

# Project Runway

## Designer Clothes For Disciples

### Hezekiah: Part II

Written By  
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If you get seasick, you're not going to want to watch *The Perfect Storm*. Loosely based on historical facts, the tossing and turning movie is about the swordfishing boat, the *Andrea Gail*, which heads out at the end of the season into questionable weather waters for one last, hopefully, lucrative catch. With Billy Tyne (George Clooney) at the helm, they land a boatload of fish, but they also find themselves smack dab in the middle of a storm to beat all storms.

Toward the end of the movie, the sea worthy but small fishing boat is pictured in a sea of mammoth, boat-swallowing 100 foot waves. Fearlessly, the crew keeps the engines running as they repeatedly take on the relentless walls of water. After one wave in particular, something interesting happens. Things get quiet as the sea is eerily calm. Looking over the undulating horizon, the men catch a glimpse of it: A break in the clouds with the sun shining in all of its glory. It's one of those God moments when talking stops, when sea-hardened men stand erect, and eyes take in the awesome, soul-stirring sight.

But the break in the storm was short-lived, a harbinger of a wave to end all waves. Seeing the green, foamy water rising up and looming high above them, they turn the ship directly into it for one last ride to possible freedom. Riding it toward the top, they are screaming and cursing, and then, in one fateful moment, it's all over. The sea, their powerful foe, has sent another battered, beleaguered boat to a watery grave.

How can you watch that particular clip and not say to yourself, “You know, that’s looks a lot like a clip from my life.” Can you identify? I can. Just when you had your life in order, just when you were blessed with a catch to end all catches, just when everything in your life fell in perfect order, you found yourself bobbing helplessly in *The Perfect Storm*.

Having been there and done that, I have but one pressing, probing, practical question:

## What Should You Do With Your Perfect Storm? (2 Kings 18-19)

Yeah, what should you do? Run? Hide? Curse? Blame somebody? Blame God? Let fear seize your body? Head to the bar for a shot of warm whiskey? Reach for some Zanax? If you’re hip, like so many think they are in our world, you turn to an acceptable cultic religion like the actor Robert Downey did. After twenty years of a constant flow of drugs, booze, and run-ins with the law, plus a little prison time, Robert turned this “unthinkably surreal” debauched life into a calm sea by tapping into *Pilates*, Eastern philosophy, meditation and Wing Chun Kung Fu. Is that what you should do? Is that what *really* works long-term? Will this *really* enable you to get successfully through your storm, or is it just another wall of water looming above your tiny vessel? I think you know the answer to that if you’ve read a little of the Bible.

King Hezekiah, the king of Judah, is a man worth studying closely in regards to our aforementioned question. He enjoyed a fourteen year co-regency with his father, Ahaz (729-715) before he ruled for eighteen years by himself (715-697 B.C.). His wicked son, Manasseh, co-reigned with him for eleven years (697-686 B.C.). His leadership life shows us in bold relief how to properly face the storms of life. Granted, he was a made of flesh and blood like you and I. Granted, he made his share of mistakes and missteps along his spiritual journey; however, from what we read about him in 2 Kings chapters 18 and 19, this stalwart saint knew how to face the storms of life with grace and godliness.

What storm did God permit to come his way? What wall of water kept threatening to destroy him and his country as well? A storm called Assyria, his saber-rattling foe to his east in what is now modern-day Iraq. Not much has changed in the last 3,000 years, has it? Now, let’s go back in the history of the time and pain the picture of what King Hezekiah faced.

In 745 B.C. a war-monger and skilled Assyrian soldier, Tiglath-pileser (745-727 B.C.), revived his struggling empire and launched it to the zenith of its power. Simplicity and ruthlessness typified his militaristic expansionist plan: Invade and forcibly seize as many surrounding countries as he could with a blitzkrieg format. Really, nothing has changed in the last 3,000 years. ISIS, an uber-radical and blood-thirsty terrorist group in Iraq is working overtime to establish their coveted world caliphate. Nothing is sacred to them. Nobody’s life is precious to them. No form of execution is to tame. They will literally commit any horrific act so long as it advances their blind zeal to realize the final Islamic theocracy. And Israel is, most certainly, in the crosshairs of both of these evil entities, as they have been for millennia.

