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Applying the socio-rhetorical school of interpretation to Peter’s sermon in Acts 2, this paper attempts to gain insight into Luke’s understanding of the concept of the divine empowerment of leaders. This intertextual analysis of Acts 2 explores Luke’s use of Joel 2, Psalm 16 and Psalm 110 to show how Luke employs oral, social and cultural intertextualization to recontextualize and reconfigure certain Old Testament texts in order to prove that Jesus is the prophetic fulfillment of Lord and Messiah. Three principles of leadership empowerment are elicited from the analysis: Empowered leaders seek the good of the group not their own glory; divinely empowered leaders are divinely accountable; and empowered leaders speak boldly into chaos. Three contemporary leadership theories are associated with the results of this study: Bolman and Deal’s Reframing Leadership Theory, DuRue and Ashford’s Social Process of Leadership Identity Construct Theory, and Uhl-Bien’s Relational Leadership Theory.

Applying techniques from the socio-rhetorical school of interpretation as espoused by Robbins (1996), this study attempts to gain insight into Luke’s understanding of the concept of the divine empowerment of leaders and apply that to an understanding of leadership in the 21st century. First, an intertextual analysis of Acts 2 explores Luke’s use of Joel 2, Psalm 16 and Psalm 110. Second, leadership empowerment principles are synthesized from the study, and third, elements from the study of Acts 2 are associated with contemporary leadership theories.

The Old Testament (OT) texts used by Luke are examined in light of the method of interpretation called “fulfillment of prophecy.” Likely, Luke wrote the twin-volumes of his gospel and the Acts of the Apostles late in the 1st century, sometime after the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 C.E. (DeSilva, 2004). The significance of this timing is to realize that Luke wrote with agenda (p. 309). He is not only reporting on the occurrence of events for an individual, the “most excellent Theophilus” (cf. Luke 1:3 and Acts 1:1), he is interpreting and organizing these events for a broader audience of the sometimes divided community of Jews and Gentiles engaged in the fledgling Christian movement.
toward the end of the first century (p. 309-310). A specific problem Luke attempts to overcome in his writings is “that of theodicy: explaining how God did in fact fulfill God’s promises to the house of David (see Acts 15:16-18) despite the fact that the majority of Jews did not accept the means of fulfillment and despite the fact that Jerusalem now sits in ruins” (p. 310). This is the problem Luke takes on in Acts 2. The Jerusalem witnesses of the Pentecost events and the hearers of Peter’s sermon are primarily Jewish (Acts. 2:5). Van de Sandt (1990) suggests, “The Jews from the dispersion seem to be central to this pericope and act as representatives of the world population. In them all the inhabitants of the world are potentially present” (p. 68). Therefore, Luke’s unique selection of material in Acts 1-2 combined with the present circumstances of his writing function as fulcrum and lever to transition the early faith-community from the life, ministry, and mission of the person of Jesus to the life, ministry, and mission of his followers, the early church (p. 310). Necessary to this end, a nascent Christology is at work in the book of Acts (Puosi, 2006). Christology is the branch of theology that attempts to understand the person and work of Christ (Erickson, 1983). In this light, “Luke contributes to the church’s Christocentric reading of the Jewish Scriptures, extending this reading into the life of the early church and its ongoing mission. Not just Jesus but also the mission of the church fulfills the promises and prophecies of the Jewish Scriptures” (DeSilva, 2004, p. 310). Luke, then, interprets the events of Acts 2 from a “fulfillment of prophecy” method/tradition in order to solidify in the minds of a less-than-fully-united Christian community at the end of the first century two essential elements important to her future survival. One is the very nature and identification of the person of Jesus and his mission (i.e. Christology); the second is the empowerment of his followers, as they take up the mantle of leadership in the early faith-community.

