

ACTS OF THE HOLY APOSTLES KEPHA AND PA'AL

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It came to pass, after Pa'al went out of the island Gaudomeleta, that he came to Italia; and it was heard of by the Yahudiym who were in Rome, the elder of the cities, that Pa'al demanded to come to Cæsar. Having fallen, therefore, into great grief and much despondency, they said among themselves: It does not please him that he alone has afflicted all our brethren and parents in Yahudah and Samaria, and in all Palestine; and he has not been pleased with these, but behold, he comes here also, having through imposition asked Cæsar to destroy us.

Having therefore made an assembly against Pa'al, and having considered many proposals, it seemed good to them to go to Nero the emperor, to ask him not to allow Pa'al to come to Rome. Having therefore got in readiness not a few presents, and having carried them with them, with supplication they came before him, saying: We beseech you, O good emperor, send orders into all the governments of your worship, to the effect that Pa'al is not to come near these parts; because this Pa'al, having afflicted all the nation of our fathers, has been seeking to come hither to destroy us also. And the affliction, O most worshipful emperor, which we have from Kepha is enough for us.

And the Emperor Nero, having heard these things, answered them: It is according to your wish. And we write to all our governments that he shall not on any account come to anchor in the parts of Italia. And they also informed Shim'on the Magian, having sent for him, that, as has been said, he should not come into the parts of Italia.

And while they were thus doing, some of those that had repented out of the nations, and that had been baptized at the preaching of Kepha, sent elders to Pa'al with a letter to the following effect: Pa'al, dear servant of our Lord Yahusha HaMashiach, and brother of Kepha, the first of the apostles, we have heard from the rabbis of the Yahudiym that are in this Rome, the greatest of the cities, that they have asked Cæsar to send into all his governments, in order that, wherever you may be found, you may

be put to death. But we have believed, and do believe, that as God does not separate the two great lights which He has made, so He is not to part you from each other, that is, neither Kepha from Pa'al, nor Pa'al from Kepha; but we positively believe in our Adonai Yahusha HaMashiach, into whom we have been baptized, that we have become worthy also of your teaching.

And Pa'al, having received the two men sent with the letter on the twentieth of the month of May, became eager to go, and gave thanks to Adonai and Master Yahusha HaMashiach. And having sailed from Gaudomeleta, he did not now come through Africa to the parts of Italia, but ran to Sicily, until he came to the city of Syracuse with the two men who had been sent from Rome to him. And having sailed thence, he came to Rhegium of Calabria, and from Rhegium he crossed to Mesina, and there ordained a bishop, Bacchylus by name. And when he came out of Mesina he sailed to Didymus and remained there one night. And having sailed thence, he came to Pontiole on the second day.

And Dioscorus the shipmaster, who brought him to Syracuse, sympathizing with Pa'al because he had delivered his son from death, having left his own ship in Syracuse, accompanied him to Pontiole. And some of Kepha's disciples having been found there, and having received Pa'al, exhorted him to stay with them. And he stayed a week, in hiding, because of the command of Cæsar. And all the toparchs were watching to seize and kill him. But Dioscorus the shipmaster, being himself also bald, wearing his shipmaster's dress, and speaking boldly, on the first day went out into the city of Pontiole. Thinking therefore that he was Pa'al, they seized and beheaded him, and sent his head to Cæsar.

Cæsar therefore, having summoned the first men of the Yahudiym, announced to them, saying: Rejoice with great joy, for Pa'al your enemy is dead. And he showed them the head. Having therefore made great rejoicing on that day, which was the fourteenth of the month of June, each of the Yahudiym fully believed it.

And Pa'al, being in Pontiole, and having heard that Dioscorus had been beheaded, being grieved with great grief, gazing into the height of the heaven, said: O Adonai Almighty in heaven, who hast appeared to me in every place whither I have gone on account of Your only begotten Word, our Adonai Yahusha HaMashiach, punish this city, and bring out all who have believed in Elohiym and followed His word. He said to them therefore: Follow me: And going forth from Pontiole with those who had

believed in the word of Elohiym, they came to a place called Baias; and looking up with their eyes, they all see that city called Pontiole sunk into the seashore about one fathom; and there it is until this day, for a remembrance, under the sea.

And having gone forth from Baias, they went to Gaitas, and there he taught the word of Elohiym. And he stayed there three days in the house of Erasmus, whom Kepha sent from Rome to teach the Besorah of Elohiym. And having come forth from Gaitas, he came to the castle called Taracinas, and stayed there seven days in the house of Cæsarius the deacon, whom Kepha had ordained by the laying on of hands. And sailing thence, he came by the river to a place called Tribus Tabernes.

