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SPIRITUAL INTELLIGENCE AND THE BIBLE

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Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to explore spiritual intelligence as it relates to the Bible. What is spiritual intelligence? Is it another way to describe faith? What does it include? Faith, hope and love? How might it be measured? Many definitions of spiritual intelligence have been offered. Zohar and Marshall (1999) describe spiritual intelligence as "the intelligence with which we address and solve problems of meaning and value, the intelligence with which we can place our actions and our lives in a wider, richer, meaning-giving context, the intelligence with which we can assess that one course of action or one life-path is more meaningful than another." The Bible illustrates the endpoints of those life paths and warns against a short-sighted materialistic path because "what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal." (2 Cor. 4:18). God provides direction through revelation (visions, dreams, prophets, the spoken and written Word of God), nature (Rom. 1:19-20), and most eloquently, through the teachings and life of Jesus Christ (Heb. 1:1; Mt. 13:11-18, 34-35; Mk. 1:22, 27; 6:2-3; John 7:15). This revelation is sometimes for unlikely recipients by extraordinary means: to a rebellious, oppressive Pharaoh by means of plagues and to a money-grubbing prophet by means of a donkey. Spiritual intelligence comes by revelation through God's Spirit, which expresses "spiritual truths in spiritual words. The man without the Spirit does not accept the things

that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.” (1 Cor. 2:9-14; 2 Cor. 4:18). The Holy Spirit illuminates what otherwise is inaccessible and incomprehensible (1 Cor. 2:10-14; John 14:16-17, 26; 15:26; 16:13-15; Eph. 1:17-19). No other type of intelligence is more important to human existence both now and for the hereafter.

Overview of theories of intelligence

Theories of intelligence fall into three main types of models: developmental (e.g., Jean Piaget’s assimilation and accommodation processes); psychometric models based on measurement concepts (e.g., Raymond Cattell’s fluid vs. crystallized abilities); and information processing models like those proposed by Robert Sternberg and Howard Gardner. J. P. Guilford’s model is the most complex one. In it operations by context, by products yields a Rubik’s Cube of 120 discrete aspects of intelligence. In Gardner’s multiple intelligences (1983) he theorizes that these are “relatively autonomous human intellectual competences” and that they are formed, adapted and expressed by individuals and cultures. They are independent but they typically work in harmony. This is consistent with Charles Spearman’s theory that intelligence is based on one common intellectual factor known as “g” for general intelligence. While Spearman recognized specific abilities or “s,” each requires a certain amount of g factor. Gardner, in contrast, notes that multiple intelligences can be highly developed in individuals (e.g., J. S. Bach or Albert Einstein). Or, they may be isolated altogether (e.g., the mathematical ability of autistic savants)—a confirmation by negation of their autonomy. Gardner further defines human intelligence as a “set of skills of problem solving—enabling the individual to

resolve genuine problems or difficulties that he or she encounters and when appropriate, to create an effective product—it must also entail the potential for *finding or creating problems*—thereby laying the groundwork for the acquisition of new knowledge.” (pp. 60-61, italics in original). Because multiple intelligences are a “reasonably complex gamut of the kinds of abilities valued by human culture” (p. 62) they are more fluid and possibly culture-specific, compared to that which is measured by traditional IQ tests (i.e., verbal and quantitative reasoning). Being smart means different things for different cultures at various periods in history.

The processes and core operations by which knowledge is acquired, however, are more culture-general because they are based in human neurology and human cognitive capacity. For linguistic intelligence, these core operations include semantics, phonology, syntax, and pragmatics. For musical intelligence the principal constituent elements are pitch, rhythm, and timbre (pp. 104-105), with which neurology and emotions have a critical modifying role. Gardner describes the core operations and developmental trajectory for the other “intelligences;” such as logical-mathematical, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, and personal (inner- and interpersonal “intelligence”).

Gardner freely concedes that there may be more or fewer “intelligences” than he describes, even spiritual intelligence. Emotional intelligence has received a fair amount of interest since 1985 when Wayne Payne wrote a dissertation on the topic. Mayer and Salovey (1993, 1995) and Mayer and Geher (1996) made other significant contributions to an understanding of emotional intelligence. They describe it as social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' emotions, to discriminate among various emotions, and to use the information to guide thought and action. According to

Salovey and Mayer (1990), it subsumes Gardner's inter- and intrapersonal intelligences. Daniel Goleman popularized the concepts and applied it to business success with his 1995 book "Emotional Intelligence."

For each type of intelligence that Gardner describes, he also describes different core operations that are involved in coming to know in any given domain. Each subject (e.g., music, math, or politics) differs in the core operations that relate those disciplines to the student. In all, perception of the otherness is based part in neurology (e.g., visual or aural acuity and sensitivity to pitch relations), part information processing and pattern recognition (grammar, rhythm), and part nurture (educational intervention). How to know and manipulate the symbols and symbolic maps of any domain varies.

Robert and Michele Root-Bernstein (1999) take the theory of multiple intelligences a step further. They argue that "multiple intelligences" is not intelligence per se. Rather, they are the media through which intelligence is expressed. The artifacts created through these media are symptoms of intelligence. According to them, thinking and creativity precede logical and verbal expression, and is experienced by the individual in pre-verbal ways. Thus, "knowing something" is first experienced through the emotions, intuitions, visual images, and bodily feelings. For example, one may hunt for just the right word by checking a thesaurus or dictionary. The right word, though, may be elusive and the individual proceeds with the best approximation that comes to mind. Later, when that right word pops up and is happily incorporated into its place. There is a sense of relief in finding the right word that one already knew at an emotional or subconscious level. One who is high in verbal intelligence is more adept at naming emotions and readily finding the right word, while others struggle to express themselves.

Paul lends support for this type of pre-verbal, visceral, or physical knowledge that is known before it can be expressed in words, if ever. He says we “groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies” (Rom. 8:22-24) and “if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful” (1 Cor. 14:13-15).

The Bible indicates that humans are created with a longing for eternity, a restlessness that reaches for but cannot fully know God and his ways (Eccl. 3:11). The individual must “translate” this pre-verbal, ill-defined knowledge into one or more of the different intelligences such as words, quantitative formulae, paintings, or music. Some things can be expressed in more than one way. An abstraction such as “love” for example, can be expressed in verbal ways (poetry), graphically (sculpture of the Madonna and child), or interpersonally (experiencing the kindness of another).

Intelligence of any kind generally increases with age and maturation. Luke observed that the young Jesus grew physically and “became strong in spirit” (Luke 1:80). John Fowler has described stages in faith development in a manner similar to Jean Piaget’s developmental approach to describing intelligence. Core operations in Piaget’s model of cognitive development are the dual processes of assimilation and accommodation. In his classic work Stages of faith: the psychology of human development (1995) Fowler describes a six-stage model of development from childhood to maturity. Because Fowler’s model of stages of faith development is a developmental one, it will be of greatest interest to those who work with children.