**Beginning With the End in View**

How could a speech given to a group of Jews by a converted fisherman a few months after their ringleader was killed (Desilva, 2004, p. 357) provide renewed energy, meaning, sense of mission and motivational purpose for of fledgling movement of followers some 40-50 years after these events occurred? How could such a speech clarify, motivate and unify a Christian community reading or hearing a written record of it to such an extent that they are encouraged not only by an understanding of the faithfulness of God to his long standing promises (p. 357), but to a level of motivating even-to-death (c.f. Phil 1:21) obedience to this calling and their implications and ideals to the meaning of their own faith community at the end of the first century (p. 356)? The clear purpose of Peter’s speech in Acts 2 comes near the very end of his spoken address. The purpose, Luke says, is that people will “know for certain that God has made Him [Jesus] both Lord and Christ” (vs. 36). This end in view, to “know for certain” the significance and identity of the person of Jesus, is not only specific to the actual hearers but, by application, to all future readers/hearers of Luke’s chronicle (cf.
Jesus’s praying in John 17:20 for those who will “believe in Me through their word”). For in the identity and purposes of Jesus are the very seeds Luke needs to “shape a community’s awareness of its identity, its place in God’s unfolding plan and its values” (p. 356).

To this lofty end then, it is helpful to see that the speech has a clear inner structure (Puosi, 2006) and is organized in three sections (Trull, 2004). Each supporting point is formed around the interpretation of an Old Testament text (Herrick, 2000) and explained/interpreted in light of the recent events of Acts 1–2 as fulfillment of prophecy. First, Peter interprets the phenomena of Pentecost as a fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel (quoted in Acts 2:14-21); second, he argues that Jesus’s resurrection was foretold by David in Psalm 16 (quoted in Acts 2:22-32); and third, Jesus is not only resurrected from the dead and therefore alive, but exalted to a position of authority and honor at YAHWEH’s right hand, consistent with a Messianic fulfillment of Psalm 110 (quoted in Acts 2:33-35). Peter ends the sermon with a call to repentance going back to the text from Joel 2 to make his compelling appeal (Acts 2:38-39). Just as Peter’s speech aligns past promises to God’s present fulfillment in these circumstances, so Luke, through Peter, calls for individual and collective repentance and the faith-commitment necessary to live out the unfolding fulfillment of God’s plan.

**Luke’s Use of Joel 2 to Support Prophetic Fulfillment in Acts 2**

Luke frames the Pentecost phenomenon as a fulfillment of OT prophecy drawing three supporting elements from the text of Joel 2. Each is addressed below.

**Speaking Into the Chaos**

The first element involves Peter’s rephrasing and adding to key texts from the OT prophet Joel to interpret and bring some order, in terms of understanding, out of the confusing events those present have experienced. Peter’s entire speech (Acts 2: 14 – 36) is set by Luke in context to explain the miraculous events of Acts 2:1-13. Jews “from every nation under heaven” (v. 5), who were in Jerusalem for the feast of Pentecost, are “bewildered” (v.6), perplexed (v. 12) and even “mocking” (v. 13) the extraordinary evidences of the miracle of the Holy Spirit’s coming (cf. v. 1-4) that creates mass confusion among the crowd. Seizing the opportunity, Peter immediately speaks into the chaos of the event, using the Word of God to give meaning and order to the unprecedented events. The order that springs from the spoken word appears as the chaotic events are aligned to and associated with the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy. Peter emphatically states “this is that” (v. 16) which was spoken through the prophet Joel. “The signs are evidence of the fulfillment of God’s promise, as Joel writes in his book” (Puosi, 2006, p. 260). Leveraging the significance of the Pentecost event, Luke purposefully changes the wording of the Old Testament text to fit the larger circumstances of the past 53 days (i.e. the trial of Jesus, some in the very crowd of Acts 2
likely having a part in the “crucify him” chant, Jesus’ crucifixion on a Roman cross, the earthquake, the three hours of darkness, the burial, resurrection and appearances of the risen Christ, and his recent ascension to name a few). Acts 2:17 says, “It shall be in the last days,” while Joel 2:28 says, “It will come about after this…. “Last days” is different than “after this,” not only in the English text, but also in the Septuagint (LXX) and the Hebrew Old Testament (MT). “Here the author wants to show that those people are actually living ‘the last days.’ The messianic era has finally arrived” (p. 206). According to Herrick (2000), “This is a decidedly ‘here and now’ interpretation of an eschatological passage…” (p. 1). In fact, the word used to translate “last days” is the Greek word eschatos, the word from which we get “eschatology,” the doctrine of last or final things (Vine, 1981). Further, Treier (1997) sees Peter using a style of eschatological interpretation known as peser, which has been associated with the early Christian community at Qumran (p. 18). “For what shocked the audience was not Peter’s eschatological understanding of Joel 2 but his insistence that the fulfillment was now because of Christ. Moreover typical Qumran peser moved from the Scripture passage to the current event, whereas Peter’s thinking moved from the current event to the Scripture passage” (p. 19). Peter’s alignment of present events to past prophecy will allow him to speak with authority about the future.

