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ABSTRACT
It is clear in the Hebrew reading of Joel 3:1 that it is the Spirit which will be poured out. The LXX translators, however, used ἐκχέω+genitive to translate this phrase. This opened up more possibilities in terms of its interpretation when the LXX reading is used by Luke in the context of the Pentecost events. It could mean (a) that the Spirit itself is being poured out as in the Hebrew reading; (b) that part of the Spirit is being poured out (partitive genitive); or (c) that ἐκχέω indeed implies another object, referring to something which went out from the Spirit. Taking into account the different translation possibilities, occurrences of similar phraseology elsewhere and the broader Lukan context, this paper investigates especially the latter possibility. This object is identified as the ‘power’ which was promised (Ac 1:8). After the Spirit ‘filled’ them with this power, they then received the ‘gift’ ( δώρος) of prophecy (Ac 2:17,18). A new dispensation has come, where all will share in this gift, not only prophets, kings and priests, but all, without distinction of age, sex or social standing.

1 PURPOSE
The intention of this paper is not to present a dogmatic understanding, a confession or a systematic theological presentation on the baptism with the Spirit. The focus of this brief investigation is rather to look at the possible interpretations of the phrase under discussion—which was taken over within the quotation from Joel by Luke—and to determine which of these possible interpretations would have made the best sense within the immediate literary context of Acts 2.

2 THE PROBLEM
Joel 2:28-32 (3:1-5 in the LXX) is quoted in Acts 2:17-21. It is probably one of the most discussed explicit quotations in Acts. It forms part of the second Petrine speech and is central to the argument. One of the many problems encountered is the fact that the text form of the whole quotation as it stands in Acts and as it is being used by Luke, does not agree completely with either our existing Hebrew versions, or with the Greek versions. There seem to be traces of older textual traditions.¹

¹ For a detailed discussion on this quotation and the second Petrine speech, see Steyn 1995:69–100.
However, focusing on the phrase under investigation, ἐκχεῖν ἀπὸ τοῦ πνεύματος (Ac 2:17,18), the matter is complicated even further when comparing the Hebrew and Greek versions, on the one hand, and attempting to interpret this phrase within the broader context, on the other hand.

The number of people, or rather phases in the process, involved in working with this text up to the point at which it is quoted by Luke, needs to be clearly distinguished:

(a) There were the Hebrew versions of Joel – some of which formed the basis for the Hebrew text as we have it today in the BHS.

(b) Then there were also Hebrew versions which formed the basis of the Greek translations of Joel—not necessarily the same Hebrew versions.

(c) Then, any one of these existing versions, either Greek or Hebrew, could have been used by Luke when he quoted from Joel in the process of compiling Acts. Previous studies, however, have shown fairly satisfactorily that Luke’s explicit quotations are closer to our known Greek version(s) of the Hebrew Scriptures.

The Hebrew versions read: יִהְיוּ וְיִהְיוּ. The unvocalised יִהְיוּ could have had three possible meanings for the LXX translator of Joel (cf Holladay 1980:31): (a) as an accusative particle; (b) as a preposition, meaning ‘with’, or ‘(away) from’; or (c) as the iron farm-tool, a plowshare. It is clear from the context that the translator has not mistaken it for the latter when he translated the phrase into Greek. Comparing the first two possibilities though, he clearly chose the second possibility when using the Greek preposition ἀπὸ+genitive. There is a clear difference in meaning between using the accusative particle and the preposition. The accusative particle would indicate that it is the Spirit itself, as an object, which is being ‘poured out’. By using the preposition, however, it could mean that it is either part of the Spirit, or something else coming from the Spirit which is being poured out. The possible interpretations of these different alternatives have far-reaching implications for Luke’s pneumatology.

It seems therefore that the LXX translator probably misread the Hebrew accusative particle for the preposition. This changed the meaning, or at least left open the possibility, from the Spirit as the object which is being poured out, to either parts (shares) of the Spirit being poured out or something else being poured out from the Spirit as a source. The question which comes to mind is then: why did Luke intentionally took this over from the old Greek version at his disposal. Could it be that it made perfect sense to Luke who understood that ‘something’ was ‘poured out from the Spirit’, rather than the Spirit itself?

3 POSSIBLE INTERPRETATIONS

We can identify at least three major possible interpretations of the phrase under investigation in its context. Most of the literature (such as translations and commentaries) supports either the first or the second possibilities, that is, either the Spirit
as the object which is being poured out, or parts (shares) of the Spirit being poured out. I would like to pose a third possibility within the immediate literary context of Acts 1–2.

3.1 Option 1: The Spirit as the object which is being poured out

There is no doubt that the intention of the writer of Joel—according to our known Hebrew text traditions—was that it is the Spirit itself which is the object being poured out. The accusative particle used in the Hebrew clearly refers to this. Some later textual witnesses support the Hebrew reading, referring to the Spirit as the object which is being poured out. One wonders whether it could be that the preposition, ἀπό, was merely used as a replacement for the accusative particle. However, there is no proof of this.

