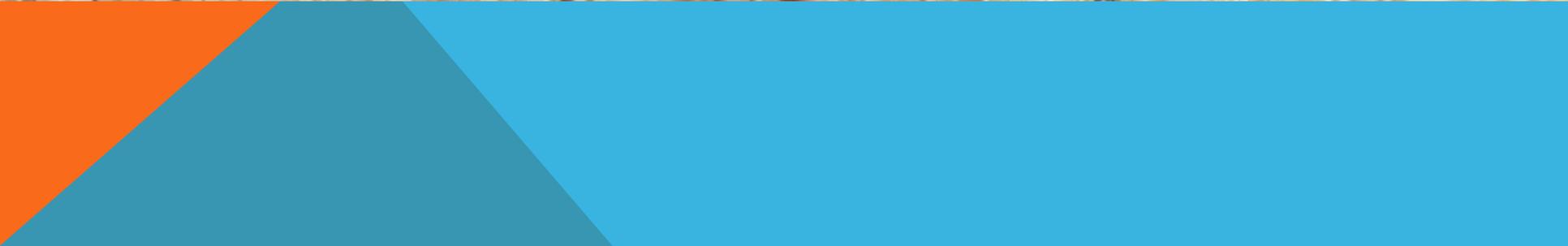


A small green seedling with two leaves is growing out of a hole in the sand. The sand is light-colored and textured. The seedling is positioned on the right side of the frame. The background is a close-up of the sand.

GROWING THROUGH OUR CHALLENGES



**TODAY: WHEN WE FEEL
OVERWHELMED**

PSALM 143

PSALM 143

LORD, hear my prayer, listen to my cry for mercy; in your faithfulness and righteousness come to my relief.

² Do not bring your servant into judgment, for no one living is righteous before you.

³ The enemy pursues me, he crushes me to the ground; he makes me dwell in the darkness like those long dead.

⁴ So my spirit grows faint within me; my heart within me is dismayed.

⁵ I remember the days of long ago; I meditate on all your works and consider what your hands have done.

PSALM 143, CONT.

6 I spread out my hands to you; I thirst for you like a parched land.

7 Answer me quickly, LORD; my spirit fails. Do not hide your face from me or I will be like those who go down to the pit.

8 Let the morning bring me word of your unfailing love, for I have put my trust in you. Show me the way I should go, for to you I entrust my life.

9 Rescue me from my enemies, LORD, for I hide myself in you.

PSALM 143, CONT.

**¹⁰ Teach me to do your will,
for you are my God;
may your good Spirit
lead me on level ground.**

**¹¹ For your name's sake,
LORD, preserve my life;
in your righteousness,
bring me out of trouble**

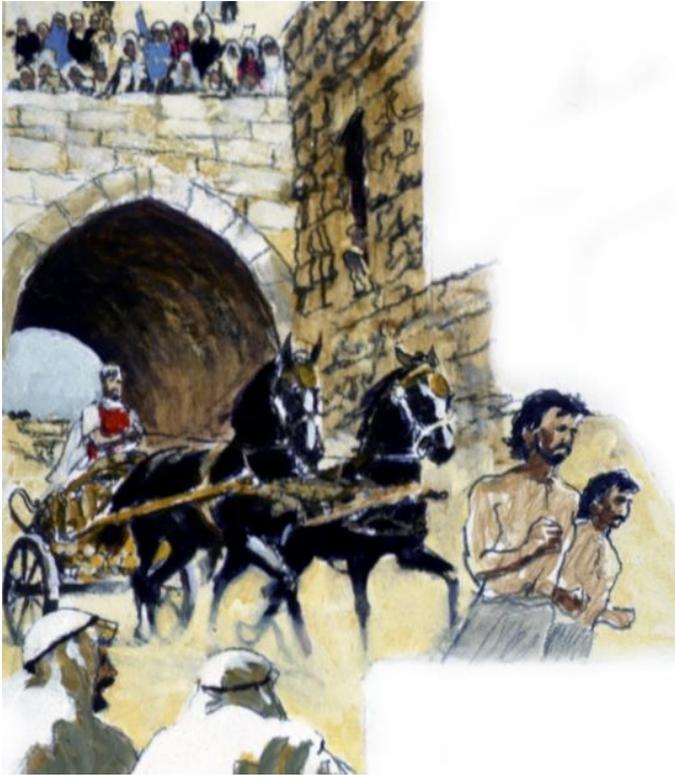
**¹² In your unfailing love,
silence my enemies;
destroy all my foes,
for I am your servant.**



THE TOP TEN STRESSFUL EVENTS OF LIFE, HOLMES RAHE SCALE

1. Death of a spouse
2. Divorce
3. Marital separation
4. Imprisonment
5. Death of family member
6. Serious illness or injury
7. Dismissal from work
8. Marriage reconciliation
9. Retirement
10. Serious illness of a family member
11. Next is: Pregnancy, intimacy issues, new family member, serious money problems, death of friend.
12. On their scale, 150+ points is serious, can bring anxiety and depression. The average expat scores 300+

THE CIRCUMSTANCE OF THE PSALM



David's Stressors

- Absalom's rebellion
- His life in danger
- His other sons in danger
- The fate of the nation
- Financial need
- Hiding again in the wilderness
- "My spirit grows faint within me, my heart ... dismayed."

