

Holy Wisdom Orthodoxwiki

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**Holy Wisdom**, also called **Divine Wisdom** (Greek: Ἁγία Σοφία, *Hagia Sophia*) is the theological idea that perfect Wisdom is to be found in [God](#) alone.

The word and concept of *Sophia* ("wisdom") is expressed in both the [Old Testament](#), as notably in the [Septuagint](#) version, and of the [New Testament](#).

In the New Testament wisdom is presented in three meanings:

- In the usual broad meaning of wisdom as understanding: ""Jesus increased in wisdom and stature and grace"" (Luke 2:52); ""But wisdom is justified of all her children"" (Luke 7:35).
- In the meaning of the wise economy of God expressed in the creation of the world, in His Providence over the world, and in the [salvation](#) of the world from sin: ""O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! For who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been His counselor?"" (Romans 11:33-34). ""We speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory"" (1 Cor. 2:7).
- In relation to the Son of God as the Hypostatic Wisdom of God: ""But we preach Christ crucified ... Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God"" (1 Cor. 1:23-24); ""Who of God is made unto us wisdom"" (1 Cor. 1:30).

These themes are a continuation of those expressed in the the Books of Proverbs and the Apocryphal books of the Old Testament: the Wisdom of Solomon, the Wisdom of Joshua, and the Son of Sirach.

In the mystical theology of the Orthodox Church wisdom is understood as the Divine Logos who became incarnate as [Jesus Christ](#). In the Holy Family, Sophia is often seen as being represented by the [Theotokos](#). Sophia is expressed as the Holy Wisdom of God and the saints, obtained through [humility](#), and in Mary, the Theotokos, the first and greatest of all [saints](#). In Orthodoxy, humility is the highest wisdom and is to be sought more than any other virtue. It is humility that cultivates not only the Holy Wisdom, but humility (in contrast to knowledge) is the defining quality that grants people salvation and entrance into Heaven.

In the [liturgy](#) of the Orthodox Church, the exclamation *Sophia!* or in English *Wisdom!* is proclaimed by the [deacon](#) or [priest](#) at certain moments during the service, especially before readings of [scripture](#), to draw the [congregation](#)'s attention to sacred teaching.

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## Sophiology

The concept of Sophia has been championed as a key part of the Godhead by some Orthodox religious thinkers. These included Vladimir Solovyov, [Pavel Florensky](#), [Nikolai Berdyaev](#), and [Sergius Bulgakov](#) whose book *Sophia: The Wisdom of God* is in many ways the apotheosis of [Sophiology](#). For Bulgakov, the Sophia is co-existent with the [Holy Trinity](#), operating as the feminine aspect of God in concert with the three masculine principles of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. [Vladimir Lossky](#) rejected Solovyev and Bulgakov's teachings as error. Lossky states that Wisdom as an energy of God (just as love, faith, and grace are also energies of God) is not to be ascribed to be the true essence of God, to do so is to deny the apophatic and incomprehensibility of God as God's essence.<sup>[1]</sup> Sophiology is contrary to the official view of the Orthodox Church, and Bulgakov's work was denounced by the [Russian Orthodox](#) authorities as [heretical](#).<sup>[2]</sup>

See also

## [Sophianism](#)

## References

1. [Jump up↑](#) This was the basis of the theological development of Fr. Bulgakov, and also his fundamental error: for he sought to see in the energy of Wisdom (Sophia), which he identified with the essence, the very principle of the Godhead. In fact, God is not determined by any of his attributes: all determinations are inferior to Him, logically posterior to His being in itself, in its essence. pgs 80-81 *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church*, by Vladimir Lossky SVS Press, 1997. (ISBN 0-913836-31-1) James Clarke & Co Ltd, 1991. (ISBN 0-227-67919-9)
2. [Jump up↑](#) Text available online [\[1\]](#)

## Sources

- [Teaching of the Wisdom of God in Holy Scripture](#)
- [w: Sophia \(wisdom\)](#)
- [w: Sophiology](#)

## External links

- [Teaching of the Wisdom of God in Holy Scripture](#)
- [On the Great Church](#)
- [Jesus Christ, Messiah and Divine Wisdom](#)