

The *Schechina* Concept(s) in Acts: The Formation Potential of Old Testament Citations

Peter Nagel
University of the Free State

Abstract

The topic and title of this study was inspired by contributions to *Das Geheimnis der Gegenwart Gottes* (eds. Janowski and Popkes). The more general aim is to contribute towards a better understanding of the *Schechina* concept as understood by the NT authors. The more specific aim is to question what may have determined the particular *Schechina* concept(s) of Luke-Acts' author. To this end, the article will first describe what is meant by the *Schechina* concept, asserting and explaining the function of OT citations in this regard. The article will then proceed to identify those sections of text that may assist in constructing a *Schechina* idea. Once such an idea has been constructed for Acts, the article will focus on the extent to which the OT citations underwrite the *Schechina* concept of Acts.¹

Key Terms

Schechina; Acts; Old Testament; Joel; Psalm; citations; Holy Spirit; pneumatology; Christology; kyriology

1 Introduction

The topic for this study was primarily inspired by a fairly recent publication, *Das Geheimnis der Gegenwart Gottes* (eds. Janowski and Popkes 2014), which is a compilation of essays dealing with the *Schechina* idea as it was conceptualised in ancient Judaism and early Christianity. Contributions on the NT include the Synoptic Gospels (Du Toit 2014), Pauline theology (Vollenweider 2014), the ecclesiology of the Ephesian epistle (Lichtenberger 2014), Johannine Christology (Frey 2014) and Johannine

¹ This article is dedicated to Dirk G. van der Merwe as Spirituality and NT researcher.

apocalypse (Toth 2014). The fact that the book of Acts is not treated in the volume prompted me to investigate whether or not Acts does in fact have anything to contribute to this topic. The following twofold proposal results from a close reading of Acts, especially the citations in Peter’s first speech in Acts 1:1–8. Firstly, it is proposed that these OT citations legitimised and substantiated the following constructs: ἐπλήσθησαν πάντες πνεύματος ἁγίου (“everyone was filled with the Holy Spirit”; Acts 2:4); καὶ ἡ σὰρξ μου κατασκηνώσει ἐπ’ ἐλπίδι (“and my flesh will dwell in hope”; Acts 2:26); and οὐκ ἐγκαταλείψεις τὴν ψυχὴν μου εἰς ᾅδην (“my living spirit will not be left behind in Hades”; Acts 2:27). Secondly, I contend that the understanding of traditional *Schechina* theology in Acts is influenced by the “filling of the Holy Spirit” (pneumatological) and Jesus being placed on par with YHWH as the κύριος (Christological and kyriological). This will be argued by focusing on the Joel 2:28–31 (MT and/or LXX²) citation in Acts 2:17–20 and the Ps 15:8–11 (LXX³) citation in Acts 2:25–29. The aim, therefore, is to determine the theological formation potential of these OT citations with regard to the *Schechina* concept.

Most commentators agree that the phrase φερομένης πνοῆς βιαίας καὶ ἐπλήρωσεν ὅλον τὸν οἶκον οὗ ἦσαν καθήμενοι (“a strong wind filled the whole house that they were sitting in”; Acts 2:2), which leads up to the cited text in Acts 2:17–20, reveals a theophany (cf. Talbert 2005, 24; Barrett 1994, 114; Keener 2012, 783–787⁴). If one accepts a general definition of theophany as a physical manifestation of a deity, and if one agrees with the view of the commentators, then it is important to investigate the distinctions, similarities and peculiarities between theophany and *Schechina*. The *Schechina* concept dates to the Rabbinic period, commencing around 70 CE, and derives from the Hebrew root יָשַׁב, which may be translated as “dwell,” “inhabit” or “settle down” (Janowski 2014, 4). The words “dwell” and “inhabit” imply that the Hebrew deity dwells among Israel or in a specific place, such as the Temple (Janowski 2014, 4). The *Schechina* concept expresses the “settling down” of the Hebrew deity among his people or in a given place, while theophany explains the physical characteristics when

² Meeks (2008, 97) affirms that the differences between the Masoretic Text and the Septuagint, on the one hand, and the Septuagint and Acts, on the other, do not significantly alter the interpretation of this text.

³ Ps 16 in the Masoretic Text and English translations.

⁴ Keener (2012, 785) addresses the issue of whether Luke recognised the link between the gift of the Spirit, on the one hand, and the theophany and gift of the Torah at Sinai, on the other.

such a deity “becomes” present in such a way that its presence is noticed by certain changes or signs in the physical world. The former denotes an enduring presence, and the latter takes effect when this presence becomes manifested; this is an event that may be repeated. Apart from these points, I also presuppose in this article that the *Schechina* concept in Acts is influenced by (1) the destruction of the Temple around 70 CE; (2) the Jesus movement becoming more independent of the Jewish religious structures; (3) the universal motif and schema of Acts; and (4) the kyriology and pneumatology of Acts.

