

The Significance of Τοῦτο in Act 2:16 to the Eschatology of Acts

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Abstract

The demonstrative pronoun “τοῦτό” in Acts 2:16 carries pragmatic weight, suggesting markedness and emphasizing the eschaton (v. 17). Despite scholarly oversight, verse 16’s syntactical placement within the main clause underscores its significance. This article seeks to rectify this neglect by examining Acts 2:16’s theological and syntactical importance, particularly the usage of “Τοῦτο” and its implications for understanding Acts’ eschatological framework. Through linguistic analysis, theological exploration, and intertextual connections, this study aims to reveal the profound implications of Acts 2:16 for the eschatological discourse in Luke’s narrative.

Keywords: Cataphoric, Demonstrative Pronoun, Pragmatic, Semantics, Eschatology

Introduction

Although the term “eschatology” is not explicitly mentioned in the narrative of Luke-Acts, the theme permeates Luke’s work. Acts 2:17 stands out as a pivotal passage employing the adjective “eschatos” – ἐν ταῖς ἐσχάταις ἡμέραις – in connection with a significant period.¹ This term arises within Joel’s prophecy concerning the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, as found in Joel 2:28-32 (LXX 3:1-5). Darrell L. Bock highlights numerous text-critical

¹ καὶ ἔσται ἐν ταῖς ἐσχάταις ἡμέραις, λέγει ὁ θεός, ἐκχεῶ ἀπὸ τοῦ πνεύματός μου ἐπὶ πᾶσαν σάρκα, καὶ προφητεύσουσιν οἱ υἱοὶ ὑμῶν καὶ αἱ θυγατέρες ὑμῶν καὶ οἱ νεανίσκοι ὑμῶν ὀράσεις ὄψονται καὶ οἱ πρεσβύτεροι ὑμῶν ἐνυπνίους ἐνυπνιασθήσονται (Acts 2:17 GNT);

‘And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams Act 2:17 (ESV).

challenges associated with the use of Joel 2:28-32 in Acts 2:17.² He suggests that these textual discrepancies between the Old Testament passage, the Masoretic text, and the Septuagint shed light on how Luke employs the Old Testament text and whether he does so from a particular tradition.³

The demonstrative pronoun “τοῦτο” in Acts 2:16, commonly translated as ‘this’ in most versions (such as NRSV, NKJV, NASV, ESV), carries significant pragmatic effects for understanding the eschaton (ἐν ταῖς ἐσχάταις ἡμέραις v. 17) in Acts 2:14-21. Within the main clause, the demonstrative pronoun is articulated as ‘this is that’ (KJV, AV), indicating markedness. The definite article “τὸ” assumes the force of the demonstrative pronoun (KJV, AV), while the copula verb “ἐστίν” aligns with the demonstrative pronoun, denoting the quality of the subject matter. As rightly observed by Louw Nida, the verb “ἐστίν” may imply a correspondence to something else in certain significant features—‘to correspond to, to stand for, to be a figure of, to represent.’⁴ In essence, the syntactical construction draws the reader’s attention to a pivotal event of Acts 2:17.

Despite scholarly discussions often overlooking the syntactical significance of the demonstrative pronoun in verse 16, its placement within the main clause suggests a certain emphasis. The writer appears keen to underscore the events of the prophecy in Acts 2:17. While scholars have extensively debated the textual problems and theological implications in verse 17, verse 16 has been somewhat neglected. Yet, the proposition in verse 16 substantially contributes to highlighting the event in verse 17 and the overall pericope, enriched by its theological nuances. This article aims to rectify this oversight by exploring the syntactical and theological significance

² Darrell L. Bock, *Proclamation from Prophecy and Pattern: Lucan Old Testament Christology*, (Sheffield: JSOT, 1987), 163.

³ *Ibid.* Page?

⁴ Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 592.

of Acts 2:16 alongside its implications for the eschatological discourse in Acts.

The thesis of this article is to thoroughly examine the significance of Acts 2:16, with a particular emphasis on the utilization of the term “Τοῦτο,” and its ramifications for comprehending the eschatological framework within Acts. By scrutinizing the linguistic nuances, theological implications, and interconnections with other eschatological passages, our objective is to unveil the profound implications of this verse for the eschatology presented in Acts.

Eschatology in Acts

The significance of Acts 2:16 extends beyond its immediate context, playing a pivotal role in Luke-Acts’ eschatological framework.⁵ The manifestation of the Spirit throughout Acts—coupled with the witnessing that both occasions and is occasioned by the Spirit—underscores the eschatological character of the Christian community’s life before the anticipated day of the Lord. This eschatological discourse finds its roots in Jesus’ dialogue with his disciples regarding the kingdom of God in Acts 1, where Luke

⁵ The New Testament includes different terms and images associated with “the last things.” Generally, within the Jewish and Christian thought eschatology is seen to include the present age (life now) and the future age (coming age both within history and beyond it). Thus, eschatology is applied to two eras or ages. Essentially, the term is a conceptual tool use to express historical/ beyond events expected in the last days of history. These events include death, resurrection, Judgment, and consummation. The NT presents various strands of eschatological elements, depending on the different strands of use in NT context. Therefore, the term “Eschatology” in general sense appears appropriate in its usage in this paper. However, its content includes some of the themes mentioned. It is also perceived among scholars that the term eschatology is no longer restricted to the traditional sense of “last things” –death, Judgment, heaven and hell etc., see. Carl E. Braaten and Robert W. Jenson, *The Last Things: Biblical and Theological Perspectives on Eschatology* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2002) 68-69; J. J. Collins, “Eschatologies of Late Antiquity,” in *Dictionary of the New Testament Backgrounds*, ed. Craig A. Evans & Stanley Porter (Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity, 2000), 330.

initiates a narrative thread linking the disciples' inquiry about the kingdom with Jesus' promise of the Spirit.

