

# Bible and Spiritual Intelligence: Conceptual Analysis.

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## Abstract

Since the works of Zohar, the concept of spiritual intelligence has been at the center of scientific debates, but exegetical and philological, and other studies have revealed that this concept is not new (Zinsstag, 2010; Moleka, 2021a). The Bible speaks about it with Hebrew words (hokhmah, binah) and Greek words (phronesis, sunesis, noûs, and sophia). In this essay, we examine spiritual intelligence from a philosophical standpoint and discuss some ramifications, such as ethos.

**Keywords:** Bible, exegesis, philology, spiritual intelligence, conceptual analysis

## 1. Introduction

Many authors who have proposed the concept of spiritual intelligence, such as Zohar Danah, have a pluralist assumption and worldview that incorporates Christianity and new age or Buddhist perspectives (Zohar, 2010). The law of karma is one of the spiritual concepts associated with spiritual intelligence in Buddhism philosophy. Karma is derived from the Pali word kamma and the Sanskrit word karma, which means "activity." It's the cause-and-effect principle (Goldstein, 2008).

Our premise is biblical and Christian since science is perspectivist and has presuppositions, theories, and metatheories. The metatheory is the philosophy that underpins the theory, the basic set of beliefs about how phenomena of interest in a given discipline are explained. This notion is similar to Thomas Kuhn's concept paradigm, which is defined as the metatheory, theory, methodology, and ethos of a discipline or specialization when they are all integrated. The term "paradigm" has a broader meaning than "metatheory," yet a metatheory is central to every paradigm and can be used to define it in a variety of ways (Kuhn, 2012; Bates, 2005).

## 2. A philological approach of the concept of spiritual intelligence

Philology is "a systematic reflection on textuality and language" (Khan, Najman and Rosen-Zvi, 2020). In the context of biblical exegesis, it helps us understanding the texts and Bible's language (Vayntrub, 2020) by analyzing concepts from their original language.

In the Scriptures, there are many Hebrew and Greek concepts in relationship with the intelligence in terms of spirituality: “binah”, “hokhmah”, “phronesis”, “sunesis”, “noûs”, and “sophia”. This plurality of concepts is an indicator of multifaceted intelligence. Further studies such as Howard Gardner’s theory of multiple intelligences, the hierarchy of intelligence with Cattell and Vernon (Moleka, 2021b).

Binah is a Hebrew word that means intelligence, discernment, to be skillful, to show wisdom in mind, in words and in acts (Kamuwanga, 2017). Strong’s biblical dictionary (2011) defines the term *biyn* as “the phenomenon of perceiving, of knowing by the spirit.” Knowing how to look after the people that are in your charge. For the leader, the shepherd, Binah is a form of spiritual intelligence. As I demonstrated in a recent study (Moleka, 2021a), a paradigm shift in leadership is required, a shift from rationalism to spirituality. Leaders must have binah in order to be effective. It also refers to judgment, as well as prudence and discretion in terms of behavior.

Joseph had more wisdom (*binah*) than anyone else in Egypt, according to Pharaoh (Genesis 41, 39).

The rational technique employed by Jewish rabbis to develop ideas to their maximum potential is deductive reasoning, or understanding a notion from another thought. They have intuitions that are not always consistent with the systematic logic of current non-deductive thinking (Gabbay, Schild and David, 2019).

Hokhmah is a divinely inspired word that is not reasonable (Strong biblical dictionary). It “represents the thoughtful, synthetic parts of God’s thought,” according to the description (Jewish Virtual Library, 2021). Hokhmah is three-dimensional, equivalent to God’s three characteristics in man: moral and ethical wisdom in following God’s norms, and spiritual wisdom in daily life. It is about character. The functional dimension of hokhmah is about daily work and how highly skilled and competent. It is about competence. Hokhmah’s relational level consists of well-managed relationships (Kight, 2018). It’s a social dimension, or what we refer to as emotional intelligence.

