



Wisdom in Practice

Humility & Wisdom

Proverbs 11 : 2 / 1 Kings 3 : 5 - 15



Proverbs 11:2

² When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with humility comes wisdom.

Here we have two biblical equations, if you will...

You + Pride = Disgrace

You + Humility = Wisdom (Notice it isn't the opposite).

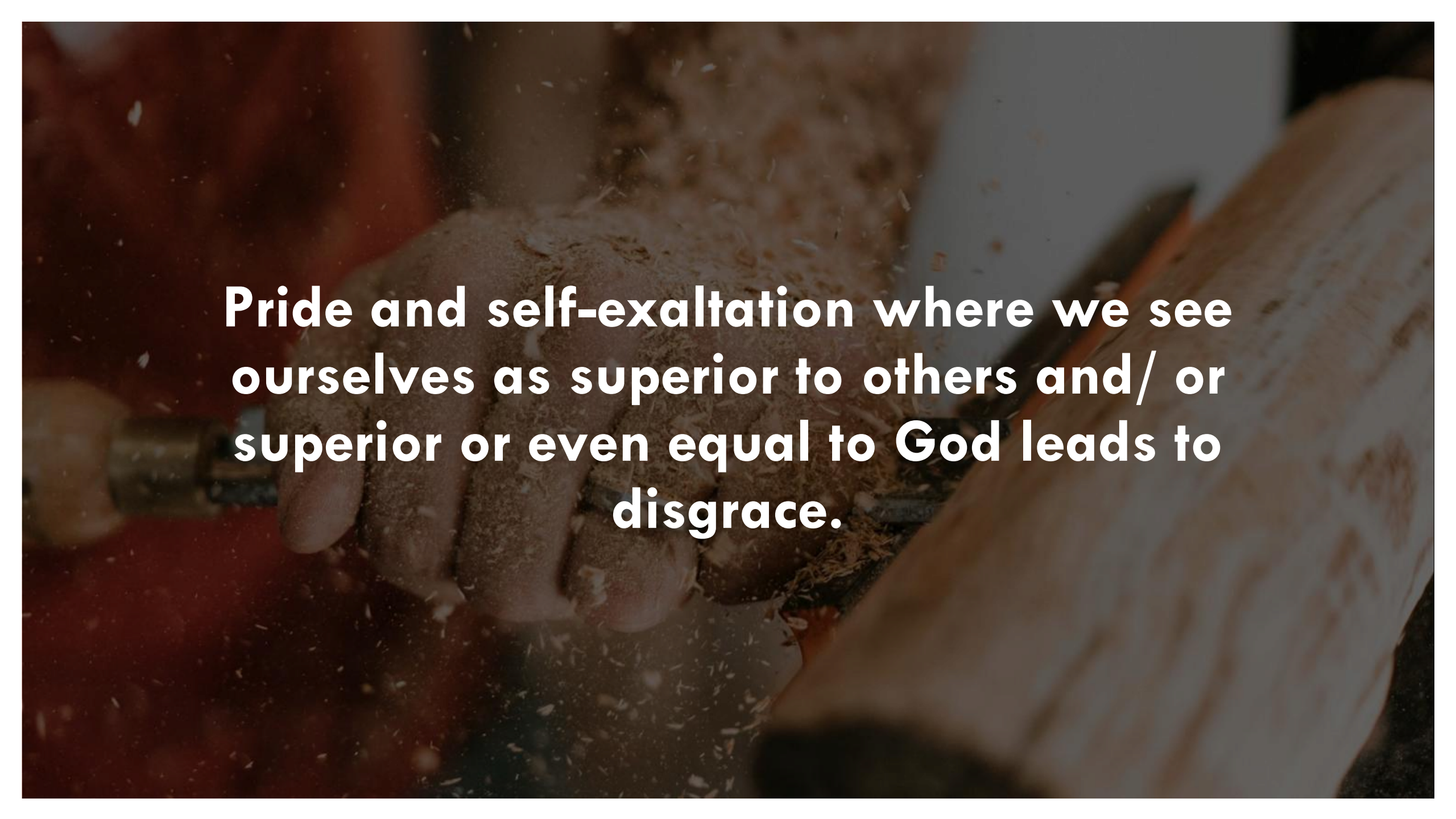


Proverbs 11:2 - Unpacked

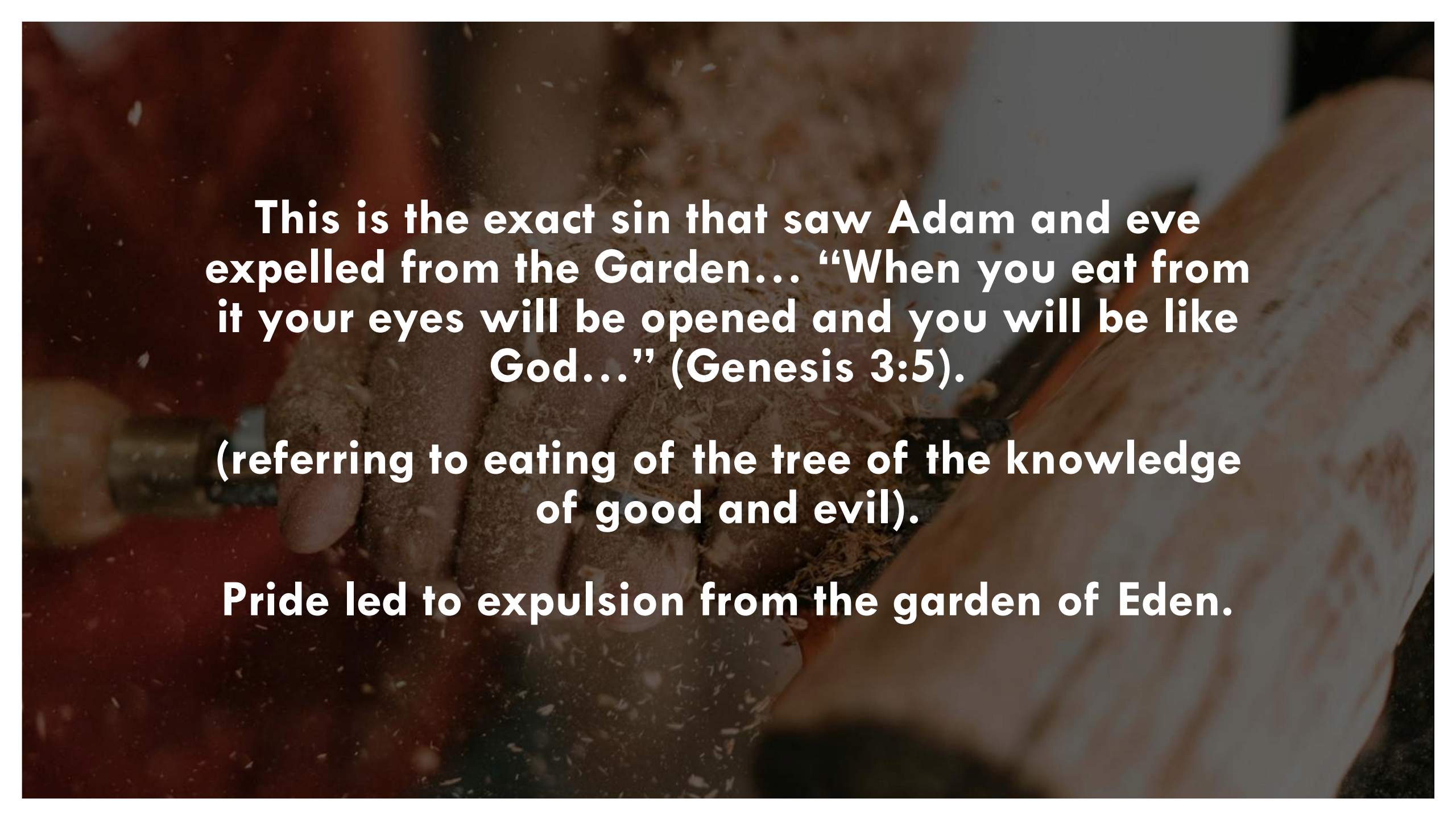
² When **pride** comes, then comes disgrace, but with humility comes wisdom.

Pride (in the Hebrew): ‘זָדוֹן’ or ‘zadon’

זָדוֹן portrays boiling-over arrogance—**presumptuous self-exaltation that resists divine authority and despises godly counsel**. It is more than hidden pride; it is pride that has ripened into overt rebellion, verbalized contempt, or oppressive action (Bible Hub, 2025).



Pride and self-exaltation where we see ourselves as superior to others and/ or superior or even equal to God leads to disgrace.



This is the exact sin that saw Adam and eve expelled from the Garden... “When you eat from it your eyes will be opened and you will be like God...” (Genesis 3:5).