General Overview

Several scholars have examined the “last things” concept in the New Testament, with divergent perspectives on its meaning and implications. Some view it as encompassing decisive end events. In contrast, others interpret eschatology more broadly as fulfilled prophecies.⁶ Alternatively, scholars may use terms like “realized,” “proleptic,” or “inaugurated” to describe eschatological concepts.⁷

Hans Conzelmann's analysis of the eschatological theme in Acts is comprehensive,⁸ although some scholars have expressed reservations about his conclusions.⁹ He suggests that the early church faced spiritual challenges due to the delayed return of Christ, leading to a decline in eschatological hopes. Conzelmann posits that Luke wrote Acts to respond to this crisis, presenting a view of eschatology where the church's life and witness to the world fill a prolonged period before the end. He maintains that the parousia remains a future event and views the pouring of the Holy Spirit as a temporary fulfillment rather than the ultimate fulfillment itself.¹⁰

While some scholars have embraced Conzelmann's theory, others have offered alternative perspectives. Robert Maddox, citing G. Schneider, for example, modifies Conzelmann's proposition by

⁶ W. Hulitt Gloer, ed. *Eschatology and the New Testament: Essays in Honor of George Raymond Beasley-Murray* (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson, 1998?DATE?).

⁷ E. E. Ellis, “Present and Future Eschatology in Luke.” *NTS*, 12 (1965-66), 27-41 et al; F. F. Bruce, “Eschatology in Acts” in *Eschatology in the New Testament: Essays in Honor of George Raymond Beasley-Murray*, ed. Hulitt Gloer (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 1988? DATE), 51.

⁸ Hans. Conzelmann, *The Theology of St Luke*, Trans. of 2nd German edition (London, 1960).

⁹ I. Howard Marshall, “Recent study of the Gospel According to St, Luke,” *Exposition Times* 80(1968): 53.

¹⁰ Conzelmann, *Theology*, 293.

suggesting that the end could come at any time but remains in the future.¹¹ J. Dupont proposes an individual eschatology, arguing that Luke reinterpreted eschatological themes to focus on the fate of individual souls, particularly regarding judgment and reception into heaven or hell at death.¹² Despite variations in interpretation, Acts presents a view of eschatology that leans towards a future consummation.

Realized Eschatology

Scholars have debated the perspective of realized eschatology in Acts, particularly focusing on textual variants in Acts 2:17. The substitution of “in the last days” for “after these things” is seen as an early insertion to align with the church’s eschatological tradition, indicating an ecclesiastical emendation.¹³ Some scholars, influenced by the Septuagint text including the alterations, interpret the Holy Spirit as the fulfillment of prophetic promises and a present experience of eschatological hopes.¹⁴

C. H. Dodd’s influential study on the parables of the kingdom laid the groundwork for discussions on realized eschatology.¹⁵ He built upon Albert Schweitzer’s futuristic eschatology to propose that Jesus taught a “realized eschatology” based on terms like “near” and “has arrived” (Luke 11:20; Matt 12:28; Mark 2:19) in the Gospels. Max Turner understands the realized eschatology of Acts as the fulfillment of prophecy, particularly God’s promises to Israel associated with resurrection, ascension, and the descent

¹¹ See., Robert Maddox, *The Purpose of Acts* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1982), 101

¹² Jacques Dupont, *The salvation of the Gentile: Essay on the Acts of the Apostles*, 37-47.

¹³ See detailed discussion on the emendation Ernst. Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles Commentary*, trans from the 5th German edition (Oxford, 1991), 179.

¹⁴ *Ibid.* page?

¹⁵ C. H. Dodd, *The Parables of the Kingdom* (London: James Nisbet, 1935), 36-37.

of the Holy Spirit.¹⁶ He interprets Acts 2:17 broadly, viewing the Pentecost event as pivotal to God's purposes for the world.

Maddox views the pneumatic aspect of the disciples as an eschatological event, merging ancient hopes with their fulfillment in the apostles and their associations. He suggests that Acts 2:17-21 merges the anticipation of spiritual renewal with its realization in the Pentecost, fulfilling God's promise to righteous Israel.¹⁷ John Stott warns against re-quoting Joel's prophecy as awaiting future fulfillment, emphasizing that the Pentecost event signifies a re-enactment of God's covenant with Israel and is not restricted to ethnic Israel.¹⁸

Inaugurated Eschatology

Johannes Weiss rejected interpretations akin to Dodd's linguistic analysis of "eggiken" and "ephthasen."¹⁹ He contended that Jesus' mention of the kingdom encompassed a subjective, inward, or spiritual experience within the human community. Furthermore, Weiss envisioned the eschaton as a forceful intrusion into the present world, challenging Dodd's reliance on Septuagint passages.²⁰ Consequently, Weiss's hermeneutical approach supports an inaugurated eschatology in Acts.

The perspective of inaugurated eschatology expands upon the concept of realized eschatology proposed by Dodd and his contemporaries. Scholars like I. Howard emphasizes the Pentecost

¹⁶ Max, Turner, *The Holy Spirit and the Spiritual Gifts in the New Testament Church and Today*, (Peabody, MA Hendrickson 1998), 43.

¹⁷ Maddox, *Purpose of Luke*, 137

¹⁸ J. R. W. Stott, *The Message of The Spirit, the Church and the World* (Downers Grove: Inter Varsity, 1990), 73.

¹⁹ Johannes Weiss, *Jesus' Proclamation of the Kingdom* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971), 56.

²⁰ Ibid. G. E. Ladd, *Jesus and the Kingdom: The Eschatology of Biblical Realism* (London: S.P.C.K., 1964), Page?

event as marking the inception of the church.²¹ They view the outpouring of the Holy Spirit as inaugurating “the last days” or the church age. According to this view, the final phase of the last days will culminate in the universal disappearance of natural light sources.

Already and not Yet

G. E. Ladd’s interpretation of New Testament (NT) texts with eschatological themes suggests that the anticipated events occurred through the person and mission of Jesus.²² However, Ladd maintains that the ultimate fulfillment of prophetic hopes will occur at the end of the age. He concludes that Jesus’ statement in Mark 9:1, regarding some not tasting death until they see the kingdom of God coming with power, implies the manifestation of the power through the gift of the Holy Spirit.²³

In conclusion, the eschatological perspective presented in the book of Acts is intricate. While acknowledging the validity of various hermeneutical principles and eschatological interpretations, it is reasonable to recognize that each perspective contains elements of fulfillment. Scholars who insist on placing eschatological events solely in the future may overlook the historical dimension and misunderstand the history of redemption.