Let us turn the focus for a minute here to the Hebrew verb itself. The verb יָשַׁלָּק is used in different contexts for the pouring out of different objects: water (Ex 4:9), blood (Gen 9:6), or other liquids. But it is also used figuratively for the ‘pouring out of the heart’ (Ps 62:9; Lam 2:19) or the ‘soul’ (1 Sm 1:15; Ps 42:5). It could be that the intention here is along these figurative lines, meaning that God poured out his Spirit (his inner Being), giving (from) himself as humans would open their ‘hearts’ and ‘souls’ and give from themselves.

Some of the Bible translations and commentaries which support this first option are the following:

- New International Version = ‘I will pour out my Spirit on all people’
- Good News Version = ‘I will pour out my Spirit on everyone’
- Nuwe Afrikaanse Bybel = ‘Ek sal my Gees uitstort op alle mense’
- Lewende Bybel = ‘Ek sal my Gees ten volle gee aan elkeen’
- Gute Nachricht Bibel = ‘...alle Menschen mit meinem Geist erfüllen’
- Conzelmann (1987:18) = ‘I will pour out my Spirit’
- Marshall (1988:73) = ‘...God is going to pour out his Spirit upon all people...’
- Foakes-Jackson (1951:13, 15) = ‘then will I pour out my Spirit upon flesh’

3.2 Option 2: Parts (shares) of (or from) the Spirit itself are poured out

Another possible interpretation could be that the intention of the LXX translator, and so also probably Luke, was to take this as a partitive genitive. Wolff, along these lines, is of the opinion that the Greek translator—using the preposition ἀπό+ genitive—did so under the influence of Num 11:17, 25: ‘(shares) of my spirit’. This

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2 Cf the Aethmotic (Coptic) and the EthiopIan translations. So also to be found in Justin (Ziesler 1984:235).

3 Wolff 1977:56. Cf also Bruce (1989:61): ‘Joel’s words may have harked backed to Moses’ exclamation: “Would that all the Lord’s people were prophets, that the Lord would put his
reference is also listed by the 27th printed text edition of the Greek New Testament of Nestle-Aland at this point in Acts.

3.2.1 The meaning of the preposition ἀπό

Dictionaries in general agree that the basic meaning of ἀπό indicates departure from a person (separation from someone), object or place (separation from something) (Bauer, Gingrich & Danker 1979:86; Balz & Schneider 1990:124; Louw & Nida 1988:721, 799). Other meanings have developed from this.

Conybeare and Stock (1981:83) pointed out that ἀπό in the LXX is often little more than a sign of the genitive, like our English "of", provided that the genitive be partitive.' Balz and Schneider (1990:124) reckons that 'in the New Testament ἀπό assumes the function of the older partitive genitive'. Their translation equivalent for this phrase is listed under the heading of 'Local use' and the sub-meaning 'as a substitute for the genitive of separation'. They translate it as 'from (of) my Spirit' (Balz & Schneider 1990:124). Some examples quoted from classical literature with this usage, are: Herodotus 6.27; Thucydides 8.87.6; Pap.Petrie 3, 11:20.

Some of the Bible translations and commentaries which support this second option, are the following:
- Expositor's Greek Testament (Nicoll 1912:78)='I will pour forth of my Spirit': 'The partitive ἀπό may be accounted for by the thought that the Spirit of God considered in its entirety remains with God, and that men acquire only a certain portion of its energies. Or the partitive force of the word may be taken signifying the great diversity of the Spirit's gifts and operations.'
- Nieuwe Nederlandsche Vertaling (Nederlandse Bijbelgenootschap 1957:225)= 'Ik zal uitsorten van mijn Geest op alle vlees': 'Overvloedig, doch de menschen kunnen Gods Geest niet ten volle ontvangen.'
- Ou Afrikaanse Vertaling (Genser et al 1976:324)= 'sal Ek van my Gees uitsort op alle vlees': 'swak mense kan Gods gawe van Sy gees nie uitput nie'
- King James Version= 'I will pour out of my Spirit': 'Contrary to the RSV (and the Hebrew text) we should not translate I will pour out my Spirit (vv. 17 and 18b), but rather I will pour out from my Spirit.' The preposition indicates the difference between the Spirit endowment of Jesus and of his followers.'
- Pesch (1986:115–116)= '... von meinem Geist auf alles Fleisch': On the one hand Pesch refers to the Spirit of God being poured out ('...Anteil an Gottes Geist, den er ausgebr'), on the other hand, he refers to the outpouring from the Spirit ('...werde ich ausgießen von meinem Geist').
- Schneider (1980:261)= '...werde ich ausgießen von meinem Geist'
- Nida (Newman & Nida 1972:43)= What Peter means by the use of this phrase is obvious: God will let all people share in his Spirit.'
3.3 Option 3: Something else is being poured out from the Spirit

A finer distinction needs to be made between ‘parts of the Spirit’ (still the Spirit itself in small portions) or something else being poured out ‘from the Spirit’—with the Spirit as the source from which it flows.

