Theophilos, my friend, check Webster's Collegiate Dictionary on "Faust".

A prophecy.

"After a sensual life, he is carried off by the Devil, but in the Final Act he is regenerated and his soul is saved".

Rumor reports that Faust rationalized Jesus' miracles and said, "Anything he can do - I can do better."

My poodle still shadows me. His name is Isaiah, a dark, coal black, curly haired, standard. If the poodle be Satan, Theophilos, I must say - he is most obedient and yes, even, trainable.

Isaac commands the poodle best -

Shake!
Heel!

and most important - a quite believable -

Play dead!

Amen, So may it be God's will on Earth as it is in Heaven. Heaven on Earth.

Rabbi Laurence (DeLeon)
Re Shone
La Sealah

The vision of Christ that thou dost see
Is my vision's greatest enemy...
Both read the Bible day and night
But thou reads't black where I read white

Do what you will, this Life's a fiction
And is made up of contradiction.

The Everlasting Gospel—William Blake
Faust (mit dem Pudel here-int redend)

Schon warnt mich was, dass inh dabei nicht bleibe
Mir hilft der Geist, auf einmal seh ich Rat
Und schreibe getrost: Im anfang wan die tat.

My translation must be changed again
Then, I am warned as I grasp the pen
The spirit helps me. I have it - exact
Write: In the beginning was the (F)Act.

"The beauty of the Bible is that the most ignorant and simple minds understand it best."

William Blake
Theophilos:

Every printed Hebrew Bible since the Ninth Century include the Torah and Prophetic Trope. They are the Soul and Song of the Torah.

At least seventy distinctly different versions of the tune of the Tropes exist, including Babylonian, Yemenite, Lithuanian, German, Indian, Minhag American and Sealah. The Sealah Trope are jazzy and fluid.

Each of the Trope musical systems require a teacher. Final Testament is but a taste. The music in the text represents Minhag American with Sealah twists. They are only guides, Theophilos, so let the symbols awaken the melody in your heart.

My friend Dr. Harold Bloom, in his introduction to Olivier Revault D’Allonnes Musical Variations on Jewish Thought teaches that the freedom to move from the Broken to the Free Tablets depends on these musical variations. D’Allonnes teaches the music of the inwardness of the Moral Law.

Final Testament and Acts and the Final Revelation of the Moral Law are not idols of broken lines and stone. The word is always broken. the Song is always Eternal. Sing unto the Lord the New Song. Finally in New Jerusalem.

Amen
Sealah
Laurence
Sit in a quiet place and envision seven circles in motion, radiating outward from the center. The First circle represents the Self. The Second; all relationships of the Family. The Third and Fourth; Neighbors and Community. The Fifth circle corresponds to the Nation or State. The Sixth; to all Terran life. The Seventh circle radiates out to the apparent limits of the Universe. These Seven circles radiate outward from the Inner self to the Outer World, from Shalvah to Shalom. The Still Point of our Turning Worlds, at the center of the first circle, is Shalvah. Shalvah is at the root of Sealah and means: tranquility, inner peace, inner perfection.

Just as the sphere is the apparent outer limit of space, the point at the center of the First Circle is the apparent inward limit, the Aleph point, the beginning of all Creation. The movement of a sperm cell as it seeks the Circle of the Egg and the spiral motion of a forming galaxy describes the dance of the Sealah spheres. The sperm, a circle in motion, merges with the Egg and life is born. Particles at the center swirl outwards as a Galaxy is formed.

This is the Yould point of the Aleph. Yould is the first letter of Gods’ transcendent names. The Yould’s subtleties are ineffable. We can say that at the center of all creativity is God. The perfection of Shalvah, of inner Wholeness, is found in the imitation of the motion of the dancing Yould. A restful motion, A holy pause. A Sabbath of the spirit, like a comma.

We pause and move outwards from the Center, bringing AtOneMent to all spheres and dimensions of our lives. Shalvah is atonement with God in the First Circle.

All spiritual striving begins in the First Circle and enlightenment is not possible, except through God’s grace, if the Sphere of Shalvah is not filled full. One cannot hope to save the World if they have not saved themselves.

Focus on the Center and throw the first pebble into the Well of Self. Watch the circles ripple outwards to infinity. Meditation, prayer, singing and dancing are all ways to be in touch with the Center. The Music of the Seven Spheres is heard with this focusing and the harmony is the New Song, Sealah’s Song. Arise, spin like a Dervish, and feel the circles begin their merging and overlapping.

The First Circle is an apparent boundary to the Second Circle of Family. When filled, however, it spills into the Second the Way water overflows the circumference of a full vessel. A Second Circle is created, through Love, as Sperm and Egg become One Circle. This follows the pattern of Divine Creation. The Second Circle is perfected in the Love of Parents and Children. The Ten Utterances command: Honor Your Father and Mother. Sealah prays for Love for the Second Circle to be perfected.

Peace in the Home is the starting point for Peace on Earth. In the Golden Sealah Age, the hearts of children and parents are One. The Third and Fourth circles include neighbors and community. Our Sealah Model reminds us that to “Love your neighbor as yourself” (Leviticus 19:18) we first must Love Ourselves.

Peaceful homes are the foundation of peaceful Sealah communities. The circle of community begins in neighborhoods and expands outward to the circumference of the Globe. Then Sealah’s Peace will come to our Terran Global Village.
The Fifth circle, the state, and the Sixth, the potential community of nations, are in great an immediate need of healing. Wars will end when Sealah’s teaching are law. Our century, what future chroniclers will call the Age of Barbarism, will end in Peace if the Fifth and Sixth Circle are Perfected. The alternative is Death by Nuclear Holocaust.

The choice of :Life, not Death, will refocus humanity on the real Holy War, the War for Justice and Economic equality.

As long as one child in one family in one community of one Nation is malnourished, we are all, each of us, unredeemed.

Sealah will nourish this child with food and love. Our good world has been blessed by God with enough natural resources that none need want, enough food that none need to go hungry, enough love that none need be lonely, enough wisdom that all may be enlightened.

Sealah Teachers of Peace

Sealah is here. The nations shall be unified into one world with Jerusalem as capital. The United State of Israel. From Zion this Torah goes forth: One World, under One Flag. Sealah’s banner worn as a prayer shawl, of Seven concentric circles overflowing from Shalvah to Shalom. One world ruled by the One God with the pure language of Liberty and Peace, Truth and Economic Justice for All.

Religion will be whole, and One, in Sealah. The world is made sacred by Sealah Teachers of Peace. The Ark of God’s Final Covenant shall heal the world. The Ark that does battle against injustice shall teach us to put together the broken pieces of the Tablets, the shattered pieces of the Covenant that remain broken as we daily dance around the Golden calf. Sealah’s Tabernacle of Peace teaches us how to put the pieces of the Covenant together again to S.T.O.P. poverty, S.T.O.P. injustice and S.T.O.P. war.

Learning in the Final Age®

Beyond the University, where individuals worship at two altars, dividing Science and God The Body and the Soul, is Sealah.

In Sealah, nothing is secular. Sealah takes all of life as its province. We pray for the healing of all schizophrenia.

Beyond the Seminaries, which preach God but practice denominationalism, is Sealah. Wholistic Scholarship, Shema learning, sings the New Song of Spirituality: “You are no longer Jew or Christian, Muslim or Hindu, this sect or that sect, but one in Sealah. All disciplines of knowledge shall be one.

Sealah trains Rabbi physicians, economists, sociologists, ecologists, politicians, etc., in our Final Age® all disciples require integration. We shall survive the Nuclear Age and enter the Sealah age as all our endeavors in medicine, physics, engineering and business and religion submit to Sealah’s vision of wholeness and Peace.

Join us in our Sealah circle dance as we worship the Lord and choose life.

Amen

Isaac Sealah

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Dear Theophilos,  
We speak again my friend. The Final Act is complete. It is no fiction. Our task is to interpret the meaning of that Deed to the world. Then this Gospel according to Laurence will be Good News and Truth.  
Final Acts is one of the theoretical blueprints for Sealah as God's Tabernacle of Peace. The Gospel, The Good News; Isaac lives! Praise the Lord. God is good. God's kindness endures forever. Those who fear God declare: God's kindness endures forever. By strength and song we are delivered.  
The Final Act, the exaltation of God's right hand. Isaac lives to teach God's deeds. The Gates of Righteousness are open for all to enter. Hallelujah. In the end you answered. Now you are our Salvation.  

From among your  
Sons and daughters of the Lord  
Sons and daughters of women  
And men  

The One  
The builders rejected  
Is now the cornerstone  
A marvel  
In our eyes.  

The cornerstone, the Rock, scorned by the Church, is Sealah's cornerstone. The living Tabernacle of Peace rests on the Rock of God. Many stumbled on the original stone, fragmenting and shattering the Promise.  
Moses' Revelation was chiseled into stone. The Apostles chipped away at their Rock. Israel twice dances around Golden Calves.  
The broken pieces of Tablet are placed in a Tabernacle. The broken body of Christ is placed in a sepulcher.  
The Revelation of Pentecost is once a fiction, once a failure. Being more kind, the Revelation of Pentecost is once a Midrash, once a Prelude.  
Another Midrash: This day of atonement we accept for a second time the second set of stone tablets. God's Law whole and unbroken. This Final Day of Atonement we be-live the Second Coming, God's living Torah, alive and well. A marvel in our eyes.  