And those who had been saved out of the city of Pontiole that had been swallowed up, reported to Cæsar in Rome that Pontiole had been swallowed up, with all its multitude. And the emperor, being in great grief on account of the city, having summoned the chief of the Yahudiym, said to them: Behold, on account of what I heard from you, I have caused Pa'al to be beheaded, and on account of this the city has been swallowed up. And the chief of the Yahudiym said to Cæsar: Most worshipful emperor, did we not say to you that he troubled all the country of the East, and perverted our fathers? It is better therefore, most worshipful emperor, that one city be destroyed, and not the seat of your empire; for this had Rome to suffer. And the emperor, having heard their words, was appeased.

And Pa'al stayed in Tribus Tabernes four days. And departing thence, he came to Appii Forum, which is called Vicusarape; and having slept there that night, he saw one sitting on a golden chair, and a multitude of blacks standing beside him, saying: I have today made a son murder his father. Another said: And I have made a house fall and kill parents with children. And they reported to him many evil deeds— some of one kind, some of another. And another coming, reported to him: I have managed that the bishop Yuvenalius, whom Kepha ordained, should sleep with the abbess Iuliana. And having heard all these things when sleeping in that Appii Forum, near Vicusarape, straightway and immediately he sent to Rome one of those who had followed him from Pontiole to the bishop Yuvenalius, telling him this same thing which had just been done. And on the following day, Yuvenalius, running, threw himself at the feet of Kepha, weeping and lamenting, and saying what had just befallen; and he recounted to him the matter, and said: I believe that this is the light which

you were awaiting. And Kepha said to him: How is it possible that it is he when he is dead? And Yuvenalius the bishop took to Kepha him that had been sent by Pa'al, and he reported to him that he was alive, and on his way, and that he was at Appii Forum. And Kepha thanked and glorified the Elohiym and Father of our Adonai Yahusha HaMashiach.

Then having summoned his disciples that believed, he sent them to Pa'al as far as Tribus Tabernes. And the distance from Rome to Tribus Tabernes is thirty-eight miles. And Pa'al seeing them, having given thanks to our Adonai Yahusha HaMashiach, took courage; and departing thence, they slept in the city called Aricia.

And a report went about in the city of Rome that Pa'al, the brother of Kepha, was coming. And those that believed in Elohiym rejoiced with great joy. And there was great consternation among the Yahudiyim; and having gone to Shim'on the Magian, they entreated him, saying: Report to the emperor that Pa'al is not dead, but that he is alive, and has come. And Shim'on said to the Yahudiyim: What head is it, then, which came to Caesar from Pontiole? Was it not bald also?

And Pa'al having come to Rome, great fear fell upon the Yahudiyim. They came together therefore to him, and exhorted him, saying: Vindicate the faith in which you were born; for it is not right that you, being a Hebrew, and of the Hebrews, should call yourself teacher of Goyim, and vindicator of the uncircumcised; and being yourself circumcised, that you should bring to nought the faith of the circumcision. And when you see Kepha, contend against his teaching, because he has destroyed all the bulwarks of our law; for he has prevented the keeping of Sabbaths and new moons, and the holidays appointed by the law.

And Pa'al, answering, said to them: That I am a true Yahudiyim, by this you can prove; because also you have been able to keep the Sabbath, and to observe the true circumcision; for assuredly on the day of the Sabbath Elohiym rested from all His works. We have fathers, and patriarchs, and the Torah. What, then, does Kepha preach in the kingdom of the Gentiles? But if he shall wish to bring in any new teaching, without any tumult, and envy, and trouble, send him word, that we may see, and in your presence, I shall convict him. But if his teaching be true, supported by the book and testimony of the Hebrews, it becomes all of us to submit to him.

Pa'al saying these and such like things, the Yahudiym went and said to Kepha: Pa'al of the Hebrews has come, and entreats you to come to him, since those who have brought him say that he cannot meet whomsoever he may wish until he appear before Cæsar.

And Kepha, having heard, rejoiced with great joy; and rising up, immediately went to him. And seeing each other, they wept for joy; and long embracing each other, they bedewed each other with tears.

And when Pa'al had related to Kepha the substance of all his doings, and how, through the disasters of the ship, he had come, Kepha also told him what he had suffered from Shim'on the Magian, and all his plots. And having told these things, he went away towards evening.

