

MEN'S ROUNDTABLE September 3, 2026

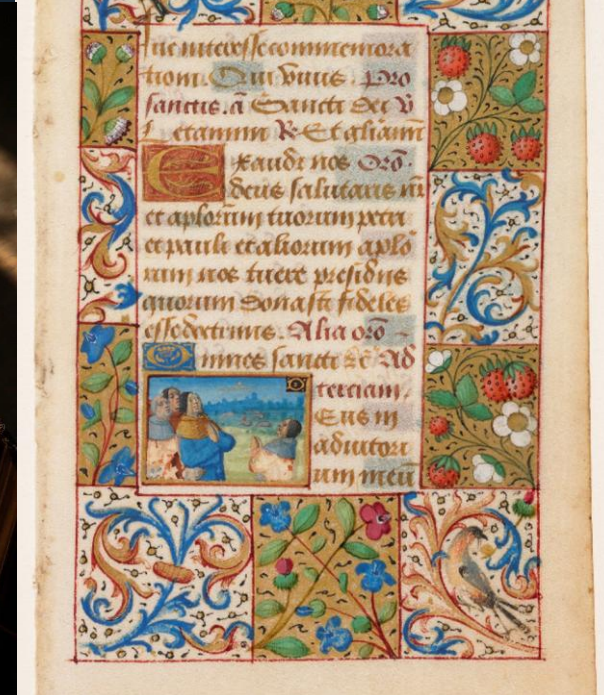
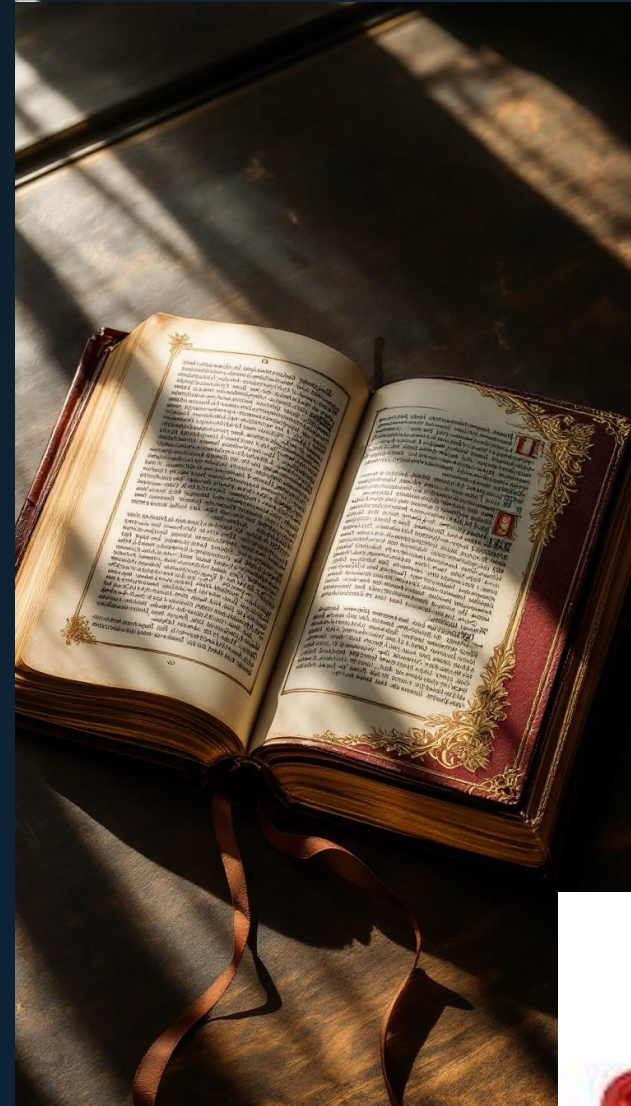
Wisdom, Awareness & Manhood

Decoding Your Internal Drives, Breaking Generational Patterns, and the Inward Journey to God

What Is Real Wisdom?

Beyond IQ: Knowing Why You Act

Wisdom isn't just getting straight A's or knowing Bible trivia. True spiritual wisdom is **acute self-awareness**: understanding your behaviors, knowing *why* you do what you do, and recognizing the hidden engines driving your actions.



The Battle Within: Dual Inclinations

Yetzer HaTov (The Good Drive)

The internal inclination toward honor, justice, self-control, and divine purpose. It is the noble voice urging you to act like a true man of God, even when no one is watching.

Yetzer HaRa (The Raw Impulse)

The appetite drive—hunger, ambition, sexual urge, ego. It is not inherently evil, but unexamined and uncontrolled, it degrades into addiction, pride, aggression, and destruction.

