



PROPOB 8: Rabshakeh Denounces Hezekiah & YHWH, Isa 36:14-15; PROPOB 9: Demands Negotiation of a Treaty of Peace: The Maleficent Deception, vv. 16-17

Isaiah 36:13 - Then the Rabshakeh turned and spoke loudly in Hebrew, "Listen to the words of the great king, the king of Assyria.

v. 14 - "Thus says the king, 'Do not let Hezekiah deceive you because he is not able to deliver you;

v. 15 - do not let Hezekiah cause you to trust in Jehovah, saying, "The Lord will surely deliver us. This city will not be given into the hands of the king of Assyria.'"

- 1) After setting them up by suggesting that the most grotesque circumstances famine can impose are in their immediate future, the Rabshakeh turns his attack back on Hezekiah.
- 2) Before people can be turned against their own belief system their trust in that system must be destroyed. The Rabshakeh has already insulted Hezekiah on a number of issues just noted.
- 3) Now he boldly addresses the people with three imperative moods: (1) "Listen to the words of the king of Assyria!" (2) "Don't let Hezekiah deceive you!" (3) "Do not let Hezekiah cause you to trust in Jehovah!"
- 4) Again he refers to Sennacherib as the "great king" while still refusing to assign the title to Hezekiah.
- 5) He then accuses Hezekiah of misleading them with the most despicable duplicity. He tells them that Hezekiah simply cannot be trusted to deliver them from Assyria's army.
- 6) This is duplicity on the part of the Rabshakeh for Hezekiah never did tell the people that he could deliver them but that Jehovah would.
- 7) This last point is true and the Rabshakeh attacks it next by commanding them not to trust in Hezekiah's appeal to trust in Jehovah.
- 8) This is actually an assault upon the integrity of God and the Word of God. The Father spoke to Hezekiah through Isaiah the prophet in:

Isaiah 38:4 - Then the word of the Lord came to Isaiah, saying,

v. 5 - "Go and say to Hezekiah, 'Thus says the Lord, the God of your father David, "I have heard your prayer, I have seen your tears; behold, I will add fifteen years to your life.

v. 6 - "And I will deliver you and this city from the hand of the king of Assyria; and I will defend this city.'"

- 9) With this knowledge, Hezekiah is able to say with confidence to the people gathered in Jerusalem that the Lord will deliver them from Sennacherib and the Assyrian army in:

2 Chronicles 32:7 - "Be strong and courageous, do not fear or be dismayed because of the king of Assyria, nor because of all the multitude which is with him; for the One with us is greater than the one with him.



v. 8 - “With him is only an arm of flesh, but with us is the Lord our God to help us and to fight our battles.” And the people relied on the words of Hezekiah king of Judah.

- 10) The Rabshakeh not only impugns the word of Hezekiah but in doing so he also blasphemes the Word of God.
- 11) **Propaganda Objective #8:** Attack the person who delivers the message. Once the messenger is discredited then attack his message.
- 12) When the attack is designed to tear down deeply-held belief systems then the attack must be emboldened by hyperbole as illustrated earlier in verse 12 or camouflaged by the invention of a new vocabulary.
- 13) The present-day manipulators of the American culture who are experts at this approach are the proponents of Frankfurt philosophy.

Atkinson, Gerald L. “What Is the Frankfurt School?” In *Cultural Marxism at the U.S. Naval Academy*. (Clinton: Atkinson Associates Press, 1999), 1:

It is important to realize that this movement, 'cultural Marxism,' exists, understand where it came from, and what its objectives were: the complete destruction of Western Civilization in America. That is, these 'cultural Marxists' aimed to destroy, slowly but surely from the bottom up, the entire fabric of American Civilization.

By the end of World War II, almost all the original Frankfurt School members had become American citizens. This meant the beginning of a new English-speaking audience for the school.

Since the 1940s, subtle changes appeared in the Frankfurt School's descriptions of their work. For example, the opposite of the 'authoritarian personality' was no longer the 'revolutionary,' as it had been in previous studies aimed at Europeans. In America, it was now the 'democratic' who opposed the 'authoritarian personality.' Thus, their language matched more closely liberal language. Education for tolerance, rather than for revolutionary change, was the ostensible goal of their research. They were cleverly merging their language with the mainstream of liberal left thought in America while maintaining their 'cultural Marxist' objectives.

Tolerance had never been an end in itself for the Frankfurt School, and yet the non-authoritarian (utopian) personality ... was posited as a person with a tolerance for diversity. This thought is dominant in today's power elite of the Boomer generation, the New Totalitarians.

The Rabshakeh's bloviations continue in:

Isaiah 36:16 - “Do not listen to Hezekiah because this is what the king of Assyria says, ‘Make your peace with me and come out to me. Then each and every one of you will enjoy his own vine and fig tree and all will drink from his own cistern,

v.17 - until I come and take you to a land like your own, a land of grain and new wine, a land of bread and vineyards.”

- 1) This could be correctly described as the Maleficent Deception. The Rabshakeh uses rhetorical veils to advance while concealing his hidden agenda.

Maleficent. The act of committing harm or evil. Productive of disaster or evil. Latin: *maleficus*, wicked.

Deception. To cause to accept as true or valid what is false or invalid. Telling a lie to gain an end.