And in the morning of the following day, at dawn, behold, Kepha coming, finds a multitude of the Yahudiym before Pa'al's door. And there was a great uproar between the Christian Yahudiym and the Gentiles. For, on the one hand, the Yahudiym said: We are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, the friends of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, with whom Elohiym spoke, to whom He showed His own mysteries and His great wonders. But you of the Gentiles are no great thing in your lineage; if otherwise, you have become polluted and abominable by idols and graven images.

While the Yahudiym were saying such things, and such-like, those of the Gentiles answered, saying: We, when we heard the truth, straightway followed it, having abandoned our errors. But you, both knowing the mighty deeds of your fathers, and seeing the signs of the prophets, and having received the law, and gone through the sea with dry feet, and seen your enemies sunk in its depths, and the pillar of fire by night and of cloud by day shining upon you, and manna having been given to you out of heaven, and water flowing to you out of a rock—after all these things you fashioned to yourselves the idol of a calf, and worshipped the graven image. But we, having seen none of the signs, believe to be a Savior the Elohiym whom you have forsaken in unbelief.

While they were contending in these and such-like words, the Apostle Pa'al said that they ought not to make such attacks upon each other, but that they should rather give heed to this, that Elohiym had fulfilled His promises which He swore to Abraham our father, that in his seed he should inherit all the nations. For there is no respect of persons with Elohiym. As many as have sinned in Torah shall be judged according to

Torah, and as many as have sinned without Torah shall perish without Torah. But we, brethren, ought to thank Elohiym that, according to His mercy, He has chosen us to be a holy people to Himself: so that in this we ought to boast, whether Yahudiym or Greeks; for you are all one in the belief of His name.

And Pa'al having thus spoken, both the Yahudiym and they of the Gentiles were appeased. But the rulers of the Yahudiym assailed Kepha. And Kepha, when they accused him of having renounced their synagogues, said: Hear, brethren, the Ruach HaQodesh about the patriarch David, promising: Of the fruit of your womb shall He set upon your throne. Him therefore to whom the Father said, You are my Son, this day have I begotten You, the chief priests through envy crucified; but that He might accomplish the salvation of the world, it was allowed that He should suffer all these things. Just as, therefore, from the side of A'dam Chuah was created, so also from the side of Mashiach was created the Church, which has no spot nor blemish. In Him, therefore, Elohiym has opened an entrance to all the sons of Avraham, and Yitschaq, and Ya'aqov, in order that they may be in the faith of profession towards Him, and have life and salvation in His name. Turn, therefore, and enter into the joy of your father Avraham, because Elohiym has fulfilled what He promised to him. Whence also the prophet says, The Adonai has sworn, and will not repent: You are a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek. For a priest He became upon the cross, when He offered the whole burnt-offering of His own body and blood as a sacrifice for all the world.

And Kepha saying this and such-like, the most part of the people believed. And it happened also that Nero's wife Libia, and the yokefellow of Agrippa the prefect, Agrippina by name, thus believed, so that also they went away from beside their own husbands. And on account of the teaching of Pa'al, many, despising military life, clung to Elohiym; so that even from the emperor's bedchamber some came to him, and having become Christians, were no longer willing to return to the army or the palace.

When, consequently, the people were making a seditious murmuring, Shim'on, moved with zeal, rouses himself, and began to say many evil things about Kepha, saying that he was a wizard and a cheat. And they believed him, wondering at his miracles; for he made a brazen serpent move itself, and stone statues to laugh and move themselves, and himself

to run and suddenly to be raised into the air. But as a set-off to these, Kepha healed the sick by a word, by praying made the blind to see, put demons to flight by a command; sometimes he even raised the dead. And he said to the people that they should not only flee from Shim'on's deceit, but also that they should expose him, that they might not seem to be slaves to the devil.

And thus, it happened that all pious men abhorred Shim'on the Magian, and proclaimed him impious. But those who adhered to Shim'on strongly affirmed Kepha to be a magician, bearing false witness as many of them as were with Shim'on the Magian; so that the matter came even to the ears of Nero the Cæsar, and he gave order to bring Shim'on the Magian before him. And he, coming in, stood before him, and began suddenly to assume different forms, so that on a sudden he became a child, and after a little an old man, and at other times a young man; for he changed himself both in face and stature into different forms, and was in a frenzy, having the devil as his servant. And Nero beholding this, supposed him to be truly the son of Elohiym; but the Apostle Kepha showed him to be both a liar and a wizard, base and impious and apostate, and in all things opposed to the truth of Elohiym, and that nothing yet remained except that his wickedness, being made apparent by the command of Elohiym, might be made manifest to them all.