On the other hand, those who exclusively locate eschatological events in the present may neglect the ultimate consummation of human history. There appears to be a challenge in articulating the events of the last days in the Acts, especially if they are seen as confined to the future while simultaneously being experienced in the present. Moreover, the question of the imminence of eschatology becomes difficult to address when certain elements have already been fulfilled.

²¹ I. Howard Marshall, *Luke: Historian and Theologian* (Milton Keynes, UK: Paternoster, 1970), 79.

²² G. E. Ladd, *Jesus and the Kingdom: The Eschatology of Biblical Realism* (London: S.P.C.K., 1964), Page?

²³ *Ibid.* Page?

The concept of inaugurated eschatology presents the challenge of reconciling prior redemptive acts in the life and mission of Jesus. With these considerations in mind, this study endeavors to explore the syntactical relationships within the pericope, contextualized against the backdrop of the Second Temple period and the intertextual use of the Old Testament in the New Testament, in order to discern the possible eschatological orientation in Acts 2:16-21.

Significance of the τοῦτό

The demonstrative pronoun τοῦτό in Acts 2:16 presents a significant inference to the literary construction. The Luke-Acts corpus attests to the use of demonstrative pronouns to refer to subsequent propositions in the discourse. Linguists refer to this rhetoric use a particle with a forward pointing as ‘cataphoric’ reference.²⁴ The demonstratives pronoun can be employed in a syntactical construction to draw attention to new propositions yet to be introduced. Runge presents an elaborate description of the forward-pointing references in Luke.²⁵ He avers that the forward-pointing references seek to draw attention to prominent concepts.

The grammarians, who perceive the cataphoric use of demonstrative pronoun, also conceive the pronoun as a highlighting device.²⁶ Runge avers that pronoun adds “anticipation and prominence” to the linguistic feature that might be unnoticed in a normal construction.²⁷ He rightly identifies this cataphoric use in colloquial English to highlight important propositions in the discourse. He gives an example of the statement: ‘Listen to this,’ ‘This is my final offer,’ in both statements, the propositions will

²⁴ Runge, *The Lexham Discourse*, 54.

²⁵ Runge, “The Exegetical Significance of Prospective Demonstrative Pronouns in Luke’s Gospel,” Paper Presented at the Evangelical Theological Society’s (Northwest Regional Meeting, February 24, 2007), 3.

²⁶ Runge, *Lexham discourse*, 57.

²⁷ *Ibid.* page?

follow the demonstrative pronoun. The speaker draws the attention of his audience.

Luke's gospel presents instances of grammatical constructions with cataphoric features. Either the pronouns substitute a whole proposition, not only a noun phrase, or point ahead to propositions not yet introduced. Runge demonstrates the probable tendency of Luke's employment of the literary device in the following examples: one set shows the cataphoric use purpose and result in *ινα*, *οτι* conjunctions, the second shows an appositional, and finally, one deduces from the semantic context.²⁸

Therefore some references that show the demonstrative pronouns with cataphoric force include:

τοῦτο δὲ γινώσκετε ὅτι εἰ ἦδει ὁ οἰκοδεσπότης ποία ὥρα ὁ κλέπτης ἔρχεται, οὐκ ἂν ἀφῆκεν διορυχθῆναι τὸν οἶκον αὐτοῦ (Luke 12:39 BNT).

“And be sure of this, that if the head of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have allowed his house to be broken into” (Luke 12:39 NAS).

The semantic value of the demonstrative pronoun in this sentence is to front the interpretative point of Jesus. Jesus draws the attention of his audience by using the demonstrative pronoun. The cataphoric use of *τοῦτο δὲ γινώσκετε*, ‘and (or but) this you know,’ in the sentence shows the significance of Jesus’ statement.

Luke presents another cataphoric use in Luke 24:44, whereby Jesus reminds his disciples of the messianic prophecies in the OT that are fulfilled his life:

Εἶπεν δὲ πρὸς αὐτούς, Οὗτοι οἱ λόγοι μου οὓς ἐλάλησα πρὸς ὑμᾶς ἔτι ὡν σὺν ὑμῖν, ὅτι δεῖ πληρωθῆναι πάντα τὰ γεγραμμένα ἐν τῷ νόμῳ Μωϋσέως καὶ τοῖς προφήταις καὶ ψαλμοῖς περὶ ἐμοῦ (Luk 24:44 GNT)

²⁸ Runge, Steven, “The Exegetical Significance of Cataphoric Pronouns in Luke’s Gospel,” 4.

“Now he said to them, “These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled” (Luke 24:44 NAS).

In this particular context, Jesus employs the demonstrative pronoun to underscore the importance of his statement. He aims to convince his disciples regarding the Messianic prophecies that were fulfilled in him. The pronoun functions in line with the content of the passage. Another instance illustrating this point can be found in Jesus’ final hours. He directs his disciples’ attention to the prophecies, urging them to prepare for the imminent confrontation by carrying a sword and bags.

λέγω γὰρ ὑμῖν ὅτι τοῦτο τὸ γεγραμμένον δεῖ τελεσθῆναι ἐν ἐμοί, τὸ Καὶ μετὰ ἀνόμων ἐλογίσθη· καὶ γὰρ τὸ περὶ ἐμοῦ τέλος ἔχει. (Luke 22:37 GNT)

“For I tell you, that this which is written must be fulfilled in Me, ‘And He was numbered with transgressors’; for that which refers to Me has its fulfillment.” Luke 22:37 NAS

The cataphoric pronoun presents the prominence of the OT quotation referred to by Jesus. Levisohn observes that the Greek word order presents markedness in the highlighting pronoun.²⁹ These cataphoric uses are restricted to Lucan use alone but identifiable in other NT books.

