

ABIDE 102 · LESSON 1

Why So Many Translations?

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



SECTION 1 · ACTS 8:26–35

Which Bible Can I Trust?

“How can I,” he said, “unless someone guides me?”

Acts 8:31 · BSB



SECTION 2 · EZRA 7:10
NEHEMIAH 8:8

The People Behind Your Bible

“For Ezra had set his heart to study the Law of the LORD, to practice it, and to teach its statutes and ordinances in Israel.”

Ezra 7:10 · BSB

“So they read from the Book of the Law of God, explaining it and giving insight, so that the people could understand what was being read.”

Nehemiah 8:8 · BSB



SECTION 3 · FOUR REASONS

Four Reasons Translations Differ

The approach

The interpretation

The manuscripts

The English

Four reasons

1 · Approach

Word for word or
thought for
thought.

2 · Interpretation

The same words,
read two ways.

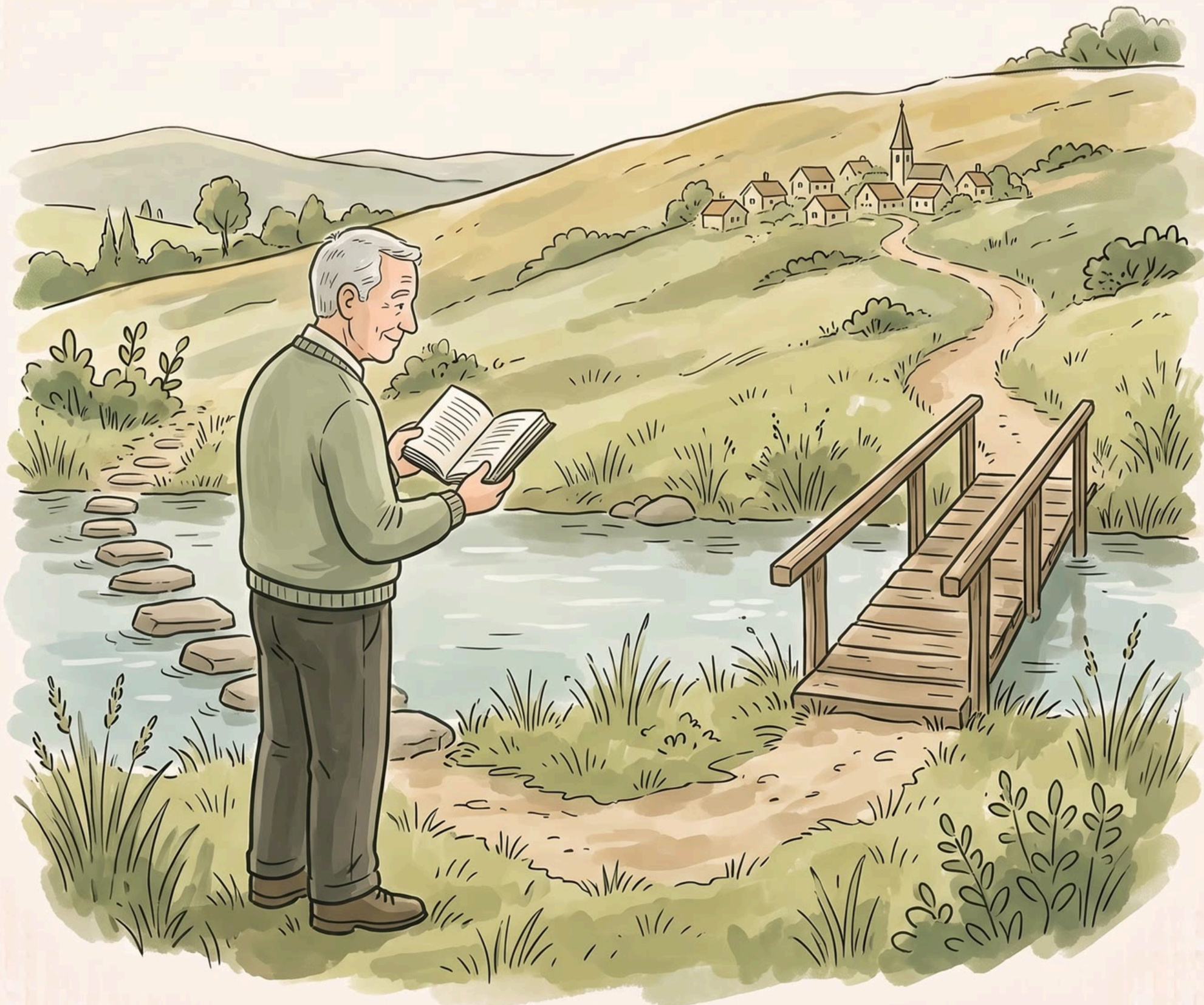
3 · Manuscripts

A different Greek
or Hebrew text.