We pray - God save us  
This time - we pray  
To be successful.  
With a capital S  

Blessed is the One  
Who comes in God's name  
To arrange the Marriage  
Of Israel and Judah  
In the Holy Tabernacle of Sealah  
Which is called  
God's home.  
God's strength is enlightening  
a Menorah of hope  

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God's festivals, sacrifices
Were bound with rope

And Isaacs on the altars

The sacrifice unbound
Satan's horns broken
Off the altar

Now you are our God

We praise:

Praise is do, good God
God's chesed is forever

Theophilos, enough hallelujah talk. I confess that at first I was not convinced about Sealah. My first role, doubting, a Thomas.

I was confused. What role would I play? What was my friend up to? When Isaac mentioned Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, or Paul, I recoiled, a Dracula response.

If Isaac had been crucified by his father, if I had seen the marks from the nails in his hands, I still would not have believed.

For three years I fled Isaac, at first to Jerusalem, my Nineveh. There in the first steps towards my return to Sealah, I read the Later books of the Torah. My greatest stumbling was John.

Isaac never said it. John did. But Isaac quoted John and Mark, and Matthew and Luke, and the Letters. John 14:6 says "No one comes to the Father except through me." John quotes Jesus. Isaac did not speak this way. He did say: "I teach the Way, the Truth, and the Life." Playing Philip, I asked to be shown the Father. Isaac's answer: "I teach more than the Father." My friend, lover of wisdom, lover of God. Theophilos, you know now that I was not moved from the beginning to be an Apostle.

I speak in Final Testament of my devotion to the Anointed One's life and teachings. Even I, who chronicled the Final Act, came to Sealah only after much stumbling. Therefore I begin with this apology.

I would learn how to form prayers to broken and reconstructed stone. Luke spoke to you in the Old Acts about Peter before the Sanhedrin. Luke hinted, or rather, reminded us that one of the things we learn from the original Revelation is that even broken stone can be resurrected. And stone-cold hearts can be circumcised with a chisel and feel love's warmth. So I became the stone and Isaac the sculptor. In this Final Book of Acts, I chronicle how I would learn to see Isaac as a living Torah, the fleshing-out of old, stone-cold ways.

Moses' Law is brought back to life in a ReNewed Covenant. Sinai itself is rigid and fixed, the Covenant grounded, chiseled into granite. The rivers of Eden flow to and from Sinai. The mountain gives form; the river waters the Garden. The river is the oral tradition. These words flow from that source.

Theophilos, I learned, as Isaiah promised, that if I trusted in Sealah I would not be put to shame.

In the beginning the cornerstone was my stumbling, the Rock on which I fell. In those days I did not know Peter from Paul, my left hand from my right, or my destiny.

What follows is the story of how I became Re Shone La Sealah, Isaac's right hand man and Apostle; as Sealah is God's Apostle and right hand.

Amen. Sealah.
Pentecost One

The mist had not lifted. The seagulls were only faintly visible on the rock. A thick cloud drifted off the sea, surrounding the gazebo. The cloud was thick as smoke. The sun broke through the cloud and the cloud ascended, afire, the smoke of a furnace.

Isaac was then visible holding two scrolls of the Torah. The scrolls were covered in white velvet mantels. Two lions embroidered in gold held up the Ten Principles of God's Law. The Lions of Judah and Israel.

All stood as Isaac opened his arms and sang in Hebrew: "Wherever the Tabernacle traveled Moses would proclaim 'Arise O Lord, and your enemies will be dispersed and scattered will be those who despise your presence.'"

Then Isaac, following the custom of the orthodox, proclaimed the true Zionism of Isaiah and Sealah:

"For from Zion shall go forth Torah
The word of the Lord, from Jerusalem

And God shall judge between the nations
Debating and rebuking many

And they shall beat their swords into ploughshares
And their spears into pruning hooks

Nation shall not lift up sword against nation
Neither shall they learn war anymore."

Isaac and his disciples then sang together:

"Hear O Israel
All who struggle and prevail
The Lord
And God
Are one"

Isaac answered:

"Blessed is God's kingdom
On Earth as Heaven
Forever and ever"

The traditional response is:

God is One
Great the Lord
Transcendent God's name.

I was bothered by this change. Isaac noticed. Isaac continued with the traditional:
"Magnify the Lord with Me
As we extol God's name together."

Isaac walked with the scrolls for all the Apostles to kiss. Isaac then danced through the crowd so all could touch and kiss the scrolls. They sang in Hebrew, but all seemed to understand.
Isaac opened one of the scrolls and chanted:

"And may God help shield and deliver
All who trust
And let us say
Amen.

Let the first called come forward, arise our Rabbi and teacher,
HaRav Aryeh ben Avraham, Re Shone La Sealah."

I was stunned. My jaw unhinged and fell open, a-gape.
Isaac laughed. "A-gape - Agape," he said. "Come, my friend, to this Feast of Love." I had no idea what in Hell Isaac was talking about. Too shocked to protest, I entered the gazebo and recited the blessing between the readings of the Law. Isaac handed me the Yad (the pointer), wiggled his eyebrows Groucho-style, and said in Hebrew:

"My strong right arm, please read."

Isaac smiled, but I saw nothing humorous in the situation, and was not amused. I did not read. I did follow the ancient text as Isaac sang the Hebrew with the special cantillation called Tam Elyone, for the Ten Utterances.

"I
Am Lord, Your God
Who took you out
Of the land of Egypt
From the house of Slaves."

Isaac sang the English in a chant following the pattern of the Hebrew cantillation.
He indicated that I should kiss the scroll and recite the blessing after the reading of the Torah. Isaac had not begun the reading in its proper place and now he was ending in the wrong place - the middle of the fourth reading. Isaac read my mind. "All are called today," he said. "Say your blessing so we can answer Amen." I did.

Isaac called each Apostle to read one of the Ten Principles. I was amazed when each chanted the text perfectly, in Hebrew, according to the exact voweling of the Masoretic text and High cantillation. Each also translated into their tongue, and English, if it was different.
Isaac then motioned all the onlookers into the gazebo. The media crews with hand-held cameras, zoomed in on the crowd and inner circle.

Each Apostle wore a prayer shawl draped over shoulder and head. I wore the traditional oversized black and white Tallit. The prayer shawls of the Apostles were flags. One with a cross, another a crescent. One with a hammer transforming sword to sickle, another with designs of the American Indian. A flag of Asia. A flag of Africa. The flag of the United Nations with olive branch and the concentric circles of Sealah and others I could not identify. I did recognize the flag of Israel and the Stars and Stripes in red, white and blue. The stars were the stars of David. Each flag was fringed with Tzitzit, the tassels commanded by the Lord in Numbers and Deuteronomy, to be worn on the corners of one's garments. The ten formed a complete circle, holding on to one another's Tzitzit.

Isaac and I now stood in the middle. Isaac wore his Tallit flag as a cape. The Tallit was emblazoned with a cross of stars that was a Menorah. The cross-like outstretched arms, supported the Seven lamps of the Menorah. From each lamp a color of the spectrum emanated, creating a luminous mirror of the menorah and the circles of Sealah.

Isaac wore this rainbow, an inverted crown, as he moved the Tallit from off his shoulders to over his head in the manner of the ultra-orthodox Jew. I mocked my friend in my mind as I thought, Superman becomes Sealahman. I imagined Isaac wearing Superman's cape, the "S" a secret mystical allusion to Sealah. Isaac smiled.

On his forehead he wore the double signs of God as Lord. Tefillin. Phylacteries. The boxes, traditionally black, were white. On one side was a three pronged Shin or S. The first prong was red; the middle, orange; the third, yellow. On the other side the shin was four pronged. One prong green, one blue, one indigo, one violet. Roy G. Biv Tefillin.

The strap that crowned Isaac's head was white, as were the two straps hanging around Isaac's neck and over his heart. The Hebrew letter Daled was tied in a green knot over the base of his neck.

On his arm near his heart Isaac wore a red box. The box is traditionally made of leather. Isaac's appeared to be made of wood.

My eyes, as did the camera's, focused on the faces of the Apostles. Framed by the flag of Israel, an orthodox Chassidic rabbi with side curls. Woven into the white fringes of his Tallit, was a thread of blue. Under the flag of the United Nations, Sheila Baldwin. Under the Stars and Stripes, Isaac's father, the Reverend Raymond of Saint Clair.

I moved out of the inner circle and joined the onlookers as they moved in, facing the sea. The sun broke through the clouds like a tongue of fire.

The seagulls were out on their rock. They appeared to be watching us, as we watched them. I counted nine gulls. Perhaps they were waiting for a tenth to make a minyan. Perhaps they were awaiting their own avian messiah to descend from the heavens. They made sounds I heard as mocking. They could have come from my own throat.

Isaac then chanted in Hebrew: "All are now called."

The Apostles let go of one another's fringes and raised their flag shawls over everyone's heads, creating a massive canopy of Peace. Seventy people recited the blessing together and then sang with one voice: "All the people heard the sounds and saw the flames, the voice of the Shofar and the mountain smoking. The people saw this and trembled, and there were seven lamps of fire burning before God's throne."

All recited the blessing after the Torah, reading in unison.

Perplexed and still amazed, I asked Isaac in Aramaic, so as not to embarrass him, "What does this all mean?" Isaac smiled as all answered in one voice, "Sealah has come."

I thought they all must be on drugs!