It is plausible to assert that cataphoric demonstrations are used as rhetorical devices to highlight prominent propositions in Luke. The example illustrates the significance of perceiving the pronouns as cataphoric. According to Runge, the use of cataphoric pronouns can be identified in Pauline and Johannine literature.³⁰

²⁹ 55 Stephen H. Levisohn, 2006 Self-instruction Materials on Narrative Discourse Analysis. Online at <http://mail.jaars.org/~bt/narr.zip>.

³⁰ No entry

Contextual Analysis

Broader context

Scholars have grappled with constructing a linear structure or outline for the book of Acts due to the constant flux of characters, settings, and socio-cultural contexts throughout the narrative. The dynamic nature of Acts, characterized by diverse speakers, varying styles, topics, and circumstances within its speeches, complicates efforts to categorize its literary units using standardized terms.³¹ Scholars have proposed various structural frameworks for the book of Acts, including those based on Acts 1:8 and geographical, socio-ethnic, and cultural perspectives.³² These structures attempt to organize the narrative's fluidity, incorporating speeches, alternating circumstances, and characters.

This study adopts a hybrid structure combining geographical patterns and summary statements. Barclay Moon Newman and Eugene Albert Nida identify six sections centered around spreading the gospel from Jerusalem to Rome, with summary statements marking significant transitions.³³ In this framework, the apostles are not the primary agents of gospel dissemination beyond Judea; instead, the Holy Spirit plays a central role, continuing the work of spreading the message to both Jews and Gentiles. Thus, Acts focuses on the pivotal role of the Holy Spirit in carrying out the mission of the early church, culminating in the proclamation of the gospel to the ends of the earth.

³¹ Walter L. Lie Feld, *Interpreting the Book of Acts* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1995), 19.

³² I. Howard Marshall, *Acts of the Apostles*, (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic 2003), 37.

³³ Barclay Moon Newman and Eugene Albert Nida, *A Handbook on the Acts of the Apostles*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1972), 3.

Immediate Context

The immediate context of Acts 2 is centered around the Pentecost event in Jerusalem, serving as a pivotal moment in the narrative. The plot unfolds as the disciples receive the Holy Spirit in the upper room, leading to the miraculous manifestation of speaking in tongues. This phenomenon captures the attention of devout individuals from various nations, setting the stage for the thematic and linguistic thread that runs throughout the chapter.

Acts 2 maintains a cohesive thematic and linguistic continuity with the preceding narrative. The Pentecost event vividly portrays the descent of the Holy Spirit, fulfilling Jesus' promise as foretold in Acts 1:4. In the preceding chapter, the disciples eagerly anticipate the fulfillment of this promise through prayer and supplication in Jerusalem (Acts 1:14). Luke employs the present infinitive dative form of *συμπληροῦσθαι* not only to signify a chronological sequence but also to underscore the fulfillment of this divine promise.³⁴

The theme of the Holy Spirit serves as a unifying thread throughout the chapter, weaving together its contents seamlessly. The audience is astonished by the miraculous gift of languages bestowed upon the disciples by the Holy Spirit (2:7). Peter's subsequent speech draws a connection between the presence of the Holy Spirit and Joel's prophecy (2:17). Additionally, the disciples' steadfast unity in prayer and study of the word, empowered by the Holy Spirit, leads to the manifestation of "many wonders and signs" (2:43).

Peter's subsequent speech, spanning from verses 14 to 40, serves as the focal point, where he proclaims the gospel message, linking the presence of the Holy Spirit to Joel's prophecy and inviting repentance.³⁵ The speech in chapter 2 consists clear demarcation as

³⁴ John B. Polhill, Acts, vol. 26, *The New American Commentary* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995), 97.

³⁵ The debate over the historicity of the speech in Acts, rages on, but is not discussed in this study, However, the study presupposes historical validity of the speeches, based on the unity of themes and vocabulary in all three speech (Acts 2:14-41; Act 3: 12-26; Acts 10: 34-43).

opening addresses to his audience: “Men of Judea” (v.14); “Men of Jerusalem” (v. 22) and “men and brothers” (v.29). In the first section of the speech (14-21), Peter refutes the allegations from the audience that the disciples are drunk (v.13). In verses 22-36, relates the Pentecost event to the death of Jesus of Nazareth, and invites them to repentance. In the final section of the speech, Peter makes a rhetoric remark to affirm his words (vv.38-39).

Haenchen has extensively examined the significance of Peter’s address to the gathered crowd at Pentecost (Acts 2:14-41), considering it as programmatic for the rest of Acts.³⁶ Craig S. Keener highlights the importance of Peter’s speech, which serves as a paradigm for discussions related to the Holy Spirit in Acts, crucially shaping Luke’s eschatological representation.³⁷ In this speech, Peter employs four Old Testament (OT) quotations as scriptural proofs, notably vv. 14-21 interpret the event of the tongues as a fulfillment of: a. Joel 2:28-32 (LXX 3:1-5); Acts 2:22-36 present Christ as messiah fulfillment of b. Psalms 16:8-11, c. Psalms 110:1, and d. Psalms 132:10 Keener suggests that Peter intentionally uses these OT quotations to invoke ancient authority, particularly to explain the disciples’ demeanor and refute accusations of drunkenness.³⁸

Joel’s prophecy in Acts 2:17-21 includes various eschatological elements, suggesting the fulfillment of the Lord’s promise in Acts 1:4 at Pentecost, thus constituting a diminutive of an eschatological experience. However, Luke Timothy Johnson and Haenchen argue about the substitution of LXX μετὰ ταῦτα for ἐν ταῖς ἐσχάταις ἡμέραις ‘in the last days’ (cf. Isa. 2:2), viewing it as a redactional change to connect the advent of the spirit to the last days.³⁹ Haenchen advocates for the textual variant of B (μετὰ ταῦτα),

³⁶ Haenchen, *The Acts of The Apostles*, 179; Marshall, *Acts of the Apostles*, Page?.

³⁷ Keener *Acts: An Exegetical Commentary*, 872.

³⁸ *Ibid.* page?