Then Shim'on, having gone into Nero, said: Hear, O good emperor: I am the son of Elohiym come down from heaven. Until now I have endured Kepha only calling himself an apostle; but now he has doubled the evil: for Pa'al also himself teaches the same things, and having his mind turned against me, is said to preach along with him; in reference to whom, if you shall not contrive their destruction, it is very plain that your kingdom cannot stand.

Then Nero, filled with concern, ordered him to bring them speedily before him. And on the following day Shim'on the Magian, and Kepha and Pa'al the apostles of Mashiach, having come into Nero, Shim'on said: These are the disciples of the Nazarene, and it is not at all well that they should be of the people of the Yahudiym.

Nero said: What is a Nazarene?

Shim'on said: There is a city of Yahudah which has always been opposed to us, called Nazareth, and to it the teacher of these men belonged.

Nero said: Elohiym commands us to love every man; why, then, do you persecute them?

Shim'on said: This is a race of men who have turned aside all Yahudah from believing in me.

Nero said to Kepha: Why are you thus unbelieving, according to your race?

Then Kepha said to Shim'on: You have been able to impose upon all, but upon me never; and those who have been deceived, Elohiym has through me recalled from their error. And since you have learned by experience that you cannot get the better of me, I wonder with what face you boast yourself before the emperor and suppose that through your magic art you shall overcome the disciples of Mashiach.

Nero said: Who is Mashiach?

Kepha said: He is what this Shim'on the Magian affirms himself to be; but this is a most wicked man, and his works are of the devil. But if you wish to know, O good emperor, the things that have been done in Yahudah about Mashiach, take the writings of Pontius Pilate sent to Claudius, and thus you will know all. And Nero ordered them to be brought, and to be read in their presence; and they were to the following effect: —

Pontius Pilate to Claudius, greeting. There has lately happened an event which I myself was concerned in. For the Yahudiym through envy have inflicted on themselves, and those coming after them, dreadful judgments. Their fathers had promised that their Elohiym would send them his holy one from heaven, who according to reason should be called their king, and he had promised to send him to the earth by means of a virgin. He, then, when I was procurator, came into Yahudah. And they saw him enlightening the blind, cleansing lepers, healing paralytics, expelling demons from men, raising the dead, subduing the winds, walking upon the waves of the sea, and doing many other wonders, and all the people of the Yahudiym calling him Son of Elohiym. Then the chief priests, moved with envy against him, seized him, and delivered him to me; and telling one lie after another, they said that he was a wizard, and did contrary to their law. And I, having believed that these things were so, gave him up, after scourging him, to their will; and they crucified him, and after he was buried set guards over him. But he, while my

soldiers were guarding him, rose on the third day. And to such a degree was the wickedness of the Yahudiym inflamed against him, that they gave money to the soldiers, saying, Say his disciples have stolen his body. But they, having taken the money, were not able to keep silence as to what had happened; for they have testified that they have seen him (after he was) risen, and that they have received money from the Yahudiym. These things, therefore, have I reported, that no one should falsely speak otherwise, and that you should not suppose that the falsehoods of the Yahudiym are to be believed.

And the letter having been read, Nero said: Tell me, Kepha, were all these things thus done by him?

Kepha said: They were, with your permission, O good emperor. For this Shim'on is full of lies and deceit, even if it should seem that he is what he is not— a Elohiym. And in Mashiach there is all excellent victory through Elohiym and through man, which that incomprehensible glory assumed which through man deigned to come to the assistance of men. But in this Shim'on there are two essences, of man and of devil, who through man endeavors to ensnare men.

Shim'on said: I wonder, O good emperor, that you reckon this man of any consequence— a man uneducated, a fisherman of the poorest, and endowed with power neither in word nor by rank. But that I may not long endure him as an enemy, I shall immediately order my angels to come and avenge me upon him.

Kepha said: I am not afraid of your angels; but they shall be much more afraid of me in the power and trust of my Adonai Yahusha HaMashiach, whom you falsely declare yourself to be.

Nero said: Are you not afraid, Kepha, of Shim'on, who confirms his Divinity by deeds?

Kepha said: Divinity is in Him who searches for the hidden things of the heart. Now then, tell me what I am thinking about, or what I am doing. I disclose to your servants who are here what my thought is, before he tells lies about it, in order that he may not dare to lie as to what I am thinking about.

Nero said: Come hither and tell me what you are thinking about.

Kepha said: Order a barley loaf to be brought, and to be given to me secretly. And when he ordered it to be brought, and secretly given to Kepha, Kepha said: Now tell us, Shim'on, what has been thought about, or what said, or what done.