(referring to eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil).

Pride led to expulsion from the garden of Eden.



Proverbs 11:2 - Unpacked

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Humility (in the Hebrew): ‘צַנֵּעַ’ or ‘tsana’

“The verb צַנֵּעַ highlights an **inner orientation of modesty, reserve, and lowliness before God and others**. It portrays a quiet, self-effacing posture that neither courts attention nor seeks exaltation. Rather than mere external meekness, it expresses a heart disposition that acknowledges the Lord’s supremacy and one’s own dependent creatureliness.” (Bible Hub, 2025)

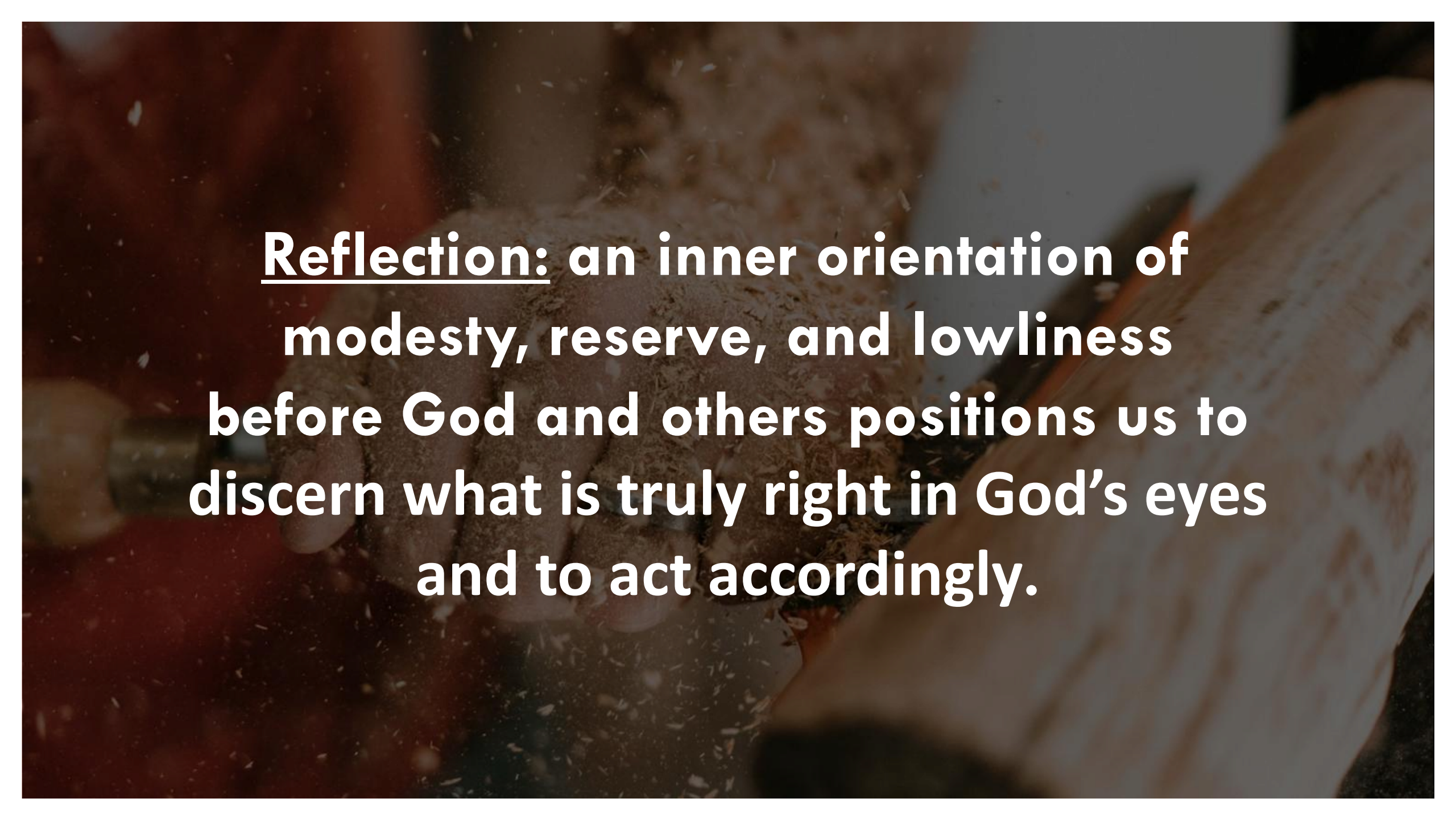


Proverbs 11:2 - Unpacked

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Wisdom (in the Hebrew): ‘חָכְמָה’ or ‘Chokmah’

“ חָכְמָה (chokmah) is the comprehensive, **God-centered quality of mind and life that discerns what is truly right and acts accordingly**. While fundamentally moral and spiritual, it embraces practical insight, technical skill, administrative aptitude, and relational discernment. Appearing about 149 times in the Old Testament, it undergirds Israel’s worship, ethics, statecraft, and artistry.”