The Greek terminology for spiritual intelligence is also used in the Bible. In the Greek New Testament, *phronesis* refers to practical knowledge in the realm of creative and lyrical imagination. It was used by Aristotle and other philosophers such as Paul Ricoeur to discuss human nature’s moral incompatibility (Wall, 2003). *Phronesis* or practical intelligence and wisdom, contrasts with *episteme*, or theoretical scientific understanding. For Aristotle it is the

highest intellectual virtue, the interactions between the theory and the judgement or the praxis (Massingham, 2019). It is used in Luke 1, 17 to speak about the wisdom of the righteous, which is a walk in accordance with the divine law prescribed by the fathers, and in Ephesians 1, 8 to speak about the wisdom-intelligence couple, which allows to understand the mysteries or inaccessible truths to reason but which require a revelation or illumination, as well as to understand and conform to God's plan, because he is the one who determines the reason for our existence. The concepts of insight, both intellectual and moral insight, as well as virtue and prudence, are all found in Strong's Bible dictionary (2011). In his daily devotional book "Rhapsody of Realities" from July 22, 2013, Pastor Chris Oyakhilome describes phronesis as a force that governs whoever possesses it, a higher intelligence like what God gave Solomon (1 Kings 4,29).

Phronesis allows you to understand God's things at the correct moment and puts you in a great frame of mind to conform your words and deeds at the appropriate time and in the proper line. It avoids errors by making sound decisions and applying sound judgment in all domains. This allows us to make progress in all we undertake.

The Greek notion according to Pastor Chris Oyakhilome (2013), sunesis is the ability to analyze concepts and their linkages, which requires acquittal and a penetration of comprehension of any activity, and which leads to human progress.

Sunesis is a word that appears several times in the Bible to represent intelligence perfection or spiritual intelligence (Colossians 1:9; Mark 12, 23; Ephesians 3,4; Luke 2,47). The great philosopher Karl Popper and (1977) translates it by understanding or sagacity.

It comes from the Greek term suniemi, which means the ability to integrate facts with a holistic understanding by synthesizing implicit truths. Sunesis is also a quest for universal justice, for the larger good, for the good of everyone (Salkever, 2007).

Noûs as intelligence allows for a social critique of reality; it signifies the ability to comprehend the external world in classical Greek philosophy and intellect, as well as theoretical and creative meditation. It is an intellectual apprehension and intuitive thought faculties. It is distinct from discursive thought in a narrower meaning and refers to the comprehension of eternal intelligible substances and foundational principles. It's been linked to the highest or divine intellect on occasion (Britannica, 2013). When the light of God reveals us, we realize what the great German theologian Moltmann writes: "The crucified God." (2015), it appears 22 times in the New Testament, and this number recalls the work of

the cross. The cross represents not only the suffering of the Son, but also the love of the Father, who suffers in order to provide hope to the world of a better future, namely the kingdom of God. And with this optimism, to commit right now to change the economic, political, and social conditions of the inhuman (Moltmann, 2015). Finally, the cross's perspective allows us to comprehend the need of preserving human life in a society increasingly brutalized by the spirit of war and violence (Mosse, 1979).

Sophia is God's supreme intelligence, which is manifested in the world's creation, redemption, and governance.

It is also the richness of wisdom, erudition, and the diverse understanding of divine and human things that one acquires through life experience, as reflected in proverbs and maxims among the ancients. It enables the interpretation of dreams and visions in order to provide sound guidance. It is the rhetorical elegance that enables him to persuade his interlocutor or the general public. It is also a speech about business and moral prudence in the handling of affairs. Sophia is the polar opposite of political cunning, conquest of power stratagems, and deceptive and demagogic discourse. Instead of relying on deception, leaders should seek Sophia from God (Fox, 2001; Robert Watson, 2017).

### 3. How SQ is measured in the Bible

All forms of intelligent systems are evaluated using external validation. For example, Goleman thought that a person's ability to succeed in business is a result of their emotional intelligence (Beardsley, 2004). The fruit of the Spirit, according to the Bible, is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, and faithfulness: "the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, and faithfulness" (Galatians 5, 22) is an indicator of the spiritual intelligence. Being even-tempered (Proverbs 17, 27) and eager to learn from God's precepts and revelation are examples of behavior markers. (Psalms 119, 73; 104, 130); feedback and discipline (Psalms 119, 73; 104, 130); and feedback and discipline (Psalms 119, 73; 104, 130). (Proverbs 15, 32). There's also the ability to apply what you've learned to new situations, solve issues, and expand existing knowledge beyond its original scope. Spiritual intelligence is defined by the ability to solve difficulties and come up with innovative, contextualized, and right replies (Beardsley, 2004).

#### 4. Some implications

We can identify the following elements in relation to intelligence through these various biblical concepts:

-The Bible emphasizes the multiplicity of intelligence, and there is a link between intelligence, problem solving, and sense of innovation, good moral conduct, and knowledge of God because he is the source of all science. This intelligence also entails a comprehension of the times and how to act in them, as well as the interpretation of visions in order to provide advice to decision-makers. And there's the dimension of know-how, which is more prominent than knowledge alone. Howard Gardner (1983) developed the hypothesis of multiple intelligences, which is mentioned in the Bible.

