (28:57):

Except for that one little year until Nathan came and talked to him about it. So. That's pretty good.

Nicole (29:01):

Yeah.

Sharon (29:02):

So, so that's why God loved David, not cause he did things right. He loved David because his heart was soft towards Him.

Nicole (29:11):

Mmmm, it always came back to Him.

Sharon (29:12):

Yeah. Yeah. Well, let's pray. Father, give us steadfast hearts. Help us to run to you every single time there's trouble. Help us to run to you when life is good. Lord, we wanna abide with you to be close to you always to walk through life with you beside us, shielding, guiding, protecting, showing us the path for our feet. Thank you, Father, that you care about the heart. Give us open hearts to you, Lord. Steadfastly loving you all the days of our lives. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Nicole (29:53):

Amen. I surely hope and pray that I can, like David, still be praying and writing songs and trusting God when I am old and gray. We've enjoyed walking through this amazing man's life with you this season, watching God work in David's life. Watching his steadfast heart despite obstacles, has strengthened our own walks. We hope it has yours as well. Next week we're going to be dressed in red and green and ringing Christmas bells. Sharon and I are so excited for Episode 93, A Simple Selah Christmas. We want to talk about how keeping it simple will help make Christmas a happier time of year for all. I'll be sharing Mom Hints and Sharon will be sharing Hints for the Grownups as we talk through the meaning of Christmas and how to fight through the distractions that abound in order to actually enjoy the season. Please join us. In the meantime, would you consider giving a Christmas gift to this ministry? Podcasts cost money. We pay for our landing platform. We pay for every picture we use. We help with the editing expenses both in the studio and our own transcripts. Would you help us this year? Go to SweetSelah.org/donations and write Podcast Partner in the comments. We'd really appreciate it. See you next week as we explore A Simple Selah Christmas.

Speaker 1 (31:08):

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