2 Two Textual Witnesses to *Schechina*

2.1 Acts 2:17–20 (Joel 2:28–32)⁵

The essence of the citation in Acts 2:17–20 is introduced in Acts 2:1–4 with the manifestation of the Hebrew deity.⁶ The author states that all the apostles were gathered in the same place when a loud sound ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ (“from heaven”) filled the room (Acts 2:2). The manifestation of the Hebrew deity is characterised by both wind and fire. It was by this “physical manifestation” of the Hebrew deity that ἐπλήσθησαν ἅντες πνεύματος ἁγίου (“all of them were filled with the Holy Spirit”; Acts 2:4). On the one hand, one could interpret the text to mean that the physical manifestation of the Hebrew deity through wind and fire was conceptually transformed into the Holy Spirit, which filled the apostles (human space; ἐπλήσθησαν πάντες πνεύματος ἁγίου), just like the wind filled the house (architectural space;⁷ ἐπλήρωσεν ὅλον). On the other hand, it is also possible to understand the

⁵ As mentioned in an earlier footnote, the differences between the Masoretic Text and the Septuagint, on the one hand, and the Septuagint and Acts, on the other, do not significantly alter the interpretation of this text (Meeks 2008, 97).

⁶ Whenever this article refers to “the Hebrew deity,” it is assumed that the author of Luke-Acts has such a deity in mind. The explicit OT content in Acts 2 supports this assumption. This OT content refers to a Hebrew deity using a Greek equivalent (e.g., λέγει ὁ θεός in the case of Acts 2:17–20). To clarify further, in this article the adjective “Hebrew” in the construct “Hebrew deity” implies that the concept of a deity was expressed using Hebrew vocabulary, and that the aim with the Greek equivalents was to reproduce this concept of the divine using appropriate Greek terms. The term “Hebrew deity” is therefore used here to denote the author’s dominant conception of the divine, especially in the context of (but not limited to) Acts 2.

⁷ Bruce (1988, 143) identifies this space as the upper room that is introduced in Acts 1:13.

Hebrew deity as having brought the Holy Spirit with him from heaven.⁸ Jesus, in turn, instructs the apostles διὰ πνεύματος ἁγίου (“through the Holy Spirit”). This instruction through the Holy Spirit, the manifestation through wind and fire, and the fulfilment of the Holy Spirit, raise the question of whether the statement πνοῆς βιαίας καὶ ἐπλήρωσεν ὅλον τὸν οἶκον (“a strong wind filled the whole house”) should be interpreted as the Hebrew deity’s *inhabitatio*, while the statement ἐπλήσθησαν πάντες πνεύματος ἁγίου (“everyone was filled with the Holy Spirit”) should be seen as the *incarnatio*?⁹ According to Janowski (2014, 4), the differentiation between the two terms is vital for a historical understanding of *Schechina*—in his words: “also zwischen ‘Einwohnung’ und ‘Fleischwerdung.’” This distinction encourages the interpretation of πνοῆς βιαίας καὶ ἐπλήρωσεν ὅλον τὸν οἶκον and ἐπλήσθησαν πάντες πνεύματος ἁγίου as an amalgamation of *inhabitatio* and *incarnation*—an amalgamation that the Joel citation takes further. The author was obviously familiar with the literary context of Joel, suggesting that he had read and considered the phrase καὶ ἐπιγνώσεσθε ὅτι ἐν μέσῳ τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ ἐγὼ εἰμι, καὶ ἐγὼ Κύριος ὁ Θεὸς ὑμῶν (“and you should know that I am in Israel’s midst, and I am the Lord your God”; Joel 2:27) when citing Joel 28–32.¹⁰ Conceptually speaking, it is significant that the Joel citation introduces the concept ἐν μέσῳ τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ ἐγὼ εἰμι (“I am in the midst of Israel”; the ἐγὼ εἰμι here refers to Κύριος ὁ Θεός). This implies, among other things, that the author

⁸ Jervell (1998, 132) comments that πληρῶ is closely associated with the fulfillment of “God’s word” and the promise of the Spirit; this “fulfillment of the promise” takes place during the Jewish “feast of weeks.” Bruce (1988, 143) comments that the wind symbolises the “Spirit of God.” Johnson (2002, 11) reminds us that the fulfillment of Scripture is important to Luke, who does not limit this to the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, but extends it to the development of the messianic community. Strauss (1995, 36), in turn, refers to this as the Davidic promise, which becomes an extension and individualisation of Yahweh’s covenant relationship with the nation Israel.

