



Introducing Sophia

A Winter Soul Food Prayer :

***Holy Sophia, Breeze maker, flow your wisdom around and through us,
Holy Sophia, Hospitality maker, expand us as an open hearted community,
Holy Sophia, World maker, engage us with you in transforming the earth.***

Biblical Sophia

Wisdom(Hokmah) has built her house, she has hewn her seven pillars, she has slaughtered her animals, she has mixed her wine, she has also set her table. She has sent out her servant girls, she calls from the highest places in the town, 'you that are simple, turn in here!' To those without sense she says, 'Come, eat of my bread and drink of the wine I have mixed. Lay aside immaturity, and live, and walk in the way of insight.' (Proverbs 9: 1-6)(Also Proverbs 8:22-31, 1:20-23)

Inside Wisdom(Sophia), there is a spirit of intelligence and holiness that is unique and unmistakable: subtle, dynamic, perceptive, pristine, unclouded, unconquerable, compassionate, shrewd, compelling, generous and loving toward mortals, faithful, faultless, serene, directing all, knowing all, and pervading every intelligent, pure and most subtle spirit. For Wisdom(Sophia) moves more swiftly than motion itself; She is so pure that She pervades and permeates all living things. She is the breath of the power of God, a pure light of the glory of the Most High, and nothing that is base can come into her presence in secret. She is the light that shines forth from everlasting light, the flawless mirror of the dynamism of God and the perfect image of the Holy One's goodness. Though alone of her kind, She can do all things; though unchanging, She renews all things; generation after generation She enters into holy souls and makes them friends of God and prophets, for God loves the one who finds a home in Wisdom. She is more beautiful than the sun and more magnificent than all the stars in the sky. When compared with daylight, She excels in every way, for the day always gives way to night, but Wisdom never gives way to evil. She stretches forth Her power from one end of the earth to the other and gently puts all things in their proper place.(Wisdom 7:22-8:1)(also Wisdom 6:12-1, 10:15-17)

We proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom (Sophia) of God. (1 Cor 1:23,24)(Also Matthew 11:16-19)



Historical Sophia

*O come thou Wisdom from on high,
Who orders all things mightily;
To us the path of knowledge show,
And teach us in her ways to go.*
(from the hymn O come, O come Emmanuel)

To Sophia
You soar, sustain, and animate,
Climb, dive, and sing
Your way through this world,

*Giving life to every beating heart.
You never end.
You keep circling, crossing over us
On three wings –
One speeds through heaven,
On holds the earth together with a kiss as light
as dew,
And one whooshes over, under, and through
our lives.
We praise you, Wisdom!(Hildegard of Bingen)*

Liberating Sophia

Wisdom's inviting biblical table with the bread of sustenance and the wine of celebration is set in a temple with seven pillars that allow the spirit of fresh air to blow through it. This image seeks to replace the understanding of canonical and scholarly authority as limiting, controlling, and exclusive authority.(Elisabeth Schussler Fiorenza Wisdom Ways p48)

It (the Trinity) is shorthand for the dynamic, inexpressible Sophia-God of compassionate, liberating love who is involved in history in multifaceted ways. (Elizabeth Johnson She Who is p199)

Multicultural Sophia

In its venerable age, Ayasofya remains a testimony to the aspirations of Jews, Christians, and Muslims to recognise paradise on earth and to live wisely in it. (Rita Nakashima Brock Saving Paradise p217)

Korean North American women have inherited Wisdom from their Asian roots, especially through Buddhism. This Wisdom is called prajna, which is in some ways similar to the Wisdom called Sophia found in Christianity. Most Korean North American women are unaware of the richness of their Asian religious heritage. Yet I suggest that, by retrieving something of their Korean culture and something from their North American Christian culture, they will be able to develop a Christology that can promote and empower their struggle for liberation.

Sophia Christology is proposed, then, as one approach that can contribute to the theological liberation of Korean North American women and release their han and heal them. Sophia Christ, who is manifested in many ways, can be depicted within the categories of Asian religion and culture... Wisdom is a profound concept that crosses all boundaries.(Grace Ji-Sun Kim The Grace of Sophia pp8,9)

Ecological Sophia

Sophia/logos awakens within the world process a striving for living, vibrant movement, unrestricted novelty, and incessant life. (p 246 Faber, Roland God as Poet of the World: Exploring Process Theologies)

Embracing the depths of life, in which are mingled the depths of divinity itself, we participate in an open-ended creativity. We no longer huddle within the frozen order of an absolute power, waiting to be saved from creation itself. We are called into a process of interaction with our fellow creatures – and with the one who calls us forth. (Catherine Keller On the Mystery p56)

Would the creative wisdom want us to help save or to help waste the world? In the image of the creator we are invited to creative responsibility – an ability to respond in an appreciative relation to others, human and nonhuman. To respond not just dutifully but resourcefully, in the flow of creativity and in the beauty of grace (Keller p66)

Post colonial Sophia

Woman Wisdom is the Earth Mother. She is the spider of ancient indigenous wisdom, spinning and weaving and webbing together Earth. She is the creative Rainbow serpent of indigenous traditions she shapes the earth with her body.(Shirley Wurst The Earth Bible 3 p54)

White Western society has tried, and still is trying to force a spirit-centred people into a head-centred way of being. It has not worked and it cannot work. Australian Indigenous people are in genocide. There has to be a dramatic, dynamic and immediate change of attitude and orientation in Australian society if genocide is to be stopped. White Western people must let go of their unrealistic and egotistical attitude of superiority or else destroy the most ancient race in the world.(Lee Miena Skye in Reinterpreting the Eucharist p56)

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A Winter Soul Food Sophia Ritual

Where shall Wisdom be found?

Wisdom is bread, made in community, kneaded, baked, and shared,
Wisdom is water, hidden in the rock: let the well go deep,
Let the spring run clear and the river flow on.(Brian Wren)

Winter Sophia, from the earth, from each other, you feed our souls

You flow through the seasons, growing the grain and ripening the grapes

You flow through humanity wising us up to bake bread and make wine

You empower connections and issue invitations,

together we share your hospitality

and so we celebrate saying ***“to Sophia, to Life!”***

(wine and juice is drunk)

Multi faceted Sophia, we accept your invitation to walk in the way of insight

And we share the bread of sustenance.

(Bread is passed around with words such as ‘Sophia’s wisdom or laughter etc’)

Sophia’s Blessing

Multi faceted Sophia bless us with winter soul food,
Accompany us on the journey into your wisdom
Empower us to be your justice seeking friends.