An emerging literature found positive correlations between spirituality and health outcomes, indicating a promising future for the psychometric, and empirical investigation of spiritual intelligence. These studies find that in general, the higher the measures of

spirituality, religiosity, and proxy or correlated measures for those constructs, the better it is for health and mortality (Lee, Stacey & Fraser, 2003; Koenig; 2001, 2002; Mueller, Plevak & Rummans, 2001; Ellison, Boardman, Williams, & Jackson, 2001; Musgrave, Allen & Allen, 2002). Each model (developmental, psychometric, and information processing) could be described in great detail. However, the rest of this paper will address spiritual intelligence from an information-processing perspective and will explore the core operations that it uses.

Spiritual intelligence and core operations

A fundamental core operation is the ability to discern the phenomenon unique to a specific intelligence (whether color, musical sounds, spatial shapes, quantifiable objects, words, or physical, nonverbal cues). Spiritual matters are noted to be spiritually discerned but opaque to others (1 Cor. 2:14). Those who lack discernment become increasingly self-serving until society itself is corrupted and decays (Gen. 6:10-14; Jonah 1:2; 4:11; Rom. 1:21, 28-32). The psalmist sighed, “Who can discern his errors? (Ps. 19:12) and discernment is the one thing Solomon asked for and God granted (1 Kings 3:9; 12). Discernment opens “the eyes of our heart,” leading to enlightenment and supernatural vision (Eph. 1: 18; Pr. 28:11). Jesus chided Nicodemus for his lack of discernment of spiritual truths even though he was a teacher in Israel (John 3:10-11). Discernment is a necessary prerequisite for knowledge (Pr. 14:6). Discernment makes people open to learning from their mistakes (“rebuke a discerning man and he will gain knowledge,” Pr. 19:25). Discernment comes through Bible study, reflection, prayer, and

is manifest by choices and behavior (Pr. 28:7) that affect the individual and “the common good.” (1 Cor. 12: 10, 7)

Another core operation is concept formation. Concepts, values, and sentiments must be assimilated for an understanding and mastery to develop to the degree that the individual develops fluency and can be creative with domain symbols and their systems (whether musical notation and theory, numbers and theorems, grammar and syntax, or spiritual concepts and theology). Immersion in the domain is critical. There is no substitute for learning well. It takes time to internalize the domain; its symbolic elements, rules, and notation. Creativity and the competence to form systems and concepts, like critical thinking, require a great deal of content mastery. Just as it is not possible to think critically about nothing, creativity must find expression through a domain. How much is enough? Gardner’s study (1993) of seven creative individuals in domains ranging from psychology (Freud), science (Einstein), dance (Graham), and music (Stravinsky), showed significant breakthroughs at 10-year intervals. The “10-year rule” as the time it takes for an individual to gain initial mastery of a domain has been well documented in studies of cognitive psychology.

Csikszentmihalyi (1996) goes on to explain that creativity is the cultural equivalent of the biological process of adaptation. In this analogy, cultural genes are “memes” in that they are the units of information that we must learn if culture is to continue. Memes are numbers, language, recipes, theories, stories, etc. that are passed on and which the creative person changes. If enough see the change as valuable, the change becomes part of culture. (p. 7)

Creativity depends on prior knowledge that must be learned before it can be changed. It may not take 10 years, but domain mastery is needed before an individual can manipulate symbols in new ways that solve problems or apply to novel situations. Jesus first demonstrated domain mastery and the ability to synthesize and reformulate spiritual truths as a 12-year old in the temple, where everyone “was amazed at his understanding and his answers” (Luke 2:46-47). When Jesus taught about the kingdom of God, his spiritual intelligence astounded those who listened to him: "How did this man get such learning without having studied?" (John 7:15) In Matthew they puzzled when “he began teaching the people in their synagogue, and they were amazed. ‘Where did this man get this wisdom and these miraculous powers?’ they asked. ‘Isn't this the carpenter's son? Isn't his mother's name Mary, and aren't his brothers James, Joseph, Simon and Judas? Aren't all his sisters with us? Where then did this man get all these things?’” (Matt. 13:54-56).

For spiritual intelligence, assimilation of the domain enables one to interpret spiritual principles and apply them to the challenges of life. One can then draw from this deep well of content mastery to solve a variety of problems such as when to terminate life support (clinical ethics); to prepare an exegetical sermon; or to combine theology with musical and verbal intelligence to create complex musical compositions such as Handel's Messiah, Mozart's mass in C minor or Verdi's Requiem. Spiritual intelligence also enables ordinary people to transform experiences and emotions such as bereavement so that they do not “grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope.” (1 Thess. 4:13).

Spiritual facilitation of thought occurs through the practice of disciplines such as meditation, observation, reflection and contemplative practices. Through such practices,

the mind changes to accommodate new ways of thinking. Appendix A shows that meditation is about something (scripture, nature, God's work) and not a cognitive state of white noise. Most of the references to meditation are in the psalms. Song itself is a form of reflection and meditation. Creating or participating in art, drama, and poetry are means of reflection, observation, and meditation. Other sources are the study of nature (Rom. 1:19-20) and history, including the oral history passed on from one to another. The book of nature is a revelation of God to the discerning eye: "The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge" (Ps. 19:1-2; Rom. 1:19-23).

The Wisdom Literature (Proverbs, Job and Ecclesiastes) lack discussions about the promises to the patriarchs, the covenant with God, the central purpose of Jerusalem, etc. Instead, they provide cognitive and spiritual building blocks with which to play. Here the wise are juxtaposed with fools. Learning from their lessons develops wisdom (see Appendix B). The Wisdom Literature also provides metrics for what spiritual intelligence is and is not.

Much learning happens in the context of relationships with other people and prayer is a means of communication and relationship with God. Prayer is also an attitude of openness and receptivity to spiritual issues. What can be known about God can also be shared and validated in the community of faith. Even God, who has the power to do so, does not use authority to command trust. Trust in God grows out of a relationship with him. Good teachers provide students with a relational epistemology. This epistemology uses core operations so that the unknown (Truth, God) is perceived, evaluated, and interpreted. Core operations are the means by which a relationship is

formed with the subject. This is validated in community, and substantiated by evidence. Relationship thus becomes both a vehicle to and a context for knowledge.

But solitude has a role as well. There is value in periods of silence. God's greatness is in stillness (Ps. 46:9-11) and our own purpose in life is found in response to his gently whispered, "What are you doing here?" (1 Kings 19:12-13). "In all creation," said Meister Eckhart (1260-1327), "there is nothing so like God as stillness."

What about faith, hope, and love? How do they fit in with the core operations? Faith is "being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see" and by faith we "fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith," (Hebr. 11:1; 12:2). Faith is integral to discernment and perception of the spiritual, non-material world. Hope rests on an assurance that God is who he claims to be and that he will redeem all things in the anticipated future (Mt. 12:21; Luke 24:21; Acts 26:6; Rom. 8:24-25; Eph. 2:12; 1 Tim. 4:10; Tit. 1:2; Hebr. 6:18-19). Hope is related to faith (Col. 1:5, 23) but also based in the lessons of history and the Bible (Rom. 15:4).

Love is most apparent in animating and ordering our relationship to God and to others (Deut. 10:12; Josh. 22:5; Mt. 22:34-40). Love is the magnet that draws one's attention to the love object. What violinist does not love the turn of a violin's lines, the hue of its wood, and the physical interaction that draws person and instrument to song? Love is the glue of all relationships.

