



**Review of Rabshakeh's Propaganda Objectives 1-10, Isa 36:2-21; Summary of His Message: F. C. Jennings's *Studies in Isaiah*; the People Answered Not a Word**

- 1) The power of the Rabshakeh's message is captured in a summary and paraphrase of this passage by:

**Jennings, F. C. *Studies in Isaiah*. (New York: Loizeaux Brothers, Publishers, n.d.), 422-25:**

Rabshakeh takes his stand at "The conduit of the upper pool, in the highway of the fuller's field." Three representatives of King Hezekiah come out of the city to meet him. Haughtily, as a conqueror, he addresses them, wondering at the temerity that dare refuse anything to "the great king." What can have given Hezekiah so vain a confidence? It must, Rabshakeh thinks, consist in one of three things, all equally baseless. First, and the most probable, he hopes for help from Egypt. Egypt, that reed that splinters with the least weight put upon it, and pierces the hand that expected its aid! (pp. 422-23)

But possibly—for it is a common report that Hezekiah is a religious fanatic—he may say that he is trusting in Jehovah, his God. How can that be possible? For whose high places has Hezekiah removed but those dedicated to that very Jehovah, insisting on so strict a conformity to his own narrow-minded bigotry, that people must only worship just what, where, and as *he* thinks right!

Or is it barely possible that he still retains some remnant of dependence on his own army. Rabshakeh will let him have 2,000 horses if he can mount them with riders. He cannot do it. How then can he resist the youngest subaltern in the Assyrian forces?

Rabshakeh has covered the field well. Hezekiah's hopes must be either on the world (Egypt), or on Jehovah, or on his own resources; the spheres of soul [human viewpoint driven by fear], spirit [blind faith in a mythological "god"], and body [reliance on military power alone to deliver].

The second [reference to the "spirit" or Hezekiah's faith in Jehovah to deliver] shows how utterly incapable an unregenerate man is to discern the motives that govern him who is led of the Spirit.

Has there been any change in man's heart today? Not one whit. Speak of God, or religion in any of its externals [essentials], and you will be approved. Speak of Jesus, tell of the virtue of His blood as alone able to cleanse from all sin, and it requires no divinely inspired prophet to tell what will happen; you will at once be condemned as a fanatic. (p. 423)

Rabshakeh's speech cuts deep, and the three plenipotentiaries fear the effect of it on the people who are listening to the colloquy as they sit on the walls, and they beg that Rabshakeh will speak in Aramaic, with which they, as educated men, were familiar, while it had not as yet become (as it did later) the vernacular of the people. (p. 424)

The Assyrian, first insulting in the coarsest way the Committee, steps nearer, raises his voice, and addresses directly the very people, thus: "Do not be deceived by Hezekiah—I will not call him king, there is but one worthy of the title, and that The Great King, the King of Assyria—he can not deliver you, nor can your Jehovah. Let me give you some advice: make terms with me, and then you will be at ease till I transfer you to another land of equal fertility and beauty to your own, so that you shall suffer nothing. But on no account let Hezekiah deceive you with such vain hope as that Jehovah will deliver you. That is an old story due to superstition; let history speak, let experience be heard. Where are all the gods who have opposed our march?—Hamath, Arpah, Sepharvaim? Nearer and nearer as we approached they fell one after another. These gods all failed to protect their votaries; and now look at your sister state to the north, Samaria! Of how much avail was Jehovah there? Shall He then deliver *you* out of my hand?" (p. 425)