It is therefore important not to overlook Luke’s addition of καὶ προφητεύουσιν after the phrase under investigation in verse 18. By adding it here, it resembles the previous verse (Ac 2:17). A deliberate connection is therefore being made between the ‘outpouring’ and prophecy. In the preceding part of Acts, attention was already drawn to this combination through the mentioning of the following:

(a) the promise that the disciples would receive power (δύναμις) when the Holy Spirit came unto them, and they would be witnesses (μάρτυρες) (Ac 1:8);
(b) they then received ‘tongues’ which looked like fire in Ac 2:3; and
(c) after they were ‘filled’ with the Holy Spirit, they started to talk in different ‘tongues’ in Ac 2:4.

This combination is a motif which is found frequently in Lk-Ac. The fact that it is stated in the quotation that ‘from the Spirit’ would be ‘poured out’, should not be overlooked either. It could have been understood by Luke to be ‘something else’, another object (other than the Spirit itself) that would be poured out from the Spirit. If he understood that it would be the Spirit itself which is being poured out, he would have changed the reading here, as he changed it in other places, to suit his purpose. He must have accepted it with the inclusion of ἀπὸ at this point, because he understood it in a certain sense without it being strange or unusual to him. If we assume that this is the case, it leads to the inevitable question what the object was which would be poured out.

We read in Lk 24:49: ‘I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high’ (my emphasis, GJS). In both this verse from Luke’s gospel, as well as that of Acts 1:8, they are promised the reception of power. It seems therefore that, on the basis of these two verses (Lk 24:49 and Acts 1:8), the object which they would receive could be identified with ‘power’. It is interesting to keep Lk 1:35 in mind here as well. Mary

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4 Cf Louw & Nida 1988:615 (63.20): ‘...a part of a whole, whether consisting of countables or of mass—“one of, one among, a part of”’
5 Compare the following instances in the OT for a combination between ‘spirit’ and ‘prophecy’: Num 11:29; 12:6-8, 2 Kt 23.2(1.LXX); Is 11:2; 40:13, 42:1, 59:19,21; 61:1; (63:10,11,14); Jl 2:28-32 [3.1-5 LXX]; IIs 9:7; (IIs 2:5). See also Rv 1:4; 4:5; 5:6.
was promised that 'the Holy Spirit would come upon her and that the power of the Most High would overshadow her'. This object ('power') with which the Holy Spirit 'filled' them, was probably understood by Luke in this particular quotation as being the 'gift' (δώρον—cf Ac 2:38, 8:20, 10:45, 11:17) of prophecy (Ac 2:17, 18).

On the other hand, however, according to Acts 1:4–5, Jesus told his disciples that they should '...wait for the gift my Father promised, ... in a few days you will be tised with the Holy Spirit.' The motif of 'baptism with the Spirit' is also found in Acts 10:44 and 11:16.

4 CONCLUSION

Certain prominent elements have been identified in the process of the 'pouring out of (something of) the Spirit: the 'promise' of a 'gift' to be received and the roles of 'power' and 'prophesy' in the process. The quoted phrases from Joel in Acts 2:17 and 18 could imply that some object was flowing from the Spirit with which the people would be filled. This meaning is maintained here by Luke and a case could be made that this object could be identified with the 'power' (of prophecy) which they received. One should be cautious, however, not to attempt reading this particular interpretation into all the other Lukan instances of being 'filled' or 'baptised' with the Spirit. The most that one could say in this regard is that the understanding of the Spirit and its interaction with humans by the early Christians was closely connected to their perception being formed by their scriptures. At an instance such as this one in Acts 2, the Spirit conveyed the power of God and by this power, people could prophesy and heal—a picture which unfolds in the rest of Acts. According to Peter, it is Jesus, who now sits at 'the right hand of God, who received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what they now see and hear' (Acts 2:33).

A new dispensation has come, where all will share in this gift, not only prophets, kings and priests (as during the OT times), and without distinction of age, sex, or social standing. The sons and the daughters will prophesy (both sexes); the young men and the old men are involved (old and young, all ages); even the slaves (from the lowest social standing). At this point in the Joel quotation Luke brings in a new meaning with his addition of μου: It is now not meant to be a social class, but those who belong to God. This picture also unfolds at each of the three stages of the spreading of the gospel, in Judea, Samaria and to the ends of the earth...

7 'All that is said of those who had received the Spirit is that they prophesied.' ‘...prophecy in the Old Testament...implies that he who exercises this gift is the mouthpiece of a spiritual being, or even a heathen god. Thus Saul was said to “prophesy” in his madness because it was supposed that, not he but the Spirit which possessed him was speaking (1 Sam xix.24). Thus those who spoke with foreign tongues would appear to the bystanders as prophesying. This Peter takes as the fulfilment of the prophecy of Joel that the prophetic spirit will be poured out on all flesh' (Foakes-Jackson 1951:15).

8 'The first and main theme of the prophecy is that God is going to pour out his Spirit upon all people, i.e. upon all kinds of people and not just upon the prophets, kings, and priests, as
had been the case in Old Testament times' (Marshall 1988:73).