

Sustaining Messiah: Introduction: Empowering of the Holy Spirit; the Prototype & Operational Divine Power Systems; Doctrine of the Sustaining Ministry of the Holy Spirit: To Christ at Virgin Birth to Physical Death; Messianic Miracles; Principles on *Kénōsis*: Restrictions on Independent Use of Divine Attributes during Incarnation

Sustaining Messiah

The Sustaining Ministry of the Holy Spirit to Jesus on the Cross

Easter Special

Sunday, 27 March 2016

I. INTRODUCTION

1. In the Church Age, the precedent for the Christian way of life is established by Jesus Christ during the First Advent or the Incarnation.
2. The same system that empowered our Lord in the Incarnation is the same one believers are privileged to utilize in the Church Age.

John 7:37 - Now on the last day, the great day of the feast [of Tabernacles], Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone is thirsty, let them come to Me and drink.

v. 38 - "He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.'" [Isaiah 12:3]

v. 39 - But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified [ascension and session].¹

John 15:10 - "If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love.

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3. This prototype system was designed by God especially for utilization by the true humanity of Jesus Christ during the Incarnation.
4. The system the Church Age believer may utilize is the Operational Divine Power System.
5. Precedence for the Operational system is taken from the Prototype.
6. Consequently, we do not consult the Law of Moses for our guidance in executing the Christian way of life, but the Law of Christ.

Romans 10:4 - For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

Ephesians 2:15a - ... by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances ...

7. The enabling power for the Prototype system was the filling of the Holy Spirit and is extended into the Operational system.

Romans 8:2 - For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and death.

v. 3 - For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did, sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh,

v. 4 - so that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

8. Jesus Christ is called the Author and Perfecter of our doctrine in:

Hebrews 12:2 - ... fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

9. The Source of this power, which enabled Him to fulfill this objective and complete the mission of Operation Reconciliation, was the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit.

2 Corinthians 5:18 - Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation ...

II. The Doctrine of the Sustaining Ministry of the Holy Spirit

1. This doctrine was prophesied by Isaiah who established that Jesus Christ the Messiah was filled with the Holy Spirit from the virgin birth until His physical death:

Isaiah 11:2 - The Spirit of the Lord will rest on Him [the filling of the Spirit], the spirit of wisdom and understanding [epígnōsis knowledge of doctrine], the spirit of counsel and strength [teaching and delegated omnipotence], the spirit of knowledge [doctrinal discernment] and the fear [respect] of the Lord.

John 3:34 - “For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God; for He gives the spirit without measure.

2. During the Incarnation, the ministries of the Holy Spirit were available to Jesus Christ without limitation.
3. Because of His virgin birth and the fact he was perfect in His true humanity, He was born as Adam was created.
4. God’s plan for the dispensation of the Incarnation called for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit to sustain the true humanity of Messiah.
5. It follows that the Prototype was established at the virgin birth. Inside this system, Jesus matured very quickly both spiritually and physically.

Luke 2:40 - The Child continued to grow and become strong, increasing in wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him.

Luke 2:52 - And Jesus kept increasing in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

6. Christ advanced through the various stages of momentum testing:

Hebrews 2:10 - In bringing many sons to glory, it was fitting that God, for whom and through whom everything exists, should make the author of their salvation perfect through suffering. (NIV)

Hebrews 2:18 - For since He Himself was tempted in that which He has suffered, He is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted.

Hebrews 4:15 - For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.

Hebrews 5:8 - Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered.

7. During the Incarnation, He was continually filled with the Holy Spirit:

Luke 4:14 - And Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit ...

8. He was able to endure evidence testing before the devil through the enabling power of the Holy Spirit:

Matthew 4:1 - Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

9. He prophesied the extension of the Prototype system into the Church Age just prior to His ascension:

Acts 1:8 - "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."

10. Jesus Christ worked miracles and performed acts of healing through the enabling power of the Holy Spirit:

Matthew 12:28 - If I cast out [ἐκβάλλω (*ekballō*)] demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.

11. The deity of Christ could have performed a miracle at any time, but to have done so would have violated the salvation plan of God whereby Messiah in true humanity was required to maintain impeccability throughout the Incarnation.

12. There are three categories of miracles performed by our Lord during the Incarnation:
- (1) Creation related miracles were performed by the omnipotence of the divine nature of Christ because He is the Creator of all things. They were not subject to the restraints of **κένωσις (kénōsis)** which was pertinent only to the Incarnation. (See Colossians 1:16–17.)

Kénōsis is derived from the Greek noun **κενόω (kenōō)**, which means “to empty oneself or to deprive oneself of a proper function”:

Philippians 2:6 - ...although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped,

v. 7 - **but** [adversative conjunction **ἀλλά (allá)**: in contrast with His deity] **emptied** [aorist active indicative of **κενόω (kenōō)**²] **Himself**, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men.

