ABIDE 101 · LESSON 5

The Literal Guardrail

Meditate and Obey. Study and Apply. Hear and Do.



SECTION 1 · MATTHEW 18:8–9

Break a Leg: Reading the Bible as Literature

“If your hand or your foot causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away.”

Matthew 18:8 · BSB

SECTION 1 · WHAT KIND OF WRITING IS THIS?

Name the family, then the subgenre

Narrative

History, gospel, parable, genealogy

Poetry

Songs, wisdom, prophecy

Prose discourse

Law, sermons, letters

Apocalyptic

Visions full of symbols, as in Daniel and Revelation

Literal asks *what kind* of words they are; Contextual's literary layer asks *where* the words are located.

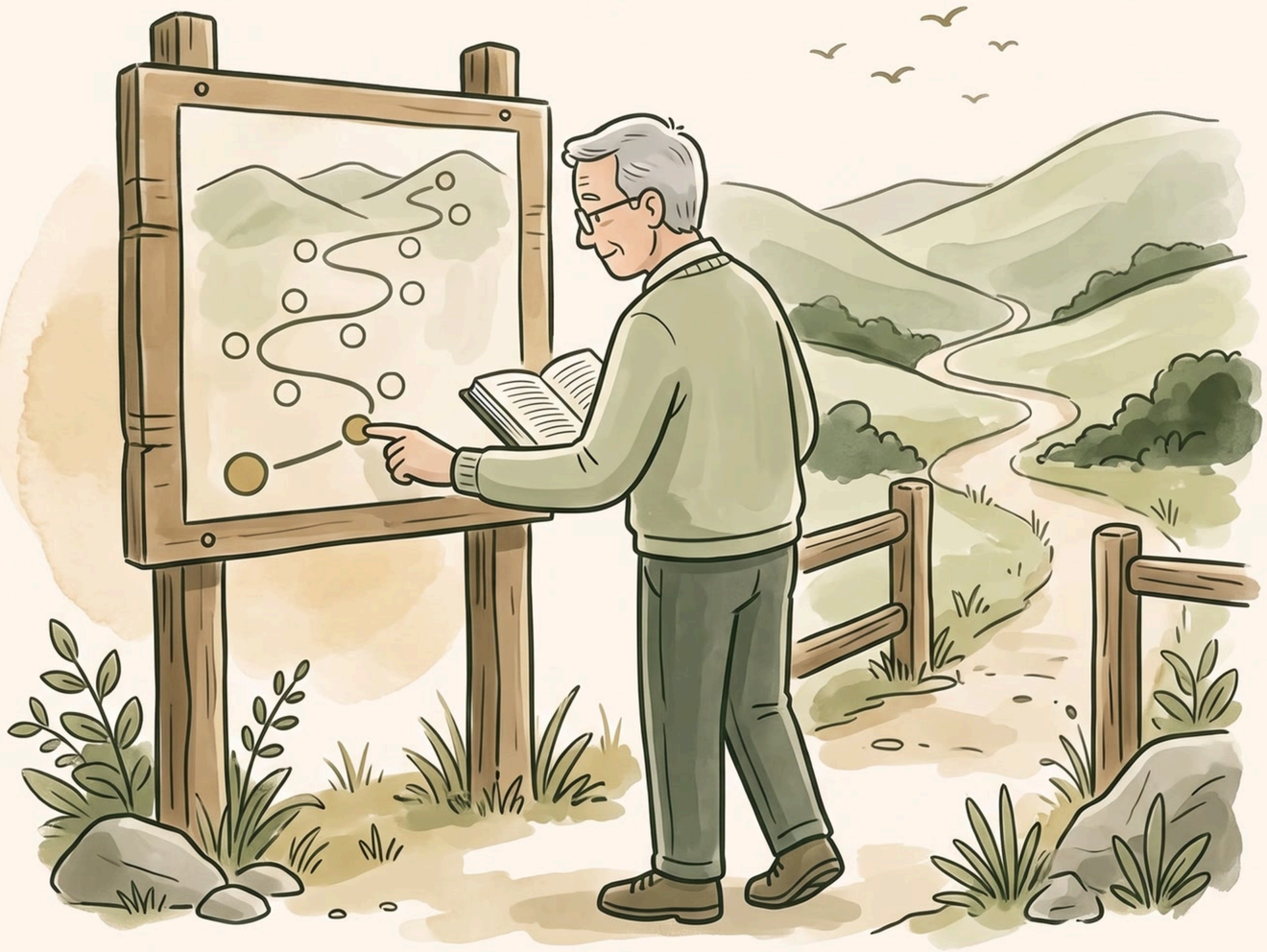


SECTION 2 · DEUTERONOMY 4:2
PROVERBS 10:4

The Two Cliffs

“Idle hands make one poor, but diligent hands bring wealth.”

Proverbs 10:4 · BSB



SECTION 3 · QUESTION 1

The First Question

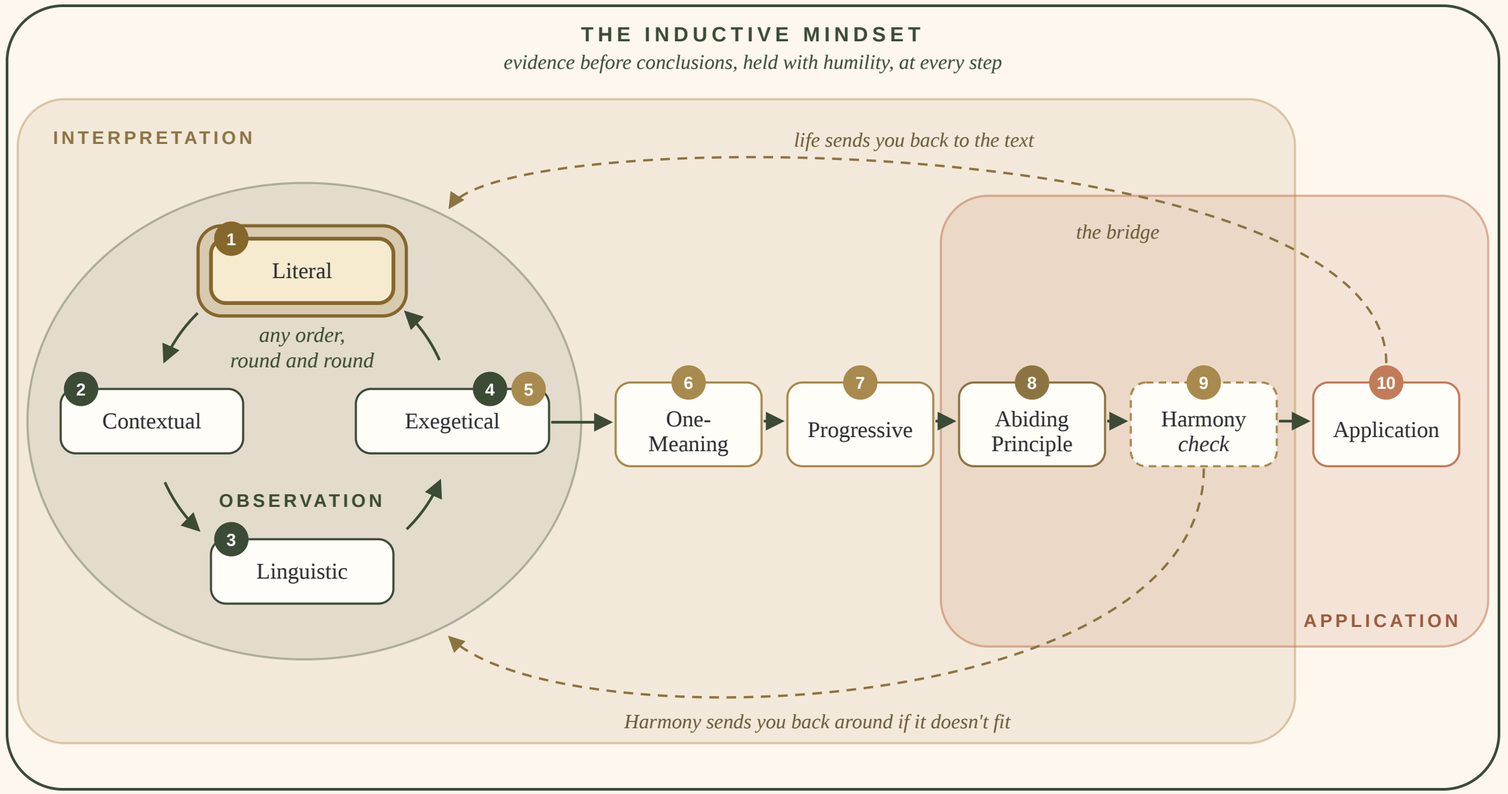
“What genre is this, and what does it actually say in that genre?”