³⁹ Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Acts of the Apostles*, ed. Daniel J. Harrington, S.J (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1992), 49; Haenchen, *Acts*, 179.

suggesting that it should be preferred, as Luke's theology of the last days does not commence at Pentecost.⁴⁰ However, Bock and other commentators aptly refute Johnson's position, regarding the Western text type B text as an assimilation to the LXX.⁴¹ Bock argues that all the OT passages alluded to in Acts 2:14-21 contain messianic nuances. Additionally, he posits that Luke utilizes Joel's text within the broader spectrum of the end times, encompassing the birth, ministry, death, and resurrection-ascension of Jesus.⁴²

The chapter concludes with depicting the early church's communal life in Jerusalem post-Pentecost. The acts of the Holy Spirit in the disciples seamlessly connect chapter 2 to chapter 3, where Peter and John perform another miraculous healing and continue their witnessing work in Jerusalem. Overall, Acts 2 serves as a foundational chapter, illustrating the transformative power of the Holy Spirit and setting the stage for the expansion of the gospel message. Scholars have meticulously dissected Peter's seminal address to the gathered crowd at Pentecost (Acts 2:14-41), recognizing its foundational significance for the narrative trajectory of Acts.⁴³

Linguistic Analysis of Acts 2:14-21

The linguistic analysis section of this study delves into an exegetical examination of Acts 2:14-21, aiming to uncover underlying eschatological expectations within the text. Through an exploration of the grammatical and syntactical relationships among words, clauses, and phrases, this analysis seeks to elucidate

⁴⁰ Haechen, *Acts*, 179; Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* (London: UBS, 1971), 293.

⁴¹ Darrell L. Bock, *Acts Baker Exegetical Commentary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI, 2007), 108.

⁴² *Ibid.* Page?

⁴³ Ernest Haenchen, *The Acts of The Apostles, Commentary*, trans. from the 5 th German edition (Oxford, 1971), 179; Marshall, *Acts of the Apostles*, 37; Craig S. Keener *Acts: An Exegetical Commentary*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Bakers Academic, 2012), 872.

the intended semantic values. The logical starting point for this investigation is the clause *ἀλλὰ τοῦτό ἐστιν* in verse 16.

Pragmatically, the clause, *ἀλλὰ τοῦτό ἐστιν*, serves to orient readers toward new information pertinent to the immediate context, specifically regarding the descent of the Holy Spirit. The adversative conjunction *ἀλλὰ* introduces a statement that contrasts with previous utterances from the audience. The demonstrative pronoun *τοῦτό*, in this analysis, is proposed to carry a cataphoric force, preparing the audience for the forthcoming revelation—the prophecy of Joel.⁴⁴

Steven E. Runge succinctly asserts, “demonstrative pronouns have the unique capability of standing in for whole propositions, and not just simple Noun Phrases” (NP).⁴⁵ Runge employs several examples to demonstrate the anaphoric and cataphoric force of the demonstrate pronouns. In Luke 4: 43 he gives an example of anaphoric function:

ὁ δὲ εἶπεν πρὸς αὐτοὺς ὅτι Καὶ ταῖς ἑτέραις πόλεσιν
εὐαγγελίσασθαι με δεῖ τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ, ὅτι ἐπὶ
τοῦτο ἀπεστάλην;

“But He said to them, “I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also, for I was sent for this purpose” (NASB).

Runge identifies an anaphoric sense in the demonstrative pronoun *τοῦτο* in Luke 4:43 to refer to the proposition ‘preach the kingdom of God in other cities.’ In this instance, the pronoun stands in the place of an action in the backward pointing and is known as anaphoric.⁴⁶ However, he further posits that in certain instances, demonstrative pronouns anticipate a subsequent word

⁴⁴ Steven Runge, “The Exegetical significance of Cataphoric Pronouns in the Luke’s Gospel,” Logos Research Systems, 2007.

⁴⁵ Steven E. Runge, “The Exegetical significance of Cataphoric Pronouns in Luke’s Gospel” (A Paper presented at the Evangelical Theological Society, Northwest Regional meeting, 2007), page?; Stanley E. Porter, *Idioms of the Greek New Testament* (Sheffield Academic Press, 1992), 134-135.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 55.

or proposition. He employs the linguistic term “cataphoric” to describe these instances and provides examples from Luke’s writings, including the following:

Καὶ τὸν κονιορτὸν τὸν κολληθέντα ἡμῖν ἐκ τῆς πόλεως ὑμῶν εἰς τοὺς πόδας ἀπομασσόμεθα ὑμῖν· πλὴν τοῦτο γινώσκετε ὅτι ἤγγικεν ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ. (Luk 10:11 GNT)

“Even the dust of your city which clings to our feet, we wipe off in protest against you; yet be sure of this, that the kingdom of God has come near.” (Luke 10:11 NAS)

πλὴν ἐν τούτῳ μὴ χαίρετε ὅτι τὰ πνεύματα ὑμῖν ὑποτάσσεται, χαίρετε δὲ ὅτι τὰ ὀνόματα ὑμῶν ἐγγέγραπται ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς. (Luke 10:20 GNT)

“Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are recorded in heaven.” (Luke 10:20 NAS).

In these examples the cataphoric function of demonstrative pronoun ‘this’ is seen in the clauses. Runge rightly identifies cataphoric force of the demonstrative pronoun in Luke 10:11. Jesus appears to highlight the main significant things. The pronoun brings to prominence “the significance of knowledge about imminence the kingdom of God.”⁴⁷ Moreover, Stanley Porter identifies a cataphoric function of the demonstrative pronoun in Acts 21:11: Τάδε λέγει τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον (Act 21:11 GNT) “the holy spirit says these things.”⁴⁸ The contextual materials seem to align effectively with the cataphoric nuance. Likewise, Runge astutely observes the pronoun’s cataphoric function in verse 20.⁴⁹ The contextual materials appear to correspond well enough to the cataphoric nuance.

It is apparent that the demonstrative pronoun draws the hearers’ attention to the fact that the names are written in heaven. The

⁴⁷ Runge, “The Exegetical Significance of the Cataphoric Pronoun in Luke,” 4.