⁹ Barrett (1994, 108) regards the presence of the “Spirit” as a gift to the people of God in the eschatological age. It is the event by which the apostles receive “supernatural powers.” For Bruce (1988, 159), the citation supports the prophecy of the outpouring of God’s Spirit. Meeks (2008, 95) likewise argues that, within the immediate context, the purpose of the cited texts is to establish the proclamation about Jesus, and not to address the Gentile mission.

¹⁰ The minus and plus readings in Acts 2:17a support the notion that the author conflated Joel 2:27 and Joel 2:28a to produce καὶ ἔσται ἐν ταῖς ἐσχάταις ἡμέραις, λέγει ὁ θεός (Acts 2:17a; cf. Jervell 1998, 142). The literary context in Joel indicates that the acting agent is Κύριος ὁ Θεός “Lord the God,” but it was also important for the author to explicitly ascribe the words uttered as originating from θεός.

intentionally cited a text that inherently deals with the *Schechina* idea. A plausible inference is that he did so, making particular use of Peter's speech because he wanted to "re-interpret" the *Schechina* concept in light of the Holy Spirit.

In his first speech (Acts 2:14–36), Peter addresses the crowd while being surrounded by the other apostles. He explains that they (the apostles) are not drunk as suggested in Acts 2:13: ὅτι γλεύκους μεμεστωμένοι εἰσὶν ("they are filled with wine"). This accusation originated from the claim that the apostles (Galileans) spoke in languages that they were not supposed to have knowledge of, resulting in the crowd hearing them in their own native tongue (καὶ πῶς ἡμεῖς ἀκούομεν ἕκαστος τῇ ἰδίᾳ διαλέκτῳ ἡμῶν ἐν ᾗ ἐγεννήθημεν; "how is it possible that we each hear in our native dialect?"; Acts 2:7–8). Peter then quotes Joel 2:28–32, where God (ὁ θεός) declares: ἐκχεῶ ἀπὸ τοῦ πνεύματός μου ἐπὶ πᾶσαν σάρκα ("I shall pour out my Spirit on every flesh"; Acts 2:17). There would have been little or no doubt among the Judean audience that the concept introduced by the latter Joel citation informs and substantiates the following constructs: ἐντειλάμενος τοῖς ἀποστόλοις διὰ πνεύματος ἁγίου ("the apostles were instructed by the Holy Spirit"; Acts 1:2); ὑμεῖς δὲ ἐν πνεύματι βαπτισθήσεσθε ἁγίῳ ("you will be baptised in the Holy Spirit"; Acts 1:5); ἀλλὰ λήμψεσθε δύναμιν ἐπελθόντος τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος ἐφ' ὑμᾶς ("but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit descends upon you"; Acts 1:8); and ἐπλήσθησαν πάντες πνεύματος ἁγίου ("all of them were filled by the Holy Spirit"; Acts 2:4).¹¹ Initially the concept ἐπὶ πᾶσαν σάρκα ("upon every flesh") was limited to Israel, but because this citation forms part of Peter's speech in particular, and of the Luke-Acts context in general, the centrifugal, static nature of the Hebrew deity's *inhabitatio* is transformed into a centripetal, mobile "becoming present" by his *incarnatio* through the Spirit.¹² The notion that Jesus instructed his apostles through the πνεύματος ἁγίου before he was "taken up," and that he promised that the apostles will be ἐν πνεύματι βαπτισθήσεσθε ἁγίῳ, are put into context by Du Toit's (2014) observations:

¹¹ Barrett (1994, 129) comments that the purpose of Peter and others "speaking in a foreign language" was to fulfil the OT prophecy that appears in the Joel citation. Brawley (1995, 79) mentions both that the events of Pentecost also fulfil John the Baptist's prophecy in Luke 3:16, and that the function of Joel in Acts 2 is to invite a retrospective glance at John's prediction.

¹² I agree with Meeks's (2008, 107–108) analysis and conclusion that the subsequent narrative intends the inclusion of gentiles with the phrase "all flesh" in Acts 2:17c.

- (1) the authority of Jesus is being passed on to his messengers, by which a representation chain is established, namely disciples—Jesus—God, whereby relations between disciples and Jesus, as well as between disciples and God, are to be understood (Saying Source Q, Luke 10:16//Matt 10:40; Mark 9:45);
- (2) the close association between being spirit-possessed and the introduction of the representation chain allows Jesus, as God’s ambassador, to facilitate such a collaboration (Gospel of Mark and probably the Sayings Gospel Q);
- (3) Christologically, Jesus is the centripetal force for God’s concealed salvation act. God’s absence and mysterious closeness are established through the trust in salvation history visible in creation (Gospel of Mark);
- (4) God is present through the earthly Jesus, which is connected with the Temple and transmitted by the Evangelist that God is present in the glorified Jesus in the midst of the congregation; this is a continuation of the “Place” in which God dwells (Gospel of Matthew). (p. 202; my translation)