- 2) After again demanding that Hezekiah be ignored, the Secretary of State offers a deal too good to be true. He paints a rosy picture of a future life in a land of milk and honey if only the people of Judah quietly surrender to the benevolent offers of Sennacherib.
- 3) His hidden agenda is to keep the masses in a state of mental bliss until the Egyptians are properly dealt with and then the Israelites will be deported to Assyria where their lives will be spent in slavery.
- 4) What politicians say in order to convince the masses to agree to their schemes for a better tomorrow is decidedly different from what they intend to do once compliance is won.
- 5) For instance: the Rabshakeh quotes Sennacherib's conditions for a new tomorrow. Condition number one is, "Make your peace with me." The King James Version reads, "Make an agreement with me by a present." The Hebrew word under discussion is the noun:

בְּרָכָה **berachah** - "blessing"

- 6) The noun form has to do with prosperity, favor, gratuity, benevolence, or benefit. Such blessings are transmitted from one person to another or from God to individuals or nations. When man seeks to "bless" God he is actually involved in reciprocity through an expression of appreciation, thanksgiving, or praise. It is in essence a salute of respect for divine favor.
- 7) In our context Sennacherib is proposing that the citizens of Judah join him in manufacturing a blessing, or "Make your peace with me." The word "make" is the Qal imperative of the verb:

עָשָׂה **'asa** - "to make, construct, complete, produce"

- 8) The idea here is that two parties, Sennacherib and the people of Judah are to enter into a negotiation which will result in making a "blessing."
- 9) What the Rabshakeh is proposing on behalf of Sennacherib is a Treaty of Peace, defined by:

Black, Henry Campbell. *Black's Law Dictionary*. Rev 4th ed. (St. Paul: West Publishing Co., 1968), 1674:

TREATY OF PEACE. An agreement or contract made by belligerent powers, in which they agree to lay down their arms, and by which they stipulate the conditions of peace and regulate the manner in which it is to be restored and supported.

- 10) The second condition Sennacherib requires of the Judahites is that they "come out to me." The word for "come out" is the Qal imperative plural of the verb:
- 11) יָצָא **yasa** - "Y'all come out"

This word is used in Exodus 21:2 for the emancipation of slaves:

Exodus 21:2 - "If you buy a Hebrew slave, he shall serve for six years; but on the seventh he shall go out [יָצָא **yasa**] as a free man without payment."

- 12) The Rabshakeh knows that the Jews were once in slavery to the Egyptians. He has taken the time to shame them for voluntarily entering into a coalition with the Pharaoh for the maintenance of their freedom.



- 13) What has resulted in their mental retreat back to Egypt is that Egypt failed them and now they are in jeopardy of going into slavery to the Assyrians.
- 14) This is absolutely true but in the Maleficent Deception this is not what the Rabshakeh says in his rhetorical veil.
- 15) He previously made the point that Judah's allegiance to the God of Israel will not protect them and that they would soon be in slavery to Sennacherib but for his willingness to offer them a deal.
- 16) Thus he uses the very same word employed by the Lord in His instructions regarding master and slave relationships in Exodus 21 to imply that if the citizens of Judah "come out," (אָסַף *yasa*) to him that they will be made truly free.
- 17) Therefore, the conditions that Sennacherib places on Judah are that they (1) negotiate a treaty of peace with him and (2) surrender to him in order to escape slavery.
- 18) This is indeed a Maleficent Deception since this is exactly what the king of Assyria plans to do with the Judahites. However, in order to continue the deception he must make them an offer to entice them into surrendering.
- 19) What Sennacherib proposes through the Rabshakeh is that if they do submit to these conditions then they will be allowed to go back to their homes and drink their own wine, eat their own figs, and drink water from their own reservoirs.
- 20) Sound too good to be true? Well, what comes next is a bright red flair for the discerning and the key word is "until":

Isaiah 36:17 - "... until I come and take you away to a land like your own land, a land of grain and new wine, and land of bread and vineyards."

The word "until" is the preposition:

עַד **'ath** - Used temporally to indicate a continuation of an event from a point in the past to the present and also of an event in the future.

- 21) In other words, the people of Judah could stay in their homes and return to their normal lives but only for awhile. "Until" indicates that Sennacherib would be back and when he arrives the Jews are going to be accompanying him back to Assyria.
- 22) There he contends they will live in a land that is flushed with grain, new wine, bread, and vineyards.
- 23) But notice something very important about the description of their circumstances in Assyria as compared with those in Judah. In verse 16 the Jews would be free to drink their *own* wine, eat their *own* figs, and drink water from their *own* cisterns.
- 24) Verse 17 lacks the use of the personal pronoun. The Rabshakeh simply says that on Sennacherib's return he will take the Jews to a *land* like their own land. He then describes the land's bounty but does not assign any of it to the people of Judah.



25) The land has grain, new wine, bread, and vineyards but the Judahites will not be able to call any of it *theirs*. Instead they will be the ones providing the slave labor to plant, tend, and harvest these crops and manufacture their products.

26) They will harvest the grain and then bake the bread; they will tend the vineyards and produce an Assyrian version of Burgundy's Nouveau Beaujolais. And there will be even more for them to do according to the parallel passage,

2 Kings 18:32 - ... until I come and take you away to a land like your own land, a land of grain and new wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of olive trees and honey, that you may live and not die.

27) In addition to the duties already mentioned, the Judahites will also harvest olives and make olive oil and attend the hives and fetch honey for the fine folk of Assyria.