⁴⁸ Stanley E. Porter, *Idioms of the Greek New Testament* (CITY OF PUBLICATION? Sheffield Academic Press, 1992), 134-135.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.* page?

cataphoric sense of the demonstrative pronoun enhances prominence in both instances. A.T. Robertson identifies demonstrative pronouns with cataphoric functions as appositional.⁵⁰ Daniel Wallace designates the cataphoric feature of the demonstratives as proleptic.⁵¹ While, as always in such analyses, there are grammatical puzzles, grammarians have given little attention the cataphoric forces in discourse analysis.

The significance of the demonstrative pronoun in Acts 2:16 allows for a cataphoric analysis of the syntax. The conjunction ἄλλὰ that precedes the demonstrative pronoun allows anticipation of a change of the subject matter. Runge cites Heckert's depiction of ἄλλὰ as bearing "a global marker of contrast, one that introduces a correction of the expectation created by the first conjunct; an incorrect expectation is cancelled and a proper expectation is put in its place."⁵²

In this study, the demonstrative pronoun is regarded as a highlighting device, as exemplified in the statement, "This is that spoken through the prophet Joel." Luke strategically places the proposition at the forefront, underscoring its significance to the message he conveys. By employing the demonstrative pronoun in a cataphoric manner, Luke aims to draw the reader or listener's attention and assign prominence to Joel's prophecy. While Joel's prophecy inherently carries weight due to its semantic content, the deliberate use of the demonstrative pronoun provides objective exegetical evidence of Luke's intention. Thus, Luke may be observed purposefully utilizing the pronoun to foreground the proposition he intends to convey.

One potential rationale behind Luke's use of the demonstrative pronoun as a highlighting device is to direct attention to the event

⁵⁰ A.T. Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in Light of Historical Research*. (Nashville: Broad Man or Broadman?, 1934), 698.

⁵¹ Daniel G. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics*, 2ed. . (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999, 2002), 318.

⁵² Steve E. Runge, *Discourse Grammar of the Greek New Testament: A Practical Introduction for Teaching and Exegesis* (Peabody, Abbrev. : Hendrickson Publishers, 2010), 56.

of Pentecost and its connection to the last days mentioned in verse 17. Newman and Nida aptly note that the pronoun must be linked to verse 17, implying God's declaration: "This is what I will do in the last days."⁵³ The use of the perfect forms of the verb, indicating a stative verbal aspect for the verb εἶπον 'to speak', characterizes the action as an ongoing state of affair. Additionally, the perfect verbal aspect suggests the speaker's deliberate intention to emphasize the verbal action.⁵⁴ These grammatical constructions underscore the significance of the phrase in verse 17, "the last days." The pragmatic effect of the pronoun suggests that the "last days are upon us," marking the period culminating in the coming of the day of the Lord.⁵⁵

The context of verse 16 is vv.14-15. Peter and the eleven disciples stood up to explain the Pentecost scenario.

14 δὲ

ὁ Πέτρος ἐπῆρεν τὴν φωνὴν αὐτοῦ,

σὺν τοῖς ἑνδεκά Σταθεῖς

καὶ

ἀπεφθέγγετο ἄνδρες Ἰουδαῖοι καὶ οἱ κατοικοῦντες
Ἱερουσαλὴμ πάντες, τοῦτο ὑμῖν γνωστὸν ἔστω καὶ

ἐνωτίσασθε τὰ ῥήματά μου.

But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice,
and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell
at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my
words;(Act 2:14 KJV)

In this verse, Peter and the eleven disciples are depicted as standing (Σταθεῖς - aorist passive participle), with the syntactical function of the participle concurrent with the main verb ἐπῆρεν (aorist active indicative), indicating that as they stood, Peter

⁵³ Newman and Nida, *A Handbook on the Acts of the Apostles*, 43.

⁵⁴ Stanley Porter, *Verbal Aspect in the Greek of the New Testament*, 242-243.

⁵⁵ *Ibid*, page?; Bock, *Proclamation*, 161.

lifted his voice to address the curious gathering using the verb ἀπεφθέγγετο (aorist middle indicative). Bock notes that this verb is unique to Luke, appearing only twice elsewhere (Acts 2:4), suggesting a spirit-inspired utterance. Luke notably portrays Peter as the primary spokesperson for the apostles.⁵⁶

The demonstrative pronoun τοῦτο in verse 14 serves a cataphoric syntactical function. In addition to the imperative ἔστω καὶ ἐνωτίσασθε ‘be and give ear to,’ the pronoun emphasizes what Peter declares to the audience. The verb ἐνωτίσασθε (aorist middle imperative) is unique to this passage in the New Testament and conveys the meaning of ‘paying close attention to something’ or ‘listening carefully.’⁵⁷ Peter appears eager to reveal the divine purposes rather than solely explaining the significance of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

γὰρ

οὐ ὑπολαμβάνετε οὗτοι

ὡς ὑμεῖς μεθύουσιν,

γὰρ

ἔστιν ὥρα τρίτη τῆς ἡμέρας, (Act 2:15 GNT).

“For these men are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only the third hour of the day” (Act 2:15 NAS)

Peter offers a logical explanation, using the γὰρ conjunction (indicating reason), regarding the descent of the Holy Spirit. He counters the accusation from the crowd that the disciples are drunk, arguing that it would be unreasonable for them to be intoxicated at “the third hour of the morning.” The apostle proceeds to describe the factual occurrences of the Pentecost phenomenon.

⁵⁶ Darrell L. Bock Acts: *Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, Abbrev: Baker Academic, 2007), 110.

⁵⁷ William Arndt, with Frederick W. Danker, and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), save. ἐνωτίσασθε.

ἀλλὰ

τοῦτό ἐστιν τὸ εἰρημένον

διὰ τοῦ προφήτου Ἰωήλ,(Act 2:16 GNT)

“But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel” (Act 2:16 KJV)

The verse presents a variant reading regarding the identification of the prophet Joel. The majority of witnesses support the inclusion of the phrase “prophet Joel.” Metzger suggests that Joel’s name might have accidentally been omitted from the Western text (D).⁵⁸

Therefore, the inclusion of Joel’s name is proposed as the most original reading based on the majority of text types. Peter contends that Joel’s prophecy finds its fulfillment at Pentecost.