A close-up, slightly blurred background image showing wood shavings and a piece of wood being worked on, likely with a hand plane. The wood is light-colored, and the shavings are dark and scattered around it. The overall tone is warm and rustic.

**Reflection: an inner orientation of
modesty, reserve, and lowliness
before God and others positions us to
discern what is truly right in God's eyes
and to act accordingly.**



Dura Europos Synagogue (Mid 3rd century) - Accessed at History of Information, 2025

Biblical Narrative Humility vs Pride Deep-dive - Solomon



1 Kings 3:5-15 (NIV)

⁵ At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon during the night in a dream, and God said, “Ask for whatever you want me to give you.”

⁶ Solomon answered, “You have shown great kindness to your servant, my father David, because he was faithful to you and righteous and upright in heart. You have continued this great kindness to him and have given him a son to sit on his throne this very day.



1 Kings 3:5-15 (NIV)

⁷ “Now, LORD my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David. But I am only a little child and do not know how to carry out my duties. ⁸ Your servant is here among the people you have chosen, a great people, too numerous to count or number. ⁹ So give your servant a discerning heart to govern your people and to distinguish between right and wrong. For who is able to govern this great people of yours?”



1 Kings 3:5-15 (NIV)

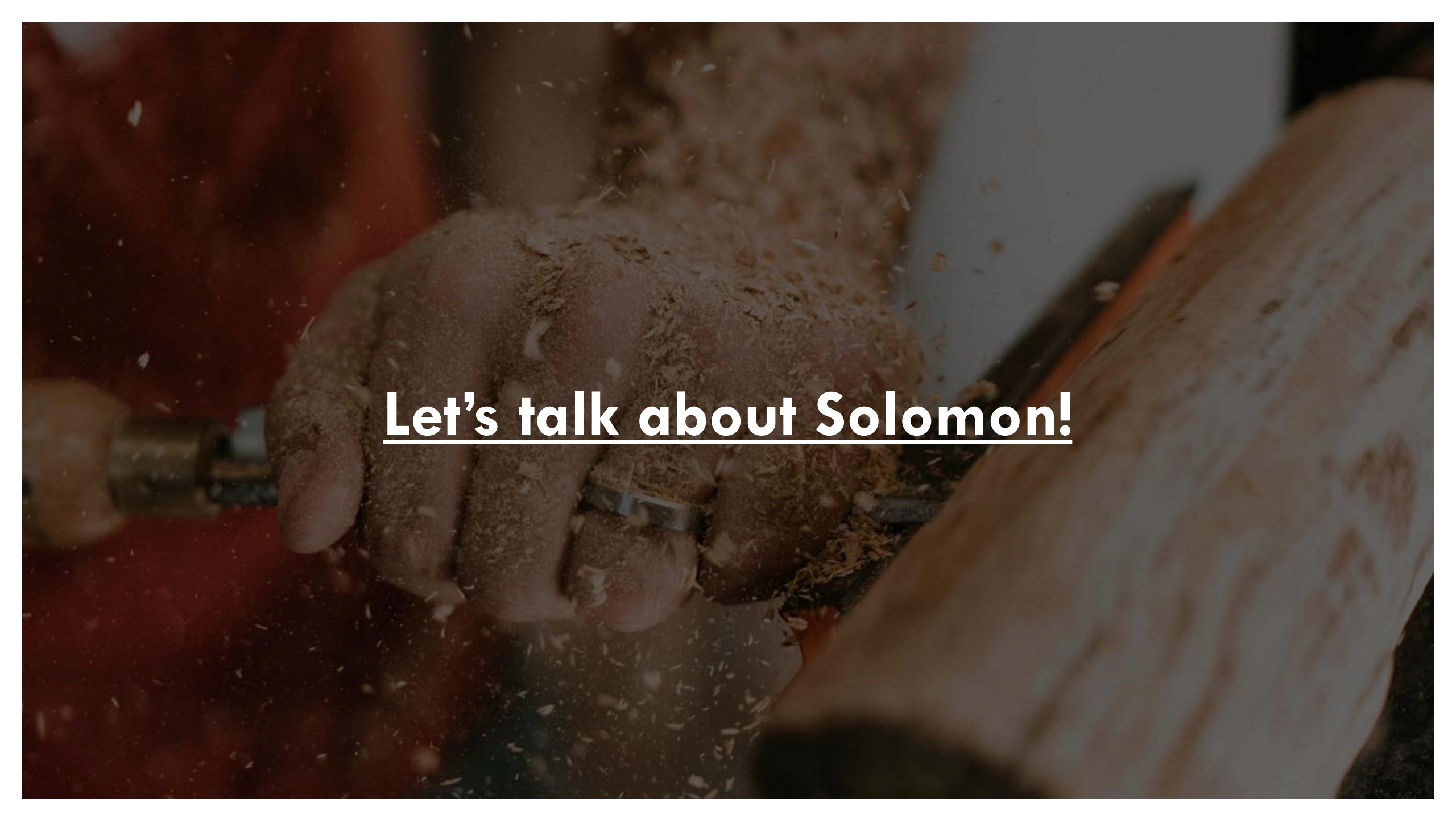
¹⁰ The Lord was pleased that Solomon had asked for this. ¹¹ So God said to him, “Since you have asked for this and not for long life or wealth for yourself, nor have asked for the death of your enemies but for discernment in administering justice, ¹² I will do what you have asked. I will give you a wise and discerning heart, so that there will never have been anyone like you, nor will there ever be. ¹³ Moreover, I will give you what you have not asked for—both wealth and honor—so that in your lifetime you will have no equal among kings.