Relationships are fertile grounds for growth. According to Vygotsky (1978), the mutual construction of knowledge is fundamental to the development of human cognition. The social construction of knowledge also occurs in the classroom. Palmer (1998, p. 51) proposes that our assumptions about what truth is directly affect our

approach to teaching: “If we regard truth as something handed down from authorities on high, the classroom will look like a dictatorship. If we regard truth as a fiction determined by personal whim, the classroom will look like anarchy. If we regard truth as emerging from a complex process of mutual inquiry, the classroom will look like a resourceful and interdependent community. Our assumptions about knowing can open up, or shut down, the capacity for connectedness on which good teaching depends.”

Palmer contends that “knowing of any sort is relational, animated by a desire to come into deeper community with what we know.” He elaborates: “Knowing is how we make community with the unavailable other, with realities that would elude us without the connective tissue of knowledge. Knowing is a human way to seek relationship and, in the process, to have encounters and exchanges that will inevitably alter us. At its deepest reaches, knowing is always communal.” (p. 54).

Jesus said, “If you really knew me, you would know my Father as well.” This describes a relational knowledge that is generalizable rather than specific (John 14:7). A few chapters later this relational knowledge is reemphasized his prayer: “Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you, and they know that you have sent me. I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them.” (John 17:25-26). This is a relational epistemology. Indeed, Pinnock (1999) writes that relationality is an essential quality of the Trinity and it is the Holy Spirit who creates and enables communality. The Holy Spirit interprets and enables receptive minds to perceive and understand spiritual truths (1 Cor. 2:10-14; John 14:16-17, 26; 15:26; 16:13-15). Jesus said, “But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He

will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.” (John 16:13) This is why alienating the Spirit is so serious.

Zohar and Marshall (1999) place value on situations in which we must make a choice, exercise our freedom and responsibility, and use what they call SQ [Spiritual Quotient] as an inner compass. Learning from mistakes is part of the maturation of spiritual intelligence. The Bible contains many examples to encourage and demonstrate that failure is fertile ground from which spiritual intelligence can grow. A number of these were reflected in name changes (Abram to Abraham, Jacob to Israel, Simon Peter to Cephas, Saul to Paul) to mark their spiritual growth. The meaning of the Greek word repentance, μετάνοια, is to have a change of heart, a change of way and a turning from one’s sins. It involves a metamorphosis (μεταμορφουσθε) of change in form as from a caterpillar to a butterfly--a transformation of thinking from a worldly to spiritual pattern (Rom 12:2). It is a turning away from the old and a rebirth to a new form of thought and action.

Pharaoh, King Saul, and Judas are examples of those who had regrets but failed to repent by humbling themselves in discipleship, re-connection and a loving re-orientation to God. Whether due to pride or irreparably-corroded faith, they sank into spiritual darkness. Because rejection of discernment given by God’s Spirit leads to a blindness so dark there is no escape from its perpetual night, Jesus warned against alienating the Spirit (Mt. 12:31-32; Mk 3:28-29). Students need assurance that the more serious sin is to fail to turn away from and learn from mistakes and wrongdoing.

How is spiritual intelligence measured?

When there is domain mastery, the individual develops the ability to create new structures and expressions through, for example words, the arts, music, drama. “The Chronicles of Narnia” by C.S. Lewis and “Lord of the Rings” J. R. R Tolkien are expressions of creativity and spiritual intelligence that appeal to both young and old. Their stories are delightfully whimsical but with deep magic (theology).

Creativity has an internal and external dimension. But any type of intelligence depends upon external validation that it exists in an individual. Traditional IQ tests assess and quantify verbal and quantitative aptitude. In other domains, evidence of that particular intelligence may be works of art or music, sculpture, or architecture. Goleman (1995) suggests that success in the business world is the evidence of emotional intelligence. Regardless of what it is, the only measure that any type of intelligence exists is external evidence. What external evidence is there of spiritual intelligence? Why should we think that because spiritual intelligence deals with the unseen world that there is no way to measure and observe it? The Bible indicates that such intelligence or wisdom is seen in one’s life: “Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show it by his good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom.” (James 3:13)

The evidence of discernment, assimilation, and understanding are what the Bible identifies as “fruit of the spirit.” They are external indicators of an internal state of affairs (Mt. 12:35). There is good fruit and bad. The bad is described alongside the good in Galatians 5. “So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want... The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality,

impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.”

(Gal. 5:16-17, 19-21).

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness (Gal. 5:21-23). Using these guidelines, Table 1 shows some examples of people in the Bible who manifested spiritual intelligence as judged by their choices and behavior.

Table 1 Biblical examples of spiritual intelligence as judged by choices and behavior.

Positive indicators	Negative indicators	Indeterminate
Deborah	Barak	
Rahab	The rest of the inhabitants of Jericho	
Job	His wife and 3 friends	
King David		King Saul (1 Sam. 16; 28:8-25; 31:4-6; s Sam. 1:6-16)
Solomon	Most of his wives	
Jacob	Esau	
True prophets like Elijah	False prophets, mediums, spiritists (1 Sam. 28:5-9)	
Moses	Pharaoh	
The believing thief on the cross	The other one	
Peter (Mt. 17:17)	Caiaphas	Judas
The 3 wise men	Herod (either one)	Pilot
Ruth, Naomi	Orpah	

Analysis of those who had negative spiritual intelligence in column 2, shows that spiritual intelligence can be a matter of life and death. Our culture, however, practically dismisses the value of spiritual intelligence. Schools, parents, employers, and students themselves focus almost exclusively on a more narrow definition of intelligence. On

Rosh Hashanah--the Day of Judgment, Rabbi Harold Schulweis (1996) warned his congregation, “pay attention to the measure that we use.” He said:

It is not the measure of God who created us in His image but the measure of Sodom of Gomorrah that stretches and amputates the wholeness of ourselves. On this day of judgment, I appeal for a respect for yourself, for your children and for each other. Pay attention to the multiple talents and spiritual intelligences.

The news in all of this is that spiritual intelligence, emotional intelligence, intrapersonal and Interpersonal intelligence so critical for the sanity of society and the health of the individual, is teachable. Unlike the tyranny of the IQ, with its fateful genetic determinism that burns its number into my psyche that is the measure of my worth, spiritual intelligence can be taught and it is here that faith, religion, and character education are so important.

The Wisdom Literature provides many examples of what today are referred to as Student Learning Outcomes, as do other portions of the Bible (Appendix B). In the behavioral domain, indicators are behaviors such as holding one’s tongue (Pr. 11:12), being even-tempered (Pr. 17:27) and patient (Pr. 14:29), obedient to God’s law (Ps. 119:33-35; 99-101, and shunning evil (Job 28:28) by constant training to “distinguish good from evil.” (Hebr. 5:1-14). The wise person is quick to learn from God’s precepts and revelation (Ps. 119:73, 104, 130; Ps. 110:10; Pr. 2:6); from parents (Pr. 4:1); from practice, feedback and discipline (Pr. 15:32); and the lessons of history and nature (Ps. 145:5). They are able to communicate and explain what has been learned to others (Job

8:10; Ps. 49:3; 2 Tim. 2:2). They are also able to apply what they have learned to novel situations, to solve problems, and extend existing knowledge beyond itself (Dan. 5:12; Mt. 22:15-22; Luke 24:32). The ability to solve problems and create new, contextualized, theologically correct responses is a hallmark of spiritual intelligence.