After subduing Babylon to his west in, and setting himself up as the new ruler named Pulu, General Pileser stomped Syria and northern Palestine into submission in 738 B.C. (As ISIS is presently attempting to do). Those defeated foes who were unfortunate to live through the bloody campaigns were sent to faraway lands, and Assyrians took possession of their properties. Vassal states like Northern Israel had to pay exorbitant amounts of tribute money to keep the Assyrians from obliterating them. Israel’s last king, Hoshea (732-724 B.C.), unwisely withheld these monies when Tiglath-pileser died, and by 722, the General’s son, Shalmaneser V, leveled Israel and their

well-fortified fortress, Samaria, after an unrelenting and brutal three year siege.<sup>1</sup> Sargon II, the predecessor and son of Shalmaneser V, claimed this victory; however, it most likely belonged to Shalmaneser.<sup>2</sup>

King Hezekiah had ruled over Judah for seven years while this storm of the century finally wiped out his brethren to the north. At first, even this godly king caved into the pressure of Assyria by paying tribute monies to them.<sup>3</sup> Yet some twenty years one years later, thinking the geo-political climate was propitious for rebellion, King Hezekiah withheld the tribute money. The Assyrian warlord, Sennacherib (705-681 B.C.), who succeeded Sargon, reacted predictably by sending his massive army to whip Judah into line. By 701 B.C., forty-six Judean cities, many of them fortified, were smoldering ruins. At Lachish, one of Judah's premier fortresses guarding the road up to Jerusalem from the southwest of Jerusalem, some 1,500 skeletal bodies have been uncovered in one deep pit. Found on top of these unfortunate Jewish inhabitants were pig bones, pointing to Sennacherib's policy of doing anything and everything to humiliate his foe. To study ISIS is to realize this menacing methodology is still pervasive in this area of the world, probably instigated by the same demonic foes who stood behind Sennacherib.

Now, I don't just guide you into the deep waters of history for no reason. Far from it. I sail into them with the sole purpose of painting a picture of just how King Hezekiah faced what we'd call The Perfect Storm. All of the key cities around him were summarily defeated, and now Sennacherib's vile, arrogant, abrasive, and cocky emissary Rabshakeh, stood arrogantly outside his main city gate in Jerusalem taunting him and his knee-knocking troops. And he just happens to have a large contingent of well-seasoned, battle-hardened soldiers backing him up, too. Second Kings 18, verse 13 gives us the disturbing historical movie clip.

Speaking in Hebrew so everyone could understand what he said, not in Aramaic which was the customary language of diplomats, Rabshakeh, the Tokyo-Rose-psych-ops mouthpiece of the Assyrian's, taunted his timid enemy, Judah, along with their God. The closing verses of his godless rant pretty much sum up what he had to say:

“But do not listen to Hezekiah when he misleads you, saying, ‘The LORD will deliver us.’<sup>33</sup> Has any one of the gods of the nations delivered his land from the hand of the king of Assyria?<sup>34</sup> Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim, Hena and Ivvah? Have they delivered Samaria from my

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<sup>1</sup> All of this sounds very similar to the tactics of radical Islam. Mark Gabriel's analysis of modern day radical Islam, which finds its basis of belief in the Koran, sounds eerily similar to the tactics of the ancient Assyrians, “Fight against those who (1) believe not in Allah, (2) nor in the Last Day, (3) nor forbid that which has been forbidden by Allah and His Messenger (Muhammad) (4) and those who acknowledge not the religion of truth (i.e., Islam) among the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians), until they pay the Jizyah [tax] with willing submission, and feel themselves subdued” (Surah 9:29, The Noble Quran). At first gland, this verse is a little hard to understand in English, but it will be very clear after I explain it. This verse says Muslims must fight four kinds of people: 1. Those who don't believe in Allah, 2. Those who don't believe in the last day, 3. Those who do things that Allah and Muhammad have forbidden, 4. Those who don't acknowledge Islam as the truth, i.e., ‘people of the Scripture,’ who are Jews and Christians. Muhammad gave people three options: 1. The could accept the message of Islam. 2. The could remain Jews or Christians but pay a special tax (jizyah), which is traditionally levied once a year. 3. They could die. (The phrase ‘and feel themselves subdued’ is much stronger in Arabic than in this English translation. The Arabic word means something like ‘abject subjection.’ It carries the idea of someone cowering in fear before a greater power. If abject subjection is not achieved, then death follows. Mark Gabriel, *Islam And Terrorism* (Lake Mary, Florida: Charisma House, 2002): 73-74.

