



**“I have striven
not to laugh at
human actions,
not to weep at
them, nor to
hate them, but
to understand
them.”**

(Benedict Spinoza, also known as Baruch, 1632-77, Jewish born Dutch philosopher and theologian. This simple quote is a modern translation extracted from the Introduction to Tractatus Theologico-Politicus, first published around 1670. The quote illustrates a fundamental aspect of wisdom - namely objectivity. A longer literal translation is: "...I have laboured carefully, not to mock, lament, or execrate [view with horror], but to understand human actions; and to this end I have looked upon passions, such as love, hatred, anger, envy, ambition, pity, and the other perturbations of the mind, not in the light of vices of human nature, but as properties, just as pertinent to it, as are heat, cold, storm, thunder, and the like to the nature of the atmosphere, which phenomena, though inconvenient, are yet necessary, and have fixed causes, by means of which we endeavour to understand their nature...")