

Compromising with Evil

by Carl McMurray

2 Kings 18-19 records the time in Israel's history when Hezekiah was king in Jerusalem. The scripture describes him as there being "*none like him*" either before or after, because he "*held fast to the Lord,*" ...he "*did not depart from following Him.*" Because of this the Lord was with him wherever he went out. The scripture says he prospered, he struck down the Philistines, and he rebelled against Shalmaneser, King of Assyria. The Lord was surely with His servant Hezekiah.

So what was the problem? It seems that when the new king of Assyria, Sennacherib, came up against Judah and took some of the cities, Hezekiah lost his nerve. He pre-empted the attack on Jerusalem by sending a message of apology to the Assyrian king offering to do anything he wished. When Sennacherib demanded 300 talents of silver and 30 talents of gold, Hezekiah promptly stripped the Temple of gold, as well as emptying the king's treasury and handed it over. It would seem that this should have ended the matter, right? Demands were met, apologies were offered, this reaching out in peace with evil was settled, right? Wrong. It doesn't even appear to have slowed Assyria down in the march across the land. Almost immediately Assyrian representatives are outside the gates of Jerusalem demanding a surrender of the city or face siege, death, and destruction.

Of course, the end of the story for this short article is that Hezekiah promptly and humbly sought out Isaiah the prophet and direction of God. The Lord stepped in and saved the city and the people without an arrow being loosed. But, this is not the point of our writing.

Our point was to notice the mistake of this servant of God in dropping his guard for a short time, trying to settle things without first depending on the Lord as he had been with such success. He tried to compromise with the enemy of the Lord's people just as surely as many try to compromise with the enemy today. When apologies are made to the enemy that are neither needed nor righteous one can expect neither peace nor acceptance. In an age of tolerance and political correctness let us never face the enemy with apologies on our lips for standing up for the truth of God's word. Doctrines of truth such as repentance from sin, baptism for forgiveness, purity of life, and worship according to God's directions will stand with our help or without it. Trying to "nice up to" the enemy and be apologetic for some supposed fault will never bring about peace. Only unity on God's word can do that. God bless your efforts.