-A connection can be made with the concept of spiritual discernment, which entails perceiving in the spiritual world and differentiating between what is false and true in words and actions, as well as the spirit that lurks there.

It is a matter of seeing and participating in what is done in heaven for the prophets or As a result, the spiritual domain has an impact on the course of history and the regulation of human affairs.

Abraham sat in God's council to sway the judge of all the earth's decision on Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 18,22-33), and the prophet Micah claimed, "I saw God sit in his council after the fate of King Ahab was sealed" ( 1Kings 22,19). He took part as a bystander; the prophet Elijah told Ahab, "I stand before God; thus, I sit in his council to decide on the march of this country" (1Kings 17, 1). Jeremiah poses the following question to the false prophets: "Who then joined in his council to listen to and see his word?" (Jeremiah 23, 18-22). What's interesting about this passage is that the prophet of God speaks of seeing the message rather than hearing it. Is it possible to view the word? In the logos hymn, John responds to this challenge by saying that the word is both a man and God: Jesus (John 1).

These spiritual prophets can guide decision-makers at all levels, such as King Uzziah, who collaborated with the prophet Zechariah, who possessed visionary intelligence, thus assisting the king in decrypting the coded messages of dreams and visions, as well as assisting him in working in spiritual intelligence, which would make his reign prosperous (2 chronicles 26, 3-5). David is described as an angel of God (hamalak haelohim) in 2 Samuel 14,17, indicating that he is a member of the heavenly court as well as the angels.

When it comes to making decisions as decision makers or leaders, even in tiny daily decisions, spiritual discernment assists us to avoid making mistakes. It also protects against errors in terms of direction and decision-making. Spirit discernment allows one to not only comprehend the spiritual world, its principles, functioning, and composition, but also to do a spiritual analysis or interpretation of life's facts and events.

We can read time and reveal the hidden dimension of things using this skill (kronos and kairos). Kronos is a measured and counted time, and kairos an experienced time (McKinley, 2020).

-There are some abilities activated by the spiritual intelligence. For Beardsley (2004), there is the capacity 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 Corinthians 2, 14).

Concept formation is another important intelligence function. For a good comprehension and the ability to be creative with domain symbolism and systems, basic conceptions and values must be acquired. It's crucial to immerse yourself in the domain. There is no replacement for effective learning. Content mastery is required for creativity and the ability to build systems and concepts, as well as critical thinking. Just as it is not possible to think critically about nothing, creativity must find expression through a domain (Beardsley, 2004).

Csikszentmihalyi (1996) continues by stating that creativity is the cultural equivalent of adaptability in biology. Cultural genes, in this analogy, are "memes" in the sense that they are the units of information that humans must learn if culture is to survive. Memes are numbers, language, recipes, theories, stories, and other items that are passed on and changed by the creator. If enough people value the change, it becomes part of the culture. Prior information is required for creativity and must be gained before it can be transformed. Although domain mastery may not take ten years, it is required before an individual can manipulate symbols in novel ways to solve problems. or apply to novel situations. But Jesus with spiritual intelligence demonstrated domain mastery and the ability to synthesize and reformulate spiritual truths as 12 years old in the temple, where everyone was amazed about his level of spiritual understanding (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).

-As intelligence, spiritual intelligence implies the use of codes (e.g. 666 in the book of Revelation), a special music such as Gregorian or Gospel, the use of symbols also

(Skrzypińska, 2021).

-An ethos is attached to spiritual intelligence. It reveals itself in the sphere of leadership in the pursuit of justice, compassion, wisdom (Kheswa, 2016) and mercy towards the poor. Because of his lack of experience in public administration, Salomon sought this, and of these values are essential elements of spiritual intelligence.

Cornelius (2014) paints a clear picture of what a spiritual intelligence ethos should be in his exegetical examination of Galatians 5:16-25. It's what a spiritual man would be in today's world. Being a Christian improves one's ability to deal with problems that arise in life. It influences how one conducts business. Christian spiritual intelligence can aid in the success and well-being of an individual, family, enterprise, or nation.

### Conclusion

Many contemporary problems can be solved if the spiritual intelligence is integrated into the schools' curricula and implemented in workplace. It increases the capacity of solving problems, creativity and innovation, and help people to behave in new ethic standards for the sustainability.

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