Spiritual intelligence leads to happiness (Pr. 3:13), prosperity (Pr. 19:8) and is a fountain of life (Pr. 16:22). But “a man who strays from the path of understanding comes to rest in the company of the dead” (Pr. 21:16), and so “my people will go into exile for lack of understanding; their men of rank will die of hunger and their masses will be parched with thirst” (Is. 5:13).

Spiritual intelligence can and must be part of the higher education curriculum. Students must also learn that when the application of knowledge is for exploitive and cruel purposes, it is a misuse of spiritual intelligence. This calls for the need to cultivate emotional and spiritual intelligence, morality, and ethics alongside the cultivation of any other type of intelligence. It calls for education of the whole person.

Power, thinking, action, truth, duty, and destiny are key concepts in Adventist education. The development of these qualities enables students to be “masters and not slaves of circumstances.” The context for these concepts is that:

Every human being, created in the image of God, is endowed with a power akin to that of the Creator—individuality, power to think and to do. The men in whom this power is developed are the men who bear responsibilities, who are leaders in enterprise, and who influence character. It is the work of true education to develop this power, to train the youth to be thinkers, and not mere reflectors of other men’s thought. Instead of confining their study to that which men have said

or written, let students be directed to the sources of truth, to the vast fields opened for research in nature and revelation. Let them contemplate the great facts of duty and destiny, and the mind will expand and strengthen. Instead of educated weaklings, institutions of learning may send forth men strong to think and to act, men who are masters and not slaves of circumstances, men who possess breadth of mind, clearness of thought, and the courage of their convictions.”” (White, 1952, p. 17, 18, italics added).

To this point we have considered spiritual intelligence as a neutral to positive quality. However, spiritual intelligence wrongly used will be considered next.

Is the Devil Spiritually Intelligent?

In the military, "intelligence" denotes information about the enemy. Can the adversary use “intelligence” in the spiritual warfare of the Great Controversy? All other types of intelligence can be used for good or evil—to design medication that can bring healing or it can be used to mastermind toxins for biological warfare. Why should spiritual intelligence be any different? Can it be used for evil?

The Bible shows spiritual intelligence to be a two-edged sword. Most of the same core operations apply to good or bad content. The wicked person reflects on and uses his creativity to “invent ways of doing evil” (Rom. 1:30). The psalmist observes: “The words of his mouth are wicked and deceitful; he has ceased to be wise and to do good. Even on his bed he plots evil; he commits himself to a sinful course and does not reject what is wrong.” (Ps. 36: 3,4).

In this case the core operations of assimilation and accommodation (through reflection and meditation) are used to wrong ends. The pre-diluvium world is an example of spiritual intelligence went so amok that its civilization became utterly corrupt and violent (Gen. 6:11-13). The societies of Sodom and Gomorrah decayed in the same way (Gen. 13:13; 18:20). All who “parade their sin like Sodom” will bring “disaster upon themselves” (Is. 3:9) and is “an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly” of all time (2 Pet. 2:6).

Satan, evil spirits, and evil people all demonstrate a degree of spiritual intelligence. Satan sometimes masquerades as an angel of light (2 Cor. 11:14). He knows the Bible and can quote it: "You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder." (James 2:19). They discern spiritual issues, assimilate and meditate on them, albeit the dark side (e.g., death versus life, greed versus generosity, pride versus humility, violence versus peace). Individuals such as the Reverend Jim Jones, David Koresh, and Hitler developed mastery of spiritual symbols and used them to manipulate people’s deepest spiritual longings to gain power and control over them. Once that control was achieved, it was used to exploit and destroy them. The image of evil spirits going into the pigs and rushing down the steep bank into the lake to drown (Mark 5:12-14, Luke 8:33) is a fitting one for those unfortunate 85 people, including 20 children, who died in the April 19, 1993 cataclysmic fire that ended the Waco siege. About that Lacayo (1993) said “Equipped with both a creamy charm and a cold-blooded willingness to manipulate those drawn to him, Koresh was a type well known to students of cult practices: the charismatic leader with a pathological edge. He was the most spectacular example since Jim Jones, who committed suicide in 1978 with more than 900

of his followers at the People's Temple in Guyana. Like Jones, Koresh fashioned a tight-knit community that saw itself at desperate odds with the world outside. He plucked sexual partners as he pleased from among his followers and formed an elite guard of lieutenants to enforce his will. And like Jones, he led his followers to their doom.”

See just how it happened in slow motion in 1 Samuel 28:8-25; 31:4-6 and 2 Samuel 1:6-16.. Saul made the wrong choice. He then disguised himself and visits the Witch of Endor in a cave by night. Earlier in his reign, King Saul acted on God's direction and put to death spiritists and mediums. But when God no longer seemed to answer him, he rationalized why it was acceptable to make God talk to him. The trap was spread and the spiritist spun a web of deceit in which he got caught. Saul believed the apparition that he saw, not considering that it might be lying to him. He relied upon his own perception rather than upon what God had said. When he did not get killed as the spirit had predicted, he made it a self-fulfilling prophecy by first falling on his own sword, and then persuaded a passing Amalekite to finish him off. The devil flung spiritual dust in his eyes. His discernment and understanding were so darkened that the visual apparition tricked him. He was out-manuevered in spiritual warfare and lost the spiritual vision that once made him a great king. He would not have been deceived had he accepted as absolute truth that mediums and sorcerers do not speak for God and must never be consulted. And so he lost his life.

Does one have to be of a specific religion, namely Adventist, to be spiritually intelligent? What about Gandhi, Buddha, Mother Teresa, Martin Luther? What about an ordinary person born in the People's Republic of China today who knows little about organized religion at all? Paul says no one has an excuse for spiritual ignorance, “Since

what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse. For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles.” (Rom 1:19-23). Paul makes it clear that spiritual intelligence is not limited to those who have the Bible, “Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature things required by the law, they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law. Since they show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts now accusing, now even defending them... No, a man is a Jew if he is one inwardly; and circumcision is circumcision of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the written code.” (Rom 1:14 – 15; 29).

If Satan and power-hungry spiritual tyrants like David Koresh can be spiritually intelligent, what makes the difference between them and the ignorant but God-leaning person that Paul described above in Romans? And how are they different from a Martin Luther, John the Baptist or Ellen White? A power-hungry tyrant has faith in the spiritual, non-material world but does not go on to develop a loving relationship with the object of Scripture. The Scriptures are like a transitive verb. A transitive verb takes a direct object: it shows action upon someone or something. Intransitive verbs take no direct object; they need only a subject to make a sentence. The object of the Bible is God. Where discernment, knowledge, and understanding fail to ultimately connect with God,

the limits of spiritual intelligence have been reached. Resistance to connecting with God has the effect of darkening the heart and mind. This indicates that spiritual intelligence involves more than perception (discernment), reflection, assimilation, understanding, and even knowledge of scripture or theology.