Nero said: Do you mean me to believe that Shim'on does not know these things, who both raised a dead man, and presented himself on the third day after he had been beheaded, and who has done whatever he said he would do?

Kepha said: But he did not do it before me.

Nero said: But he did all these before me. For assuredly he ordered angels to come to him, and they came.

Kepha said: If he has done what is very great, why does he not do what is very small? Let him tell what I had in my mind, and what I have done.

Nero said: Between you, I do not know myself.

Shim'on said: Let Kepha say what I am thinking of, or what I am doing.

Kepha said: What Shim'on has in his mind I shall show that I know, by my doing what he is thinking about.

Shim'on said: Know this, O emperor, that no one knows the thoughts of men, but Elohiym alone. Is not, therefore, Kepha lying?

Kepha said: you, then, who sayest that you are the Son of Elohiym, tell what I have in my mind; disclose, if you can, what I have just done in secret. For Kepha, having blessed the barley loaf which he had received, and having broken it with his right hand and his left, had heaped it up in his sleeves.

Then Shim'on, enraged that he was not able to tell the secret of the apostle, cried out, saying: Let great dogs come forth, and eat him up before Cæsar. And suddenly there appeared great dogs and rushed at Kepha. But Kepha, stretching forth his hands to pray, showed to the dogs the loaf which he had blessed, which the dogs seeing, no longer appeared.

Then Kepha said to Nero: Behold, I have shown you that I knew what Shim'on was thinking of, not by words, but by deeds; for he, having promised that he would bring angels against me, has brought dogs, in order that he might show that he had not Elohiym-like but dog-like angels.

Then Nero said to Shim'on: What is it, Shim'on? I think we have got the worst of it. Shim'on said: This man, both in Yahudah and in all Palestine and Cæsarea, has done the same to me; and from very often striving with me, he has learned that this is adverse to them. This, then, he has learned how to escape from me; for the thoughts of men no one knows but Elohiym alone.

And Kepha said to Shim'on: Certainly, you feign yourself to be a Elohiym; why, then, do you not reveal the thoughts of every man?

Then Nero, turning to Pa'al, said: Why do you say nothing, Pa'al?

Pa'al answered and said: Know this, O emperor, that if you permit this magician to do such things, it will bring an access of the greatest mischief to your country and will bring down your empire from its position.

Nero said to Shim'on: What do you say?

Shim'on said: If I do not manifestly hold myself out to be a Elohiym, no one will bestow upon me due reverence.

Nero said: And now, why do you delay, and not show yourself to be a Elohiym, in order that these men may be punished?

Shim'on said: Give orders to build for me a lofty tower of wood, and I, going up upon it, will call my angels, and order them to take me, in the sight of all, to my father in heaven; and these men, not being able to do this, are put to shame as uneducated men.

And Nero said to Kepha: Have you heard, Kepha, what has been said by Shim'on? From this will appear how much power either he or your Elohiym has.

Kepha said: O most mighty emperor, if you were willing, you might perceive that he is full of demons.

Nero said: Why do you make to me roundabouts of circumlocutions? Tomorrow will prove it to you.

Shim'on said: Do you believe, O good emperor, that I who was dead, and rose again, am a magician? For it had been brought about by his own cleverness that the unbelieving Shim'on had said to Nero: Order me to be beheaded in a dark place, and there to be left slain; and if I do not rise on the third day, know that I am a magician; but if I rise again, know that I am the Son of Elohiym.

And Nero, having ordered this, in the dark, by his magic art he managed that a ram should be beheaded. And for so long did the ram appear to be Shim'on until he was beheaded. And when he had been beheaded in the dark, he that had beheaded him, taking the head, found it to be that of a ram; but he would not say anything to the emperor, lest he should scourge him, having ordered this to be done in secret. Thereafter, accordingly. Shim'on said that he had risen on the third day, because he took away the head of the ram and the limbs— but the blood had been there congealed— and on the third day he showed himself to Nero and said: Cause to be wiped away my blood that has been poured out; for, behold, having been beheaded, as I promised, I have risen again on the third day.

And when Nero said: Tomorrow will prove it to you, turning to Pa'al, he said: You, Pa'al, why do you say nothing? Either who taught you, or whom you have for a master, or how you have taught in the cities, or what things have happened through your teaching? For I think that you have not any wisdom, and art not able to accomplish any work of power.

