

Isaiah 36:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then said Eliakim and Shebna and Joah unto Rabshakeh,
Speak, I pray thee, unto thy servants in the Syrian language;
for we understand it: and speak not to us in the Jews'
language, in the ears of the people that are on the wall.

Analysis

The officials' request to speak in "Syrian" (Aramaic) rather than "Jews' language" (Hebrew) shows concern for public morale. They recognize Rabshakeh's speech is aimed at the people on the wall, not just the negotiating team. Aramaic was the diplomatic lingua franca, understood by educated officials but not common people. The request reveals wisdom in protecting the vulnerable from demoralizing propaganda. However, Rabshakeh will deliberately reject this request to maximize psychological impact.

Historical Context

Aramaic was the international language of diplomacy and trade in the ancient Near East. Most common people in Judah spoke only Hebrew.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

2

Daniel 2:4 (Parallel theme): Then spake the Chaldeans to the king in Syriack, O king, live for ever: tell thy servants the dream, and we will shew the interpretation.

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