In an examination of Latin grammar, Taylor (2003) establishes that *Solus Christus* is the nominative case indicating that Christ stands alone and is all-sufficient. *Sola scriptura*, on the other hand is the ablative case, “by scripture alone.” The role of scripture is to lead to Christ, and Christ is pre-eminent, beyond scripture. To stop with the scripture and fail to progress into a loving relationship with Christ results in stunted spiritual intelligence. “You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life,” said Jesus. “These are the Scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life.” (John 5:39-40). About his intentions toward new believers, Paul said “My purpose is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.” (Col. 2:2-3). Much “spirituality” today is personal in a post-modernist, “whatever” kind of way but falls short of leading to a personal relationship with the God of Scripture. This God is not an indulgent, permissive Celestial Parent but has specific expectations and provides guidelines for what it means to be wise and to stay in relationship with God.

Implications for education

How does the educator foster spiritual intelligence in students? A website containing tips for Adventist educators suggests means for developing spiritual intelligence: meditation, reflection, worship and praise, faith integrated with learning, participation in a social gospel, and ask[ing] basic questions about existence among others (<http://www.curriculumfutures.org/learning/a06-09.html>). The educator is in a unique position to facilitate domain proficiency. There is no substitute for learning well. Students must learn to internalize the domain; its symbolic elements, rules, and notation. They must also internalize the criteria and selectivity of the field so that attention and efforts can be focused and poor ideas winnowed out. Creativity, like critical thinking, requires a great deal of content mastery. The “10-year rule” as the time it takes for an individual to gain initial mastery has been documented in other domains.

Learning how to analyze and elicit creative solutions to problems builds upon content mastery. The Root-Bernstein’s (1999) have identified 13 “thinking tools” used by creative people. These tools to transform thinking include observing, imaging, abstracting, recognizing patterns, forming patterns, analogizing, body thinking, empathizing, dimensional thinking, modeling, playing, transforming, and synthesizing. They “emphasize the teaching of universal processes of invention in addition to the acquisition of disciplinary products of knowledge.” (p. 316). They propose that teaching the arts on an equal footing with the sciences and teaching students the intuitive and imaginative skills helps nurture the nonlogical, nonverbal seeds of creative thinking.

The natural world and revelation in the Word of God are primary sources for meditation. Practice of spiritual disciplines, aligning behavior with knowledge, and incorporating feedback and repentance as a critical learning loop refines spiritual

intelligence. The Spirit of God, in revealing truth, and in hovering over the void at Creation certainly has a role here. It is through reflection on the call and claim of God that a sense of duty is developed. The light of heaven, eternity, and destiny provides insight gained through no other means.

Finally, students must be impressed that spiritual intelligence has moral and ethical dimensions. It can be used to bless through biomedical research, micro enterprise projects that alleviate poverty, or innovative, culturally-appropriate methods of evangelism. It can also be used for evil: biological warfare, calculating crime, and deceit. This is why spiritual intelligence must be learned and practiced by students within the context of duty and destiny.

Summary

Spiritual intelligence involves discernment, domain mastery, facilitation of spiritual thought, and creative expression through art, music, and other symbolic maps (theology and doctrine). Problem-solving and application to decision-making and life situations is an indicator of spiritual intelligence. It is also evidenced by behavior such as the “fruit of the Spirit” and service. Ultimately, the goal and most satisfying expressions of spiritual intelligence are loving relationships in the community of faith and with God.

Spiritual intelligence can be misused. By creating safe relationships in the classroom in which to explore and learn from mistakes, teachers can help students develop their spiritual intelligence. To enter into that environment with students and develop their proficiency with the core operations that facilitate engagement with the subject is the challenge for the educator.

Questions:

What might you foster development of spiritual intelligence in the subject you teach?

What core operations could you incorporate into instructional activities?

How might you foster engagement and relationship with God, content, and students and in your classes?

What is the role of faith, hope and love? What is the role of prayer and the Holy Spirit?

How much intelligence do you need to be spiritually smart? Can a child with Down's Syndrome be spiritually smart?

What might you do in your discipline to develop in students the abilities to think and to do?

What would help them be more creative?

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Appendix A

Core operation: Role of meditation in the development of discernment

Joshua 1:8

Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; **meditate** on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.

(Whole Chapter: Joshua 1 In context: Joshua 1:7-9)

Psalms 1:2

But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he **meditates** day and night.

(Whole Chapter: Psalms 1 In context: Psalms 1:1-3)

Psalms 39:3

My heart grew hot within me, and as I **meditated**, the fire burned; then I spoke with my tongue: Show me, O LORD, my life's end and the number of my days; let me know how fleeting is my life.

(Whole Chapter: Psalms 39 In context: Psalms 39:2-4)

Psalms 48:9

Within your temple, O God, we **meditate** on your unfailing love.

(Whole Chapter: Psalms 48 In context: Psalms 48:8-10)

Psalms 77:12

I will **meditate** on all your works and consider all your mighty deeds.

(Whole Chapter: Psalms 77 In context: Psalms 77:11-13)

Psalms 119:15

I **meditate** on your precepts and consider your ways.

(Whole Chapter: Psalms 119 in context: Psalms 119:14-16)

Psalms 119:23

Though rulers sit together and slander me, your servant will **meditate** on your decrees.

(Whole Chapter: Psalms 119 In context: Psalms 119:22-24)

Psalms 119:27

Let me understand the teaching of your precepts; then I will **meditate** on your wonders.

(Whole Chapter: Psalms 119 In context: Psalms 119:26-28)

Psalms 119:48

I lift up my hands to [**119:48** Or [for]] your commands, which I love, and I **meditate** on your decrees.

(Whole Chapter: Psalms 119 In context: Psalms 119:47-49)

Psalm 119:78

May the arrogant be put to shame for wronging me without cause; but I will **meditate** on your precepts.

(Whole Chapter: Psalm 119 In context: Psalm 119:77-79)

Psalm 119:97

Oh, how I love your law! I **meditate** on it all day long.

(Whole Chapter: Psalm 119 In context: Psalm 119:96-98)

Psalm 119:99

I have more insight than all my teachers, for I **meditate** on your statutes.

(Whole Chapter: Psalm 119 In context: Psalm 119:98-100)

Psalm 119:148

My eyes stay open through the watches of the night, that I may **meditate** on your promises.

(Whole Chapter: Psalm 119 In context: Psalm 119:147-149)

Psalm 143:5

I remember the days of long ago; I **meditate** on all your works and consider what your hands have done.

(Whole Chapter: Psalm 143 In context: Psalm 143:4-6)

Psalm 145:5

They will speak of the glorious splendor of your majesty, and I will **meditate** on your wonderful works. [**145:5** Dead Sea Scrolls and Syriac (see also Septuagint); Masoretic Text [On the glorious splendor of your majesty / and on your wonderful works I will **meditate**]]

(Whole Chapter: Psalm 145 In context: Psalm 145:4-6)

Psalm 19:14

May the words of my mouth and the **meditation** of my heart be pleasing in your sight, O Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer.

(Whole Chapter: Psalm 19 In context: Psalm 19:13-15)

Psalm 104:34

May my **meditation** be pleasing to him, as I rejoice in the LORD.