Pa'al answered: Do you suppose that I ought to speak against a desperate man, a magician, who has given his soul up to death, whose destruction and perdition will come speedily? For he ought to speak who pretends to be what he is not, and deceives men by magic art. If you consent to hear his words, and to shield him, you shall destroy your soul and your kingdom, for he is a most base man. And as the Egyptians Iannes and Iambres led Pharaoh and his army astray until they were swallowed up in the sea, so also he, through the instruction of his father the devil, persuades men to do many evils to themselves, and thus deceives many of the innocent, to the peril of your kingdom. But as for the word of the devil, which I see has been poured out through this man, with groanings of my heart I am dealing with the Ruach HaQodesh, that it may be clearly shown what it is; for as far as he seems to raise himself towards heaven, so far will he be sunk down into the depth of She'ol, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. But about the teaching of my Master, of which you asked me, none attain it except the pure, who allow faith to come into their heart. For as many things as belong to peace and love, these have I taught. Round-about from Yerushalayim, and as far as Illyricum, I have fulfilled the word of peace. For I have taught that in honor they should prefer one another; I have taught those that are eminent and rich not to be lifted up, and hope in uncertainty of riches, but to place their hope in Elohiym; I have taught those in a middle station to be content with food and covering; I have taught the poor to rejoice in

their own poverty; I have taught fathers to teach their children instruction in the fear of the Adonai, children to obey their parents in wholesome admonition; I have taught wives to love their own husbands, and to fear them as masters, and husbands to observe fidelity to their wives; I have taught masters to treat their slaves with clemency, and slaves to serve their own masters faithfully; I have taught the churches of the believers to reverence one almighty, invisible, and incomprehensible Elohiym. And this teaching has been given me, not from men, nor through men, but through Yahusha HaMashiach, who spoke to me out of heaven, who also has sent me to preach, saying to me, Go forth, for I will be with you; and all things, as many as you shall say or do, I shall make just.

Nero said: What do you say, Kepha?

He answered and said: All that Pa'al has said is true. For when he was a persecutor of the faith of Mashiach, a voice called him out of heaven, and taught him the truth; for he was not an adversary of our faith from hatred, but from ignorance. For there were before us false Mashiach's, like Shim'on, false apostles, and false prophets, who, contrary to the sacred writings, set themselves to make void the truth; and against these it was necessary to have in readiness this man, who from his youth up set himself to no other thing than to search out the mysteries of the divine Torah, by which he might become a vindicator of truth and a persecutor of falsehood. Since then, his persecution was not on account of hatred, but on account of the vindication of the Torah, the very truth out of heaven held intercourse with him, saying, I am the truth which you persecute; cease persecuting me. When, therefore, he knew that this was so, leaving off that which he was vindicating, he began to vindicate this way of Mashiach which he was persecuting.

Shim'on said: O good emperor, take notice that these two have conspired against me; for I am the truth, and they purpose evil against me.

Kepha said: There is no truth in you; but all you say is false.

Nero said: Pa'al, what do you say?

Pa'al said: Those things which you have heard from Kepha, believe to have been spoken by me also; for we purpose the same thing, for we have the same Adonai Yahusha HaMashiach.

Shim'on said: Do you expect me, O good emperor, to hold an argument with these men, who have come to an agreement against me? And having

turned to the apostles of Mashiach, he said: Listen, Kepha and Pa'al: if I can do nothing for you here, we are going to the place where I must judge you.

Pa'al said: O good emperor, see what threats he holds out against us.

Kepha said: Why was it necessary to keep from laughing outright at a foolish man, made the sport of demons, so as to suppose that he cannot be made manifest?

Shim'on said: I spare you until I shall receive my power.

Pa'al said: See if you will go out hence safe.

Kepha said: If you do not see, Shim'on, the power of our Adonai Yahusha HaMashiach, you will not believe yourself not to be Mashiach.

Shim'on said: Most sacred Emperor, do not believe them, for they are circumcised knaves.

Pa'al said: Before we knew the truth, we had the circumcision of the flesh; but when the truth appeared, in the circumcision of the heart we both are circumcised and circumcise.

Kepha said: If circumcision be a disgrace, why have you been circumcised, Shim'on?

Nero said: Has then Shim'on also been circumcised?

Kepha said: For not otherwise could he have deceived souls, unless he feigned himself to be a Yahudan, and made a show of teaching the Torah of Elohiym.

Nero said: Shim'on, you, as I see, being carried away with envy, persecute these men. For, as it seems, there is great hatred between you and their Mashiach; and I am afraid that you will be worsted by them and involved in great evils.

Shim'on said: You are led astray, O emperor.

Nero said: How am I led astray? What I see in you, I say. I see that you are manifestly an enemy of Kepha and Pa'al and their master.

Shim'on said: Mashiach was not Pa'al's master.