If du Toit is correct, and I think he is, then one can assume that the author of Luke-Acts unintentionally elaborated on these notions by (1) calling the messengers apostles; (2) extending the representation chain to apostles—Holy Spirit—Jesus—God; (3) adding that the proclaimed message allows for Jesus vis-à-vis God to be present; and (4) presenting the place of God’s presence as the place where the message is being proclaimed.¹³

Peter’s speech in Acts 2 exemplifies this. Not only is Peter filled with the πνεύματος ἁγίου, by which he is compelled to address the crowd, but he also cites an appropriate text from scripture, whereby God speaks via the prophet Joel. It is κύριος, “lord,” who speaks through the prophet (Joel 1:1) and Κύριος ὁ Θεὸς who confirms that he is in Israel’s midst (Joel 2:27). According to the author of Joel, it is the Hebrew deity himself who declares that he will pour out the Spirit on all flesh (ἐκχεῶ ἀπὸ τοῦ πνεύματός μου ἐπὶ πᾶσαν σάρκα) for the purpose of prophecy, visions and dreams (Joel 2:28). This pouring out of the Spirit will not be limited to sons and daughters and young and old men (presumably referring to Israel), but will include slaves, male and female, enabling them to prophesy (Acts 2:18). The new centripetal nature of God’s presence will be duplicated exponentially, as one can see in the following promise: καὶ δώσω τέρατα ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ ἄνω καὶ σημεῖα ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς κάτω (“and I will give you wonders in the heaven above

¹³ These *Schechina* elaborations fit in well with the author’s universal scheme.

and signs on the earth below"; Acts 2:19). Wherever flesh is found that is filled with the Holy Spirit, like Peter's flesh, and this flesh declares God's message, God is present. Wonders will be performed in heaven and signs on earth, and these will be characterised by blood, fires and smoky mist, while the sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the lord (Acts 2:20). The cultic character of Κύριος ὁ Θεός among his people (with the Ark of the Covenant), and in the Temple, is now transformed into an apocalyptic, eschatological dimension of the presence of ὁ θεός.¹⁴

It is clear that Joel interprets YHWH as the one who dwells and is present in the Temple (cf. Joel 1:9, 13, 14, 16). He rules from his holy throne on mount Zion (cf. Joel 2:1, 15, 23), and his imminent presence is felt by the power of his voice and the action of his words (cf. Joel 2:11). Israel experiences YHWH's absence, having been put to shame (cf. Joel 1:12), but YHWH reassures them that they will never again suffer this fate, because they will know that he is in their midst (cf. Joel 2:26b; 27b). Even though the prophet Joel holds a traditional view of the *Schechina* concept, the use of Joel 2:28–31 in Acts 2:17–20 has indeed contributed in placing an emphasis on YHWH's presence through the spoken word, thereby offering a more inclusive and decentralised version of the *Schechina* idea. The Joel 2:28–31 citation allows the author to transform and relocate YHWH's *inhabitatio* to *incarnatio*—from a centralised Temple dwelling and Zionistic rule to a decentralised, inclusive *Schechina*, by empowering his messengers with the πνεύματος ἁγίου.¹⁵ The power of YHWH's voice is transferred to his messengers, the apostles, who are empowered by his Spirit. In this way, YHWH's presence is felt beyond the clouds of Zion and Temple walls.¹⁶ The apostolic message of Jesus as the *incarnatio* of YHWH

¹⁴ Barret (1994, 129) points out that the "replacement" of μετὰ ταῦτα (Joel 2:28) with ἐν ταῖς ἐσχάταις ἡμέραις (Acts 2:17) emphasised the notion that, although some expected certain events to still remain in the future, the final stages of history had been reached.

¹⁵ For Brawley (1995, 79), the hermeneutical role of Joel 3:15 is to enable readers to understand Jesus' pledge of what the Father had promised (Luke 24:49). The Joel citation should therefore, according to Brawley, not be limited to its fulfilment function, but becomes the hermeneutical key to understanding the narrative. Strazicich (2007, 255) remarks that Joel does not fulfil a singular function in Acts 2, because its appropriate function is partitioned architectonically to serve different purposes within the speech of Peter.

¹⁶ Weinert (1981, 3) argues that the widely-held view that Luke is critical of the Temple is a misconception and should be rejected. According to him (1981, 88), the Temple features in Acts to express the special closeness between God and Israel (3:2; 6:13–14;

has the potential effect that, where this message is heard and accepted, the *inhabitatio* of YHWH takes place. Thus, the pneumatology and Christology of Acts 1–2 enable a clear shift away from the dominant vertical dimension of *Schechina* to a more horizontal emphasis.