(Whole Chapter: Psalm 104 In context: Psalm 104:33-35)

Appendix B

Concept formation of wisdom

Deuteronomy 4:6

See, I have taught you decrees and laws as the LORD my God commanded me, so that you may follow them in the land you are entering to take possession of it. ⁶ Observe them carefully, for this will show your wisdom and **understanding** to the nations, who will hear about all these decrees and say, "Surely this great nation is a wise and **understanding** people." ⁷ What other nation is so great as to have their gods near them the way the LORD our God is near us whenever we pray to him? (Whole Chapter: Deuteronomy 4 In context: Deuteronomy 4:5-7)

Judges 13:18

He replied, "Why do you ask my name? It is beyond **understanding**. [**13:18** Or [is wonderful]]" (Whole Chapter: Judges 13 In context: Judges 13:17-19)

1 Kings 4:29

God gave Solomon wisdom and very great insight, and a breadth of **understanding** as measureless as the sand on the seashore. (Whole Chapter: 1 Kings 4 In context: 1 Kings 4:28-30)

1 Chronicles 22:12

May the LORD give you discretion and **understanding** when he puts you in command over Israel, so that you may keep the law of the LORD your God. (Whole Chapter: 1 Chronicles 22 In context: 1 Chronicles 22:11-13)

1 Chronicles 28:19

"All this," David said, "I have in writing from the hand of the LORD upon me, and he gave me **understanding** in all the details of the plan." (Whole Chapter: 1 Chronicles 28 In context: 1 Chronicles 28:18-20)

2 Chronicles 30:22

Hezekiah spoke encouragingly to all the Levites, who showed good **understanding** of the service of the LORD. For the seven days they ate their assigned portion and offered fellowship offerings [**30:22** Traditionally [peace offerings]] and praised the LORD, the God of their fathers. (Whole Chapter: 2 Chronicles 30 In context: 2 Chronicles 30:21-23)

Job 8:10

"Ask the former generations and find out what their fathers learned, ⁹ for we were born only yesterday and know nothing, and our days on earth are but a shadow. Will they not instruct you and tell you? Will they not bring forth words from their **understanding**?" (Whole Chapter: Job 8 In context: Job 8:9-11)

Job 12:12

Is not wisdom found among the aged? Does not long life bring **understanding**? (Whole Chapter: Job 12 In context: Job 12:11-13)

Job 12:13

"To God belong wisdom and power; counsel and **understanding** are his.

(Whole Chapter: Job 12 In context: Job 12:12-14)

Job 17:4

You have closed their minds to **understanding**; therefore you will not let them triumph.

(Whole Chapter: Job 17 In context: Job 17:3-5)

Job 20:3

I hear a rebuke that dishonors me, and my **understanding** inspires me to reply.

(Whole Chapter: Job 20 In context: Job 20:2-4)

Job 28:12

"But where can wisdom be found? Where does **understanding** dwell?

(Whole Chapter: Job 28 In context: Job 28:11-13)

Job 28:20

The topaz of Cush cannot compare with it; it cannot be bought with pure gold. "Where then does wisdom come from? Where does **understanding** dwell?

(Whole Chapter: Job 28 In context: Job 28:19-21)

Job 28:28

And he said to man, 'The fear of the Lord-that is wisdom, and to shun evil is **understanding**.' "

(Whole Chapter: Job 28 In context: Job 28:27-29)

Job 32:8

I thought, 'Age should speak; advanced years should teach wisdom.' But it is the spirit [**32:8** Or [Spirit] ; also in verse 18] in a man, the breath of the Almighty, that gives him **understanding**.

(Whole Chapter: Job 32 In context: Job 32:7-9)

Job 34:10

"So listen to me, you men of **understanding**. Far be it from God to do evil, from the Almighty to do wrong.

(Whole Chapter: Job 34 In context: Job 34:9-11)

Job 34:16

"If you have **understanding**, hear this; listen to what I say.

(Whole Chapter: Job 34 In context: Job 34:15-17)

Job 34:34

"Men of **understanding** declare, wise men who hear me say to me,

(Whole Chapter: Job 34 In context: Job 34:33-35)

Job 36:26

How great is God-beyond our **understanding**! The number of his years is past finding

out.

(Whole Chapter: Job 36 In context: Job 36:25-27)

Job 37:5

God's voice thunders in marvelous ways; he does great things beyond our **understanding**.

(Whole Chapter: Job 37 In context: Job 37:4-6)

Job 38:36

Who endowed the heart [**38:36** The meaning of the Hebrew for this word is uncertain.] with wisdom or gave **understanding** to the mind [**38:36** The meaning of the Hebrew for this word is uncertain.] ?

(Whole Chapter: Job 38 In context: Job 38:35-37)

Psalms 32:9

Do not be like the horse or the mule, which have no **understanding** but must be controlled by bit and bridle or they will not come to you.

(Whole Chapter: Psalms 32 In context: Psalms 32:8-10)

Psalms 49:3

My mouth will speak words of wisdom; the utterance from my heart will give **understanding**.

(Whole Chapter: Psalms 49 In context: Psalms 49:2-4)

Psalms 49:20

A man who has riches without **understanding** is like the beasts that perish.

(Whole Chapter: Psalms 49 In context: Psalms 49:19-21)

Psalms 111:10

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; all who follow his precepts have good **understanding**. To him belongs eternal praise.

(Whole Chapter: Psalms 111 In context: Psalms 111:9-11)

Psalms 119:34

Give me **understanding**, and I will keep your law and obey it with all my heart.

(Whole Chapter: Psalms 119 In context: Psalms 119:33-35)

Psalms 119:73

Your hands made me and formed me; give me **understanding** to learn your commands.

(Whole Chapter: Psalms 119 In context: Psalms 119:72-74)

Psalms 119:100

I have more **understanding** than the elders, for I obey your precepts.

(Whole Chapter: Psalms 119 In context: Psalms 119:99-101)

Psalms 119:104

I gain **understanding** from your precepts; therefore I hate every wrong path.

(Whole Chapter: Psalms 119 In context: Psalms 119:103-105)

Psalm 119:130

The unfolding of your words gives light; it gives **understanding** to the simple.

(Whole Chapter: Psalm 119 In context: Psalm 119:129-131)

Psalm 119:144

Your statutes are forever right; give me **understanding** that I may live.

(Whole Chapter: Psalm 119 In context: Psalm 119:143-145)

Psalm 119:169

May my cry come before you, O LORD ; give me **understanding** according to your word.

(Whole Chapter: Psalm 119 In context: Psalm 119:168-170)

Psalm 136:5

who by his **understanding** made the heavens, His love endures forever.

(Whole Chapter: Psalm 136 In context: Psalm 136:4-6)

Psalm 147:5

Great is our Lord and mighty in power; his **understanding** has no limit.

(Whole Chapter: Psalm 147 In context: Psalm 147:4-6)

Proverbs 1:2

for attaining wisdom and discipline; for **understanding** words of insight;

(Whole Chapter: Proverbs 1 In context: Proverbs 1:1-3)

Proverbs 1:6

for **understanding** proverbs and parables, the sayings and riddles of the wise.

(Whole Chapter: Proverbs 1 In context: Proverbs 1:5-7)

Proverbs 2:2

turning your ear to wisdom and applying your heart to **understanding**,

(Whole Chapter: Proverbs 2 In context: Proverbs 2:1-3)

Proverbs 2:3

and if you call out for insight and cry aloud for **understanding**,

(Whole Chapter: Proverbs 2 In context: Proverbs 2:2-4)

Proverbs 2:6

For the LORD gives wisdom, and from his mouth come knowledge and **understanding**.