The reading from the second scroll was, for me, an even greater stumbling. All called Isaac to the Torah. The second scroll was thicker than the first; as though material had been added. The scroll was near its
end. Isaac chanted:

"And I saw a New Heaven and Earth...
I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem
Coming down from God out of Heaven
Prepared as a bride
Adorned for her groom
I heard a loud voice
Proclaiming from the throne
'Behold the tabernacle of God is with you
You shall be my people
And I your God.'
God will wipe away all tears
From your eyes
And there shall be no more death
Neither sorrow, nor crying
Neither shall there be
Anymore pain.
The old order has passed away!"

I had heard material like this recently, in Isaac's dreadful debate with his father. I thought of the Final Act and shuddered. When I began to listen again I heard Isaac chant:

"The Twelve Gates of New Jerusalem
Were twelve pearls
Every Gate a pearl
The streets of New Jerusalem

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Were of pure gold
Gold you see through
I saw no temple in the city
Save the sovereign Lord God
And the Lamb"

I stopped listening as Isaac kept on chanting, and I awoke when I heard Isaac say, "The one giving testimony speaks: Yes indeed, I am coming soon." All said: "So be it. Come Lord Jesus." Isaac answered, "May the grace of Lord Jesus be with you all."

I felt faint. Isaac chanted, "Chazak Chazak Vanetchazak." All responded with a song:

"Be strong
Be strong
And let us strengthen one another."

They began a circle dance. Isaac grasped my Tzitzit but I broke away and stood outside the crowd. I ran.

Dear Theophilos: The remainder of the service I watched years later, on video.

The people were crowding Isaac on every side. A poor woman who had suffered from severe bleeding for twelve years (she had spent all her money on physicians, but none had cured her) approached Isaac from behind and touched the fringes on Isaac's Tzitzit. Her bleeding stopped at once. Isaac said, "Who touched me?"
The Apostles shrugged and one said, "Who can tell in such a crowd?" Isaac smiled and gently asked everyone to leave the gazebo. He then said, "Let the one who was touched come forward - they share in my power."
The woman, who had wanted to be discreet, entered the gazebo trembling with joy, and explained why she had grasped Isaac's Tzitzit. Isaac said, "My daughter, your faith made you well. Go in Peace!"
The sick sat outside the gazebo, now a doctor's waiting room. They were healed while holding the corners of Isaac's Tallit, the Tzitzit, in their hands.

Isaac then said the prayer for the sick, as the orthodox do during the Torah service to this day:

"May the God who blessed our ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah, bless and heal all who are ill."

Isaac asked the congregation, "Is anyone among you sick? Send for the leaders of the congregation to pray with you and anoint you with oil so you may also be messiahs in the name of the Lord. Prayers offered in faith help save the diseased, the Lord will help raise them form their beds, their sins forgiven. Confess your sins to one another, pray for one another and you will be healed."

Isaac then gave a short sermon:

"When Jacob, who became Israel, was on his deathbed, he was prepared to reveal to his sons the time of the Final Redemption. He knew well the shortcomings of his sons: Reuben's instability; Simon
and Levi's cruelty; Zebulen's desire to be a sailor; Dan's destiny to be a judge, and so on. Judah's blessing Israel couched in the enigmatic prophecy that the scepter would not depart from Judah until the coming of Sealah, who would have the obedience of all people. The trials of Judah were hinted at when Israel spoke of Judah washed in blood, red as wine. Today Sealah teaches, 'You are no longer only Israel and Judah, Gentile and Jew, but one in Sealah. This day all who choose are chosen.

"Israel's vision was blurred by a vision of death and the end. Israel felt responsible for the continuation of the legacy of Abraham and Isaac and the divine presence, the Sechina, departed from him when he questioned the worthiness and integrity of his sons.

"Israel doubted if his sons would keep the faith. They all replied in one voice:

'Shema Yisroal Adonai Elohayhem Adoni Echad'
Hear O Israel
Listen Father
We believe
The Lord is our God
The Lord alone'

"Let us continue this noble tradition as we affirm our faith to our parents and chant the Shema putting in their names."

Isaac waited as all prayed, and then continued:

"Israel is also the nation dedicated to God. Jacob became Israel after his God-wrestling. The Shema is a call to pray.

Isaac turned to the Chassidic Rabbi (wearing the flag of Israel) who proclaimed, "Hear O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one."
The Reverend proclaimed, "Hear O America, The Lord our God, the Lord is one."
Professor Baldwin continued, "Hear all nations, the Lord our God, the Lord is one."
Isaac answered, as Jacob did:

"Let God's glory manifest in this world eternally."

Isaac continued to the camera:

"Israel's flag today is based on the ancient Tallit with its thread of blue. The threads frame the Star of David, the symbol of Israel's nationalism. Flags worn as prayer shawls with holy fringes symbolize the submission of Israel's nationalism to the kingdom of God.

"All nations will submit and be obedient to Sealah's vision. The flag of every nation becomes a prayer shawl as the scepter returns to Sealah.

"The nations will be healed by Sealah's vision. The fringes are the distinctive sign of my healing."

Isaac and the minyan of Apostles led the congregation in a song.

"We are one in the spirit
We are one in the Lord
We are one in the Spirit
We are one in the Lord

And we pray that all unity
Will one day be restored

And they will know we are Sealah
By our love, by our love

Yes they'll know we are Sealah
By our love"

Some sang 'Christian.' Some sang 'Jewish.' One Apostle said 'Muslim.' Another 'Buddhist.' And so on. All ended with: "And they'll know we are Sealah by our Love."

Isaac then chanted the blessing before the prophetic reading that speaks of God's prophets of truth and righteousness.

Isaac chanted the Haftorah verse by verse in Hebrew and English, with traditional cantillation. He read the traditional Haftorah from the back of Ezekiel, the first chapter, and verse twelve of chapter three.

Now I understand the connection between the readings in Ezekiel and Revelation. In the beginning Isaac's innovations, in Kabbalistic terms, broke my vessels. Isaac's unorthodox orthodoxy, or say better, orthodox unorthodoxy, was a shattering experience for an orthodox Rabbi. Isaac's sermon on Ezekiel is on the tape. I start and stop the tape as I write this commentary.

I am going to suggest to Isaac, Theophilos, following the Mishna in Chagiga 11:1 that he delete this section from tapes sent out to Sealahites. Some scripture is better taught face to face. When we next meet face to face we shall study this section of Ezekiel together.

The Haftorah Isaac chanted is recited in Sealah synagogues to this day, as Isaac did on the First Pentecost of the Final Acts.

We of Sealah stand at the end of the Haftorah where Ezekiel describes the Divine Presence departing from the Temple into the New Temple. The presence, in the likeness of a man, is surrounded by fire and light. An electrum bow emanates the colors of the spectrum.

At this point the leader, like Isaac at the first Pentecost of the Final Acts, falls to the ground, lying flat and still. The congregation responds in a shout:

"Blessed is God's Glory
In this place."

Isaac stood and the Apostles grasped his, and each other's Tzitzit as all awaited the service for returning the Torahs to the Ark. Isaac sang out, full throat, from Psalms.

"Praise the name of the Lord
God's name, alone, is exalted."
All answered in Hebrew:

"God's glory is on Earth
As it is in Heaven
All power to God's people
All praise to exalted leadership
Praise to God's Chassidim
Israel draw near
Hallelujah
Praise be the name of the Lord."

That year Pentecost fell on the Sabbath, so the congregation recited Psalm 29, the Psalm for Peace in the Nuclear Age, a prophecy before Final Revelation. The psalm, you remember Theophilos, that introduces Final Testament.

The Torah scrolls Isaac had written by his own hand, as the Law commands, was passed from hand to hand, grasped and raised up by each congregant. They all sang the Psalm. The scrolls were returned to Isaac who led in the ending of the Psalm in Hebrew:

"The Lord gives strength to his people
The Lord blesses his people with Peace."

Isaac then cradled a scroll in each arm, enfolding the Torahs into his body. All sang in Hebrew:

"And when the Ark of the Covenant rested - he said
Return O Lord to the
Ten
Thousand
Thousands
Of Israel
Arise O Lord, unto Thy resting place
Thou and the Ark of Thy strength!"

Isaac pointed to the Apostles as all but they sang:

"Let Thy Apostles be clothed with Righteousness."

Isaac pointed to the crowd as all sang:

"And let Thy Chassidim shout for Joy."

They all turned towards Isaac and sang:

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"For Thy servant David's sake
Do not turn away
The face of Thy anointed;

The Lord has sworn in Truth to David
He will not turn from it;

One of the sons of Thy body
Will I set upon my Throne
If Thy children keep my Covenant
And my testimony
That I shall teach them

Their children shall also sit
Upon Thy Throne forevermore."

Isaac continued:

"I give you good doctrine
Forsake not my teachings."

Isaac then sang to His Torahs, a father singing a lullaby to his children:

"She is more precious than rubies
Or anything you may desire
Length of days is in her right hand,
Riches and honor in her left."

All joined in:

"She is a Tree of Life
To those that grasp
All who hold by
Her teachings
Are happy

Her ways are ways of pleasantness
And all her paths are Peace."

The congregation did not sing the final verse from Lamentations. Isaac recited Kaddish and led the Apostles out of the gazebo part of the garden to the path to the beach.
Mikvaism

I had been watching from the beach and observed the processional winding down the path. Isaac and his followers stopped at the shoreline. Isaac, walking with a staff, was the newest Moses. He would split the sea and lead his children to Jerusalem. I stood on the edge of the crowd, behind the camera crew.