2.2 Acts 2:25–29 (Psalm 15:8–11)

The second catena of explicit OT content is found in Acts 2:25–29 (Ps 15:8–11^{LXX}),¹⁷ which is introduced by the formula Δαυὶδ γὰρ λέγει εἰς αὐτόν (“and David said about him”). The third person personal pronoun, αὐτόν, refers to Jesus of Nazareth (Acts 2:22; cf. Jervell 1998, 146; Bruce 1988, 163–164; Barrett 1994, 146),¹⁸ who performed wondrous and powerful deeds (Acts 2:22), but was handed down to be crucified (Acts 2:23). It was through him that θεός performed the signs ἐν μέσῳ ὑμῶν (“in your midst”). These signs purposely included Christ’s crucifixion, death and resurrection from the dead. The author’s act of redirecting the words of David so that they apply to Jesus contributes to a re-evaluation of the vertical dimension of the *Schechina* concept and the Hebrew deity’s presence. His presence now surpasses the Temple and the city, extending into the abyss, into the depths of Hades. This notion is supported by the fact that the introduction mentions what David said about Jesus, namely: (1) προωρόμην τὸν κύριον ἐνώπιόν μου διὰ παντός, “I also saw the κύριος before me”; and (2) ὅτι ἐκ δεξιῶν μου ἐστίν, ἵνα μὴ σαλευθῶ, “he is at my right hand, so that I do not tremble.”

Seemingly, it was important for the scribe of Ps 15 to point out in v. 8 that it was king David who claimed to have the κύριος in sight in front of him. It is further claimed in the same verse of Ps 15 that the κύριος is at his right hand as ruler and king, ensuring that he rules justly and wisely. The use of the word κύριος thus confirms that the kingly rule of the day was regarded as a mirror image of divine rule, with κύριος sitting on his throne as a cosmic ruler. The theology underpinning these ideas is that the king,

21:28; 22:17; 24:26). He further argues that in Acts the Temple continues to be a place for the manifestation of signs and visions (3:11–12; 22:17–18), and especially for prophetic proclamation and teaching by the apostles (Acts 3:11–12). Weinert (1981, 88) does, however, concede that Paul’s vision in the Jerusalem Temple leads him away from the place so that he can minister to the gentiles (Acts 22:17–21).

¹⁷ Ps 16 in the Masoretic Text and English translations.

¹⁸ Brawley (1995, 84) states that the focus in Acts 2:33–36 is on Jesus as the Lord and Christ on the basis of his resurrection, and that this focus is authenticated by the Ps 15 citation.

David in this case, is a representative or “mirror image” of the divine. This is only a brief description of *Schechina* theology as it features in Ps 15. *Schechina* theology is here coupled with Jerusalem theology, which regards Jerusalem as the city in which κύριος (YHWH) dwells and rules (cf. Janowski 2014, 15). The introductory formula (Δαυὶδ γὰρ λέγει εἰς αὐτόν), in combination with (a) καὶ ἔσται πᾶς ὃς ἂν ἐπικαλέσῃται τὸ ὄνομα κυρίου σωθήσεται (“anyone who calls the name of the lord will be saved”); (b) Ἰησοῦν τὸν Ναζωραῖον, ἄνδρα ἀποδεδειγμένον ἀπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ εἰς ὑμᾶς δυνάμεσιν (“Jesus of Nazareth, a man made known to you by God”); and (c) ὃν ὁ θεὸς ἀνέστησεν λύσας τὰς ὠδῖνας τοῦ θανάτου (“who God raised and released from the birth pains of death”), makes it impossible to interpret εἰς αὐτόν (“in him”) as referring to Jesus. It further exposes the author’s deliberate attempt to reinterpret Ps 15:8–11 as words—king David’s words—that speak about Jesus as the κύριος. One should be cautious not to interpret this as clear evidence that the author of Luke-Acts intended, in this case at least, to place YHWH on par with Jesus. His aim, more likely, was to “ethnically” and “religiously” legitimise the idea that the Hebrew deity was present wherever Jesus was being preached as the Messiah. That being said, the following interpretative possibilities remain:

- (1) The author of Luke-Acts interpreted the term κύριος as an equivalent for YHWH¹⁹ knowing that Jesus was also referred to as κύριος, thereby placing Jesus (as κύριος) on par with YHWH by implication;
- (2) The author’s aim was to make explicit the notion that even king David spoke about Jesus as the κύριος, which in his mind legitimises the continuation of the *Schechina* idea wherever Jesus is proclaimed as the Messiah.