(Whole Chapter: Proverbs 2 In context: Proverbs 2:5-7)

Proverbs 2:11

Discretion will protect you, and **understanding** will guard you.

(Whole Chapter: Proverbs 2 In context: Proverbs 2:10-12)

Proverbs 3:5

Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own **understanding**;

(Whole Chapter: Proverbs 3 In context: Proverbs 3:4-6)

Proverbs 3:13

Blessed is the man who finds wisdom, the man who gains **understanding**,
(Whole Chapter: Proverbs 3 In context: Proverbs 3:12-14)

Proverbs 3:19

By wisdom the LORD laid the earth's foundations, by **understanding** he set the heavens
in place;
(Whole Chapter: Proverbs 3 In context: Proverbs 3:18-20)

Proverbs 4:1

Listen, my sons, to a father's instruction; pay attention and gain **understanding**.
(Whole Chapter: Proverbs 4 In context: Proverbs 4:1-2)

Proverbs 4:5

Get wisdom, get **understanding**; do not forget my words or swerve from them.
(Whole Chapter: Proverbs 4 In context: Proverbs 4:4-6)

Proverbs 4:7

Wisdom is supreme; therefore get wisdom. Though it cost all you have, [**4:7** Or [**Whatever else you get**]] get **understanding**.
(Whole Chapter: Proverbs 4 In context: Proverbs 4:6-8)

Proverbs 7:4

Say to wisdom, "You are my sister," and call **understanding** your kinsman;
(Whole Chapter: Proverbs 7 In context: Proverbs 7:3-5)

Proverbs 8:1

Does not wisdom call out? Does not **understanding** raise her voice?
(Whole Chapter: Proverbs 8 In context: Proverbs 8:1-2)

Proverbs 8:5

You who are simple, gain prudence; you who are foolish, gain **understanding**.
(Whole Chapter: Proverbs 8 In context: Proverbs 8:4-6)

Proverbs 8:14

Counsel and sound judgment are mine; I have **understanding** and power.
(Whole Chapter: Proverbs 8 In context: Proverbs 8:13-15)

Proverbs 9:6

Leave your simple ways and you will live; walk in the way of **understanding**.
(Whole Chapter: Proverbs 9 In context: Proverbs 9:5-7)

Proverbs 9:10

"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is **understanding**.
(Whole Chapter: Proverbs 9 In context: Proverbs 9:9-11)

Proverbs 10:23

A fool finds pleasure in evil conduct, but a man of **understanding** delights in wisdom. (Whole Chapter: Proverbs 10 In context: Proverbs 10:22-24)

Proverbs 11:12

A man who lacks judgment derides his neighbor, but a man of **understanding** holds his tongue. (Whole Chapter: Proverbs 11 In context: Proverbs 11:11-13)

Proverbs 13:15

Good **understanding** wins favor, but the way of the unfaithful is hard. [**13:15** Or [unfaithful does not endure]] (Whole Chapter: Proverbs 13 In context: Proverbs 13:14-16)

Proverbs 14:29

A patient man has great **understanding**, but a quick-tempered man displays folly. (Whole Chapter: Proverbs 14 In context: Proverbs 14:28-30)

Proverbs 15:21

Folly delights a man who lacks judgment, but a man of **understanding** keeps a straight course. (Whole Chapter: Proverbs 15 In context: Proverbs 15:20-22)

Proverbs 15:32

He who ignores discipline despises himself, but whoever heeds correction gains **understanding**. (Whole Chapter: Proverbs 15 In context: Proverbs 15:31-33)

Proverbs 16:16

How much better to get wisdom than gold, to choose **understanding** rather than silver! (Whole Chapter: Proverbs 16 In context: Proverbs 16:15-17)

Proverbs 16:22

Understanding is a fountain of life to those who have it, but folly brings punishment to fools. (Whole Chapter: Proverbs 16 In context: Proverbs 16:21-23)

Proverbs 17:27

A man of knowledge uses words with restraint, and a man of **understanding** is even-tempered. (Whole Chapter: Proverbs 17 In context: Proverbs 17:26-28)

Proverbs 18:2

A fool finds no pleasure in **understanding** but delights in airing his own opinions. (Whole Chapter: Proverbs 18 In context: Proverbs 18:1-3)

Proverbs 19:8

He who gets wisdom loves his own soul; he who cherishes **understanding** prospers. (Whole Chapter: Proverbs 19 In context: Proverbs 19:7-9)

Proverbs 20:5

The purposes of a man's heart are deep waters, but a man of **understanding** draws them

out.

(Whole Chapter: Proverbs 20 In context: Proverbs 20:4-6)

Proverbs 21:16

A man who strays from the path of **understanding** comes to rest in the company of the dead.

(Whole Chapter: Proverbs 21 In context: Proverbs 21:15-17)

Proverbs 23:23

Buy the truth and do not sell it; get wisdom, discipline and **understanding**.

(Whole Chapter: Proverbs 23 In context: Proverbs 23:22-24)

Proverbs 24:3

By wisdom a house is built, and through **understanding** it is established;

(Whole Chapter: Proverbs 24 In context: Proverbs 24:2-4)

Proverbs 28:2

When a country is rebellious, it has many rulers, but a man of **understanding** and knowledge maintains order.

(Whole Chapter: Proverbs 28 In context: Proverbs 28:1-3)

Proverbs 30:2

"I am the most ignorant of men; I do not have a man's **understanding**. I have not learned wisdom,

nor have I knowledge of the Holy One.

(Whole Chapter: Proverbs 30 In context: Proverbs 30:1-3)

Ecclesiastes 1:17

Then I applied myself to the **understanding** of wisdom, and also of madness and folly, but I learned that this, too, is a chasing after the wind.

(Whole Chapter: Ecclesiastes 1 In context: Ecclesiastes 1:16-18)

Isaiah 5:13

Therefore my people will go into exile for lack of **understanding**; their men of rank will die of hunger and their masses will be parched with thirst.

(Whole Chapter: Isaiah 5 In context: Isaiah 5:12-14)

Isaiah 6:9

He said, "Go and tell this people: " 'Be ever hearing, but never **understanding**; be ever seeing, but never perceiving.'