Pa'al said: Yes, through revelation He taught me also. But tell me what I asked you— Why were you circumcised?

Shim'on said: Why have you asked me this?

Pa'al said: We have a reason for asking you this.

Nero said: Why are you afraid to answer them?

Shim'on said: Listen, O emperor. At that time circumcision was enjoined by Elohiym when I received it. For this reason, was I circumcised.

Pa'al said: Do you hear, O good emperor, what has been said by Shim'on? If, therefore, circumcision be a good thing, why have you, Shim'on, given up those who have been circumcised, and forced them, after being condemned, to be put to death?

Nero said: Neither about you do I perceive anything good.

Kepha and Pa'al said: Whether this thought about us be good or evil has no reference to the matter; but to us it was necessary that what our Master promised should come to pass.

Nero said: If I should not be willing?

Kepha said: Not as you will, but as He promised to us.

Shim'on said: O good emperor, these men have reckoned upon your clemency, and have bound you.

Nero said: But neither have you yet made me sure about yourself.

Shim'on said: Since so many excellent deeds and signs have been shown to you by me, I wonder how you should be in doubt.

Nero said: I neither doubt nor favor any of you; but answer me rather what I ask.

Shim'on said: Henceforward I answer you nothing.

Nero said: Seeing that you lie, therefore you say this. But if even I can do nothing to you, Elohiym, who can, will do it.

Shim'on said: I no longer answer you.

Nero said: Nor do I consider you to be anything: for, as I perceive, you are a liar in everything. But why do I say so much? The three of you show that your reasoning is uncertain; and thus, in all things you have made me doubt, so that I find that I can give credit to none of you.

Kepha said: We preach one Elohiym and Father of our Adonai Yahusha HaMashiach, that has made the heaven and the earth and the sea, and all that therein is, who is the true King; and of His kingdom there shall be no end.

Nero said: What king is Adonai?

Pa'al said: The Savior of all the nations.

Shim'on said: I am he whom you speak of.

Kepha and Pa'al said: May it never be well with you, Shim'on, magician, and full of bitterness.

Shim'on said: Listen, O Cæsar Nero, that you may know that these men are liars, and that I have been sent from the heavens: tomorrow I go up into the heavens, that I may make those who believe in me blessed and show my wrath upon those who have denied me.

Kepha and Pa'al said: Us long ago Elohiym called to His own glory; but you, called by the devil, hastens to punishment.

Shim'on said: Cæsar Nero, listen to me. Separate these madmen from you, in order that when I go into heaven to my father, I may be very merciful to you.

Nero said: And whence shall we prove this, that you go away into heaven?

Shim'on said: Order a lofty tower to be made of wood, and of great beams, that I may go up upon it, and that my angels may find me in the air; for they cannot come to me upon earth among the sinners.

Nero said: I will see whether you will fulfil what you say.

Then Nero ordered a lofty tower to be made in the Campus Martius, and all the people and the dignities to be present at the spectacle. And on the following day, all the multitude having come together, Nero ordered Kepha and Pa'al to be present, to whom also he said: Now the truth has to be made manifest.

Kepha and Pa'al said: We do not expose him, but our Adonai Yahusha HaMashiach, the Son of Elohiym, whom he has falsely declared himself to be.

And Pa'al, having turned to Kepha, said: It is my part to bend the knee, and to pray to Elohiym; and yours to produce the effect, if you should see

him attempting anything, because you were first taken in hand by the Adonai.

And Pa'al, bending his knees, prayed.

And Kepha, looking steadfastly upon Shim'on, said: Accomplish what you have begun; for both your exposure and our call is at hand: for I see my Mashiach calling both me and Pa'al.

Nero said: And where will you go to against my will?

Kepha said: Whithersoever our Adonai has called us.

Nero said: And who is your Adonai?

Kepha said: Yahusha HaMashiach, whom I see calling us to Himself.

Nero said: Do you also then intend to go away to heaven?

Kepha said: If it shall seem good to Him that calls us.

Shim'on said: In order that you may know, O emperor, that these are deceivers, as soon as ever I ascend into heaven, I will send my angels to you, and will make you come to me.

Nero said: Do at once what you say.

Then Shim'on went up upon the tower in the face of all, and, crowned with laurels, he stretched forth his hands, and began to fly. And when Nero saw him flying, he said to Kepha: This Shim'on is true; but you and Pa'al are deceivers.

To whom Kepha said: Immediately shall you know that we are true disciples of Mashiach; but that he is not Mashiach, but a magician, and a malefactor.

Nero said: Do you still persist? Behold, you see him going up into heaven.