To my mind, it is unlikely that the author of Luke-Acts would have risked alienating his Judean audience by implying a YHWH-Jesus equation or equivalence. It would also not have served his Judean-based universal approach. Instead, his intention seems to have been expressing a continuation of the *Schechina* idea in relation to Jesus as the κύριος, and the “becoming” present of God (i.e., *Schechina*) through the Holy Spirit. It is in light of these considerations that I lean towards the second interpretative

¹⁹ The term יהוה (YHWH) features prominently in the Hebrew version of this Psalm (see Ps 16:2, 5, 7, 8^{MT}). In Ps 16:2, the Hebrew term יהוה (Lord), together with the first-person pronominal suffix, is used, as often happens when YHWH and YHWH appear next to each other in the Hebrew text.

possibility. How one understands the author's implicit *Schechina* theology depends on which one of these potential interpretations one adopts. The first option calls to mind a history of YHWH among and with his people, placing Jesus as κύριος on par with YHWH, while the second option legitimises Jesus as Messiah, at least for the Judeans of the time. For a native Greek audience, there would have been no real relevance in equating Jesus with YHWH, since they lacked the religious background not only to make the link between YHWH and κύριος, but also to understand the theological significance of doing so. This makes the second option even more likely, should a native Greek audience be assumed. In other words, the argument is that interpretative option (1) would equally have appealed to his Greek audience and alienated a Judean audience, whereas option (2) would have held greater universal appeal, while legitimising the *Schechina* concept for the Judeans in the audience.

On the other hand, speaking conceptually and from a theological point of view, the logical inference is that the author of Luke-Acts does not differentiate between YHWH and Jesus as κύριος. The qualities possessed by YHWH are transferred onto Jesus as the κύριος. This understanding raises a few questions, though. How does θεός, the one responsible for resurrecting Jesus, relate to YHWH and Jesus as κύριος, respectively? Should one differentiate between the referent of the respective terms θεός and κύριος?²⁰ Is one to assume that YHWH, κύριος and θεός refer to the same entity? It seems that the *Schechina* theology of the author hinges on these theologically contentious issues. I am of the view that, when the author opted to cite Ps 15, he did so intentionally and with a very specific aim in mind, being fully aware of the potential theological risks. He could not, in my opinion, have considered all the theological consequences that this act might introduce. Some of these consequences demand a more in-depth analysis.

²⁰ Brawley (1995, 84) refers to Donald Juel (1983), who is of the opinion that the Ps 15 and Joel 2 citations are connected through use of the term κύριος. I do not agree with his contention that both Jesus and “God” bear the same title, namely κύριος. I do, however, agree that the term κύριος plays a vital role in Acts. I would go as far as to say that the term is pivotal for understanding the transformation of the *Schechina* theology, partly introduced in Acts 2.

- (1) προοράω can mean to “know beforehand” or “see beforehand” (L&N 1988, 208), “to look back from the present,” “to see in advance [foresee]” or “to see before one’s eyes” (Arndt et al. 1979, 709). The literary context suggests that, in the light of Jesus’ death and resurrection, coupled with David’s statement as a historical figure, “foresight” is the most suited translation.
- (2) The foresight that κύριος is present causes the heart to delight (ἠγαλλιάσατο ἡ γλῶσσά μου) and the tongue to rejoice (ἠγαλλιάσατο ἡ γλῶσσά μου).²¹ The reapplication of these two phrases in Ps 15:9 allows one to accredit these feelings and emotional expressions to the foresight that Jesus, being the κύριος, will be resurrected after his death. So, the initial “shortsightedness” of David has morphed into some kind of futuristic foresight.²²
- (3) In the context of Ps 15, the hope of David’s flesh is based on the notion that κύριος, in the sense of YHWH (the personal Hebrew deity), is present. In the context of Acts 2, however, the “bodily hope” is constituted by Jesus, as the κύριος, having been crucified and killed, yet resurrected. The bodily hope in Ps 15 is a consequence of “looking back”—foresight that the *Schechina* of κύριος has always been. Thus, we are dealing in Ps 15 with a *Schechina inhabitatio* theology based on bodily hope, not a *Schechina incarnatio* theology that involves being with the flesh and/or being the flesh, as developed in Acts 2. Not even ἡ ψυχή will be forsaken (left behind, abandoned) in Hades.²³
- (4) In Ps 15, the δώσεις τὸν ὄσιόν σου (“you who received holiness” or “you who received righteousness”) can only refer to king David, the one ordained to rule “on behalf of,” or “in the presence of” κύριος

²¹ According to Jervell (1998, 146) ἡ γλῶσσά points to the possibility that those who will be raised from the dead will also speak in different languages.

²² The teaching during the night that caused movement in David’s kidneys (Ps 15:7) can be understood as a revelation of what would later happen to Jesus.

²³ Barrett (1994, 147) comments that joy results not only because one is no longer dead, but also because one is now living in the presence, before the face, of God. Strauss (1995, 38–39) sketches a useful post-exilic and Second Temple Judaic backdrop of Davidic hope. He argues that Davidic hope was set aside due an increase in hierocratic administrative authority. As evidence, he refers to Ben Sirach and 1 Maccabees, with the former confirming the eternal nature of the Davidic covenant, but neither showing any interest in the individual Messiah. The high priest and not the king is seen as mediator between God and the nation. The Davidic expectations, though, were renewed during the first century BCE: new hope for a Davidic king who would act as God’s agent to judge corrupt rulers and priests (Strauss 1995, 40).

