

We see that modern translations remain somewhat inconsistent in their rendering of texts that speak of a person returning *beshalom*. NKJV routinely uses the literal (but not always appropriate) rendering “in peace.” NRSV varies between “in peace,” “safely,” and “victorious.” Others such as NCV, CEV, and NLT, likewise alternate between ideas of safety and ideas of victory. I do not mean to suggest that the phrase *beshalom* should always be rendered the same way. Other renderings of *beshalom* are still appropriate for other contexts; for example, a translation such as “peaceably” seems required in 1 Samuel 29.7. However, when *beshalom* occurs with the verb *shub* “return,” as in the examples above, the focus often seems to be on the speaker’s personal well-being. When this is the case, the idiomatic phrase “safe and sound” renders the sense well in English. It is closer to modern everyday English speech than alternatives such as “in safety,” and captures some of the broader meaning of the Hebrew term *shalom* as well. Yet only the translators of CEV seem to have availed themselves of the rendering “safe and sound,” and then only in Judges 8.9. The passages discussed above suggest that such a rendering deserves to be considered more seriously.

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## HOW WAS THAT?

In an edition of the CEV Bible that has major division headings as well as section headings, the following headings appear together at Genesis 25 verse 1:

### ***THE DEATH OF ABRAHAM***

#### ***Abraham marries Keturah***

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Three small boys were discussing their fathers and how important they were.

One said to the others, “My father just scribbles a few words on a piece of paper; he calls it a poem, and he gets \$50 for it.”

“Well,” said one of the others, “My father just scribbles a few words on a piece of paper; he calls it a song, and he gets \$100 for it.”

“That’s nothing,” said the third boy. “My father just scribbles a few words on a piece of paper; he calls it a sermon, and it takes eight people to collect all the money!”

[Editor’s question:

What do you get if you scribble a few words on a piece of paper and call it a Bible translation?]