(Whole Chapter: Isaiah 6 In context: Isaiah 6:8-10)

Isaiah 6:10

Make the heart of this people calloused; make their ears dull and close their eyes. [**6:9,10** Hebrew; Septuagint ['You will be ever hearing, but never **understanding**; / you will be ever seeing, but never perceiving.' / 10 This people's heart has become calloused; / they hardly hear with their ears, / and they have closed their eyes]] Otherwise they might see

with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed."
(Whole Chapter: [Isaiah 6](#) In context: [Isaiah 6:9-11](#))

[Isaiah 10:13](#)

For he says: "By the strength of my hand I have done this, and by my wisdom, because I have **understanding**. I removed the boundaries of nations, I plundered their treasures; like a mighty one I subdued [10:13 Or [/ I subdued the mighty] ,] their kings.
(Whole Chapter: [Isaiah 10](#) In context: [Isaiah 10:12-14](#))

[Isaiah 11:2](#)

The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him- the Spirit of wisdom and of **understanding**, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD -
(Whole Chapter: [Isaiah 11](#) In context: [Isaiah 11:1-3](#))

[Isaiah 40:14](#)

Whom did the LORD consult to enlighten him, and who taught him the right way? Who was it that taught him knowledge or showed him the path of **understanding**?
(Whole Chapter: [Isaiah 40](#) In context: [Isaiah 40:13-15](#))

[Isaiah 40:28](#)

Do you not know? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and his **understanding** no one can fathom.
(Whole Chapter: [Isaiah 40](#) In context: [Isaiah 40:27-29](#))

[Isaiah 44:19](#)

No one stops to think, no one has the knowledge or **understanding** to say, "Half of it I used for fuel; I even baked bread over its coals, I roasted meat and I ate. Shall I make a detestable thing from what is left? Shall I bow down to a block of wood?"
(Whole Chapter: [Isaiah 44](#) In context: [Isaiah 44:18-20](#))

[Isaiah 56:11](#)

They are dogs with mighty appetites; they never have enough. They are shepherds who lack **understanding**; they all turn to their own way, each seeks his own gain.
(Whole Chapter: [Isaiah 56](#) In context: [Isaiah 56:10-12](#))

[Jeremiah 3:15](#)

Then I will give you shepherds after my own heart, who will lead you with knowledge and **understanding**.
(Whole Chapter: [Jeremiah 3](#) In context: [Jeremiah 3:14-16](#))

[Jeremiah 4:22](#)

"My people are fools; they do not know me. They are senseless children; they have no **understanding**. They are skilled in doing evil; they know not how to do good."
(Whole Chapter: [Jeremiah 4](#) In context: [Jeremiah 4:21-23](#))

[Jeremiah 10:12](#)

But God made the earth by his power; he founded the world by his wisdom and stretched

out the heavens by his **understanding**. (Whole Chapter: Jeremiah 10 In context: Jeremiah 10:11-13)

Jeremiah 51:15

"He made the earth by his power; he founded the world by his wisdom and stretched out the heavens by his **understanding**. (Whole Chapter: Jeremiah 51 In context: Jeremiah 51:14-16)

Ezekiel 28:4

By your wisdom and **understanding** you have gained wealth for yourself and amassed gold and silver in your treasuries. (Whole Chapter: Ezekiel 28 In context: Ezekiel 28:3-5)

Daniel 1:17

To these four young men God gave knowledge and **understanding** of all kinds of literature and learning. And Daniel could understand visions and dreams of all kinds. (Whole Chapter: Daniel 1 In context: Daniel 1:16-18)

Daniel 1:20

In every matter of wisdom and **understanding** about which the king questioned them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters in his whole kingdom. (Whole Chapter: Daniel 1 In context: Daniel 1:19-21)

Daniel 5:12

This man Daniel, whom the king called Belshazzar, was found to have a keen mind and knowledge and **understanding**, and also the ability to interpret dreams, explain riddles and solve difficult problems. Call for Daniel, and he will tell you what the writing means."

(Whole Chapter: Daniel 5 In context: Daniel 5:11-13)

Daniel 9:22

He instructed me and said to me, "Daniel, I have now come to give you insight and **understanding**.

(Whole Chapter: Daniel 9 In context: Daniel 9:21-23)

Daniel 10:1

In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia, a revelation was given to Daniel (who was called Belshazzar). Its message was true and it concerned a great war. [**10:1** Or [true and burdensome]] The **understanding** of the message came to him in a vision.

(Whole Chapter: Daniel 10 In context: Daniel 10:1-2)

Daniel 10:12

Then he continued, "Do not be afraid, Daniel. Since the first day that you set your mind to gain **understanding** and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to them.

(Whole Chapter: Daniel 10 In context: Daniel 10:11-13)

Hosea 4:11

because they have deserted the LORD to give themselves ¹¹ to prostitution, to old wine and new, to prostitution, to old wine and new, which take away the **understanding** (Whole Chapter: Hosea 4 In context: Hosea 4:10-12)

Hosea 4:14

"I will not punish your daughters when they turn to prostitution, nor your daughters-in-law when they commit adultery, because the men themselves consort with harlots and sacrifice with shrine prostitutes- a people without **understanding** will come to ruin! (Whole Chapter: Hosea 4 In context: Hosea 4:13-15)

Matthew 13:14

In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah: " 'You will be ever hearing but never **understanding**; you will be ever seeing but never perceiving. (Whole Chapter: Matthew 13 In context: Matthew 13:13-15)

Mark 4:12

so that, " 'they may be ever seeing but never perceiving, and ever hearing but never **understanding**; otherwise they might turn and be forgiven!"[4:12 Isaiah 6:9,10] " (Whole Chapter: Mark 4 In context: Mark 4:11-13)

Mark 12:33

To love him with all your heart, with all your **understanding** and with all your strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself is more important than all burnt offerings and sacrifices." (Whole Chapter: Mark 12 In context: Mark 12:32-34)

Luke 2:47

Everyone who heard him was amazed at his **understanding** and his answers. (Whole Chapter: Luke 2 In context: Luke 2:46-48)

Acts 28:26

" 'Go to this people and say, "You will be ever hearing but never **understanding**; you will be ever seeing but never perceiving." (Whole Chapter: Acts 28 In context: Acts 28:25-27)

Romans 10:19

Again I ask: Did Israel not understand? First, Moses says, "I will make you envious by those who are not a nation; I will make you angry by a nation that has no **understanding**."[10:19 Deut. 32:21] (Whole Chapter: Romans 10 In context: Romans 10:18-20)

Romans 13:11

And do this, **understanding** the present time. The hour has come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed. (Whole Chapter: Romans 13 In context: Romans 13:10-12)

Ephesians 1:8

that he lavished on us with all wisdom and **understanding**.

(Whole Chapter: Ephesians 1 In context: Ephesians 1:7-9)

Ephesians 1:9

And he[1:9 Or us. With all wisdom and **understanding**, 9 he] made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ,

(Whole Chapter: Ephesians 1 In context: Ephesians 1:8-10)

Ephesians 4:18

They are darkened in their **understanding** and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts.

(Whole Chapter: Ephesians 4 In context: Ephesians 4:17-19)

Philippians 4:7

And the peace of God, which transcends all **understanding**, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (Whole Chapter: Philippians 4 In context: Philippians 4:6-8)

Colossians 1:9

For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and **understanding**. (Whole Chapter: Colossians 1 In context: Colossians 1:8-10)

Colossians 2:2

My purpose is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete **understanding**, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, (Whole Chapter: Colossians 2 In context: Colossians 2:1-3) My purpose is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ,³ in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

Philemon 1:6

I pray that you may be active in sharing your faith, so that you will have a full **understanding** of every good thing we have in Christ. (Whole Chapter: Philemon 1 In context: Philemon 1:5-7)

James 3:13

Who is wise and **understanding** among you? Let him show it by his good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom. (Whole Chapter: James 3 In context: James 3:12-14)

1 John 5:20

We know also that the Son of God has come and has given us **understanding**, so that we may know him who is true. And we are in him who is true—even in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life. (Whole Chapter: 1 John 5 In context: 1 John 5:19-21)