<sup>2</sup> Yohanan Aharoni and Michael Avi-yonah, *The MacMillan Bible Atlas* (New York, MacMillan Publishing, 1977): 151.

<sup>3</sup> Don't think that a nuclear armed Iran, bathed and deeply committed to radical Islamic world domination theology, will not use this to threaten Israel and demand they pay up or be blown up.

hand? <sup>35</sup> Who among all the gods of the lands have delivered their land from my hand, that the LORD should deliver Jerusalem from my hand?"

Or in other words, "The gods of the other nations couldn't stop our military machine, and yours will be no different. So don't believe anything your weak, mis-informed king has to say."

Rabshakeh forgot one thing. Israel's God was God, and Israel's King was a God-fearing man. Woe to those godless foes of all which is right and honorable when they forget the living God and the power of one man or woman sold out to God and willing to believe in Him no matter how massive the waves. That man in this situation was King Hezekiah.

Facing a storm threatening to reduce his glorious, capital city to rubble, he did what any godly person should do. Second Kings 19 details his right, or should I say, righteous response. Please. Study his life carefully for his actions are then actions any of us should take as we face our own storms. We'll principalize his actions with these statements:

### Get Your Friends Before God (2 Kings 19:1-7)

No. I'm not talking about your godless friends. I'm assuming you have some godly ones, some who walk intimately with Jesus, and some who are His devoted disciples and have a "direct line" to Him. Why is this so important? Simple. You want as many saints before God's holy throne as you can, seeking God's will and protection for you. Just as a ship's Captain wouldn't sail into any squall without a crew, or at least one good, trusted sailor, we shouldn't head into rough seas without a prayer partner.

Watch how the wise King operated when the water was seemingly about to crest over his massive city wall:

<sup>1</sup> And when King Hezekiah heard *it*, he tore his clothes, covered himself with sackcloth and entered the house of the LORD. <sup>2</sup> Then he sent Eliakim who was over the household with Shebna the scribe and the elders of the priests, covered with sackcloth, to Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz. <sup>3</sup> They said to him, 'Thus says Hezekiah, 'This day is a day of distress, rebuke, and rejection; for children have come to birth and there is no strength to *deliver*. <sup>4</sup> Perhaps the LORD your God will hear all the words of Rabshakeh, whom his master the king of Assyria has sent to reproach the living God, and will rebuke the words which the LORD your God has heard. Therefore, offer a prayer for the remnant that is left.' <sup>5</sup> So the servants of King Hezekiah came to Isaiah. <sup>6</sup> Isaiah said to them, 'Thus you shall say to your master, Thus says the LORD, Do not be afraid because of the words that you have heard, with which the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed Me. <sup>7</sup> Behold, I will put a spirit in him so that he will hear a rumor and return to his own land. And I will make him fall by the sword in his own land.'

What's the difference between a person who thinks they are spiritual, and one who really is? What they do when Rabshakeh is screaming outside their city gate. They naturally turn to a godly saint for prayer. Strange, isn't it?

What do political leaders usually do when their facing a formidable, fearless enemy? They call their cabinet, they assemble the heads of the military, they get a threat assessment from the CIA, and they, then, head to the nearest hardened bunker.

How could King Hezekiah have reacted? He could have barked: “Get my Generals assembled! Amass the troops! Position the archers! Beef up those city gates!”

But he did none of these predictable things. He “tore his clothes, [and] covered himself with sackcloth” to show outward mourning, and he immediately went to the holy Temple of God, the center of Israel’s worship, and to the place where God had promised to be in a special, unique way (1 Kings 8:10-11). Would that be your first impulse? Is it your first impulse? Would you think, “I’ve got to go to church, right now”? If you are a military officer with power over countless soldiers, airmen, or sailors, is your first reaction in a crisis to go to God? If you are a politician facing a difficult national decision based on the activities of our enemies, do you spend more time in the Senate chambers discussing our next national move with your colleagues than you do with the living God? When the storm of the century is about to slam into your listing vessel, who is your Isaiah? Who is your godly person with an intimate connection with God?