1 Kings 3:5-15 (NIV)

¹⁴ And if you walk in obedience to me and keep my decrees and commands as David your father did, I will give you a long life.” ¹⁵ Then Solomon awoke—and he realized it had been a dream.

He returned to Jerusalem, stood before the ark of the Lord’s covenant and sacrificed burnt offerings and fellowship offerings. Then he gave a feast for all his court.



Let's talk about Solomon!

Who was Solomon?

- The second born of David and Bathsheba.
- “But a little child”: Scholars place him as being somewhere between 12 and 20 years of age when he took the throne.
- A chosen king contested by Adonijah (David’s eldest son) for the throne.
- The one that God called to rebuild the temple...



2 Samuel 7:12 – 15 (NLT)

God's promise to David (Regarding Solomon)

¹² For when you die and are buried with your ancestors, I will raise up one of your descendants, your own offspring, and I will make his kingdom strong. ¹³ He is the one who will build a house—a temple—for my name. And I will secure his royal throne forever. ¹⁴ I will be his father, and he will be my son. If he sins, I will correct and discipline him with the rod, like any father would do. ¹⁵ But my favor will not be taken from him as I took it from Saul, whom I removed from your sight.



2 Samuel 7:18 – 19 (NIV)

David's humble reply:

¹⁸ Then King David went in and sat before the LORD, and he said:

“Who am I, Sovereign LORD, and what is my family, that you have brought me this far? ¹⁹ And as if this were not enough in your sight, Sovereign LORD, you have also spoken about the future of the house of your servant—and this decree, Sovereign LORD, is for a mere human!”

Solomon's crossroad

At the start of Solomon's reign before him he had two examples of kingship:

King David (God's chosen king).

Solomon + Humility = Wisdom

King Saul (A fallen world's chosen king).

