

# The Teaching of Shem'un Kipha in the City of Rome

Dedicated to M. Ben-Talal al-Rasheed

Translated by J. Gebhardt-Klein, 2023

Based on:

William Cureton, *Ancient Syriac Documents* (London: Williams and Northgate, 1864), pp. 35ff.

\*A copy of this text was submitted to the Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon Project of Hebrew Union College (Jewish Institute of Religion)-Cincinnati:

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מלפניוהו המצא כאר כומא The Teaching of Shem'un Kipha in the City  
 מהשאה of Rome:

בשנה השלישית שלטון קלאודיוס. In the thirtieth (sic) year of Claudius  
 משה צא מן אנטיוכיה. Caesar, Shem'un Kipha had departed from  
 והוא הלך לרומא. Antioch to go unto Rome. And while he was  
 משה משה משה משה passing by, he was evangelizing in (various)  
 משה משה. regions the word of our Lord. And when he  
 הנהל משה להם: [עבד משה was near entering thereto, [many had heard  
 משה משה משה. and went out to meet him. And the  
 משה משה משה. congregation entirely had received him with  
 משה משה משה. great joy. And some of the nobles of the  
 משה משה משה. city with the white clothing of the king had  
 משה משה משה. come beside him, that they would see him  
 משה משה משה. and hear his word. And when the entire city  
 משה משה משה. was assembled around him, he stood to  
 משה משה משה. speak with them and show them the  
 משה משה משה. preaching of his doctrine, just as it was.  
 משה משה משה. And he began to speak to them accordingly:

ביתא דרומא סדנא האלל "Men, children of Rome, saints of all Italy,  
 חלל. עבד מהר האנז אר לחל hear what I say to you. Today I preach and  
 משה משה משה. I evangelize for Yeshua the Son of God,  
 לעבד כום האלמא. השאה who came down from heaven, and became a  
 משה משה משה. human being, and was with us, just like us,

[illegible]

and worked amazing feats, signs, and wonders before us, and before all the Yehudites who were in the land of Palestine. While even you were hearing those things that he had done, because they had even come from other regions to him, on account of the news of his healing and hearing of his astonishing benefits. And everyone who was approaching him was healed by his word. And because he was God, with his healing he was even forgiving sins, for his healing was public which testified about his hidden forgiveness, that it was true and faithful. Indeed, this Yeshua have the prophets proclaimed in their mysteries, while they were hoping to see him and hear the word of him who was existing with his Father always and from eternity, the God who was hidden in the height and appeared in the depth, the glorious Son who from his parent was even to be glorified with his Father and with his divine Spirit, and the authority of the power of his dominion. And he was crucified by his will at the hands of sinners and was raised up to his Father, just as I saw, and my friends. And he is prepared to come again in his own glory, and that of all his holy angels,

[illegible]

just as we had heard from him who was speaking to us. For we are not able to say anything that was not heard by us from him, nor even do we write in the book of his gospel anything that he did not tell us, because that word is spoken to shut the mouth of the liars on the day that human beings give an answer for vain words in place of judgment.

[illegible]

But because we were catchers of fish and were not scribes of books, wherefore he said to us, 'I am sending you the Spirit, the Paraclete, so that it will teach you what you do not know.' (Jn 14:26) For it is his own gift, our speaking the things that you hear. And through it, again, we bring near help to the sick, and healing to the hurt, so that whoever hears of his word and by the help of his power may believe in the Messiah, for he is God, the Son of God. And you will be delivered from the labor of slavery, and worship him and his Father, and praise the Spirit of his divinity. For when we praise the Father, we even praise his Son with him. And when we worship the Son, we even worship the Father with him. And when we confess

the Spirit, we even confess the Father and  
 the Son, because in the name of the Father  
 and the Son and the Spirit we were  
 commanded to immerse those who believe,  
 so that they may live forever.