While at the Temple, Hezekiah tells two key priestly men, Eliakim and Shebna, to tell Isaiah, the prophet of God, about the tidal wave which was about to descend upon them. The King’s request is bathed in humility and steeped in selflessness, “Therefore, offer a prayer for the remnant that is left” (verse 5). That’s all he wants from this trusted friend. A prayer. He really doesn’t even tell the prophet how to pray. He’s so emotionally spent, he’s so speechless as he looks at the storm, he leaves it up to him to pray as he sees fit.

Have you been there ... I mean ... at the bottom of the emotional bucket as the storm beat at your city gate? Was it just after the doctor gave you the unwanted news, just after the police gave you the call in the middle of the night, just after two soldiers stood at your door late one evening with a chaplain, just when you found your child had slipped out of the house ... again, or just when your company started cutting back key positions like yours. Yeah, you’ve probably been there, and I’m sure you know how you asked your “prophet” to pray for you. Most likely it was more open ended than anything, and rightly so.

I remember receiving an emotional call years ago in the middle of the night from two young, highly successful doctors. The husband was a surgeon and the wife a doctor of internal medicine. If anyone could save a life, it should have been these two smart, talented people. However, they were unable to save their firstborn infant daughter who had stopped breathing as she slept between them. Stunned and spent, they called me, their Isaiah for the moment, to come and pray with them as the storm of their lives seemingly washed over them. Believe me, you cannot place a value on the presence of an Isaiah, a friend at a moment of great trial. I’ve had my own Isaiahs over the years so I speak from experience. The prayers of these folks serve as a medicinal balm for your weakened soul. The prayers of these folks bring peace in the chaos by ushering you into the presence of the living God. You never forget them, do you?

Isaiah, who was in tune with God, as godly people are prone to be, didn’t let his spiritually searching king down. His words are the words Christ spoke in another storm “Do not be afraid ....” How comforting. Next he directed the king to the ultimate reality: God would deal with this Assyrian invasion force himself, so the king needed to breathe easy. Everything was under God’s sovereign control.” Again, how comforting.

Isn’t that what you need as the wall of water is approaching your ship? Indeed. You need comfort from one who understands, through Bible study and prayer, that God is on His throne and that everything is going to be all right. Read through Isaiah’s entire prophetic book and you’ll quickly agree with the fact he, above all people, tenaciously held to the biblical belief that God is absolutely, completely, and totally sovereign regardless of how the winds blow upon the sea. Evidence is interwoven throughout his prophecy. Here’s a short sampling:

<sup>1</sup> But now, thus says the LORD, your Creator, O Jacob, And He who formed you, O Israel, Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are Mine! <sup>2</sup> When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; And through the rivers, they will not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be scorched, nor will the flame burn you. <sup>3</sup> For I am the LORD your God, The Holy One of Israel, your Savior ..." (Isaiah 43).

See how God's words here drip with the sweetness of His sovereignty? When, not if, you pass through the waters, He promises to be with you all the way. Comforting. And just what does sovereignty mean, anyway? In his usual helpful style, Pastor Chuck Swindoll offers this insight: "Stop and think about the word 'sovereignty.' There's a smaller word nestled in the heart of it, the word 'reign': sove-reign-ty" (*The Mystery Of God's Will: 77*). Correctly, the skillful pastor underscores the fact that above all things God continually reigns, and because this is true, all storms are under His control, and will ultimately be used to accomplish His magnificent, lofty, and sometimes mysterious purposes.

See how utterly comforting it is to know that a godly person is praying for you? Not only is it comforting to know they are holding your need(s) up before God, seeking His will, they are apt to give you a word of much needed encouragement as they remind you about the unchanging, Rock of Gibraltar-type character of the living God.

So what are you going to do as your storm looms before you? Get a trusted disciple of Jesus Christ to pray for you. I've done it more times than I can remember, and I've always been given enough fuel to make it through the storm without being capsized.

- Looking at a disintegrating marriage? Get a godly friend to pray.
- Looking at a grueling educational track? Get a godly friend to pray.
- Looking at making a tough personnel decision as a leader? Get a godly friend to pray.
- Looking at having to confront a deep-seated sin in the family? Get a godly friend to pray.
- Looking at dealing with a dreaded bully at school? Get a godly friend to pray.
- Looking at how to best raise a special needs child? Get a godly friend to pray.