Solomon + Pride = Disgrace



**“Who am I, Sovereign LORD, and
what is my family, that you have
brought me this far?” 2 Samuel
7:18 – 19 (NIV)**

David’s humble heart



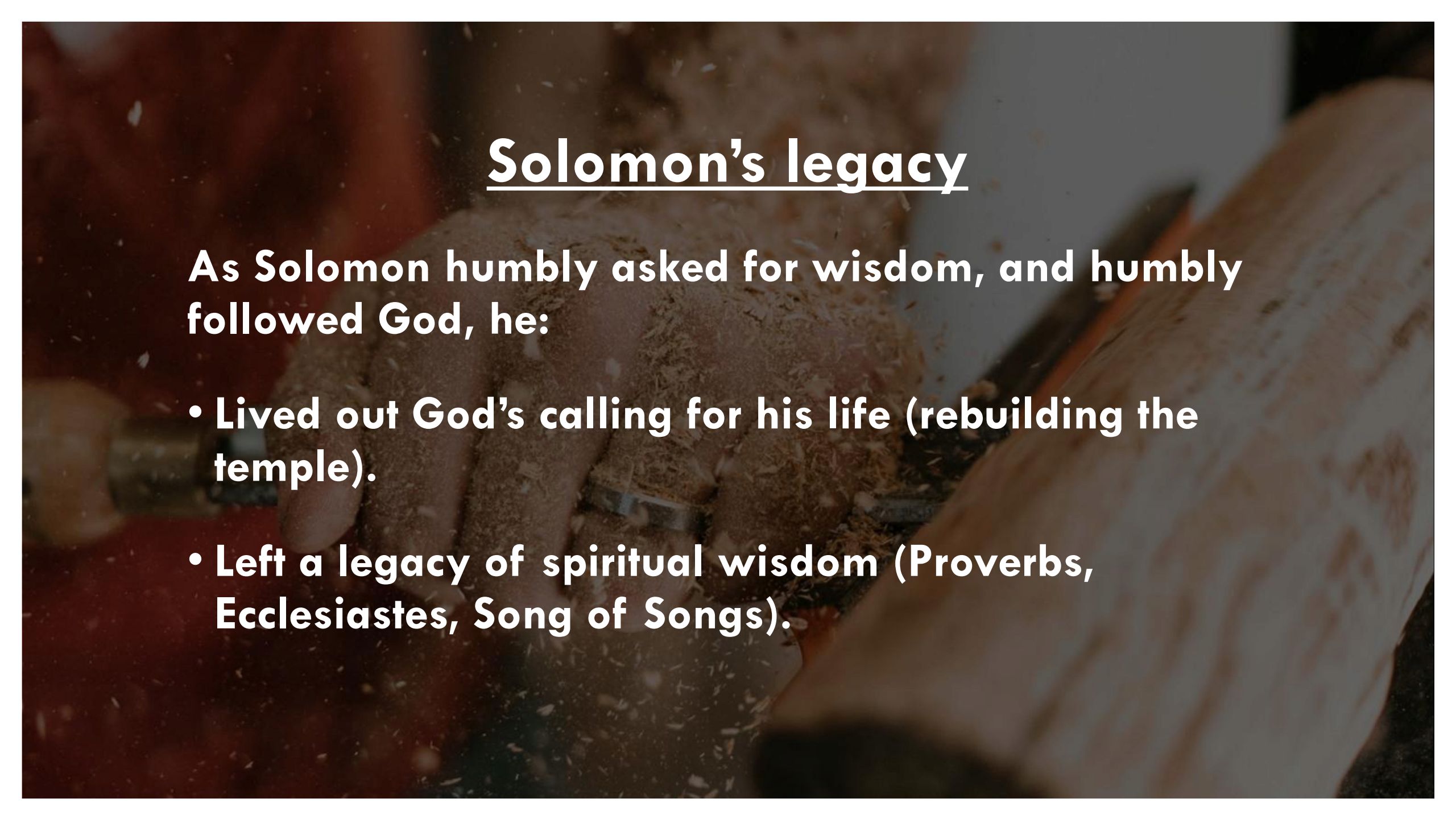
“¹² Early in the morning Samuel got up and went to meet Saul, but he was told, “Saul has gone to Carmel. There he has set up a monument in his own honour...” (1 Samuel 15:12 NIV).

Saul’s prideful heart

Solomon Chooses Humility

Solomon ultimately chose to walk in his father, king David's footsteps, adopting that 'inner orientation of modesty, reserve, and lowliness before God and others, which positioned him to discern what is truly right in God's eyes and to act accordingly.'

He could have asked for the riches and power that the world had to offer and could have erected statues in his own name like king Saul, instead, he humbly asked for wisdom.



Solomon's legacy

As Solomon humbly asked for wisdom, and humbly followed God, he:

- **Lived out God's calling for his life (rebuilding the temple).**
- **Left a legacy of spiritual wisdom (Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs).**



The Challenge:

Just like with Solomon, God has a unique call for all his followers. And just like with David, God's promises extend to the next generation.

So, my question, is what can we learn from these faithful followers of God?

How might you harbor an inner orientation of modesty, reserve, and lowliness before God and others so that we might position ourselves to discern what is truly right in God's eyes and to act accordingly.



Proverbs 11:2

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Let's Pray!