Escape therefore from the words of the  
 wisdom of this world, for there is no  
 advantage in them. And be drawn near to  
 those who are true, and faithful, and received  
 before God, and whose reward is kept, and  
 whose recompense he has established. And  
 now,] the light shines for him on the creation,  
 and the world has obtained for him the eyes of  
 the mind, so that every person will see and  
 understand that it is not right for creatures  
 to be worshiped instead of the Creator, nor  
 even with the Creator, because everything  
 that is created is a worshiper of the one who  
 is its Maker, and is not one to be worshiped like  
 its Creator. But the one who came beside us is  
 God, the Son of God, in his nature, even though  
 his divinity was mingled with our humanity, so  
 that he would renew our humanity by the help  
 of his divinity. And because of this it is right  
 for us to worship him, because he is worshiped  
 with his Father. And we should not worship

לְעוֹלָמוֹת הַבָּרָא. מֵאֵל מֵאֵל. creatures that were created for the worship  
 אֱלֹהֵי הַבָּרָא. מֵאֵל מֵאֵל. of the Creator, for he is the God of verity and  
 אֱלֹהֵי הַבָּרָא. מֵאֵל מֵאֵל. truth. He is from before the worlds and the  
 אֱלֹהֵי הַבָּרָא. מֵאֵל מֵאֵל. creatures, he is the Son of verity, and the  
 אֱלֹהֵי הַבָּרָא. מֵאֵל מֵאֵל. praised fruit from the exalted Father.

אֲנִי רֹאֶה אֲנִי רֹאֶה. חֲזֹקִים חֲזֹקִים. However, you see the astonishing works that  
 אֲנִי רֹאֶה אֲנִי רֹאֶה. חֲזֹקִים חֲזֹקִים. accompany and follow these words, without  
 אֲנִי רֹאֶה אֲנִי רֹאֶה. חֲזֹקִים חֲזֹקִים. anyone being persuaded. The time is short,  
 אֲנִי רֹאֶה אֲנִי רֹאֶה. חֲזֹקִים חֲזֹקִים. lo, since he ascended to his Father, but see  
 אֲנִי רֹאֶה אֲנִי רֹאֶה. חֲזֹקִים חֲזֹקִים. how his gospel has flown through all creation,  
 אֲנִי רֹאֶה אֲנִי רֹאֶה. חֲזֹקִים חֲזֹקִים. for by this it may be known and believed that  
 אֲנִי רֹאֶה אֲנִי רֹאֶה. חֲזֹקִים חֲזֹקִים. he is the Creator of creatures, and that by  
 אֲנִי רֹאֶה אֲנִי רֹאֶה. חֲזֹקִים חֲזֹקִים. his beckoning creatures rise. And as you saw  
 אֲנִי רֹאֶה אֲנִי רֹאֶה. חֲזֹקִים חֲזֹקִים. the sun became dark at his death, even you  
 אֲנִי רֹאֶה אֲנִי רֹאֶה. חֲזֹקִים חֲזֹקִים. are witnesses. The earth then was shaking at  
 אֲנִי רֹאֶה אֲנִי רֹאֶה. חֲזֹקִים חֲזֹקִים. his murder, and the veil of the door was torn  
 אֲנִי רֹאֶה אֲנִי רֹאֶה. חֲזֹקִים חֲזֹקִים. at his death. And about these things even  
 אֲנִי רֹאֶה אֲנִי רֹאֶה. חֲזֹקִים חֲזֹקִים. Pilatus the hegemon was witnessing, for he  
 אֲנִי רֹאֶה אֲנִי רֹאֶה. חֲזֹקִים חֲזֹקִים. had sent and had informed Caesar, and these  
 אֲנִי רֹאֶה אֲנִי רֹאֶה. חֲזֹקִים חֲזֹקִים. things and many more than them were  
 אֲנִי רֹאֶה אֲנִי רֹאֶה. חֲזֹקִים חֲזֹקִים. recited before him and before the chiefs of  
 אֲנִי רֹאֶה אֲנִי רֹאֶה. חֲזֹקִים חֲזֹקִים. your city. And because of this Caesar  
 אֲנִי רֹאֶה אֲנִי רֹאֶה. חֲזֹקִים חֲזֹקִים. became angry at Pilatus, on account that he  
 אֲנִי רֹאֶה אֲנִי רֹאֶה. חֲזֹקִים חֲזֹקִים. had not been justly persuaded by the  
 אֲנִי רֹאֶה אֲנִי רֹאֶה. חֲזֹקִים חֲזֹקִים. Yehudites. And because of this, having sent  
 אֲנִי רֹאֶה אֲנִי רֹאֶה. חֲזֹקִים חֲזֹקִים. out, he took from him the authority that he