Isaac sang:

The Third Creation: A Song

When God began creating
   When God began
      Begin again
   With wisdom God created
      With the power of What (Ma).

In the beginning of God's creation
   Light and fire
      Earth and water.

Fire and water then one,
   The firmament suspended,
      And so one day Sinai,
Over the Earth, over Israel's head
   The firmament
      Separating
      water and water
   Above and below

      God hovering
         A dove
   Over her young
      Then
         A light
   Zohar Harakeah
      The rainbow light
      Soon to separate

   The day
      Called Two

Heaven and Earth, Sky and Sea
   A Mikvah of Fire - Earth
   A Mikvah of Water - Sea

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The world is born
God's waters broken
An amniotic sea
God names
Earth the child
Good

The Mikvah of Mayim
The Earth's blood
Four flowing waters of Eden
Heaven flowing on Earth

On Earth
As it is in Heaven
Together
A woman
And a man

**A Song of Revelation, A Song of Corruption**

Eden's four flowing rivers.
God prayed: Let them be
Rich-earthen and sun-rayed
Scented with Sinai Roses

But East of Eden
Beast with beast
And man with man
And beast with man
Distilling firewater

The first death by water
The death to come by fire

Eden's waters
Forty days and nights
Forty measures
To purify the light
As Isaiah saw even before
Noah opened the Ark's door

God's prayer for the people:

The mountains dry
The dove again descends
From the sky
My Covenant of Peace
Light and water
Split
The sky
My Covenant:

I hide only a moment
My exile
Ending
In the twinkling of an eye
Wait

Earth and Heaven joined
In my rainbow gate.

Theophilos - I cannot imitate Isaac. The original Psalms are more poetic.

Song By the Sea - Three

Then sang Isaac And the children of Sealah
This song Together we enter the sea
We sing again this victory God is our strength and song
This is our deliverance Emulating God
As our ancestors

Praising God The Lord is Peace
Peace is the Lord's name Baptized into Moses
All passed through the sea Egyptians baptized
Into death The children of Israel
On dry land Of the sea
In the midst And after all this
Still not believing In Me!
From Sinai vistas see
Fired-kilned calves
Burnt gold

Why have you forsaken me?

**A Prayer For Remembrance**

All our ancestors under the cloud
All were *Mikvaized* into God
In the clouds and in the sea
All drank from the Rock, moving Testimony
Yet you preferred idolatry.

**Final Song By the Sea**

This Third Creation
We return to water
The Sacrament of Mother Earth
The Final Covenant, Earth's lifeblood
Drawn from the wellsprings of Salvation
For all who thirst

This Sea
Filled with Israel's tears
Uncountable, as the grains
Of sand we stand upon

Forged by fire, steeled in adversity
Honed by exile, true to God

Israel crucified
Israel resurrected
Israel redeemed

Rebirthed. Born again
In the waters of Sealah
The afterbirth is delivered
Lord we bless Thee
The umbilicus is cut
The child born
The dove again is free

Your baptism of suffering is ended
Your baptism in Joy begins

One Tree - One Garden
One river of light

One body and one spirit
One hope and one calling
One Lord and one faith
One God and one immersing

Amen Sealah.

With this they entered the Pacific holding hands - with their garments on, and immersed in God - Israel's Mikvah.

The Kiss

I stood on the shore observing. Isaac saw me and smiled. He held out his hands and arms, which under his Tallit were wing-like. "Come my friend," Isaac said. "You are called first. My right-hand man." I didn't move.

Isaac moved towards me and stood by me on the shoreline. My eyes filled with tears and Isaac and I cried. "My friend," I whispered, "I must go my own way."

"Go in Peace," Isaac answered. I hugged Isaac and kissed his cheek. The crowd responded with a gasp. Isaac hushed the crowd. He hugged me, kissed my cheek, and said "He leaves me for the moment, with a holy kiss."

Theophilos, for me, Isaac's Sealah had become Sheolh. Not heaven on earth, but Sheolh, a type of hell. I awaited the real Messiah, a Jewish messiah. I returned to Indiana and Lillian.

Indiana

Lillian did not meet me at the airport. She was in bed when I arrived. Lillian's father was leaving. He was in a rage.

"How could you let her do such a thing!" he screamed. "The Nazis conducted such experiments. You abandoned her for a meshuganah. You abandoned her! A goy. A boy who thinks he's God. I saw you on television with your pretentious friend. Bastards!" He stormed out of the apartment.

"Lillian," I asked. "What is your father talking about?" She was mute, ashen-faced and withdrawn. Later she explained. She was sure I would not return. She wanted her freedom. I noticed her painting of herself, a nude, on her easel. She had been painting over her legs, extending a yellow shawl of light over her exposed genitals. Lillian's second painting of a woman and child was off the wall.

"I had a tubal ligation," she said, beginning to whimper. "My father called me a Nazi. He screamed at me. I tried to explain, so many starving children who need homes. He screamed louder that we lost two million children in the Holocaust, and now mine." She began to cry.

"He's the Nazi, the sonofabitch. I will not be a baby factory. I will not be a housewife-whore." Lillian put her face in the pillow and pounded the bed. I took her in my arms to comfort her and she pushed me away.
I left the apartment to get some dinner.

Theophilos, I know that would have been the moment to set in motion plans for leaving Lillian. I wanted a family. Lillian and I were both as sterile as two wooden cuckoo birds. Our relationship was scripted, as to a clock. The same meaningless arguments, the same meaningless fights, and almost hourly we said to one another "Cuckoo."

Rabbi - Feel

Years later I asked a friend of mine, Rabbi Geresh, a physician whom I trained for the Sealah Rabbinate, who was also psychic, about my relationship with Lillian. He had me stand with arms extended and asked me questions. He checked my responses by having me push my arm up against his hand. He asked me to say "I am clear of Lillian."
"Weak," he said.
My wife Manna had just visited me at the synagogue with our son. I didn't want her to see this. I protested to Geresh. "I am free of her."
"The body never lies," he answered.
He asked: "Were you and Lillian karmically related in another lifetime?"
"Yes,"
He answered. "Were you married?"
"Yes."
"Were you in the Holocaust together?"
"Yes."
"As I suspected," the Rabbi said.
He sat down, meditating, entranced. "I see you in Russia. You, a rabbi, Lillian your wife. You are both naked. A German officer approaches. 'This one,' he says, indicating Lillian, 'will make a fine whore. Look at those jugs. Jugs, no, they are fine cantaloupes, ready for plucking.'"
This Rabbi Geresh said in a voice not his own.
"I hear Lillian screaming." The Rabbi stood up and lifted my arms. The scenario tested out as he envisioned it.
"What did Lillian say?" the Rabbi asked.
"I,... I don't, I'm not sure."
"Close your eyes, think, feel."
I stood with arms extended and said, "Aryeh, save me, save me."
"Yes," the Rabbi said. "Yes. And your answer?"
"I stood silent, a statue."
"Yes," the Rabbi said. "Yes. Then as now. Talk to her, Rabbi," Rabbi Geresh said. "Tell her how you feel."
"I,... I can't help you Lillian, don't you see? I can't help you."
"Yes," the Rabbi said. "Say it again."
"Lillian, I can't, help you. I am not responsible. I love you."
"I can't see anymore. Only shots. I hear machine guns sputtering. The sounds are muted, almost toy-like. People are dropping around me. I see Lillian being taken away."
"No!" I screamed. "No!" I fall to my knees. "No!"
I was on the floor of the study of my Philadelphia synagogue crying, "No, no, no!" I couldn't help. "I am not responsible. I'm sorry Lillian. I'm so sorry."
Rabbi Geresh lifted me off the floor. I was embarrassed. Perhaps my secretaries had heard. The Rabbi
held me, crying. I sighed loudly.
    Again I stood with arms outstretched. He asked me to say, "I am clear of Lillian."
    "Yes," he said. "Thank God. The pages of that book are cut."
    He ordered me to say:
"I am divorced from Lillian."
"Yes."
"Our karmic umbilicus is cut."
"Yes." And one more affirmation.
"You have made your choice in this life. I am not responsible. I have suffered enough. You have your
destiny. I have mine. The fabric is unwoven, the garment is cut." I said it all.
"Yes." the Rabbi said, "Yes."

I smiled. Unburdened. My natural skepticism and cynicism about such things quickly returned. I
looked at my student in amazement.

Theophilos, I must again confess I had never been able to understand clearly why I stayed so long with
Lillian. Isaac encouraged, almost insisted, that I leave her. I am still not sure. Rabbi Geresh, now a Sealah
Rabbi, offered me his experiential answer, but I remain unsure. What do you think, my friend?

I returned early after bolting my dinner, concerned about Lillian. She lay on the bed unconscious. In
her hand lay an empty bottle of pain killers prescribed by her gynecological surgeon. I stood Lillian up on the
bed. "Let me die," she said pathetically, pushing me away. "Let me sleep. The pain." I took her in my arms
and sat her up in our car. We were stopped by a police car and arrived at the emergency room with his lights
flashing and siren blaring.

Lillian's stomach was pumped and the attending physician called a psychiatrist for a consultation. I told
him the story of her tubal ligation, my return, and going out to dinner, and finding Lillian unconscious.
"Well," the psychiatrist said glibly, "It's good you didn't order dessert. She might be dead."

