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Shock and Awe

The phrase was coined in the 1990s, but flashed across the world when the night skies of Bagdad blazed in March 2003 as a massive aerial bombardment launched the second Gulf War. According to one report more than 600 news reports used *shock and awe* in the first week of the war. The idea of *shock and awe* is to launch an attack so massive and overwhelming that the enemy would be demoralized and overwhelmed, and so the conflict would be brief. The first phase of that war was completed in just over five weeks.



We know war is not the only cause of feelings of being overwhelmed and demoralized. Other causes, just for starters,

- too many demands
- too much stress
- conflict
- health problems
- death of someone you love
- financial problems
- loss of a relationship
- evil in the world

What do we do? How do we cope? How do we overcome those feelings? How do we, as one writer phrased it, move from being overwhelmed to overflowing?

God created us as physical, spiritual, emotional and social beings. To move from being overwhelmed, and also to prevent it, we need to take care of ourselves in each aspect.

- do our best to be healthy physically and emotionally,
- watch out for and cut out taking on more than we should,
- invest in our relationships,
- and, we don't just assume it, make sure we are spiritually fit.



The thing we have that those who are not believers don't have is God. God is "a great and awesome God" (Deuteronomy 7:2). He is "the great, the mighty and the awesome God" (Nehemiah 9:32). As Jeremiah wrote, "Ah, Sovereign LORD, you have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and outstretched arm. Nothing is too hard for you" (32:17). Taking you through and out of being overwhelmed and demoralized is not too hard for God. So, you can join King David in his praise Psalm of confidence in God,

"Hear my cry, God; give Your attention to my prayer. From the end of the earth I call to You when my heart is faint; lead me to the rock that is higher than I. For You have been a refuge for me, a tower of strength against the enemy" (Psalm 61:1-3).

When your heart grows faint, when you feel like you are fainting away, are overwhelmed, pray to God who is your refuge and strength to take you through, to lift you up into His presence as a solid refuge. In Psalm 18 David declared,

"The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my savior, my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge; my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold" (2).

So,

- Come to God in prayer, always keep in touch with God.
- Read, study and apply the truth of God's word.
- Make sure you keep current with God in both dealing with sin and praising Him for His faithfulness and blessings.
- Set and live by Godly, heavenly priorities.
- Stay in touch with Christian friends, develop meaningful relationships.
- Share with and ask Christians you know and trust to pray for you, with you, walk with you.

When David was on the run from Saul, feeling weak, overwhelmed, he called out to God. He said "I declare my trouble before [God]" as he asked God to rescue him. He closed that Psalm with confidence, telling God, "You will look after me" (Psalm 142).

God *will* look after you.

Pastor Lyle