

a passage means they simply gave a literal rendering, even if it did not give a clear meaning in English. In such places the NIV often adds words, as in this instance, and thus gives a precise interpretation, which sometimes, as at this place, gives a meaning contradicting the actual meaning of the passage.

- ¹¹ Written language began as a means of making a permanent record of spoken language, but as time went on written and spoken language diverged because there are ways of making thoughts clear in written language that are usually not available in spoken language, and there are very important features of spoken language that are generally unrepresented in written language. It is rare that a writer simply puts down what he would say if he were speaking, for accent and intonation play a great part in what is said. When a written document includes a quotation of spoken words, as in Daniel 12:8, it is necessary to quote these words exactly as they were spoken, even if this would make it difficult to understand their true meaning. Since there is usually no way to indicate intonation and emphasis in a written document it is often necessary, when reading a direct quotation, to infer part of its meaning from the context, and this affects the interpretation of a substantial number of biblical passages.

There is an interesting instance in the account in 1 Kings 22 and 2 Chronicles 18 of what occurred when the prophet Micaiah stood before Ahab, the wicked king of Israel. Since Ahab desired to convince his visitor, Jehoshaphat, the devout king of Judah, that it was God's will for the armies of the two kingdoms to attack Ramoth-Gilead, Ahab publicly asked Micaiah to say whether this was God's will. Micaiah said: "Attack and be victorious for the LORD will give it into the king's hand" (1 Kings 22:15). Although Micaiah had said exactly what Ahab wanted him to say, Ahab was not satisfied. He did not say to Jehoshaphat: "See, Micaiah agrees with the other prophets that God will give us the victory." Instead he rebuked Micaiah, telling him that he must say nothing but truth in the name of the Lord. Ahab's action makes no sense unless we assume that Micaiah had spoken with an intonation that made it evident to everyone that he was merely saying what the king wanted to hear and did not mean a word of it. When Micaiah responded to the king's rebuke by saying the opposite of what he had said before, the king said to Jehoshaphat: "Didn't I tell you that he never prophesies anything good about me, but only bad?" Recognition of the importance of intonation in spoken language is essential to understanding this incident.

There is a good illustration of the importance of emphasis in quotations from oral speech in Isaiah 28. It is generally agreed that this chapter is an account of what Isaiah said at a banquet given by nobles of Judah to celebrate the expected downfall of Ephraim.