Reversals

I had missed over two weeks of teaching. That semester I only taught one course because I supervised
the minyan of Rabbis and teachers in the Judaic Department. I was also responsible for curriculum
development. The Assistant Principle, also a Rabbi, had covered for me. I signed up for teaching Summer
School. The Assistant Principle informed me that my contract might not be renewed. Even in Indiana people
had seen the Final Act, and the Rabbi suggested that I not return. Guilt by association. The vote was close, but
my contract was renewed.

My reversal was done that summer. Two urological surgeons, one working on either side of me,
performed a vaso-vasotomy. With microsurgery they were able to reconstruct my severed vas deferens. I
instructed the surgeons to inform those that asked, that the operation was for infertility. They agreed.

Lillian made an appointment with her surgeon. His offices were near the school. We went together
during our lunch hour.

The doctor had a Pakistani or Indian name. The receptionist, perhaps his wife, wore a sari. It seemed to
be wrapped too tightly around her. Her midriff was exposed and hung over the folds of her skirt. I stared at a
brown mark, a kind of third eye, above and between her eyes. She told Lillian rather coldly that she should
have a seat. I explained that I had to be back by 12:30.

The doctor brought us into his private office. I noticed he watched Lillian's ass as we entered the room.
"I had hoped you would call," he said to Lillian. He sounded like a teenager stood-up on prom night. "I
was called by the psychiatrist, and the police. I am disappointed with you," he said.

The entire conversation must have been filled with double meaning. Lillian stared him down.
"I made a mistake," she said. "I want a reversal."
The doctor was angry. "You told me you never wanted to have children," he said. "I used a technique that has the least likely chance of being reversed. You signed a waiver," he said, sensing Lillian's next comment.

You Nazi!" she shouted.

He waved us out of his office with a motion similar to one we had seen years ago in Denmark.

Lillian went into a deep depression. I joined her when I received the results from the lab of my first sperm count. The surgery had been successful but my sperm count was sill borderline.

Summer School

That summer I set up a survey course in Jewish history. I taught Peace Studies. One other course was taught by another orthodox rabbi, Rabbi Chumash. Torah, Bible, the Five Books of Moses. A number of his students had failed Leviticus. "They didn't learn to love their neighbors as themselves?" I asked. He did not answer.

The Rabbi's texts did not arrive in time. He asked each student to bring in a family Bible. One student, the son of an orthopedic surgeon, brought in a combined Old and New Testament. The Rabbi was beside himself. The student, not wanting to repeat the course during the year again, tried to appease the Rabbi. He promised he would not read the later books. The Rabbi wanted to assure this. He took the Bible and ripped it out of its binding. He then carefully found the page separating the Book of Matthew for the Old Testament, and ripped the Bible in two pieces.

I am sure there is no need to tell you, Theophilos, that the student retrieved the torn pages from the trash. The Rabbi had discovered a new method of pedagogy. He piqued the student's interest to such heights that the student read the Four Gospels, page by page, the Epistles, and even the Book of Revelations. I was struggling with these books myself at the time.

If I had given the Rabbi my New English Bible, the one I had purchased at Hebrew University, and asked him to rip it in half, I too may have found it possible to diligently study the text.

Theophilos, I was a Torah scholar. I had mastered Surus of the Qur'an, in Arabic, with Tafsir.

My aversion to the New Testament? Yes, My friend, I see that you are nodding. I was suffering from the Dracula response. The cross and its message frightened me. I would rather read about the New Testament. I did this as I prepared for my class during the summer. I used Solomon Grayzel's A History of the Jews, as the text for the history class. Orthodox day schools do not usually teach history. They teach Talmudic text. The Law is eternal. History describes the rebellions and follies of mortals. Dr. Grayzel scatters his views of Jesus over a number of chapters. He calls Jesus Joshua, Mary Miriam, and Joseph, a pious carpenter.

Grayzel says that Joshua was condemned to the cross by Pontius Pilate and the Romans. I was relieved. Once in elementary school a bully, one that every Jewish boy meets in school, told his friends that the Jews killed Christ. "Christ killer!" he screamed in my face to start a fight. I lost it. The bully slapped my face with his open palm. I did not turn my other cheek. I grabbed his head and pulled him to the ground. I think his face hit my knee as he fell. Enraged, he stood up again and kicked my knee, splitting the skin open near my shin. I grabbed his hair and again pulled him to the ground near the curb. I bashed his head into the curb. Thank God adults came running and pulled us apart.

The next day I asked my mother about Christ.

"Christ was a prophet," she said. "A great man who was a Jew." I was really confused. "Why did the Jews kill a Jew? Why was the bully angry at me?"

Grayzel started me thinking: Christianity was misnamed. The teachings of Christ were transformed by Paul from Judeo-Christianity into preaching that became the basis of a new Pagan Christianity, Paulism. Jesus
was rescued. Paul's teachings were responsible for Christianity's split from Judaism. Even Paul was treated compassionately by Grayzel. Paul was misunderstood. Paul preached living a godly life. Paul preached believing in Jesus. Pagan Christianity forgets the teaching about living godly lives.

I designed a long unit on Christianity. I read widely about Christianity. I knew I would have to read the sources, as my methodology in teaching required.

Each time I started to read a Gospel, I put it down. I skimmed and returned and still had difficulty finishing Matthew. The same with Mark, Luke and John. You remember, Theophilus, that I knew a few verses of the New Testament from my studies with Rabbi Brauerman on divorce. That was not reading, but proof-texting, and was as enjoyable and as sweet as any forbidden fruit.

Many quote the New Testament. Perhaps few have read it. I sat and forced myself to read the document form cover to cover.

Before I left Laguna, Isaac gave me a copy of the Psalms of Final Testament. He also asked me to read what he called "The Later Books of the Torah." I read Isaac's Psalms, but had to put off the "Later Books." Perhaps Isaac's Psalms sparked me to write my initial reactions to the New Testament in verse. I am sure you will notice, Theophilos, the influence of Isaac on my style and structure.
Four Who Entered the Garden

Four entered Paradise
Four gates to Sealah
 or Sheolh

Heaven
 or Hell

Before the entrance
St. Peter
Before St. Peter
The Pearly Gate
Before The Pearly Gate
The Pearl

And before the Saint, the Gate, or the Pearl,
The irritant.

Before the irritant
The text of
Stone or Sand
Fire or Water

Pearls or
Before swine

The text: The Testament
Four Gospels
Four questions
Four directions
Four sons
Four cups
1) Brought out
2) Rescued
3) Redeemed
4) Taken

Chosen for sacrifice and redemption.
Four ways the garment was ripped
By history's Pharaohs

A Final Exodus
Testament
Act
And Redemption

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Only ten plagues on the Egyptians in exile
   Ours four-powered more
   Wrath, Anger, Gloom, and Trouble
       Four evil angels
       Sent by the Lord

   ______
   Enough already

   The Lamb's the blood's
   The Bread, the bitters

   ______
   Enough already

   The binding
       The cross
       The Final Act

   ______
   Enough already

   Afik o men
   The hidden piece found
   The old order ended
   Those still in Egypt
   Slaughter the Lamb
       Eat of its flesh
   Mark their doors
   With its blood
       To this day
   Until it is finished

   ______
   Enough already

   Let us say Grace
   Drink from Elijah's cup
   Sing Hallel Praise
   Next year in Jerusalem
   Sealah's Tabernacle rebuilt
   All will know the One
       God

   All will know Two
The tablets reconstructed
In their Tabernacle

All will know Three
Patriarchs who teach

All will know Four
Matriarchs
And the New Gospel
They preach

All will know Five
Moses and his Books

All will know Six
The six points
Of the oral Torah

All will know Seven
And rest will come then
on earth as in heaven

All will know the perfection of Eight
Circumcised of body
And heart

All will know Nine
After Sealah's birth

All will know
And do
And hear

Ten principle sayings
The Final Revelation
Fulfilled in Love

And Fear

All will know
And see
The Eleven stars
Of the dream

All will know the Twelfth star
The star's son
Twelve tribes
Under Sealah
With Liberty and Justice
For All
Then all will know
God is merciful

Thirteen, are the Attributes
Of God's mercy

God's Justice
The kid
Scratched by the Assyrian cat
Bitten by the Babylonian dog
Singed by Persian fire
Diluted by the Greeks
Gored by the Roman ox
Slaughtered by God's Holy Warriors
Angels of Death
Feasting at the Wedding Supper
Of the Lamb
Angel of Death. Die

____
Enough already

The Fifth who entered Paradise
Matthew
Envisioned but did not see
Mark the Sixth
The son of a Zoma - Mad!
John the Seventh
cut at the roots
Only
Luke
Ascended in Peace
But even he descended confused

Burned in the text's fire
Coal words that crumble
On white hot paper

Chiseled into ice
Cold stone
Shattered or unchanged

I know a Christian man
An orchard man
Caught up in the Third heaven
Until God whispered in his ear

"Midrash"

Not stone - sand
Not ice - water
Even he sod Eden
With his fertile soil
Not even of him
Will I boast

Still, I am not an anti-Paul
I feel his pain
Four times
Reading at the Four Gates, feeling
Four sharp pains

Four times
I ask the Lord
To ease the pain
To open the Gates

God's answer:

"You know My Grace is all
You need
Power comes to strength in weakness
Scale the walls
They surround Paradise."

My answer:

These walls, higher than Babel
I scale and find
Walls within walls
Gatekeepers on every side
Of the Four Gates

They demand a high admission
A fortune
In spiritual currency

Two words: I believe
And a ticket that reads
One way.
Theophilos, what can I say. Matthew, Mark, John, and even Luke, your friend, I found to be Jew-haters and Jew-baiters.