Should this be the last and final course of action as the white-capped wave appears to be cresting? No. A second step of spiritual people is forever recorded upon the pages of the eternal Scriptures:

### Get Yourself Before God (2 Kings 19:8-19)

Don't just ask people to pray for you whom you know have an active and fruitful prayer life. Pray for yourself. Enter God's throne room by yourself. Get alone with Him, humble yourself, and pour your heart out to Him. Once more, King Hezekiah sets the pace for all would be spiritual sailors.

According to 2 Kings 19, verses 8 through 14, and its parallel passage, Isaiah 37, verse 14, Rabshakeh eventually withdrew from Jerusalem, along with his troops, and went to help Sennacherib at Libnah (which is also a possible location for Lachish, *Bible Knowledge Commentary: 576*). While here he received word that Tirhakah, King of Egypt was coming up from the south to help his ally, Judah. He (or possibly Sennacherib) sent a message to keep the Israelites in Jerusalem, along with their King, from getting too euphoric over the possibility the Assyrians might have to withdraw. In his usual bellicose style he exclaims:

“Do not let your God in whom you trust deceive you saying, ‘Jerusalem will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria’ (2 Kings 19:10).

Or in our vernacular: “You’re not going to get away from us. Never.”

How did King Hezekiah respond to this in-your-face letter? Read on and you’ll see:

<sup>14</sup> Then Hezekiah took the letter from the hand of the messengers and read it, and he went up to the house of the LORD and spread it out before the LORD. <sup>15</sup> Hezekiah prayed before the LORD and said, ‘O LORD, the God of Israel, who are enthroned *above* the cherubim, You are the God, You alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth. You have made heaven and earth. <sup>16</sup> Incline Your ear, O LORD, and hear; open Your eyes, O LORD, and see; and listen to the words of Sennacherib, which he has sent to reproach the living God. <sup>17</sup> Truly, O LORD, the kings of Assyria have devastated the nations and their lands <sup>18</sup> and have cast their gods into the fire, for they were not gods but the work of men’s hands, wood and stone. So they have destroyed them. <sup>19</sup> Now, O LORD our God, I pray, deliver us from his hand that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that You alone, O LORD, are God’ (2 Kings 19).

Believe me, we could do a complete three or four part series just on this amazing prayer alone. But, for our purposes today, I desire to merely point you to three key facets of his prayer. I liken them to the acronym CPR because they breathed life into his tired, wore out body.

First, **C** represents what I’d call *Confession* (2 Kings 19:1). No, I am not talking about confessing sin, either, as valuable as this is. Quite the contrary. After the King spread the vile letter out before God in the Temple, he approached God by speaking openly and honestly about His magnificent divine character. He calls God, LORD. In Hebrew the word “O” isn’t there, only the word LORD, and this word is placed emphatically at the head of the sentence for maximum theological impact. Reading from right to left: *Yahweh Elohim of Israel*.

יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל

Why did he use this dualistic name, viz., Yahweh Elohim? Let’s sift through the evidence to understand the reasons for these title choices.

Yahweh was/is God’s covenantal name, the name of the Abrahamic, Mosaic, and Davidic covenants (Trust me, the references are too numerous to count). By using it throughout his address, he highlighted the fact he knew that God would be, above all things, true to His covenantal word not to totally desert His chosen people (Deuteronomy 4:31; Isaiah 54:10). The root of this name is built on the Hebrew verb “to be,” and, as you’ll remember, it is the very name God gave Moses to give to Israel as His name:

And God said to Moses, ‘I AM WHO I AM,’ and He said, ‘Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you’ (Exodus 3:14).

God's name is built on the verb "to be" to emphasize that He, and He alone, is the God beyond time and space and who is not bound by cause and effect. He is the eternal, timeless One.<sup>4</sup> Since this is all true of His character, since He is in a state of perpetual being and existence, since He is the uncaused One, He is more than equipped to stand with you and assist you as you watch the wave of all waves cresting toward you. Thus, you can trust Him when He speaks through His inspired Word:

The afflicted and the needy seek water in vain, their tongues are parched with thirst. I, the LORD, will answer them; I, the God of Israel, will not forsake them (Isaiah 41:17).

Be brave and steadfast; have no fear or dread of them, for it is the LORD, your God, who marches with you; he will never fail you or forsake you (Deuteronomy 31:6).

I will never forsake you or abandon you (Hebrews 13:5).