The Audacity of Speaking as God’s Authority

In this same line of prophetic fulfillment, the addition by Peter of the phrase “God says” in verse 17, or as some translations have “God declares,” is significant. Herrick (2000) suggests Peter is putting himself on the level of the OT prophets by adding the words, “God says” or “God declares” to the Joel text quoted in Acts 2. “The addition of [God declares] adds a note of divine authority which is intended to gain the audience's attention and lead them to repentance (cf. 2:37-41). In particular, it may be functioning as a ‘badge of prophetic announcement’ wherein Peter is functioning on par with the OT prophets” (p. 1). This is what is known as a cultural intertexture echo. Robbins (1996) says, “echo occurs when a word or phrase, evokes or potentially evokes, a cultural tradition” (p. 110), which this phrasing certainly does, by evoking the prophetic tradition of “thus saith the Lord” in the Jewish culture and religion onto this very scene. That “uneducated and untrained men” (Acts 4:13) has the audacity, intestinal fortitude and rhetorical wherewithal to speak like this is perhaps an additional evidence of the supernatural at work (Spurgeon, 1855). This representation of God’s authority in man not only strengthens the new apostles’ position as leaders, it foreshadows the derivative authority of all who follow Christ as representative ambassadors of Him and His Kingdom (2 Cor 5:21) (Kraybill & Sweetland, 1983).

Externally Initiated Empowerment

Was the outpouring of the Holy Spirit bigger in its broadest cultural application, more than just a fulfillment of an obscure Jewish prophecy? The ability of a non-Jewish
people to be able to see a broader fulfillment is revealed through a social-intertexture look at a key text in Acts 2. Social-intertexture “concerns [the analysis of] ‘social’ phenomena, since it focuses on customs and practices that are widespread through Mediterranean society, potentially affecting every person at some time during their life” (Robbins, 1996, p. 117). The God-initiated pouring-forth of his Spirit was on both men and women. Joel 2:29 says, “Even on the male and female servants I will pour out My Spirit in those days” whereas Acts 2:18 says, “EVEN ON MY BONDSLAVES, BOTH MEN AND WOMEN, I WILL IN THOSE DAYS POUR FORTH OF MY SPIRIT And they shall prophesy” (emphasis added). The deliberate inclusion of women (“daughters”) here not only ties into the long history of prophetesses in Jewish culture (cf. Miriam, Ex 15: 21; Huldah, 2 Ki 22:14-20; and Deborah, Judges 4:4–5 in the OT and Anna, Luke 2:36-38; and Philip’s daughters, Acts 21:9 in the NT) (Piper & Grudem, 1991), but also may connect the Jewish with the Greek cultural practices of males and females involved as being oracles, particularly the female oracles of Delphi and Apollo, which also involved ecstatic utterances (i.e. glossalallia) (Huffmon, 2007). This cultural connection may be furthered by the observation that “Ancient Near Eastern prophetic oracles were apparently initiated by the deity rather than being responses to a specific inquiry” (p. 456). Regardless of the readers’/hearers’ social-cultural background, Greek or Jewish, they would understand the main point: God initiated the events of Pentecost, further legitimizing the new apostolic leadership.