The Four can't get anything right. They even misspell your name: Theophilus. They turn the Lover of God into the fairy-tale-figure of Faust. They cut off the branch that might have grown straight and even have borne fruit.

My friend, was not Luke's gospel convincing to the faithful? You, my friend, the lover of God, are transformed from a butterfly into a religious caterpillar. Theophilos becomes Theophilus, an archdeacon who suffers disgrace, and turns to the Jews and their Kabbalistic magic. When you enter the synagogue, the legend contends, we don't accept you.

Would a bad Christian make a good Jew?

You then cut your Covenant in human blood with the Devil. Luke's gospel becomes polemic and bad news when he writes to you about not one, but two attempts by Pontius Pilot to free the Jews. (Grayzel are you listening?) Luke even introduces Herod to support him.

Is it any wonder that the Devil and the Jew became enemies of the Church? John calls our Father the Devil, and our churches Synagogues of Satan.

Is it surprising that Theophilos becomes Theophilus? Is it surprising that in their confusion of the Jew with Satan, the war against Satan became, incidentally, a war against the Jews?

My friend Theophilos:


I sent my reactions to the Gospels to Isaac. The following is his response:

"Rabbi, over the entrance of each gate hangs the key.

"Matthew traces the descent of the Christ back to our father Abraham. Matthew, the most comprehensive Gospel is by far the most important. This Gospel is more deliberately written than Mark.

Matthew is presenting Christ as King. A King is not democratically elected. A king is selected by birth.

"Matthew is at home in the world of Torah - quoting chapter and verse. Rather than teaching lawlessness, Matthew's Christ is a lawgiver even greater than Moses our Rabbi."
A key to Matthew is Five Eighteen. The Sermon on the Mount is the holy of holy's of Matthew's Gospel. Jesus is a New Moses, and the New Law is the Law of the Chassid.

"Amen. So long as heaven and earth exist, not a Yould, or a stroke of the Law will vanish until it is fulfilled.' Christ demands fulfillment of the Law. Christ demands a higher consciousness. Christ demands inwardness.

Seven contrasts burn forth, the flames that flicker on the wick of the menorah. Anger is a type of death. Lust is a type of adultery. Every divorce is also a divorce form God. Swearing is false. Strict Justice leads to violence. Your enemy is your neighbor. Piety easily becomes empty pageantry.

"Jesus' prayer is instructive to mumbling Jews and fumbling Gentiles.

"Our Father in Heaven
Hallowed by Thy name
Your Kingdom come
Your Will be done
On Earth as it is in Heaven
Give us each day
The bread of satisfaction
Forgive our debts
As we forgive our debtors
Lead us not into temptation
But deliver us from the evil one."

I know I need not remind you Rabbi Re Shone," Isaac wrote, "That this prayer could have appeared, without change, anywhere in rabbinic literature.

"Over the entrance to Mark's gate, this key. No genealogy. Mark's Christ is a servant without pedigree. Mark presents a Jewish Jesus in a Jewish setting. On Mark's gate is written a verse from Isaiah,

"I will send my messenger ahead of you who will prepare the way.'

"You are that messenger.'


"The family faithfully attends services every year at the Temple during Pesach. The Final Passover in Jerusalem, Mark and Matthew report that Jesus is condemned by the Sanhedrin before being taken to Pontius Pilate. Luke gives a more authentic report by not chronicling that fiction. The Sanhedrin in Luke never condemns Jesus, nor does the High Priest claim Jesus is guilty of blasphemy. In Luke, Jesus was never condemned by any authority. Jesus was lynched. Some versions of Luke quote Jesus as saying: 'Father forgive them, they don't know what they are doing.' Rabbi, I have also written on these themes in the Psalm section of the Final Testament. Read the Ninth Hour. Read Crucifixions.

"The key to John is also over the entrance.

"In the beginning was the misunderstanding. The divine logos. The Word became flesh and went to his own, the Jews, who rejected him.

"John says to the Jews, 'You do not understand.' Actually the Jews did understand. Whatever the meaning of the untranslatable logos, Isaiah reminds us that God's true word does not return fruitless without accomplishing God's purpose.
"This time we shall succeed in the task God has given' (Isaiah 55:11).
"Love - Amen - Sealah"

Theophilos, not a moment passed before I sat down to pen my response to Isaac.

"To Isaac - Shelya - Man of God - Sealah.
"Indeed your keys unlock the four doors. I am not at Peace with what I find within.
"Matthew's gate does open with your key. I wonder if it would not be better to lock that door forevermore and throw away the key. The Talmudic pun that makes Gospel, the so-called evangelism, into 'a wicked scroll,' seems fitting.
"What use is prayer, the Lord's or any Christian's, when the bad news is: Matthew puts all of the Jewish people on the sacrificial altar. We, our children, our children's children, our parents, our grandparents, carry the cross of blame. Matthew rebinds every Jew to the altar. Every Jew an Isaac. Every Jew a Christ to be crucified.
"Mark's key is bent. Mark's way is crooked. Mark teaches that Jesus healed the sick. Jesus exorcised demons. Jesus was forgiving. Who will exorcise the demons of Mark? Even the disciples of Jesus, being Jews, are seen as dark shapes in a mirror, reflected shadows.
"Mark was forgiving.
"For giving the Jews the devil's name. The crooked key of Mark cannot be made straight.
"Still, much of Luke is fiction. If Luke is canonized and enscribed in the Tree of Life, will you also canonize Final Testament and the Final Act?
"John's fruits are bitter to my lips, filled with visible worms and lies.
"I bring my case against John. John's conflict is not with Pharisees or Scribes. John's axe to grind is wielded against the Jews and the Tree of Life.
"Is the Tree of Life human that it can escape his siege of hatred?
"Pontius Pilate is portrayed, contrary to the simple facts, the hinted facts, or the interpreted facts, as washing his hands of the Trial of Jesus. The Bad News according to John: Pilate says that he can find no case against Jesus. Then this evil fiction, 'You Jews have a custom that I release one prisoner at Passover. Would you like me to release the King of the Jews?' Tell me, my friend, where this fanciful 'fact' can be found, outside of this so-called gospel?
"Once again Pilate says he has no case against the Christ. The chief priests shout 'Crucify! Crucify!'
"'Take him and crucify him yourselves,' John reports Pilate saying. 'I find no case against him.'
"The Jews answer, 'We have a Law and by that Law he must die.'
John implies that the Jews would have killed Jesus if it had been within their jurisdiction and power. The Romans put Jesus on the cross. The Jews are responsible.
"In the end, John is the Lie.
"Rabbi - Isaac - Sealah (Joshua?). The Christian City of God is built on a Rock that marks the crossroads of four major theological faults. John and his gospel, and Revelation, be damned."

I added the latest about Lillian and myself and the following, on a separate page, folded according to tradition, in Aramaic and Hebrew.

A book of cutting
A bill of divorcement
Delivered this first day of Tishray
This first week of Awe
This first year
At mourning.
After Jerusalem’s destruction
By the rivers of Babylon
By the rivers of Sealaha
By the rivers of weeping
By the rivers four of Eden
Salted by our tears

I, Laurence - a son of Judah
A son of the Lion
A son of Sealah

Without regret - set aside
Release - set free -
Thee
The Churches of Babylon
Towers of discontent
And division
The self-proclaimed
New True Israel

The ground red
The unseemly things
Too numerous to list
In this Tofes
Or to specify
In this Toref

Torn by her own hand
From the Tree of Life
Permitting everything
To every man

So long as they believe

Let Judah no longer be hindered

Sealah has come
Obedience to the Lion
Protector of the torn

This shall be
From We
To Thee
A letter of release
A document of freedom
Jew and Christian
Estranged
Now divorced

A book of cutting
In accordance with the
Law of Moses
And Israel

Isaac the son
Of Abraham
Witness

Aryeh the son
Of Abraham
Witness

I concluded my letter with 'As a duly ordained Dayan, a Rabbinic judge, I ask you the following Halachic question:
'The Mishna in Yevamot teaches that a man seen hanging on a cross cannot be presumed to be dead. Can a man on a cross order a bill of divorce to be written?'

Dear Theophilos, looking back at these letters I am aware of my rudeness and Isaac's amazing grace. His answer to my letter came, first class:

Rabbi Re Shone
My friend in God
My right hand
Enough of Gates and keys and faults
Is not every Revelation
Written by God's finger
Crumbled by our own people
Into broken stone?
Are not the pieces
And the Second Revelation
Each Kept in Holy Arks?