You, LORD, will not forsake your people, nor abandon your very own (Psalm 94:14).

Comforting, isn't it?

Think about this pragmatically for a moment. What name do you use when addressing God in a tough, storm of the century situation? Why not boldly approach His glorious throne in the heavenlies (Daniel 7; Hebrews 4:16) with one of His greatest names on your lips, viz., LORD? By respectfully employing this term you are saying you, as a member of the New Covenant secured by Jesus (Jeremiah 30-31; Luke 22:20; 1 Corinthians 11:25; Hebrews 9:15; 12:24), humbly realize that He will most certainly honor this covenant toward you, that He will, based on the covenant, not leave you facing the storm without His powerful presence on the deck of your tossing and turning vessel.

Hezekiah also calls God "the God of Israel." The article in the English text, which is missing in Hebrew, points, no doubt, to the par excellence nature of God. Above all false gods, He, and He alone, is THE God, the one and only God. Once more, Isaiah echoed this timeless truth throughout his book (Isaiah 45:6-7, 18; 46:9-11). Additionally, the fact the article is missing before His name, which is grammatically called anarthrous, simply underscores the character of God as displayed in the uniqueness of this creative name. Wise men appeal, in prayer, to the God of the Scriptures, the great One.

Interestingly enough, His name here, viz., God, in Hebrew is *Elohim*, which points to Him as the sole Creator (Genesis 1:1 where it is first used to identify him). The 'im' ending in Hebrew

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<sup>4</sup> *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*: A final and brief word may be said about the meaning and interpretation of Jehovah/Yahweh. It seems beyond doubt that the name contains the verb h'yâ "to be" (but also see article YHWH). The question is whether or not it is the verb "to be" in the Qal, "He is," or the Hiphil, "He causes to be," a view championed by W. F. Albright. The strongest objection to this latter interpretation is that it necessitates a correction in the reading of the key text in Exo 3:14; "I am that I am." Most likely the name should be translated something like "I am he who is," or "I am he who exists" as reflected by the LXX's ego eimi ho œv. The echo of this is found surely in the NT, Rev 1:8. More than anything perhaps, the "is-ness" of God is expressive both of his presence and his existence. Neither concept can be said to be more important than the other.

is plural but is translated as a singular. Why? Because God is a complex, uncaused unity, a being far beyond our limited cognitive comprehension (Deuteronomy 6:4), and certainly beyond our definitive articulation. Really, who better to create the complexity of the cosmos than one beyond and above the complexity?

Let's push this concept a little further.

We are all contingent beings, who are directly dependent upon everything which has been made to support our lives. The only way, therefore, we, as highly dependent beings could have been crafted is by a Being who was and is non-contingent, a Being who stands transcendent above us in every way. To put it differently, as long as there are contingent, dependent beings in the cosmos, there must be a Being who is non-contingent and independent who set it all in motion and upon which everything rests and finds its meaning. That Being was and is, God. As Dr. Norman Geisler cogently remarks:

Whatever was once contingent will always be contingent; for whatever can come to be is not a necessary Being. A necessary Being cannot come to be; it must ever be and may never not be.<sup>5</sup>

Such is the nature of the God of Genesis 1. He is the Necessary Being we, as contingent Beings, all rely on.

Additionally, we are all the result of cause and effect, and so, too, is everything in our world and cosmos. Philosophically, the law of infinite regress means we cannot go backwards in time with cause and effect forever for there has to be a first cause. But since that which is a cause cannot possibly cause itself, there must be Someone outside of cause and effect, Someone not bound by the laws of cause and effect, who created and started the entire chain of cause and effect we cannot possibly escape. That Being is the complex, personal God who discloses Himself as Elohim in the first verse of the Bible (Genesis 1:1). And because I can study and know him, as well as gain vast amounts of knowledge about a variety of subjects, I can conclude I can know because the One who is the true Knower of all things has given me my cognitive abilities. Truly, the intellectual cannot come from the purely nonintellectual. Even my knowingness points to Him if I'm honest.