Luke’s Use of Psalm 16 to Support Prophetic Fulfillment in Acts 2

The second major section of Peter’s sermon shifts the focus onto the resurrection of Jesus and again invokes fulfillment of OT prophecy, this time from an unexpected Psalm.

Author’s Identity

Psalm 16 is quoted nowhere else in the NT outside of Acts 2 and 13 where it is used in a similar fashion (Juel, 1981, p. 545). The title to Psalm 16 indicates David wrote it so presumably one would expect the personal pronouns in the Psalm to relate to him. However, Herrick (2000) suggests that ascertaining authorship of this Psalm is more challenging than first glance and neither date nor author can be “fixed with certainty” (p. 1). Herrick reasons other possibilities of authorship and concludes, “1) there is nothing in the Psalm that necessarily rules out Davidic authorship; 2) in a comparison with other well known Davidic psalms, this psalm has much in common; 3) the title corroborates Davidic authorship, and 4) both Peter and Paul, probably following a current consensus, subscribe to this tradition (Acts 2:25; 13:35, 36)” (p.1; also cf. Kaiser, 1980, p. 224). Therefore in Psalm 16, as it was originally written and understood, the “my” and “me” in vs. 8-11, are referring to David.
Herrick (2000), endorsing Davidic authorship, says “the holy one” or “faithful one” in vs. 10 refers to David himself. “Holy one,” or sometimes “faithful one,” translates the Hebrew word hasîd. “In fact, the reason this passage should ever have been linked to the Messiah along with the Davidic speaker rests on the proper understanding of the term hasîd. As a Messianic term, it is only surpassed by "Servant of the Lord" and "Messiah" in the OT” (Kaiser, 1980, p. 224). “In Psalm 16, then, David is God's hasîd, ‘favored one,’ yet not David as a mere person but David as the recipient and conveyor of God's ancient but ever-renewed promise.” Therefore, as Beecher (as cited in Kaiser) concluded:

The man David may die, but the hhasidh [sic] is eternal. Just as David is the Anointed One, and yet the Anointed One is eternal; just as David is the Servant, and yet the Servant is eternal; so David is the hhasidh, and yet the hhasidh is eternal. David as an individual went to the grave, and saw corruption there, but the representative of Yahaweh's [sic] eternal promise did not cease to exist.” (p. 224-225)

Understanding the meaning of the antecedent text is key to understanding how another author uses it in a different purpose or in another social-cultural context (Robbins, 1996). Herrick believes David in Psalm 16 was speaking of himself but that “the divine author intended more than David did” (p. 14), while others suggest David knew he was speaking of his unnamed future offspring, the Messiah, who would be the complete fulfillment of God’s promises to him (Juel, 1981; Kaiser, 1980).