I teach a Final
Living Gospel
Good News
In every direction
The Four orchards are fenceless
In the New Jerusalem

The World, the Temple, Jerusalem, the Ark
The holy of holy's, on the Rock of Moriah

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The Rock of the binding and unbinding

The mountain of vision - All one

Four fenceless orchards
Between five mountains
The orchards tiered
And the mountains
On four levels
Hung by five threads
Over our heads

The wise smile
At similes
The discerning
Open the door
Called metaphor
Within your Final Testament
The New Jerusalem, orchards blooming
Almonds and capers daily blossoming

New ground broke
With swords
That are now plowshares

Old trees are uprooted
Branches pruned
With hooks that were spears

The rain on the broken earth
A New Covenant on parched soil
The rain of love after the rain of fear

The advent of Sealah
The hearts of parents
And children
Atoned
The atonement
The heart of the Father
At one with the Son
And the Son with the Father

And Father and Daughter
And Mother and Son

Have we not one
Father
And one
Mother
Each of us?
One parent in heaven
In Sealah we witness
The Final Testament
The Final Covenant
Never again to be torn
Asunder
The event
The marriage
The vows
Reaffirmed

Between Judah and Israel
Between Jew and Christian

The Final Act

Even the unseemly
Forgiven
The wayward wife
Estranged from husband and God
A Shechina exiled
Comes home

The branch is re-grafted
To the Tree
Of Life
Dead branches, false teachings, pruned
By the orchard man
And we
Warmed by the fire

The trees of the orchard
Trees of Knowledge
Trees of Good
Trees of Evil
Are now one Tree
The tree of Life
A Tree of Light

God's Holy Cross
Of Stars
A Menorah
Amen.
Sealah
Isaac then answered my halachic question in prose and verse. "A man hanging on a cross may order a divorce to be written for his wife. Even if his body has become weak, his mind is presumed to have remained sound, as we learn in the holy words of the Balei Ha Tosafof in the Tractate Gitten, the First Mishna of the Seventh Chapter and page seventy, side two of the tractate."

Isaac returned my Bill of Divorcement unsigned. His response:

"The bill of divorcement
I pray to witness
Is between
One Lillith also known as Lillian
And one Laurence
Also known as Aryeh

In Sealah
The marriage

You are invited
To help conduct
The wedding."

These were no empty words or metaphors Theophilos. Isaac was engaged to marry a Southern Christian from Tennessee. The wedding invitation was included in the letter. I was listed as an officiate, with a Baptist minister from Princeton. The wedding would take place in Shiloh, Tennessee and Sheloh, Israel, the invitation informed. The Ninth of Av. The year 5744. Tashmad.


Isaac laughed. "Tashmad, my friend. The year that ends division. The year that destroys the split vision. The year that leads to Tashma.

Come and hear: the year that leads to 5745 when we serve God Leshma from love. Then the words again will be fleshed out by Sealah, as we begin to rebuild this world with Joy."

Theophilos, I am recording that conversation now from memory. I must explain. In Jerusalem during the year 5744, the Jews awaited a terrible disaster. The Hebrew letters spell out 5 = T; 7 = Sh; 40 = M; 4 = D. Tashmad. Destruction. Similarly 5745 = Tashma and 5748 = Ta or Tes Mach. The only disaster Jerusalem saw, from the orthodox point of view, was the service on the 9th of Av. The ninth of Av is a national day of disaster. The first temple was destroyed on the 9th of Av. The second temple was destroyed on the ninth of Av. The expulsion from Spain began on 9 Av 1492. World War I broke out on 9 Av 1914. I told Isaac I would not conduct an intermarriage on the 9th of Av, or any day.
On to Sealah and Jerusalem

Lillian complained about my reading the New Testament. She read Isaac's letter and proclaimed Isaac an apostate. A modern day \textit{Shabbati Zvi}.

One apostasy followed another when Lillian declared that she wanted an open relationship again. As I have explained Theophilos, I wanted a family and a new life. Lillian found a woman lover. She brought her home. I awoke to two women in my bed. Touching the fruit, the temptation to taste is great. We made love together. Lillian found a man lover. Her fantasy was to make love with two men. She argued that I was obligated since she had brought home a woman first. This type of equality was too much for me. The man, a parent of one of Lillian's students, was exceptionally attractive. The night he came over for dinner I was aware of the attraction. I excused myself after dinner. Lillian shouted, as I grabbed my jacket and left, "You'd stay if it was with Isaac." I went to a motel. The parent, I believe, spent the night.

In the morning I told Lillian I was going to Jerusalem. I gave notice to the school.
"I want to come," Lillian cried.
"No way."
I told her I wanted a divorce. Lillian's father encouraged the divorce. I promised her I would send a Bill of Divorcement from Jerusalem.
A New Beginning

I was in Jerusalem for Sukkot, the Feast of Tabernacles. I began the holiday of rejoicing in the Torah (at Simchat Torah) at Rabbi Brauerman's new yeshiva. I danced with Chassidim in Mea Sharim. I danced with the new inhabitants of the Old City. I met Rabbi Sechelman at the Kotel and we danced. It was good to be home.

We began again the Book of Genesis. The Midrash teaches that all beginnings are difficult. This one felt easy.

After the holiday I went to the Chief Rabbinate's Offices. They informed me I would have to go to Tel Aviv for a Get, a Bill of Divorce.

I used my time in Jerusalem to research Final Testament. I took the name from Isaac in the same way I copied his style in my writing.

Jerusalem

Thank God I still had Isaac's map of Jerusalem. I followed the route from the train station to Mt. Zion. I reread Isaac's letter on Jerusalem found in Final Testament, and his Psalms on the Merging of the Two Jerusalems, One Old and One New, that he gave me in Laguna.

One Old and one New. Gentle reader Theophilos, I wondered about my friend.


Reading Isaac's teachings in his Psalms, I found some answers. Isaac's teachings seemed old and new at the same time. Isaac's teachings were also questioning. His Psalms were not all Songs of Praise. Isaac's "sermon" on "Adam Kadmon" was an attempt to again see God face to face. Isaac sent me to Israel with a gift, the Collected Writings of William Blake. The following question was underlined in Isaac's edition: Was Jesus chaste? As I read the poem, I was reminded of Blake's question.

I would do Blake's Everlasting Gospel one better, and write a Final Testament.

Yes William Blake - tis no mistake
This Jesus will not do
For Englishman or Jew!

Isaac's poem on Blake, "Footnote" (in Book 2: The Psalms of Final Testament), a classic, reminded me that my friend was no Fundamentalist. The Messiah with a sense of humor.

I realized, Theophilos, that Isaac's teachings went beyond not being Fundamentalistic. They were, fundamentally, New.

Isaac's masterpiece, "The Divine and Earthly Drama - A Second Time From the Heavens," forced me to rethink the Final Act.

I stood in Isaac's favorite spot overlooking the Valley of Jehoshaphat. To my left, again in sparkling clarity, Moriah. With Isaac's drama in hand, I meditated on Moriah in the distance. Satori. The first light entered my eyes and the vision reflected was that of a seer.

Isaac has his Biblical namesake and Ishmael on the altar. In the end Muslim and Jew dance Sealah's dance, chanting God's ineffable name.

What I also saw, my friend, was that I too was bound with Isaac, to Moriah.

Isaac's story and my story are one.

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My father, an Abraham (actually, as his name is in its completeness, an Abraham Isaac), bound me and was himself bound to the altar.

Our drama played out when I was sixteen, about to enter university. The test was not necessary, say better, premature, because I was not yet at the age when I was required to sign up for the draft. Vietnam might well have been over before my student deferment ran out.

Still, we each acted out our part. My father knew I was against the war. I had proclaimed for all to hear that the acid test for (golden) democracy was whether or not society tolerated dissent in the form of conscientious objection. America's failure of the test, I am sure you remember Theophilos, is attested to by her throwing those with conscience into prison. America's democracy was, for that moment, fool's gold.

My father asked, from his throne chair, "Will you serve your country after college?"

"No, I..." Before I could lecture, he was out of his chair. My sisters and mother witnessed from the hall doorway.

"Coward!" he said. I moved away from him and the fireplace, towards the door. He cornered me before I could leave, raising his arm over my head. I crouched in fear by the doorpost and protected my head with my arms.

"I am not," I whimpered.
"I'll prove it," he said, waving a menacing fist over my head.
"No..., I..., am not a coward. The cowards are the ones who go, who don't have the courage to defy authority..."

I was cut off by "Coward!" again, and the fist raised above my head struck my arms. Thank God there was no knife this time.

My hands tremble even now as I chronicle the drama, years after the act.

Crouching, a lion, I leapt up towards Abraham. Caught off balance, he went flying toward the fireplace, landing on his back. Thank God my father's head did not hit the mantle. (I almost wrote 'the altar'). I ran from the house and never returned.

All this memory in the twinkling of an eye. I was back in Jerusalem. I walked down the hill, standing as far away from the Wall as possible. The doves were perched, still, on the Wall's protruding stones. No priests were within the walls. Perhaps the doves rejoiced in the Temple's destruction. The swallows sang their song of freedom.

The orthodox prayed for the Temple's reconstruction. "Sanctify our days as of old."

Altars, sin offerings. Rivers of blood. High Priests slitting the throats of the next offering with slaughtering knives.

I moved closer. Again I could not offer prayers to broken stones. I prayed with the birds. My spirit encircled Moriah. I rejoiced from that lofty perspective.

One dove, unblemished, soared with my spirit. It was the twilight hour. In ancient days this dove would have been the sacrifice. The dove alighted and faced the Wall. The dove's neck moved in rhythm with the shokeling Chassidim below. The dove's tail hung over the lip of the stone wall. The Chassidim davening Mincha, the afternoon prayer, never looked up. To them, the dove may as well have been invisible.

As the Chassidim chanted the high point of their service in unison, the dove made his offering - as white as snow. I move back, laughing, feeling a bit guilty and responsible since I had been one with the dove.

The lights went on as I remained with my dark thoughts. The Kotel, the Wailing Wall, considered the holy place of Judaism today, looked to me like just another Disneyland attraction. Israel was becoming a type of Disneyland for adults. Disneyland did I say? Say better, a carnival. A carnival, even that is a compliment.