- (2) Messiah related miracles were performed by the deity of Christ to give accreditation to the humanity of Jesus as the son of Abraham and David as the Messiah of Israel.

Messiah related miracles include the casting out of demons, healing the blind, and the lame. These miracles did not violate the principle of *kénōsis* since they were performed by the deity of Christ.

² “The antithesis of *plērōō*, to fill. *Kenōō* is used in Philippians 2:7 meaning to empty oneself, to divest oneself of rightful dignity by descending to an inferior condition. The use in Philippians 2:7 is of great theological importance. It refers to Jesus Christ as emptying Himself at the time of His incarnation, denoting the beginning of His self-humiliation in verse eight. In verse 7 He took “the form of a bond-servant” and having become ‘in the likeness of men.’ Notwithstanding His essence of deity, He took upon Himself the true essence of a servant. In order to be a servant, however, He had to become a man and appear in the likeness of men. By doing this He emptied Himself of the proper recognition that He had with the Father as God who is Spirit and entered into the world of men, most of whom did not at all recognize Him for who He was” (Spiros Zodhiates, ed., *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament*, rev. ed. [Chattanooga: AMG Publishers, 1993], 857).

- (3) Agent related miracles were performed through the agency of the Holy Spirit to give capability to Jesus' teachings. An illustration may be seen by comparing Matthew 12:28 with Luke 4:14-18.
13. A formal definition of the doctrine of *kénōsis* reads, During the Incarnation, Jesus voluntarily restricted the independent use of His divine attributes in compliance with the Father's plan for the Angelic Conflict.
14. During His entire earthly ministry, the true humanity of the Lord depended upon the enabling power of the Holy Spirit from the moment of the virgin birth up to the moment of His physical death.

Hebrews 9:14 - ... how much more will the blood of Christ, Who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

1. The pertinent phrase we wish to note is "Who, through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God."
2. The phrase begins with the preposition of agency of **διὰ (diá)** followed by the ablative of agency of the noun **πνεῦμα (pneúma)**. It should be translated, "through the agency of the Holy Spirit."
3. Grammatically, the agency refers to a person or thing through which the action is directed. In this case it is the Lord's offering of Himself without blemish to God.
4. This ablative of agency is critical to our understanding the principle of the sustaining ministry of the Holy Spirit.
5. During His spiritual death on the cross, Jesus Christ was able to produce an action through the enabling power of the Holy Spirit.
6. Omnipotence is identified as the point of contact between Christ and the Holy Spirit by the genitive of **αἰώνιος (aiónios)**: eternal.

7. When applied to the Holy Spirit, it refers to His divine essence with emphasis on His omnipotence.
8. The action produced through the agency of the Holy Spirit is described by the aorist active indicative of the verb **προσφέρω (prosphērō)**: “to present an offering.”

Aorist: Culminative; gathering into one entirety the decision made by Jesus in eternity past to be judged on the cross for our sins but looking at it from the standpoint of existing results, i.e., the three hours of vicarious spiritual death in time.

Active: Jesus produces the action by offering Himself as the vicarious sacrifice.

Indicative: Declarative for a statement of doctrinal reality.
9. On the cross, Jesus presented Himself as our substitute through the enabling power of the Holy Spirit.
10. During those traumatic three hours on the cross it was the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit that sustained Him.
11. That the Holy Spirit was successful in sustaining the Lord during the time He was being judged for our sins is confirmed by the accusative predicate adjective of **ἄμωμος (ámōmos)**: Blameless; unblemished; impeccable.
12. This status quo of impeccable perfection was an offering submitted to **Θεός (Theós)**: God.

Hebrews 9:14 - How much more then shall the **blood of Christ** [αἷμα τοῦ Χριστοῦ (*haíma tou Christou*): a metonymy referring to His spiritual death], Who, through the sustaining power of the eternal Holy Spirit, has offered Himself as an impeccable sacrifice to God ... (EXT)
13. The phrase “the blood of Christ” receives this analysis from Johannes Behm:

The early Christian representation of the blood of Christ as sacrificial blood is simply the metaphorical garment clothing the thought of the self-offering, the obedience to God, which Christ demonstrated in the crucifixion. The history of belief in the atoning and purifying power of blood, especially among the Israelites and Greeks, does not help us to understand the ideas which the New Testament links with the blood of Christ, since the latter is simply a pregnant verbal symbol for the saving work of Christ.³

³ Johannes Behm, “αἷμα,” in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. Gerhard Kittel, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1964), 1:175.