

Never!

Taken from 2 Kings 18-19

Foundation

Stop and pray, asking God to make your heart teachable before Him. Ask Him what He wants you to learn—and then act on it.



Have you ever known a team who thought they couldn't be beat?

Although my father, King Ahaz, did what was evil in Your sight, I will strive to serve You with my whole heart, Lord, King Hezekiah prayed under his breath. He was only twenty-five years old when he became ruler over Judah, yet he had seen enough to know what paths to avoid. Instead of doing evil, King Hezekiah sought to do what was right in the eyes of the Lord. Immediately, he had set about removing the pagan influences, getting rid of the high places, destroying the sacred stones, and tearing down the Asherah poles (wooden poles dedicated to the Canaanite goddess). Not even Moses' bronze snake was spared when he saw his people worshiping it as an idol!

In all the king did, he followed the Lord, making sure to hold fast to what the Lord had commanded Moses. King Hezekiah even refused to submit to Assyria—the powerful nation to the north that held them in bondage. As Hezekiah trusted in God, God rewarded him by granting him success and boldness in everything.

I saw King Shalmaneser of Assyria lay siege to Samaria before destroying Israel and carrying off her people, King Hezekiah recalled one day. It had happened in Hezekiah's sixth year as king over Judah. He knew God allowed the northern kingdom of Israel to be destroyed because they had violated God's covenant and refused to obey the Lord their God. It was something God warned would happen.

When King Shalmaneser died and King Sennacherib came into power, Hezekiah had hoped his rebellious act of not paying tribute would slip by unnoticed. It didn't. Looking at Hezekiah's actions as outright disrespect, Sennacherib gathered his army, attacked all the fortified cities of Judah, and captured them.

"I was wrong to dishonor you. If you'll leave us, we promise to pay you whatever you demand," King Hezekiah pleaded.

The Assyrian king demanded—and received—one ton of gold and eleven tons of silver—all the silver to be found in the temple and the royal treasury. Satisfied with the results, the powerful Assyrian king then sent his commander in chief, field commander, and personal representative with a strong army to challenge King Ahaziah and the kingdom of Judah.

"What are you trusting in that makes you so confident?" the commanders challenged Hezekiah's leaders. "Don't you know that your rebellious words can't take the place of military skill and power? Who will come to your rescue? Egypt isn't dependable, and none of your other allies have been able to stand against us! We're undefeated!" they boasted loudly.

King Hezekiah's leaders asked the Assyrians to speak in Aramaic, so their people listening on the walls wouldn't understand the threats.

King Hezekiah

**shows us how to say
"never!" to being
defeated:**

N – Never give in to fear.

**E – Examine what you
have faith in.**

**V – Value going to God in
prayer.**

**E – Expect God to help
you.**

**R – Rely on Him, no
matter what.**

“What the king of Assyria has to say, he wants everyone in Judah to hear!” the chief commander arrogantly replied. He then shouted in Hebrew to those on the wall. “Don’t be deceived by King Hezekiah! He will never be able to deliver you from my power! Don’t let him fool you by telling you to trust in the Lord! Have the gods of any other nations ever saved their people from the mighty power of Assyria?” he challenged. “Never! So, what makes you think the Lord can rescue Jerusalem?”

The commander laughed as Hezekiah’s men returned inside the city walls and made their report to the king.

Upon hearing their words, King Hezekiah tore his robes in despair, then went to the Lord’s temple to pray. Sending his leaders to the prophet Isaiah to learn what the Lord would have them do next, Hezekiah was encouraged.

“Don’t fear, for Jerusalem won’t fall to the Assyrian king,” the prophet said. “God has heard your prayers and will Himself deal with the king of Assyria and his army. Sennacherib will be called back to his country on urgent business, and there he will be killed with a sword.”

Just as Isaiah said, King Sennacherib of Assyria was called back to his land with haste for Ethiopia had threatened war. Before leaving to return home, however, Sennacherib sent a message to Hezekiah: “Don’t let this God you trust give you false hope with promises that Jerusalem won’t be captured. You know perfectly well the kings of Assyria have crushed anyone who stands in their way. You will never be able to stand against us—Never!”

Footwork

Quickly turn in your Bible to 2 Kings 19:17-19 and read it. What does King Hezekiah do? Now, look over at verses 35-37. What does God do?



It's easy to feel defeated by the boasting and attacks on our defenses, ourselves, and our God. Our first impulse is to give in, or at least consider whether the claims could be true. Don't. Hezekiah heard the claims of victory against him, yet he took those claims right to the throne of the One who really rules—God. The king of Assyria said he would never be defeated—never. God simply shows that with Him, all things are possible. Never say never.