[illegible]

had given him. And this thing was revealed and made known in all the domain of the Romans. Therefore, that which Pilatus had seen and had informed Caesar of, and your own honored senate, that do I proclaim and evangelize, and my fellow apostles. And you know that Pilatus was not able to have written to the kingdom something that did not happen, and he had not seen with his eyes, rather than something that did happen and was effected by actuality—that which he had written and made known. But the witnesses who were there, and the guards of the sepulcher, became like the dead. And when those guards were questioned before Pilatus, they confessed before him how much of a bribe the chief priests of the Yehudites had given them so they would say that we, the disciples of him, had stolen the corpse of the Messiah. Therefore, lo, you have heard many things, and if then you do not want to be persuaded of the things you have heard, be persuaded even of the mighty things which you see happen by his name.

לך בלעבך שטעט זיך  
התעורר העם לך ה'.

You should not allow Simon the sorcerer to lead you astray by similitudes that he shows

חקרא אקט הלא נא הלא מאנא. you which are not actualities, as if to people  
 הלא נהבנ הנפוצא מהבד השאך without intelligence who do not know to  
 אצחב. צדוה מחבא אטלאמא, distinguish something they see and hear.  
 אבא הבנא בלא מהשחבא. Therefore, send forth, bring him where all  
 אבא לבא אדא מהבד הנבא your city assembles, and choose for  
 אבא אבא אבא אבא אבא אבא yourselves some sign which we may do before  
 אבא לבא לבא לבא לבא לבא לבא you, and whoever you see does that same sign,  
 אבא אבא אבא אבא אבא אבא it will be yours to believe in it.

אבא אבא אבא אבא אבא אבא And in that hour having sent, they brought  
 אבא אבא אבא אבא אבא אבא Simon the sorcerer. And the people of his  
 אבא אבא אבא אבא אבא אבא opinion said to him, "As a man about whom  
 אבא אבא אבא אבא אבא אבא we are confident that there is power in you  
 אבא אבא אבא אבא אבא אבא to do anything, do some sign before all of  
 אבא אבא אבא אבא אבא אבא us, and this Shem'un the Galilean who  
 אבא אבא אבא אבא אבא אבא proclaims the Messiah will see." And while  
 אבא אבא אבא אבא אבא אבא they were thus speaking to him, there was  
 אבא אבא אבא אבא אבא אבא presently passing by one dead, the son of  
 אבא אבא אבא אבא אבא אבא one of the chiefs and known and renowned  
 אבא אבא אבא אבא אבא אבא by them. And all of them while assembling  
 אבא אבא אבא אבא אבא אבא said to him, "Whoever of you enlivens this  
 אבא אבא אבא אבא אבא אבא dead one, he is true and faithful and  
 אבא אבא אבא אבא אבא אבא received, and after him we all shall follow in  
 אבא אבא אבא אבא אבא אבא everything that he tells us." And they had  
 אבא אבא אבא אבא אבא אבא said to Simon the sorcerer, "Because you  
 אבא אבא אבא אבא אבא אבא were here before Shem'un the Galilean, and  
 אבא אבא אבא אבא אבא אבא we knew you before him, show you the



power that accompanies you first.”