**Peter Reframes Identity in Light of Resurrection**

However David understood what he was writing in Psalm 16, in Acts 2 Peter applies the meaning to Jesus. “First, God raised Him from the dead. Second, it was not possible for death to hold Jesus. Third, David spoke of the Messiah” (Trull, 2004, p. 436). When Peter quotes Psalm 16, he attributes the Psalm to David, but he says David understood the subject of the Psalm to be none other than Jesus. Peter is saying that Jesus fulfills the intended meaning of Psalm 16. In verse 25, “For David says of Him,” in context, this refers back to the mention of “Jesus the Nazarene” in vs. 22. The recitation that follows is nearly word-for-word of Psalm 16: 8-11. The only difference is Luke/Peter makes the verses be about Jesus. Even with Peter’s caveat that David said this of Jesus, the personal pronouns require a lot of interpretation to understand to whom they are referring. So, whereas looking at Psalm 16 from a pure OT point of view David is speaking of himself throughout and identifies himself as the “holy one” (Herrick 2000; Kaiser, 1981), Peter’s reinterpretation places Jesus as the “holy one” of 16:10b. And not only that, on the basis of verse 27 and the statement in verse 31, “he [David] looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ,” Peter is saying that David foretold Jesus’s resurrection in Ps 16. In other words, Peter/Luke change the meaning of the Psalm for their own purposes (Herrick, p. 11). Herrick (2000) goes to great length to
show that neither David nor the tradition of the interpretation of this Psalm, up until the time of the events of Acts, considered this Psalm to be a Messianic psalm or prophetic in any way. His answer to explain Luke’s use of the OT in the NT in this case is “TYPOLOGICAL—prophetic…with the fulfillment not expected until it came” (p. 14). In other words, “Underlying the work of God in David’s life is a similar work (i.e., pattern) of God in the life of Christ—only to a greater degree. Frankly, it was only in light of the resurrection that the psalm was said to speak of a resurrection [emphasis added]. This is not an argument for every use of the OT in the NT, but in the case of Psalm 16:8-11, this seems to be the best explanation—an explanation which allows the OT to speak on its terms and according to its context and the NT to do the same. Both the human author and the divine author are given full expression in both cases” (p. 14). The question is why would Luke/Peter have done this. The answer is to establish an identity of Christ that will form a solid foundation on which to build the new faith-community (Puosi, 2006).

Deductive Christology I

Puosi’s (2006) Christological syllogism is an excellent summary of Peter’s argument in Acts 2 to this point:

1st Statement: God has fulfilled the Messianic Promise; therefore, we have a Messiah.

2nd Statement: Jesus is not an ordinary man: He performed miracles and He was resurrected from the dead.

Conclusion: Jesus is the Messiah. (p. 259)

Luke’s Use of Psalm 110 to Support Prophetic Fulfillment in Acts 2

The third main point of Peter’s speech follows closely from the resurrection. Jesus is not only alive from the dead, but he now sits in a position of honor and authority. Peter draws this argument from Psalm 110.

Jesus’s Interpretation Supports Peter’s Point

In the Hebrew OT, the Psalm itself attributes authorship to David; however, the strongest endorsement for Davidic authorship is that none other than Jesus says, “David himself said in the Holy Spirit,” before quoting Ps 110:1 (Mark 10:35). In fact what gets Jesus in trouble with the religious authorities is that He implies that this Psalm refers to himself (cf. Mark 10:35ff). Peter follows in Jesus’s stead both in attributing this Psalm to David (Acts 2:34), quoting it word-for-word from the OT text, and interpreting it as applying to Jesus. “Thus Jesus' interpretation of Psalm 110:1 confirms the future reconstruction, which treats David's words as a direct prophecy of
the Messiah” (Johnson, 1992, p. 433). But how did David understand what he was saying in the Psalm? There are several options: “David could have referred to the Messiah, himself, his son Solomon, or another descendant of his as his Lord” (Johnson, 1992, p. 431). Many view David as enacting an “enthronement oracle” or coronation psalm at least partially (Kidner, 1973; Johnson, 1992). Davis (2000), on the other hand, sees the Psalm as purely Messianic: “All areas of textual difficulty are cleared up by understanding the psalm not as a coronation psalm, or a psalm to be read at an autumnal festival, or some other kind of psalm...but as a messianic psalm from beginning to end” (p. 163). Luke and Peter then follow in Jesus’s stead with their interpretation/application of Psalm 110.

Right Hand Exaltation

Unlike Psalm 16, which is never quoted in the NT (Juel, 1981), Psalm 110 is the OT reference most often used by NT writers “with the clear intention of affirming that Jesus Christ is the Messiah and the Melchizedekian King-Priest” (Davis, 2000, p. 163). Summarizing each of the NT references to Psalm 110:1, Davis (2000) includes two observations relevant to Acts 2: “Peter quoted Psalm 110:1 on the Day of Pentecost to demonstrate that Jesus is the Messiah (Acts 2:34-36).” And, “The writers of the New Testament cited the verse in order to show that after Jesus’s crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension (Acts 2:33-35; Heb. 6:20), He is now seated at the right hand of God the Father in heaven” (p. 163). “This exalted position is one of equal honor with God” (Johnson, 1992, p. 433). This leads to a second Christological summary of the prophecy fulfillment motivations of Peter/Luke in Acts 2.

