

# Understanding (in Proverbs)

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17 January 2024 – Text: Proverbs 1:2 – Topic: Understanding

**Introduction:** Did you know that the word “understanding” is found over 62 times in the book of Proverbs. This makes it a key word that we must comprehend.

After examining the uses in the KJV and studying the Hebrew definitions, I think that a biblical definition of this word is *the God-given intelligence, skill, or insight to do things that others cannot do*.

**Transition:** Because there are six different Hebrew words translated “understanding” in Proverbs, to gain a fuller knowledge of the word, we are going to examine the three most common ones. Back in the 1800s, a man named James Strong gave every Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek word in the Bible a number. They are now known as the “Strong’s numbers”. If your Bible app has these numbers, they can direct you to the exact original word that was translated.

## 1. H995, Proverbs 1:5

### a. 34x, 23x as understand\*

- 1) Hebrew lexicons (dictionaries) define the word as to *discern, understand, consider, perceive, observe, to separate mentally*, etc. This word is a verb.
- 2) The Ancient Hebrew Lexicon of the Bible illustrates. “*The tent was usually divided into two parts, one for the females and the other for the male. The wall makes a distinction between the two sides. Understanding is the ability to discern between two or more things.*”
- 3) The key meaning of this word seems to be to *discern*.
- 4) Key verses include Proverbs 2:5; 2:9; 10:13; 14:8; 15:14; 28:5, etc.

### b. How else is this word translated in Proverbs?

- 1) Proverbs 1:2 (perceive).
- 2) Others include, looketh well, prudent, wise, directeth, consider diligently, consider, regardeth.

## 2. H998, Proverbs 1:2

### a. 14x, 12x as understand\*

- 1) This word is the noun form of the verb H995 (above),

therefore, its meaning is very similar.

- 2) Lexicons define it as *understanding, comprehension, discernment, or righteous action*.
- 3) The key meaning of this word seems to be *discernment*.

**b. How else is this word translated in Proverbs?**

- 1) Thine own wisdom, Proverbs 23:4

**3. H8394, Proverbs 2:2**

**a. 19x, 19x as understand\***

- 1) Lexicons define this word as *understanding, insight, or intelligence*.
- 2) The Ancient Hebrew Lexicon of the Bible defines it as, “*The skill of the mind and hands to build. Before the tent is constructed the location and orientation must be carefully considered according to weather, view and size. The planning and building of a house, structure or family.*”
- 1) The key meaning of this word seems to be *intelligence or insight*.
- 2) From these definitions, we can see how it differs from the previous two words. The former distinguishes, this one enlightens.

**b. This word is always translated “understanding” in Proverbs?**

- 1) Key verses are, Proverbs 2:2-3
- 2) This understanding comes from God, Proverbs 2:6.
- 3) It will protect us, Proverbs 2:11; give happiness Proverbs 3:13; God used it to establish the heavens, Proverbs 3:19; it helps us hold our tongue, Proverbs 11:12; it helps control anger, Proverbs 14:29; helps us walk uprightly, Proverbs 15:21; it enables us to get good counsel, Proverbs 20:5.

**4. Three other words, H7919, H7922, H3820**

**a. These words for understanding are not as common.**

**b. We will not dig into them this evening.**

Conclusion: We need God’s understanding, both discernment and intelligent insight. As you read the book of Proverbs, watch for these words.