The Literal guardrail’s question

SECTION 3 · WHERE WE ARE ON THE MAP

Inductive Bible Study

A time-tested method for handling "the word of truth" accurately (2 Timothy 2:15 · BSB)



The ten diagnostic questions in the process of biblical interpretation

We're at question 1, the Literal guardrail, in the Observation circle.



SECTION 4 · CASE 1
2 SAMUEL 12:1–7

A Story Inside a Story

“You are that man!”

2 Samuel 12:7 · BSB

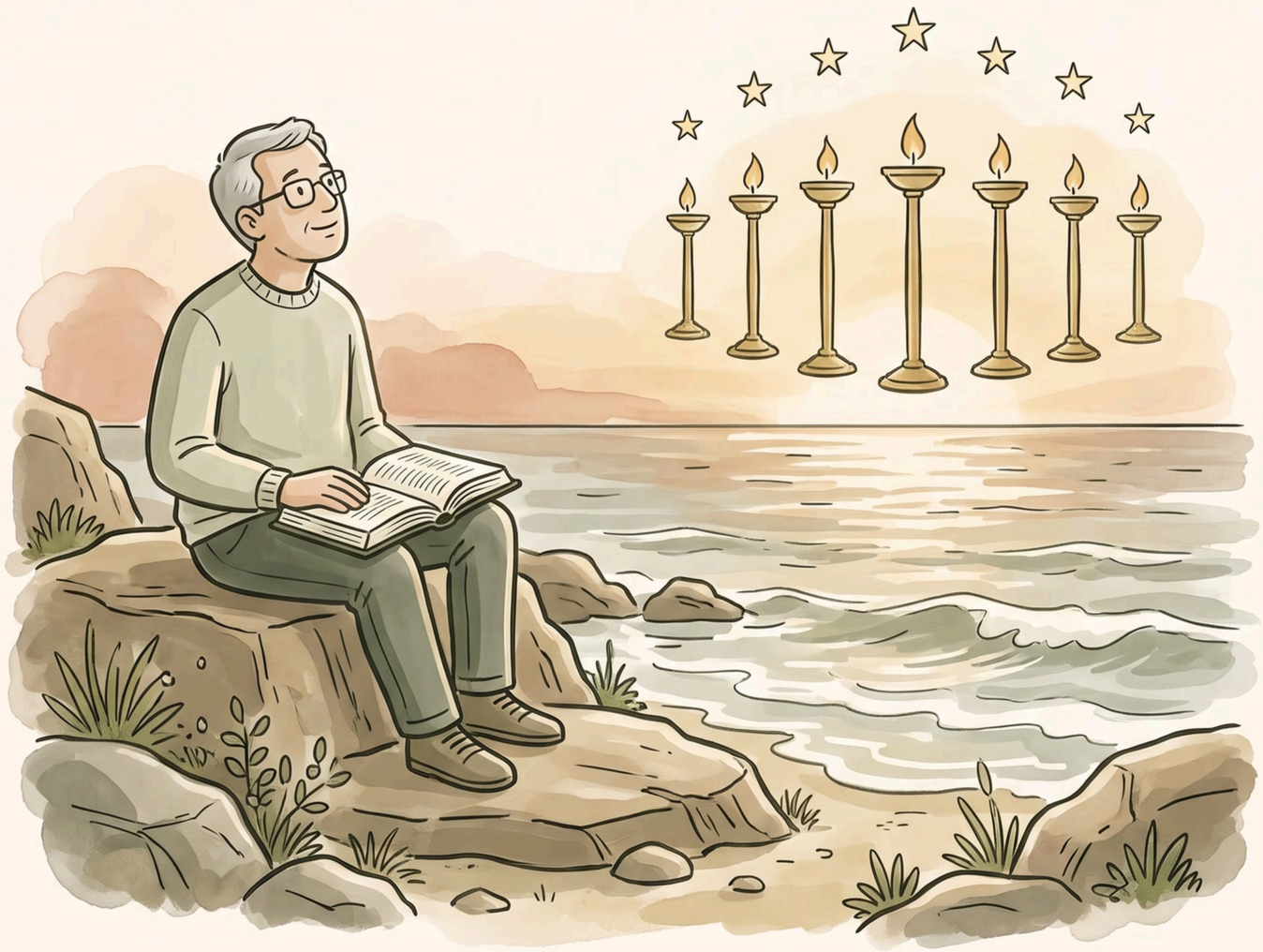


SECTION 5 · CASE 2
ISAIAH 55:10–12

Rain, Snow and Singing Trees

“so My word that proceeds from My mouth will not return to Me empty, but it will accomplish what I please, and it will prosper where I send it.”

Isaiah 55:11 · BSB



SECTION 6 · CASE 3
REVELATION 1:12–20

The Risen Christ Among the Lampstands

“I was dead, and behold, now I am alive forever and ever!”

Revelation 1:18 · BSB
MSB: “forever and ever. Amen.”



SECTION 7 · THE CENTRAL CASE
EPHESIANS 1:3–14

All Ten Questions

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realms.”

Ephesians 1:3 · BSB

SECTION 7 · QUESTION 1: WHAT KIND?

Ephesians 1:3–14 at two levels

Look at	What we find
Family	Prose discourse; the subgenre is a **letter**: the writer's name, the readers, and a greeting, "Grace and peace to you" (v. 2, BSB).
Its own kind	A **doxology**, a burst of praise to God.
Its shape	One long sentence in Greek, with a refrain: "to the praise of His glorious grace" (v. 6), "for the praise of His glory" (v. 12), "to the praise of His glory" (v. 14).