(YHWH). In the context of Acts, it most probably references Jesus as the one upon whom holiness is bestowed, causing him to be immune to destruction or corruption. To put this theological matrix into clearer perspective, one should keep in mind that the *Schechina* of κύριος (YHWH) was experienced by the body and soul of the king as something real (Ps 15). The cosmic rule and presence of YHWH is mirrored and exemplified in and through the rule of the king, but not exclusively so. The manifestation of YHWH on mount Zion and in the Temple becomes visible in the cult traditions and through his name. It is YHWH that takes center stage as the one being both with and mirrored by the ruler. Jesus, as the κύριος, on the other hand, conceptually and theologically becomes the *incarnatio* YHWH; but citing David makes him a *prototype* for Jesus. The underlying *Schechina* concept is supported by the horizontal *incarnatio* dimension: YHWH—ΚΥΡΙΟΣ —JESUS. This differs from the more vertical *inhabitatio* dimension revealed by Ps 15: YHWH—TEMPLE / KING.

We see therefore that a complex theological matrix is introduced with the Ps 15 citation in Acts 2:25–28, which includes ideas such as (1) προωρόμην τὸν κύριον ἐνώπιόν μου (“seeing κύριος before me”; Ps 15:8); (2) ἡ καρδία μου, καὶ ἡ γαλλιάσατο ἡ γλῶσσά μου (“my heart delights, and my tongue rejoices”; Ps 15:9a); (3) ἡ σὰρξ μου κατασκηνώσει ἐπ’ ἐλπίδι (“my flesh dwells in hope”; Ps 15:9b); and (4) οὐκ ἐγκαταλείψεις τὴν ψυχὴν μου (“my spirit and soul will not be left behind”).

The author of Luke-Acts has ingeniously selected and applied Ps 15:8–11 in such a way that it ensures an effective reinterpretation of the theology that underpins it. In Ps 15, king David speaks of himself and his κύριος (YHWH). Citing these verses in Acts 2, however, and ascribing them to king David, imply that he (David) speaks of Jesus as the κύριος—it is this κύριος who subsequently “becomes” the king (the ambassador of the divine), the Messiah. As mentioned before, the Jewish king and his rule formed a vital part of the Jewish *Schechina* theology. It substantiated and characterised the vertical dimension of YHWH’s presence among his people. The author of Luke-Acts introduces and promotes the horizontal dimension by expanding, interpreting and creatively transforming the Jewish *Schechina* theology in a number of ways. In Acts 2:30, David is depicted as a *prototype* for Jesus when it is claimed that he was not so much a king as a prophet who foresaw that one of his descendants will be put on

his throne. Furthermore, the author of Luke-Acts claims that David spoke about the resurrection of Jesus as the Christos: προῖδὼν ἐλάλησεν περὶ τῆς ἀναστάσεως τοῦ Χριστοῦ ὅτι οὔτε ἐγκατελείφθη εἰς ᾄδην (“in foresight he said about the resurrection of Christ, that he was not abandoned to Hades”; Acts 2:31a)—therefore neither David’s ψυχή nor Jesus was forsaken in Hades (Acts 2:31b). That θεός raised him (Jesus) from the dead (Acts 2:32) calls on everyone to bear witness to the resurrection. Jesus, as resurrected Χριστός, has now been elevated to sit at the right hand of θεός, who poured out the τοῦ πνεύματος τοῦ ἁγίου as promised by the Father (Acts 2:33). The pneumatological character of *Schechina* theology is not abandoned, but developed even further. The idea of Jesus as the Χριστός and the κύριος therefore theologically advanced the traditional *Schechina* concept.

3 Concluding Remarks

The study illustrated that the OT citations in Acts, in this case Joel 2:28–31 and Ps 15:8–11, legitimise and substantiate theological constructs such as (1) ἐπλήσθησαν πάντες πνεύματος ἁγίου (“everyone was filled with the Holy Spirit”; Acts 2:4); (2) καὶ ἡ σὰρξ μου κατασκηνώσει ἐπ’ ἐλπίδι (“and my flesh dwells in hope”; Acts 2:26); and (3) οὐκ ἐγκαταλείψεις τὴν ψυχὴν μου εἰς ᾄδην (“my living spirit will not be left behind in Hades”; Acts 2:27). Furthermore, it seems probable that these citations also highlight, inform and develop the pneumatological, Christological and kyriological dimensions of *Schechina* theology. This is done in the following ways:

- (1) By expanding on the vertical representation chain: apostles—Holy Spirit—Jesus—God;
- (2) By expanding on the horizontal dimension (one can also refer to this as the prophetic dimension): apostles—Holy Spirit—Jesus—God. The apostles are entrusted with the message of Jesus as the *incarnatio* of the Hebrew deity;
- (3) By developing a kyriology, especially evident in Acts 2:34. The kyriology appears to be pivotal for the YHWH—KYRIOS—JESUS scheme, and forms the theological foundation upon which the idea of the *incarnatio* of the Hebrew deity is to be built.