Then Kepha, looking steadfastly upon Pa'al, said: Pa'al, look up and see.

And Pa'al, having looked up, full of tears, and seeing Shim'on flying, said: Kepha, why are you idle? Finish what you have begun; for already our Adonai Yahusha HaMashiach is calling us.

And Nero hearing them, smiled a little, and said: These men see themselves worsted already, and are gone mad.

Kepha said: Now you shall know that we are not mad.

Pa'al said to Kepha: Do at once what you do.

And Kepha, looking steadfastly against Shim'on, said: I adjure you, you angels of Satan, who are carrying him into the air, to deceive the hearts of the unbelievers, by the Elohiym that created all things, and by Yahusha HaMashiach, whom on the third day He raised from the dead, no longer from this hour to keep him up, but to let him go. And immediately, being let go, he fell into a place called Sacra Via, that is, Holy Way, and was divided into four parts, having perished by an evil fate.

Then Nero ordered Kepha and Pa'al to be put in irons, and the body of Shim'on to be carefully kept for three days, thinking that he would rise on the third day. To whom Kepha said: He will no longer rise, since he is truly dead, being condemned to everlasting punishment.

And Nero said to him: Who commanded you to do such a dreadful deed?

Kepha said: His reflections and blasphemy against my Adonai Yahusha HaMashiach have brought him into this gulf of destruction.

Nero said: I will destroy you by an evil taking off.

Kepha said: This is not in your power, even if it should seem good to you to destroy us; but it is necessary that what our Master promised to us should be fulfilled.

Then Nero, having summoned Agrippa the proprietor, said to him: It is necessary that men introducing mischievous religious observances should die. Wherefore I order them to take iron clubs, and to be killed in the sea-fight.

Agrippa the proprietor said: Most sacred emperor, what you have ordered is not fitting for these men, since Pa'al seems innocent beside Kepha.

Nero said: By what fate, then, shall they die?

Agrippa answered and said: As seems to me, it is just that Pa'al's head should be cut off, and that Kepha should be raised on a cross as the cause of the murder.

Nero said: You have most excellently judged.

Then both Kepha and Pa'al were led away from the presence of Nero. And Pa'al was beheaded on the Ostesian road.

And Kepha, having come to the cross, said: Since my Adonai Yahusha HaMashiach, who came down from the heaven upon the earth, was raised

upon the cross upright, and He has deigned to call to heaven me, who am of the earth, my cross ought to be fixed head down most, so as to direct my feet towards heaven; for I am not worthy to be crucified like my Adonai. Then, having reversed the cross, they nailed his feet up.

And the multitude was assembled reviling Cæsar and wishing to kill him. But Kepha restrained them, saying: A few days ago, being exhorted by the brethren, I was going away; and my Adonai Yahusha HaMashiach met me, and having adored Him, I said, Adonai, whither are You going? And He said to me, I am going to Rome to be crucified. And I said to Him, Adonai, were You not crucified once for all? And the Adonai answering, said, I saw you fleeing from death, and I wish to be crucified instead of you. And I said, Adonai, I go; I fulfil Your command. And He said to me, Fear not, for I am with you. On this account, then, children, do not hinder my going; for already my feet are going on the road to heaven. Do not grieve, therefore, but rather rejoice with me, for today I receive the fruit of my labors. And thus speaking, he said: I thank You, good Shepherd, that the sheep which You have entrusted to me, sympathize with me; I ask, then, that with me they may have a part in Your kingdom. And having thus spoken, he gave up the ruach.

And immediately there appeared men glorious and strange in appearance; and they said: We are here, on account of the holy and chief apostles, from Yerushalayim. And they, along with Marcellus, an illustrious man, who, having left Shim'on, had believed in Kepha, took up his body secretly, and put it under the terebinth near the place for the exhibition of sea-fights in the place called the Vatican. And the men who had said that they came from Yerushalayim said to the people: Rejoice, and be exceeding glad, because you have been deemed worthy to have great champions. And know that Nero himself, after these not many days, will be utterly destroyed, and his kingdom shall be given to another.

And after these things the people revolted against him; and when he knew of it, he fled into desert places, and through hunger and cold he gave up the ghost, and his body became food for the wild beasts.

And some devout men of the regions of the East wished to carry off the relics of the qodeshiym, and immediately there was a great earthquake in the city; and those that dwelt in the city having become aware of it, ran, and seized the men, but they fled. But the Romans, having taken them, put them in a place three miles from the city, and there they were guarded for a year and seven months, until they had built the place in which they

intended to put them. And after these things, all having assembled with glory and singing of praise, they put them in the place built for them.