HOW CAN WE BECOME STRONGER WHEN THE MOST DIFFICULT PRESSURES WE CAN IMAGINE HAVE DESCENDED UPON US ALL AT ONCE?

- Seek the Intimacy of God's Face
- Seek the Strength of His Hand
- Trust the Compassion of His Heart



1. SEEK THE INTIMACY OF GOD'S FACE, 1-6

- “I thirst for You like a parched land ... do not hide Your face from me” (143:6,7)
 - David learned that his strength came from his relationship with the Lord. “He restores my soul.”
 - He avoided the temptation to justify himself. David had many failings as a father.
 - Instead he pleaded for the mercy of God, vs. 2. Intimacy with God demands repentance and confession on our part.
- 

WHAT GOD DISPLAYS IN OUR TIME OF TROUBLE

- **His faithfulness:** He is faithful to His promises
 - **His righteousness:** He always acts in righteousness
 - **His mercy and grace:** He is kind and forgiving
 - **His deliverance:** He saves us from disaster
 - **Himself:** The ultimate revelation of God is not His help but Himself
- 

APPLICATION: WHEN YOU FEEL OVERWHELMED

- Our weakness shows our need of a deeper relationship with God.
- After teaching on the importance of abiding in Him, emphasizing our relationship with Christ, he said, “I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”
- The one who seeks daily the face of God will have supernatural strength to be calm and at peace in the midst of chaos.

2. SEEK THE STRENGTH OF HIS HAND

“Rescue me from my enemies, LORD, for I hide myself in you” (143:9). David asked God for help based on the character of God and upon God’s past displays of His faithfulness.

David asked for...

- Good allies: Good news of hope in the morning. He was specific in the nature and the timing in his request.
- Specific Knowledge: The specific way he should go
- Deeper Knowledge: So he might live the right way

WOULD YOU RATHER HAVE...

- The closeness of God's face or
 - The strength of God's hand?
 - "A wise lover values not so much the gift of the lover, as the love of the giver." Thomas a' Kempis
 - But once we have settled this matter in our heart, we should not hesitate to ask our Heavenly Father for the strength of His hand.
 - Do you believe God is able to help your situation?
- 

3. TRUST THE COMPASSION OF HIS HEART

- David rededicated his life to God: “Teach me to do your will, for you are my God; may your good Spirit lead me on level ground” (Psalm 143:10).
 - Rededication is placing our lives back into the hand of God to be used for His sake, as His servants.
 - How will God use this situation to accomplish His will? The purpose of your life is not to endure the storms, but to bring glory to God.
- 

PRAYING IN JESUS' NAME?

- This phrase is not some magic formula that gives our selfish prayers more power.
- This means to transfer the ownership of all that we have into His name, to be used for His glory.



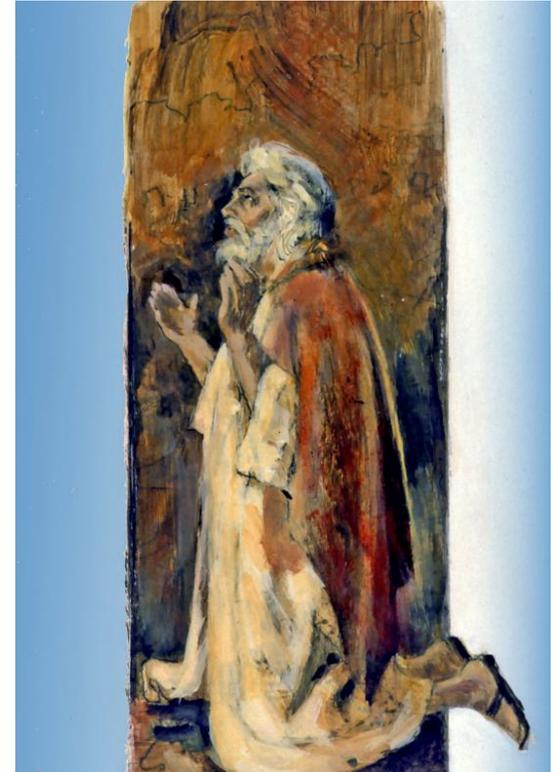
AN EXAMPLE FROM MOSES' LIFE

(Faced with heavy responsibilities)

Moses said to the LORD, “You have been telling me, ‘Lead these people,’ but you have not let me know whom you will send with me...”

The LORD replied, “My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.” Then Moses said to him, “If your Presence does not go with us, do not send us up from here.”

Exodus 33:12-15



WHEN YOU ARE OVERWHELMED...

- Avoid the tendency to blame others for your feelings. Instead take responsibility yourself for your need of the strength that God brings into a life.
 - Seek a deeper relationship with God than you currently have.
 - Bring your needs to God and ask Him to meet them in His way.
 - Recommit your heart and life to Him to live for His glory.
- 