The OT content goes beyond legitimisation and substantiation, typology and analogy. It not only reveals how the author understood the *Gegenwart Gottes* (“the Presence of God”), but also opens up an array of fundamental theological possibilities, leading one to interpret the *Schechina* concept

against a theologically intertwined backdrop. The most crucial consideration when it comes to the author's conceptualisation of *Schechina* is perhaps the fact that he placed the cited text in the mouth of the apostle Peter: the one who not only received the Holy Spirit, but also proclaimed the message that Jesus was God incarnate, the κύριος. In so doing, the *Schechina* materialised.

Bibliography

- Arndt, William et al. 1979. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature: A Translation and Adaption of the Fourth Revised and Augmented Edition of Walter Bauer's griechisch-deutsches Wörterbuch zu den Schrift en des neuen Testaments und der ubrigen urchristlichen Literatur*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Barrett, Charles K. 1994. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles, Volume I: Preliminary Introduction and Commentary on Acts I–XIV*. Edinburgh: T&T Clark [ICC].
- Brawley, Robert L. 1995. *Text to Text Pours Forth Speech: Voices of Scripture in Luke-Acts*. Indiana: Indiana University Press.
- Bruce, Frederick F. 1988. *The Book of Acts*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans [NICNT].
- Du Toit, David S. 2014. Motive der Gottesgegenwart in der Synoptischen Tradition. Pages 177–202 in Janowski and Popkes, eds. 2014.
- Frey, Jörg. 2014. Joh 1,14, die Fleischwerdung des Logos und die Einwohnung Gottes in Jesus Christus: zur Bedeutung der "Schechina-Theologie" für die johanneische Christologie. Pages 231–256 in Janowski and Popkes, eds. 2014.
- Janowski, Bernd. 2014. Die Einwohnung Gottes in Israel: eine religions- und theologiegeschichtliche Skizze zur biblischen Schekina-Theologie. Pages 3–40 in Janowski and Popkes, eds. 2014.
- Janowski, Bernd, and Enno E. Popkes, eds. 2014. *Das Geheimnis der Gegenwart Gottes: zur Schechina-Vorstellung in Judentum und Christentum*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck [WUNT 318].
- Jervell, Jacob. 1998. *Die Apostelgeschichte*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht [Meyers kritisch-exegetischer Kommentar über das Neue Testament 3].
- Johnson, Luke T. 2002. *Septuagintal Midrash in the Speeches of Acts*. Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press [The Père Marquette Lecture in Theology].
- Juel, David. 1983. *Luke-Acts: The Promise of History*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox.
- Keener, Craig S. 2012. *Acts: An Exegetical Commentary, Volume 1: Introduction and 1:10–2:47*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic.
- Lichtenberger, Hermann. Das Motiv der Einwohnung in der Ekklesiologie des Epheserbriefs. Pages 219–230 in Janowski and Popkes, eds. 2014.
- Louw, Johannes P., and Eugene A. Nida 1988. *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament based on Semantic Domains, Volume 2: Indices*. New York: United Bible Societies (L&N).

- Meeks, James A. 2008. *The Gentile Mission in Old Testament Citations in Acts: Text, Hermeneutic, and Purpose*. London: T&T Clark.
- Strauss, Mark L. 1995. *The Davidic Messiah in Luke-Acts: The Promise and its Fulfillment in Lukan Christology*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic.
- Strazicich, John. 2007. *Joel's use of Scripture and the Scripture's use of Joel: Appropriation and Resignification in Second Temple Judaism and Early Christianity*. Leiden: Brill [BibInt 82].
- Talbert, Charles H. 2005. *Reading Acts: A Literary and Theological Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*. Macon: Smyth & Helwys.
- Toth, Franz. 2014. Die Schechina-Theologie in der Johannesapokalypse. Pages 257–304 in Janowski and Popkes, eds. 2014.
- Vollenweider, Samuel. 2014. Göttliche Einwohnung. Die Schechina-Motivik in der paulinischen Theologie. Pages 213–217 in Janowski and Popkes, eds. 2014.
- Weinert, Francis D. 1981. The Meaning of the Temple in Luke-Acts. *BTB* 11(3):85–89.

admin@petermagel.co.za

P. O. Box 578, Lanseria, 1748