ששאלה הן בליל שבת מדי  
 ארבעה ימים, הנהנה  
 לחייו מהנהגתו, ומה  
 לנפשו ולנפשו. והנה  
 מהבשר מהנהגתו. זה אף מדי  
 ששאלה. מהנהגתו הן בליל  
 מדי. מהנהגתו הן בליל  
 אף מדי מהנהגתו מהנהגתו  
 לל לל מהנהגתו מהנהגתו  
 מהנהגתו מהנהגתו מהנהגתו

Simon then doubtfully approached beside the dead one, and they set down the bier before him. And he was looking to the right and to the left and was gazing into the heavens while he was saying many words. Some of them, then, he was saying with shouting, and some of them in secret without shouting. And he delayed a long time, and nothing was happening, nor done, and that dead one was lying on his bier.

אבנא דבבליה זיב מא אבא  
 באר אבליה דלילא דבבליה  
 זיב. אבא מא אבא זיב  
 אבא מא אבא. אבא דבבליה  
 אבא זיב דבבליה זיב  
 אבא דבבליה זיב. אבא  
 אבא זיב אבא דבבליה  
 אבא זיב אבא דבבליה  
 אבא זיב אבא דבבליה  
 אבא זיב אבא דבבליה.

And in that hour Shem'un Kipha approached confidently toward that dead one. And he was shouting before all the crowd that was standing there: "In the name of Yeshua the Messiah, whom the Yehudites crucified at Urishlem, and whom we evangelize, arise from there." And with the word of Shem'un, that dead one was enlivened and arose from the bier.

אנא בלתי כח אלהים.  
אלהים אמת למעשה. העני  
מחצית המחצית אמת למעשה  
שכל אלהים. שכל שכל

And all the people saw and were astounded, and they said to Shem'un, "The Messiah whom you proclaim is true." And many shouted and said, "Let Simon the sorcerer and deceiver of

all of us be stoned." But Simon, by occasion of everyone running to him to see the dead one who was enlivened, escaped from them by means of the market to its neighborhood, and from courtyard to courtyard, and he did not fall into their hands on that day.

The entire city then took hold of Shem'un Kipha and received him rejoicingly and kindly, while he did not cease from doing signs and wonders in the name of the Messiah, and many were believing in him. But Cyprinus, the father of him who was enlivened, led Shem'un with him to his house, and received him as is fitting, while he and all the children of his house were believing in the Messiah, that he is the Son of the living God. And there many of the Yehudites and the pagans became disciples. And when joy was multiplied by his teaching, he built there congregations in Rome and in the cities around it, and in all the villages of the children of Italia. And he served there in the rank of administration of ordinances twenty-five years.

And after these years Neron Caesar

[illegible]

But when Caesar had commanded Shem'un  
 to be crucified with his head downward—as  
 he had requested of Caesar—and that the  
 head of Paul should be taken off, there was  
 a great riot with the people, and a bitter  
 sorrow in all the congregation, as they had  
 been cut off from the sight of the  
 apostles. And Isus the leader arose and  
 collected their bodies at night, and buried  
 them with great honor, and it became there  
 a meeting place for many.

וְכֵן הָיָה כִּי הִשְׁפִּיטָה הַמֶּלֶךְ הַיְּהוּדִים  
 וְהָיָה כִּי הִשְׁפִּיטָה הַמֶּלֶךְ הַיְּהוּדִים

And at that time, as if by a judgment of  
 righteousness, Neron forsook his kingdom.

and fled, and there was a little cessation  
from the persecution that Neron Caesar had  
raised against them. And many years after  
the great crowning of the apostles who had  
left from the world, when the handing-down  
of their priesthood was continuing in all of  
Rome and in all of Italia, there then  
occurred and happened a great famine in  
the city of Rome.

Completed is the Teaching of Shem'un Kipha.