 readings. These marginal readings indicate that the original has no article with "anointed one" and that the word translated "decree" could be rendered as "word," thus showing that the Hebrew words used in the statement have a much wider range of possible meaning than the words of the NIV suggest.

In such a situation it is always well to examine the original carefully, to see whether the suggested translation has made the best selection among possible meanings of the words, or whether an alternative rendering deserves consideration.

The word translated "decree" in the NIV and "commandment" in the KJV is the common Hebrew word *dabar*, which both the KJV and the NIV generally render as "word" or "words." (The KJV does so more than 700 times.) Except for a few cases in the book of Esther, *dabar* is rarely used in the Hebrew Bible to represent a king's command. This is usually expressed by *miswa*, which the KJV translates as "commandment" 173 times. The word *dabar* is frequently used to indicate a divine message or a prophetic declaration, as in every one of its four occurrences earlier in this same chapter.

In verse 2, where it refers to a prophetic message that God had given Jeremiah, both the KJV and the NIV translated *dabar* as "word." In verse 12 it refers to the words of condemnation previously spoken by God's prophets; here again both the NIV and the KJV translate it "words." Both of its occurrences in verse 23 probably refer to the message that God told Gabriel to give to Daniel, but here the two translations differ markedly. Near the beginning of the verse the KJV translates it "commandment," but the NIV renders it "answer." Near the end of the verse the KJV translates it "matter," but the NIV renders it "message." After using *dabar* four times in the previous verses to mean a divine message it is hardly likely that the writer would immediately use it instead of the regular word *miswa* to mean a king's command. Yet here in verse 25 many translations choose the less common meaning for the word, thus making it fit with preconceived ideas of the passage.