The adversative conjunction ἀλλά ‘but’ at the beginning of verse 16 contrasts with the preceding suppositions of the crowd in Jerusalem. As discussed earlier, in this context, the significance of the demonstrative pronoun is considered to be exegetically significant, especially when viewed as a pragmatic cataphoric element. Peter utilizes it to prepare his audience to hear the words of the prophet Joel.

Bock incisively observes that the phrase τοῦτό ἐστιν bears a resemblance to the *peshet* style found in Qumran (CD.16).⁵⁹ This phrase occurs seven times in the New Testament (Luke 22:19; Matt 26:26; Mark 14:22, 26; John 6:29; 1 John 4:3). In verse 16, it connects the Pentecost event to the last days. The copulative verb explicitly indicates that Pentecost “is” the event of “the last days.” The prepositional phrase διὰ τοῦ προφήτου Ἰωήλ functions as the source of the message that Peter invokes as evidence for his declaration.

Καὶ ἔσται ἐν ταῖς ἐσχάταις ἡμέραις, λέγει ὁ θεός, ἐκχεῶ ἀπὸ τοῦ πνεύματός μου ἐπὶ πᾶσαν σάρκα, καὶ προφητεύσουσιν οἱ υἱοὶ ὑμῶν καὶ αἱ θυγατέρες ὑμῶν καὶ οἱ νεανίσκοι

⁵⁸ Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, 293.

⁵⁹ Bock, *Acts*, 111.

ὕμῶν ὀράσεις ὄψονται καὶ οἱ πρεσβύτεροι ὑμῶν ἐνυπνίους ἐνυπνιασθήσονται· (Act 2:17 GNT)

And it shall be in the last days,' God says, 'That I will pour forth of My Spirit upon all mankind; And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; (Act 2:17 NAS).

The verse introduces the second variant reading within the pericope, notably the absence of the words "God says" in both the Masoretic (MT) and Septuagint (LXX) passages. This omission leaves the speaker unidentified without directly attributing the prophecy to any specific speaker. NT manuscripts Bazaе and Ephraims use "Lord," while Sinaiticus, Alexandrinus, Vaticanus, and many other manuscripts, employ "God." Reading with "God" appears to be the most preferable method. It is plausible that the Western type of text changed "Lord" to "God" to align with the OT reference to God. This divine appellation underscores the source of the prophecy.⁶⁰

The coordinating conjunction καὶ links verse 17 to Peter's declaration. As mentioned earlier, the initial portion of the text is an emendation. While Sinaiticus, Alexandrinus, and Bezae read "it will be in the last days," the Masoretic Text (MT) and the Septuagint (LXX), Vaticanus read "after these things." The reading in the MT and LXX is attributed to later scribes with theological agendas.⁶¹

Metzger's proposal, supported by most scholars, advocates for the emendation to harmonize the text with the MT and the LXX.⁶² The reading "In the last days" aligns more closely with earlier textual evidence and is considered preferable. This reading

⁶⁰ R. P. Menzies, *The Development of Early Christian Pneumatology with Special reference to Luke-Acts* (Sheffield, UK?: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991), 215.

⁶¹ E. Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Commentary*, (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1971) 179.

⁶² Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, 293.

introduces an eschatological orientation in the text, suggesting that Joel's prophecy extends from Pentecost to the last days.

The verb ἐκχεῶ, meaning "to pour out" (a future active indicative), depicts the action of God pouring. It appears 16 times in the New Testament, with 3 occurrences in the book of Acts (2:17-18, 33). Notably, the verb is exclusively used in reference to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Joel's prophecy situates this event in the future. The prepositional phrase ἀπὸ τοῦ πνεύματός μου conveys a sense of the partitive genitive, indicating that the Holy Spirit is not poured out in its entirety.⁶³ This partially fulfills Joel's prophecy, with the Holy Spirit giving partially to particular individuals (Isaiah 40:3-5; 16-17). However, in these last days, God's pouring out of the Holy Spirit suggests a complete fullness of the gift to all flesh.

If the earlier argument holds true, then it aligns with the subsequent section of the verse, which speaks of the distribution of the Holy Spirit ἐπὶ πᾶσαν σάρκα, meaning "upon all flesh." This is a Semitic idiom that signifies all people. The Spirit is poured out indiscriminately upon all individuals, irrespective of nationality or gender. This inclusivity is further elaborated in the subsequent parts of the verse: καὶ προφητεύουσιν οἱ υἱοὶ ὑμῶν καὶ αἱ θυγατέρες ὑμῶν καὶ οἱ νεανίσκοι ὑμῶν ὄρασεις ὄψονται, meaning "Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, and your old men will dream dreams." This indicates that individuals of all ages, genders, and backgrounds are beneficiaries of the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

The prophecy originates from God, indicated by the future passive form of the verbs ὄψονται ("they shall see") and ἐνυπνιασθήσονται ("they shall dream").⁶⁴ These actions, along

⁶³ The partitive shows the object is apprehended in Part. The participation of believers in divine attributes is considered partial and reflected by the genitive (Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 132.

⁶⁴ Grammarians consider divine agency for passive verbal construction. Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics, An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament*, (Grand Rapids, MI; Zondervan, 1996), 437.

with prophesying, suggest divine involvement, paralleling the first prophecy. The term ὁράσεις (“visions”) is rare in the NT, occurring only four times, including one instance here in Acts 2:17 and three cases in Revelation, but commonly found in the LXX, particularly in Ezekiel and Daniel, suggesting eschatological significance in context. Similarly, the term ἐνυπνίους (“dreams”) is an NT hapax legomenon but occurs more frequently in the LXX.

καί γε ἐπὶ τοὺς δούλους μου καὶ ἐπὶ τὰς δούλας μου ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις ἐκείναις ἐκχεῶ ἀπὸ τοῦ πνεύματός μου, καὶ προφητεύσουσιν (Act 2:18 GNT)

“And on my servants and on my handmaidens, I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy: (Act 2:18 KJV).