4 · English

Our language has
changed.

A big difference is a clue: it becomes one of your questions for the passage.



SECTION 4 · LUKE 9:43–45

AMOS 4:6

Word for Word or Thought for Thought

“Let these words sink into your ears: The Son of Man is about to be delivered into the hands of men.”

Luke 9:44 · BSB

“I afflicted all your cities with cleanness of teeth and all your towns with lack of bread, yet you did not return to Me,” declares the LORD.

Amos 4:6 · BSB

Where translations sit

Word for word

Close to the original words
(formal equivalence).

LSB, NASB, ESV, KJV, NKJV

Balanced

Some of both. The BSB calls itself
“near the middle of the range.”

BSB, CSB

Thought for thought

The meaning in natural English
(functional equivalence).

NIV, NLT, NET

Past the far end: paraphrases, such as *The Message*. “Therefore, if you consult a paraphrase, treat it as you would a commentary.”

Watch what happens to the eye

	Matthew 6:22	Matthew 20:15	Mark 7:22
KJV	“if therefore thine eye be single”	“Is thine eye evil, because I am good?”	“an evil eye”
NKJV	“If therefore your eye is good”	“Or is your eye evil because I am good?”	“an evil eye”
LSB	“if your eye is clear”	“Or is your eye envious because I am generous?” (Lit evil)	“envy” (Lit an evil eye)
BSB	“If your eyes are good”	“Or are you envious because I am generous?”	“envy”
ESV	“if your eye is healthy”	“Or do you begrudge my generosity?”	“envy”
NIV	“If your eyes are healthy”	“Or are you envious because I am generous?”	“envy”
NLT	“When your eye is healthy”	“Should you be jealous because I am kind to others?”	“envy”



SECTION 5 · PSALM 8:3–6

The Same Words, Read Two Ways

*“You made him a little lower than the angels;
You crowned him with glory and honor.”*

Psalm 8:5 · BSB



SECTION 6 · COLOSSIANS 1:13–14
EPHESIANS 1:7

Different Manuscripts, and Why We Can Trust Them

“He has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.”

Colossians 1:13–14 · BSB

“In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace”

Ephesians 1:7 · BSB



SECTION 7 • 1 PETER 2:11–12

English Keeps Changing

“Conduct yourselves with such honor among the Gentiles that, though they slander you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day He visits us.”

1 Peter 2:12 • BSB



SECTION 8 · ACTS 2:5–11

What's in Your Translation Toolbox?

“we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!”

Acts 2:11 · BSB

Where English Bibles sit

	Word for word formal equivalence	Balanced optimal equivalence	Thought for thought functional equivalence	Hebraic voice Messianic Jewish
GREEK TEXT ↓				
Critical Text Earliest manuscripts, weighed verse by verse	NASB LSB ESV RSV NRSV LEB UASV AMP NABRE	BSB CSB HCSB ISV	NIV NET NLT CEB	TLV CJB
Majority Text The reading in most manuscripts (Byzantine)	WEB	MSB		WMB
Textus Receptus The 1500s “Received Text” behind the KJV	KJV NKJV MEV			

For study, open three or four from **different columns**, and at least one from a **different row**.

SECTION 8 · WHEN TRANSLATIONS DIFFER

Ask why

1 · Approach

Word for word or
thought for
thought?

2 · Interpretation

The same words,
read two ways?

3 · Manuscripts

A different Greek
or Hebrew text?

4 · English

Has the language
changed?

This week: read Ephesians 1:3–14 in your three or four translations, mark one difference, and ask which reason is at work.

GOD WANTS TO BE UNDERSTOOD

“God is more intent on revealing himself to you than you are to get to know him.”

Fuhr and Köstenberger, *Inductive Bible Study*

How is God inviting you to live out this abiding principle this week?

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

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Textbook. Fuhr, Richard Alan, Jr., and Andreas J. Köstenberger. *Inductive Bible Study: Observation, Interpretation, and Application through the Lenses of History, Literature, and Theology*. Nashville: B&H Academic, 2016.

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