Deductive Christology II

Peter’s use of Psalm 110 lays the final brick to the course of his three-layered end-in-view argument that God made Jesus “both Lord and Christ” (Acts 2:36). Puosi (2006) identifies the logic in Peter’s approach as following a “promise-fulfillment” theme. A second syllogism is offered to help frame Peter’s “a primitive Christology” (p. 265):

1st Statement: God’s promise is a promise of salvation and it is fulfilled through the Lord.

2nd Statement: Jesus has been raised to life and to the right hand of the Father. He is the fulfillment of God’s promise of salvation.

Conclusion: Jesus is the Lord (p. 263).

Evidential Impact

The impact Peter’s speech had on the once bewildered and perplexed crowd goes well beyond establishing apostolic authority and empowered leadership to Luke’s higher-
order strategic ends. The group—the growing but yet future faith-community, not the individuals—are clearly in view (DeSilva, 2004, p. 351). The Holy Spirit is at work in the hearts of the hearers, they were “pierced to the heart” and asked, “what shall we do?” Peter’s answer is recorded in Acts 2:38-39:

Peter said to them, “Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God will call to Himself.” [Emphasis added; quote from the last part of Joel 2]

Recall that in Acts 2:17-19 Peter drops the last part of Joel 2:32 in his quote. The part left out speaks of Mt Zion and Jerusalem. Here in Acts 2:39 he picks up the Joel text again, at the very end of his sermon. He does this, according to Van de Sandt (1990), because he “wants to avoid the suggestion that he agrees with [Joel 2:32b] that salvation can only take place in Zion or Jerusalem” (p. 75). Luke cuts off the rest of verse 32 “because it ends with a call to repentance” (Herrick, 2000, p. 1, emphasis added). Repentance was always the end to which Peter was aiming. His reconstructions of OT texts bring about an explanation of the Pentecost events in light of the fulfillment of OT prophecy pointing strongly to Jesus as the fulfillment of the promised Messiah coming in the line of David; one who will conquer death and sit in a place of honor extending salvation and forgiveness of sins for all who will repent and believe. Yet not only salvation as eventual preservation from eternal separation from God, but salvation as the fullness of the “abundant life” (John 10:10) and a completing of all God’s promises to all his chosen people, both Jew and Gentile in a new “now, but not yet” Kingdom; a Kingdom of “righteousness, joy and peace in the Holy Spirit” (Rom 14:17). The powerful truth of Peter’s message that transformed the lives turning a mocking people into devoted followers (Acts 2:42) of Jesus, the Lord and Christ.

So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls. They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer (Acts 2:41-42).

This Spirit-empowered repentance, instigated as it was from prophecy-fulfilled, history-recorded and story-told preaching, would have had rippling echoes of meaning and significance to Luke’s readers/hearers at the end of the first century and beyond (DeSilva, 2004). This very life-giving, life-transforming power and conviction has flowed down through the ages even to us at the end of the first part of the 21st century (Cole, 2010, p. 22).
Principles of Divine Empowerment

What are the leadership lessons for today from this social-rhetorical intertextual study of Acts 2? Three stand out: empowered leaders seek the good of the group, not their own glory; divine empowerment means divine accountability; and leaders must boldly speak into chaos.

