It's just like I often feel about the matter of telling a lie, it's wrong to tell a lie, but if you ~~don~~ tell a big enough lie, perhaps it isn't always wrong. That is to say, that if you tell a big lie, it is obviously not a lie, it's just a joke, not a lie. If somebody says to me, how long did you, did it take you to come up here from the B&O yesterday. Well, suppose I came up in 10 minutes, suppose I say came up in 8, that might be a lie. But if I say oh I made that up in 20 minutes, well anybody would laugh and say oh, did you? It's perfectly plain you were just giving an answer which said I don't consider this is particularly your concern, or I don't know the facts, and it's not necessary to give an answer, but I'm not making it clear I'm not lying, I'm simply saying something that you know is just an avoidance of the question. It's not a lie, it immediately goes in the category of a joke, but when you do that be sure you make it big enough that people will realize that is is a joke.

So that in this case we have to interpret verse 15 in the light of context. If we do, its meaning is perfectly clear and its meaning is the exact opposite of what the words, taken alone, mean. I think that's a very important principle of interpretation, not only of the Bible but of any book. Someone has said, "a text without a context is only a paper." And that's true for any sort of interpretation.

Now the instance that was being given here about Micaiah's attitude, we notice how, after he was asked to tell what the situation was, what he really thought the Lord had said to him, he spoke it out in the strongest possible language. It is the institution of the prophet, not merely to say to the king, as in Babylon, or in Rome, you want to make this attack, now this is not a good day to make it, you're not apt to be successful if you do it now, you'd better wait and try it tomorroe, you'd better go this way. That is, as a representative of the king, helping the king to do what the king wants, the prophet of Israel was never that.