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From Scripture to Publication

“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, immersing them in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Ruach haKodesh, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” Matthew 28:19-20

It should come as no surprise that the New Testament has much to say about its origins by those who were directly responsible for producing it. The *talmidim* (disciples) most certainly did travel throughout the world testifying of Y’shua and what he had taught them about the Kingdom of Elohim. Elsewhere in the New Testament we see other clues about where the *Shlichim* (Sent Ones or Apostles) went:

“Then after three years, I went up to Jerusalem to get acquainted with Keefa (Peter) and stayed with him fifteen days. I saw none of the other apostles--only Ya’akov (James), the Master (Y’shua’s) brother” (Galatians 1:18-19).

This reference from Rav Shaul continues from events in Acts 2, where all the *talmidim* had gathered in Jerusalem for Shavuot (Feast of Pentecost) and the giving of the Ruach haKodesh. Also, per events in Matthew 16 we know that Keefa was Y’shua’s chosen successor, and yet it was Mashiyach’s own earthly brother Ya’akov who was put in charge of the Jerusalem assembly.

The first hint of Ya’akov’s ascendancy appears in Acts 12:17. Keefa, after being released from prison, immediately says: *“Tell Ya’akov and the brothers about this.”* In other words, Ya’akov is clearly honored beyond the “brotherhood” which includes the rest of the *talmidim*! Furthermore, because Ya’akov’s name appears before the rest of the brothers – or even elders as in Acts 21:18 – this is very strong indication that Keefa had decided to leave him in charge of Jerusalem while he, again according to Rav Shaul, opts for some needed field work:

“On the contrary, they saw that I had been entrusted with the task of preaching the gospel to the Gentiles, just as Keefa had been to the Jews. For Elohim, who was at work in the ministry of Keefa as a Shlichah to the Jews, was also at work in my ministry as a Shlichah to the Gentiles. Ya’akov, Keefa and Yochanan, those reputed to be pillars, gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship when they recognized the grace given to me. They agreed that we should go to the Gentiles, and they to the Jews. All they asked was that we should continue to remember the poor, the very thing I was eager to do” (Galatians 2:7-10).

So Peter, also known as *Keefa*, was given the task of seeking out converts from among Jews who had settled outside of Israel, but still in areas where Aramaic was the primary language. Scripture in fact tells us one prominent assembly that Keefa founded:

“With the help of Silas, whom I regard as a faithful brother, I have written to you briefly, encouraging you and testifying that this is the true grace of Elohim. Stand fast in it. She who is in Babylon, chosen together with you, sends you her greetings, and so does my son Mark. Greet one another with a kiss of love. Peace to all of you who are in Mashiyach” (1 Peter 5:12-14).

This verse and the Church of the East, who preserved the Peshitta text for nearly 2,000 years, agree. Their documents are unanimous in proclaiming that Keefa had his First Epistle delivered to their door in Abdiabne, from Keefa’s assembly in Babylon. Furthermore, Babylon was an obvious choice for Keefa, since it boasted the largest Jewish population in the world outside of Israel. It would be hard to see how the account of Rav Shaul in Galatians 1 and 2 could otherwise be better fulfilled!

Of the three *talmidim* mentioned in Galatians 2:7-10, only one remained in Jerusalem. Ya’akov was in active charge of the Jerusalem assembly for a lengthy period of time (Acts 15:13-21,