Kind of speech	Pictures from family life, the slave market, official documents and business deals: adoption, redemption, sealed, pledge, inheritance.

SECTION 7 · QUESTIONS 2–10

From the page to this week

Question	What we find
2 · Contextual	Praise opens chapters 1 through 3, and praise closes them (Ephesians 3:20–21).
3 · Linguistic	Two refrains run side by side: *in Christ* and *the praise of His glory*.
4 · Exegetical	Praise God! In Christ, He has given you every spiritual blessing. *We* and *you* become *our*.
5 · Exegetical	Let go of the debate for a moment, and let the passage do what it was written to do.
6 · One-Meaning	In Christ, God has given His people every spiritual blessing, to the praise of His glorious grace.
7 · Progressive	The exodus, the inheritance, God's treasured possession (Exodus 19:5); now Gentiles are "fellow heirs" (Ephesians 3:6, BSB).
8 · Abiding principle	Everything God has given us in Christ is meant to lead us to praise Him, and to live as people who belong to Him and bear His name.
9 · Harmony	2 Corinthians 1:3; 1 Peter 1:3; Romans 8:17; 2 Corinthians 1:22.
10 · Application	Read Ephesians 1:3–14 aloud this week, slowly, as a prayer.



SECTION 8 · JOHN 14:26
1 CORINTHIANS 2:12

Every Kind, One Author

“We have not received the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us.”

1 Corinthians 2:12 · BSB

ASK IT EVERY TIME YOU OPEN YOUR BIBLE

What genre is this, and what does it actually say in that genre?

Read the Bible as the kinds of writing God gave it in. Name the family, then the subgenre, and look for the real point behind every figure.

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