What's the practical point then by using this particular facet of God's name? It highlights His ability as the timeless, complex, personal, and infinitely powerful Creator to control all things within His glorious, complicated creation ... even a warmongering Assyrian, even an Assyrian who is doing a number on you right now. What a unique, humbling privilege secured by the person and work of Jesus, the second member of the holy Godhead. Yes, the Creator of the cosmos, the One who powerfully brought order out of chaos, the one who created matter out of nothing is but prayer away and He waits for you to enter into His mysterious and comforting presence by using titles fitting for the King of Kings. Do you? Will you? Do you waltz into His presence while dispensing of the names? Think again. Jesus reminds us how to enter:

“<sup>9</sup> Pray, then, in this way: ‘Our Father who is in heaven, Hallowed be Your name’  
(Matt. 6).

Father. What a wonderful name to use when approaching God as you face a storm. Like a father He waits to help His son or His daughter.

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<sup>5</sup> Norman Geisler, *Christian Apologetics* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1981): 244.

Second, **P** can stand for *Presentation* (2 Kings 19:16-18). Although God is omniscient and knows of your storm's details, He desires that we articulate the storm to Him to show Him we see it and realize we need His assistance. There is no room for saints with stiff upper lips here. Just room for real, open, authentic, transparent people, with real problems, and sometimes frightening fears. Hezekiah was one of those:

“<sup>16</sup>Incline Your ear, O LORD, and hear; open Your eyes, O LORD, and see; and listen to the words of Sennacherib, which he has sent to reproach the living God. <sup>17</sup>Truly, O LORD, the kings of Assyria have devastated the nations and their lands <sup>18</sup> and have cast their gods into the fire, for they were not gods but the work of men's hands, wood and stone. So they have destroyed them” (2 Kings 19).

Was God aware of the exploits of the Assyrians? Yes. Had He heard their taunting and blasphemous words? Yes. But He wanted the King to spell it out to Him for his growth process.

Is this what you do? Do you lay your problem, your issue, your fears, your storm out before God in exacting detail? Or do you just shrug your shoulders and stoically say nothing, while bracing for the worst? Mark King Hezekiah actions well. *God wants you to explain the storm to Him so there is no doubt you are convinced this is something so ominous, so disturbing, so soul-rattling it's beyond your finite control.*

So, go ahead. Present the whole thing to the Lord. Lay the letter, as it were, before Him. He is waiting to hear from you.

Third, **R** could represent *Request*. Don't start here. Many do. God loves to first hear you worship Him through the statement of His great, awe-inspiring names. But when you get here, let your prayer be selfless like King Hezekiah's:

“<sup>19</sup>Now, O LORD our God, I pray, deliver us from his hand that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that You alone, O LORD, are God”(2 Kings 19).

He didn't pray for God to save them and their beautiful city. He did pray for God to save them, as only He could, in such a fashion that the earth, i.e., unbelievers, would know, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that He alone with the LORD and the God. His humility leaves you dumbstruck. With his life is on the line, his culture facing extinction, and all those he holds dear about to be wiped out, he quietly prays for God to act in a way which will benefit worship of Him. That's concept is worth a re-read, don't you think?

Wow. “Is that how I pray?” I ask myself. Is it how you pray?

- Do you pray for what you want God to do for you, or do you pray for what His actions in your behalf will do to bring people to worship around His lofty throne?
- Do you ask for health to be healthy, or so His name will be praised?
- Do you ask for financial stability so you'll benefit, or when people see what He's miraculously done for you they will worship Him without question?
- Do you ask for a miracle with your child so you can have an easier go of it as a family, or do you pray for God to act in such a fashion in your child's life that many will come to know Him intimately?

This is how godly, spiritual people have always prayed (Joshua, Josh. 7:9ff; David, 2 Samuel 7:19-26, Daniel 9:1-19, and Ezra, Ezra 9:5). Are you ready to join them and pray this way as the storm kicks up on the sea of your life?

“Lord no matter what you do in this situation, please, bring glory and honor to yourself.”

That, my friend, is prayer God hears. I really know this is true because this is how Jesus, the King of Kings, prayed:

“<sup>13</sup>Whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son” (John 14).

*The Perfect Storm* eventually slammed into His ship, but He came out the other side. That day His ship resurfaced on the sea of life is called the resurrection. And don't think for a minute that the Father did not get the glory for event. In fact, He's still getting the glory.

At this moment you're possibly facing a wave of monumental proportions. You're tired. You're weary. You might even be frightened. What do you need to do? Do what countless godly believers have done over the years:

- Get your friends before God.
- Get yourself before God.