Empowered leaders seek the good of the group not their own glory. The idea of the divine empowerment of leaders has led to egregious misapplications such as the divine right of kings (Figgis, 1914). The counter-corrective to this abuse is a clearer understanding of the text and context of Acts 2. Peter takes some personal risk to speak truth to the large and confused crowd. His motive is their best, not his reputation. The group is more important than the individual. The care taken in the text to identify the variety of people present and the use of the Joel quote to underscore that divine empowerment goes beyond gender (male/female), roles (sons/daughters), or social status (bondslaves) and this may be subtle but it is not trivial. The NT writers like the apostles Paul and Peter would work out this “primitive Christology” (Puosi, 2006) as the young church grows up. Paul will outline a theology that brings forth unity out of diversity in explaining the divine gifting of all believers, “For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit” (1 Cor 12:13). Peter later in his own Epistle builds on the unity theme switching the metaphor from a body to a building when he says, “And coming to [Jesus] as to a living stone which has been rejected by men, but is choice and precious in the sight of God, you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ” (1 Pet 2:4-5). The theme of the priesthood of all believers as a core principle for the working out of God’s glory in the group of people called the church, and their divine empowerment for leadership, would eventually become a foundational principle in reforming the Church as Luther and others sought recovery from the abuses of misapplied power by the Church of Rome (Luther & Rudolph, 1979).

Divine empowerment means divine accountability. The divine empowerment of particular roles or types of leaders is also implied in the description of Acts 2. The disciples of Jesus become the Apostles of the early church. The private gathering of apostles and 120 others in obedience to God in Acts 1 turns into a public recognition of God’s appointment of them when the crowd turns to the newly anointed and asks “Peter and the rest of the apostles” what they should do (verse 37). Roles of apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor and teacher are specifically identified as being given by God as gifts to the church for leadership (Eph 4). Hirsch (2006) identifies this APEPT (acronym made from the first letters of apostle, prophet, etc.) model as part of the “apostolic genius” and the “DNA” of the NT church. The traditional roles of husbands, wives, children, and even slaves are redefined in light of divine empowerment and the
new work of the Holy Spirit (Eph 5; Col 3; 1 Pet 3). Government is identified as having been appointed by God and accountable to God (Rom 12). Leaders in the new economy are identified as those who will especially be called to “give an account” for how they lead (Heb 13: 17), and teachers are warned that they will be held to a higher standard and thus incur a stricter judgment (James 3:1). Each of these leadership roles is empowered by God (cf. Rom 12, 1 Cor 12, Eph 4), yet with that empowerment comes a greater responsibility and accountability.

Leaders must boldly speak into the chaos. It may be a stretch to connect the chaos of original creation (Gen 1) to the chaos out of which the church emerges in Acts 2. However, there are parallels worth noting. In Gen 1, the earth is formless and void, the Spirit of God was moving, and God speaks (vs. 2-3). In Acts 2, Peter, full of the newly-given Holy Spirit, speaks the Word of God into the confusion of the crowd. Drawing on the word of God from Joel and Psalms, Peter speaks into the crowd the Word of God himself, Jesus (John 1; 1 John 1). The Word spoken boldly is key to order, growth, and development. Paul admonishes Timothy to preach the word (1 Tim 4:2) and encourages the young Ephesian church to speak the truth in love (Eph 4:15). The spoken word, therefore, is essential to the application of divine empowerment by leaders. When chaos reigns, leaders must speak up (cf. Crabb, 1995).

Application to Contemporary Leadership Theory

Besides immediate leadership lessons, the events of Acts 2 and Luke’s larger purposes are can extend an understanding contemporary leadership theory. Bolman and Deal’s (1991) Multi-frame theory; DeRue and Ashford’s (2010) Social Process of Leadership Identity theory; and Uhl-bien’s (2006) Relational Leadership Theory may be furthered by this study.

Multi-Frame Leadership Theory

Luke’s reframing of OT texts through Peter’s speech has a two-sided application in the Bolman and Deal’s (1991) Multi-frame Leadership Theory. Their four-frames are structural, political, human resources, and symbolic (p. 509). Though according to their research it would be rare that a leader had all four frames in play, considering this theory from the perspective of Luke as a leader and Peter and the apostles as leaders, it may be possible that all four frames are occurring in Acts 2. Briefly taking each frame and applying it to Acts is revealing.