The coordinating conjunction καί γε establishes a thematic and structural link between verse 17 and the preceding one. The effects of the divine Spirit’s outpouring will extend even to male and female slaves, who will prophesy. The prepositional phrase ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις ἐκείναις (“in those days”) carries eschatological connotations.

καὶ δώσω τέρατα ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ ἄνω καὶ σημεῖα ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς κάτω, αἷμα καὶ πῦρ καὶ ἀτμίδα καπνοῦ· (Acts 2:19 GNT)

“And I will grant wonders in the sky above, and signs on the earth beneath, Blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke” (Act 2:19 NAS)

Verse 19 presents apocalyptic imagery corresponding to the Holy Spirit’s descent on Pentecost. These images, including wonders in heaven and signs on earth like blood and vapor of smoke, align with the eschatological concept of the day of the Lord found in other NT passages (Luke 21; Rev 6:12-17). The depiction of fire, blood, and celestial changes symbolizes themes of judgment (Isa 43:2; Acts 2:20b). While these phenomena were not physically witnessed at Pentecost, Joel’s prophecy captures the overarching picture of the last days.

Peter effectively connects the events of Pentecost to Joel's prophecy by adapting it to his contemporary context. By placing the Pentecostal events "in the last days," Peter indicates his belief that the messianic age has begun with Christ's resurrection, marking the culmination of God's saving history. This interpretation aligns with the rabbinic consensus that the Spirit, once present among all of Israel, would return as a universal gift in the future.⁶⁵

ὁ ἥλιος μεταστραφήσεται εἰς σκότος καὶ ἡ σελήνη εἰς αἷμα,
πρὶν ἔλθειν ἡμέραν κυρίου τὴν μεγάλην καὶ ἐπιφανῆ. (Act
2:20 GNT).

"The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come" (Act 2:20 KJV).

Verse 20 continues the eschatological theme, depicting cosmic signs such as the sun turning dark and blood, reminiscent of the imagery associated with the day of the Lord (Joel 3:4; 21:25). These cosmic alterations signal the impending day of the Lord, as noted by Bock who aptly observes that these signs indicate the progression of eschatological events.⁶⁶ The descriptions of the day of the Lord reflect the cognitive context of the people in Jerusalem, employing a poetic style characteristic of Old Testament language.

Peter effectively ties the events of Pentecost to Joel's prophecy, placing them within the framework of "the last days." He perceives the Pentecost as evidence that the messianic age has dawned with Christ's resurrection, marking the culmination of God's saving plan. This interpretation aligns with the rabbinic belief that the Spirit, once present among all Israel, would return universally in the end times.⁶⁷

⁶⁵ Polhill, Acts, vol. 26, *The New American Commentary*, 109.

⁶⁶ Bock, *Acts*, 116.

⁶⁷ Polhill, Acts, vol. 26, *The New American Commentary*, 109.

καὶ ἔσται πᾶς ὃς ἂν ἐπικαλέσῃται τὸ ὄνομα κυρίου σωθήσεται (Act 2:21 GNT).

“And it shall come to pass; that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.” (Act 2:21 KJV)

The concluding verse of the pericope urges the audience to “call upon the Name of the Lord.” Peter interprets this as the immediate outcome of Jesus’ death, resurrection, and exaltation. Bock rightfully notes the unlikelihood of Peter mentioning the divine name in a Semitic context.⁶⁸ The verb “call upon” (ἐπικαλέσῃται) in the aorist middle subjunctive suggests the potential for all unspecified individuals to invoke the name of the Lord. The verb “will be saved” (σωθήσεται), in the future passive indicative, implies divine involvement in the act of calling upon the Lord.

Thus, the linguistic analysis of Acts 2:14-21 reveals a deliberate construction that establishes a clear connection between the Pentecost event and Joel’s prophecy. The strategic use of the demonstrative pronoun τοῦτό ἐστιν and the verb in the perfect participle form τὸ εἰρημένον serves to prepare the audience or reader for the significant prophecy articulated in Joel. This symmetrical structure underscores the logical progression within the text, highlighting the importance of Joel’s prophecy in understanding the Pentecost event.

Summary

The study delved into the nuanced role of the demonstrative pronoun τοῦτό in Acts 2:16 and its broader implications for eschatology within the book of Acts. Through a detailed analysis, it revealed that the use of pronouns served as pivotal literary devices with profound eschatological implications within the passage. Within the intricate eschatological framework of Acts, the pronoun indicated a partial fulfillment of eschatological realities depicted in the New Testament. Moreover, the study underscored the significance of the pronoun as a forward-pointing

⁶⁸ Bock, *Acts*, 116.

literary device, emphasizing its cataphoric function in highlighting Joel's prophecy within the context of eschatological themes. By examining both contextual and linguistic elements in Acts 2:14-21, the study elucidated pertinent semantic values that contribute to Acts' broader eschatological discourse.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study underscores the significance of the demonstrative pronoun τοῦτο in affirming the eschatological orientation evident in Acts 2:14-21. The descent of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples during Pentecost vividly portrays the onset of the last days (ἐν ταῖς ἑσχάταις ἡμέραις), marking a pivotal moment in human history. The passage captures the tension between the "already" and "not yet" aspects of the eschaton, with Peter recognizing the imminence of the end. The universality of the Holy Spirit's outpouring, inclusive of all nations, further emphasizes the end-time activities. Moreover, textual variations such as the addition of phrases like "in the last days" and "God says" are consistent with the broader theological context of Judaism and do not represent ecclesiastical emendations.

The literary structure of the passage decisively highlights the elements of the last days preceding "the Day of the Lord" (Acts 2:17, 20). However, these epochs need to be explicitly delineated in the text. Instead, the passage presents the last days as a present reality, with the clause "this is that spoken through the prophet Joel" indicating a fulfillment of prophecy. Background studies and the literary construction of the pericope suggest that the disciples anticipated the outpouring of the Holy Spirit as promised by Jesus Christ. Therefore, it is plausible to interpret the demonstrative pronoun τοῦτο as cataphoric, given its semantic and pragmatic significance in this context.