1 Kings 3:9 — Solomon's Request

Lev

Lev Shomea (Hebrew)
"An Hearing & Understanding
Heart"

Discerning Good Desires from Bad

When God offered 19-year-old Solomon anything he wanted, Solomon didn't ask for wealth or military flex. He asked for a *Lev Shomea*—an attentive, self-aware heart that can listen inwardly and discern between noble motives and selfish impulses.

Key Insight: A mature man doesn't just react to his emotions; he audits his heart before he acts.

In ancient Hebrew thought, the lev (heart) was not just the seat of emotions; it represented the mind, intellect, and will. Shomea comes from the root shama, which means to hear, listen, or obey (the same word used in the famous Jewish prayer, the Shema)

"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?"

Hunting for Insight: Proverbs & James

-  **Proverbs 2:3–6 — Search Like Hidden Treasure:** "If you call out for insight and raise your voice for understanding... then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God."
-  **James 1:5 — Ask God for Self-Clarity:** "If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you."
-  **The Challenge to Mature as Men:** Stop living on autopilot. Ask God daily to reveal your blind spots and show you why you react the way you do under stress or temptation.

Ephesians 1:16–17 — Inner Vision

Enlightening the Eyes of the Heart

Paul prays that God gives us the *"Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, having the eyes of your hearts enlightened."*

Immaturity is spiritual blindness—acting out of impulse, insecurity, or peer pressure. Wisdom opens your internal eyes so you can see your real motives clearly.



The Reformers: Self & Divine Knowledge

John Calvin: The Interlocked Mirror

"Our wisdom... consists almost entirely of two parts: the knowledge of God and of ourselves... No one can look upon himself without immediately turning his thoughts to the contemplation of God." (Institutes 1.1.1)

Martin Luther: The Mirror of Conscience

Luther emphasized that true faith requires brutal honesty about our inner conflict. We must stop making excuses for our bad inclinations and let God's truth uncover our true heart condition.

St. Augustine: Ordered Loves



"Noverim Me, Noverim Te"

Augustine famously prayed: "*Grant that I may know myself, grant that I may know Thee.*" He taught that sin is simply *disordered love* (*ordo amoris*)—loving secondary things (approval, pleasure, status) more than God.

When you become aware of what you truly crave, you can surrender those disordered desires to God and reorder your life.

Rabbinic Wisdom: The Soul Audit



Cheshbon HaNefesh

The ancient practice of an "Accounting of the Soul"—a daily review of your actions, words, and thoughts to keep your inner life clean.



Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

"When we try to deceive others, usually the only person we succeed in deceiving is ourselves. God forgives failures once acknowledged."



Abraham Joshua Heschel

"In prayer we shift the center of living from self-consciousness to self-surrender." True strength is overcoming self-centeredness.

Family Systems & Generational Scripts

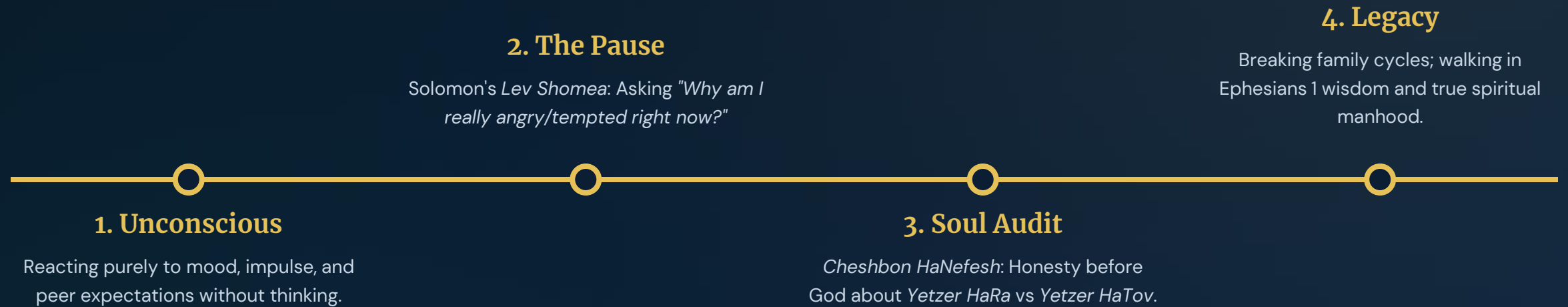
Unaware Inheritances

In counseling psychology, Family Systems Theory shows how generational patterns—anger, emotional shutdown, addiction, passive-aggression—pass down automatically from father to son if left unexamined.

Becoming the Cycle-Breaker

Unawareness repeats generational damage. The moment a young man becomes self-aware before God, he stops playing out automatic scripts and takes responsibility to build a healthy legacy.

The Inward Journey: 4-Stage Roadmap



Who Will You Become?

A boy blames others and lives on impulse. A man looks inward, asks God for wisdom, and takes responsibility for his soul.

"Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." — Psalm 139:23–24

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