The “structural” frame is at work when the leader functions as “social architect” (Bolman and Deal, 1991, p. 511). This leadership process is one of “analysis and design” (p. 511). Luke writing the book of Acts to a late 1st century Christian community (DeSilva, 2004) could be playing this role. The human resource frame has the leader acting as a “catalyst” and “servant” (Bolman & Deal), leading through “facilitation and
empowerment” (p. 511). Peter clearly fits this role as he facilitates the Jewish audiences’ understanding of the events of Pentecost through his speech. At another level, Luke facilitates empowerment by placing the particular socially significant texts within interpretations made by Peter and doing so in the early chapters of his history telling the story of the early church. Peter acts as “advocate” in a political sense, the third frame in Bolman and Deal’s theory. Peter advocates for Jesus as Lord and Christ (Acts 2:36) while “coalition-building” (p. 511) appealing to the crowd through a unique variety and application of OT texts. Finally, Peter frames himself as a symbolic leader functioning as “prophet” (p. 511) framing the particular OT texts within the experience of the Pentecost context and doing this as “inspiration” (p. 511) to lead the bewildered people to repentance.

Social Process of Leadership Identity

DeRue and Ashford (2010) construct a social process of leadership identity that could also find application in Acts 2. “A leadership identity comprises three elements: individual internalization, relational recognition, and collective endorsement” (p. 629). These researchers understand leadership as involving dynamic interaction involving “multiple individuals engaged in a process of interpersonal and mutual influence that is ultimately embedded within some collective” (p. 629). Peter and the apostles are involved in such a “collective”—the small group of followers of Jesus and the larger group of Jews participating in Pentecost, a collective which grows exponentially through their leadership and influence (cf. Acts 2:42-47). Going back to the events leading up to this momentous occasion, Peter and the disciples were part of Jesus’s special group of followers for three years. Peter’s “individual internalization” of this new social-leadership identity include the watershed “you are the Christ confession” of Mt 16:16 and the empowering “do you love me more than these” post-resurrection dialog with Jesus (John 21). “Relational recognition” occurs in Acts 1 with Peter standing to address the 120 waiting for the Holy Spirit, and in Acts 2, when the crowd, following his impassioned speech, turns to “Peter and the rest of the apostles” (2:37) for an explanation. As the book of Acts unfolds, though they are “uneducated and untrained men” (Acts 4:20), there is an emerging clarity of Peter and the other apostles’ roles as leaders of the nascent movement and as followers of Jesus, who is both “Leader and Savior” (Acts 5:31). These are aspects of the social process construct of leadership identity.

Relational Leadership Theory

A third and evolving theory of social leadership that could help inform an understanding of Acts 2 is Relational Leadership Theory (Uhl-Bien, 2006). This theory builds on Hogg’s social identity theory of leadership, which understands, “Leadership is a relational term—it identifies a relationship in which some people are able to persuade others to adopt new values, attitudes and goals, and to exert effort on behalf
of those values, attitudes, and goals” (p. 668). This approach sees, “Relational leadership as a social influence process through which emergent coordination (i.e., evolving social order) and change (i.e., new values, attitudes, approaches, behaviors, ideologies, etc.), are constructed and produced” (p. 668). Uhl-Bien is quick to point out this is not “a theory in the traditional sense of the word. It is an overarching framework for a variety of methods, approaches, and even ontologies that explore the relational dynamics of leadership and organizing” (p. 668). Again the definitions and explanations seem to fit Luke, Peter, and Acts 2. There is an “evolving social order” taking place in the period of Acts that manifest itself in new “values, attitudes, and goals.” The persuasion is the dynamic of human relationships between Jesus’s devoted followers, which includes Peter and the apostles, and those newly confronted with the truth of the events and ideas through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2. To the extent God is a person revealed in His Son and the Holy Spirit is a person with whom believers relate intimately (John 7, 14), there is influence and “emergent coordination” there as well. Relational Leadership Theory again seems to offer a promising way to understand all that is going on in Acts 2.

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