A carnival, at least, has attractions. Rides. Fun. What was the attraction here? The outer wall? Was this the newest idolatry? To pray, to kiss, to cry to broken stone. To pray for the rebuilding of a temple where animals would again be sacrificed?

Sanctify our days as of old.

The Temple again, broken, in ruins. The wooden Mosque again erected. The Temple again, a Temple Domini.

I sat down on a bench in the dark, ashamed of my cynicism. I wanted to pray but could not approach the Wall. I unfolded Isaac's letter on the binding of Isaac and Ishmael on the hill behind the wall, chronicled in Final Testament. What Isaac hints at in that essay, a denial by father Abraham to sacrifice Isaac or Ishmael, he now proclaimed aloud a second time from the heavens. The deathgod demands the sacrifice of sons. Sealah unbinds them.

With the Wall as a backdrop I continued meditating on Isaac's teachings. Now the Wall appeared as the backdrop scenery of a play. The Wall could have been made of cardboard. The movable scenery of Moriah was monotheism's stage. The show must go on.

In Islam the scene is explicitly central. One becomes a Muslim by submitting to Allah's Will, even when asked to bind, sacrifice or crucify one's own son. All this Isaac inverted. Sealah taught an anti-religion.

Isaac speaks of crucifications in his poems. Yet he reads these fictions as holy scriptures. I was really baffled.

Behind the Wall, where the ancient temple stood, was the Holy of Holy's. I sat and could imagine only profanity after profanity. My heart, like the Temple's Holy of Holy's, was an empty room. My questions on the Gospels was an honest quest for the real Jesus. Now I had to ask the same question about the Torah. Where do we end up in our quest for historical Moses? If we view Moses as God's executive secretary, what are we to make of Moses' minutes?

Genesis' opening reveals God's impatience with creation. In one week, creation is corrupted. Flooded with violence. Noah, the only righteous one, is an alcoholic.

In Exodus we sing, as the Egyptians drown in the sea. God is a warrior.

Leviticus is an artichoke. The center is nourishing, but is it worth all the work?

Numbers is the Book of the March and the Roll Call. The book of murmuring. I, an Israelite in a wilderness, loathed the manna from heaven. Another malcontent.

Deuteronomy instructs final preparation for entering the Promised Land. The unadorned text in Chapter Twenty, commands a war of extermination against the native inhabitants.

I asked myself, Theophilos, if Isaac's answers on the Gospels make the Five Books of Moses also Good News. Yes. The orchard man trims off the dead wood of the Tree of Life.

Continuing my meditation, I considered Isaac's request that I chronicle Final Testament. I feared for my friend and his apostles. Isaac, like Jesus before him, was a dangerous man. Jesus died on the cross. Without that event there is no Resurrection and no Christianity.

I imagine, Theophilos, that many consider the Final Act incomplete. I feared for my friend. First being an apostle would be dangerous, but Isaac wanted me to be his right hand. This is exactly what I ran from. For if the right hand offended it also would be cut off. The fear became very real when Isaac came to Jerusalem for the Nine days before Tisha B Av, for his wedding.
The Wedding

Isaac and his bride arrived at the airport on the eve of the new month of Av, of the Hebrew year Tashmad. The year of destruction.

Isaac looked well. He was, in fact, exuberant. When Av enters, the Talmud in Taanit, page twenty six, side B, teaches: "Gladness must be diminished." I wondered at Isaac's joy.

I had my own plans. I would convince Isaac to postpone the wedding to the 15th of Av.

Isaac introduced me to his bride. I smiled at her name, Christina. She smiled back, and sat quietly as Isaac and I talked. As we made our ascent in the taxi to Jerusalem, I said again I would not arrange a marriage on the 9th of Av. I appealed to the Rabbi in Isaac to postpone the wedding a week.

"Rabbi Shimon ben Gamaliel said that 'Israel had no festive day like the 15th of Av,'" I said.

"And so it will be," Isaac answered, "on the 15th, the final day of reciting the Seven Blessings. We will go to Sealah in Israel and dance into Jerusalem, announcing the Sealah age, the marriage of Israel and Judah.

I protested, "On the day the children of Israel were prohibited to enter the Holy Land, you will be married?" This was a continuation of the old disputation.

"This time," Isaac said, "the 9th of Av marks the day we enter the Promised Land."

"Do you remember Zechariah's prophecy on Tishna b Av?" Isaac asked.

"No, not really," I confessed.

Isaac handed me a Taanach from his backpack. "Zechariah, Chapter Eight," he said, "Verse Nineteen."

I read the beginning of the chapter to myself. Jerusalem called the City of Faithfulness, the courtyards filled with the laughter of children, affliction turned to joy.

"Thus says the Lord of Hosts... the four fasts (Tishna b Av included) shall become occasions for joy and gladness - happy festivals for the House of Judah, but you must love honesty and integrity."

I read this as we entered Jerusalem.

The Ninth Day

I am sure you have anticipated, Theophilos that Isaac thought long and hard on the question of being married on the Ninth Day of Av.

So I must get on to the wedding. I chronicle the wedding out of order. I have not described my winter in the heights of the mountains and my calling as I sat on the Arête of the heights, overlooking the road to Damascus.

The rabbis teach that there is no "before" or "after" on Torah. Still, on the whole, the Testaments move on chronologically. This will be my way also, in this Torah, Theophilos.

We sat in my dark spot as far as possible from the Wall. Isaac wanted to sit with Christina. The black-frocked rabbis of our time had the space in front of the wall partitioned, one side for men, the other for women.

We sat with hardboiled eggs and bread. Isaac lit a paper plate and dipped the egg in the ash. He took the ash and drew a Shin on Christina's forehead.

Isaac sat and taught: "The day of Marriage is a day of Atonement. A day of awe commingled with joy. On that day sins are atoned, sins are forgiven."

I interrupted, reading from a Hebrew text I had prepared (Taanit 4:8.)

"Rabban Simon ben Gamaliel said: 'There were no happier days for Israel than the fifteenth of Av and the Day of Atonement. On those days the daughters of Jerusalem used to go out in white garments. These were all borrowed so that none would be ashamed who did not own them. The daughters of Jerusalem went out to

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dance in the orchards. What did they say? 'Young man, lift up your eyes and see what maiden to choose for yourself. Don't set your eye on beauty but on family, for grace is deceitful and beauty is vain, a woman that fears the Lord shall be praised.' Also, it is written: 'Give her of the fruit of her hands and let her works praise her in the gates.' (Proverbs 31:30-31). It is also written: 'Go forth, you daughters of Zion, and behold King Solomon with the crown wherewith his mother has crowned him in that day of his engagements and in the day of the gladness of his heart!' (Song of Songs 3:11). 'In the day of his engagements,' this is the giving of the Torah. 'And in the day of the gladness of his heart,' this is the building of the Temple. May it be built speedily, and in our days! Amen."

I summarized the Talmud's comments. The fifteenth day of Av is the happiest of days for many reasons.

1) The tribes were given permission to intermarry on the 15th of Av, allowing for the formation of one Israel.
2) The last generation of the wilderness, who contented with God, ceased to die on Av 15.
3) The honorable Hosea, son of Elah, removed the roadblocks and guards from the roads that divide North and South, allowing unity and pilgrimage to Jerusalem.

"The precedent is clear," I said, as I pleaded my case. "The 15th is the day for the wedding." Isaac grinned and opened his arms to embrace me.
"You are a son of Gamaliel, my friend," he said.
I won and lost. I would arrange the wedding for the 15th.
"One question," I said to Isaac, "Is Christina Jewish?"
Christina smiled around her egg. I looked at the ash on her head and laughed.
Isaac answered. "The conversion to Sealah will be part of the ceremony."

Theophilos, this became a source of future dispute. Christina, a Sealahite, would want to re-enter Sealah the way Rosenzweig was to enter Christianity, as a Jew.

"You are neither Christian nor Jew, Muslim nor Hindu," would be interpreted to mean "you who are Christian following that path, you who are Jews, Sealah is on the mountain's top. Sealah is the Arete. Follow your paths to that place." Christina's path to Sealah became Judaism, to heal her Christianity. Rosenzweig remained a Jew, but envisioned the star of Sealah. Christina chose to be a Jewish, not a Christian, Sealahite.

Beyond the Star
A cross of Stars
Beyond the cross or star
The Menorah
God's eternal symbol
Illuminating every tabernacle of Peace.
Arrest - No Trial

Thank God the wedding was not on the 9th. The pious would have rioted. Blood may have been spilled if Isaac had followed through on his initial plan. As it was, we were arrested and jailed.

In the morning Christina said she wanted to approach the Wall. She would have to go to the women's section. We agreed to meet after services.

Isaac and I approached the Wall. "This day is one in which we rejoice in trembling." We tremble as we remember our suffering in history. We rejoice as we anticipate our future peace. The key verse of Tisha b'Av is at the end of Lamentations, Theo. We will discuss it after the service.

Mourning Service

Isaac then fell to his knees, tore his garments and cried out so loudly it seemed that not only had his garment been ripped, but his very heart and soul. Everyone looked in Isaac's direction. Tears streamed down his face as he sat in a hunched fetal position holding his legs. Isaac continued to cry long wails, weeping, with broken sobs.

The crowd began to move towards and around Isaac, iron hearts drawn to the wails of Isaac's weeping. Others began to cry. Chassidim, soldiers, even the women on the other side of the barrier moved to its edge to hear Isaac, and to cry with him.

Isaac led the minyan that formed around him. He wept again when he recited slowly and with intense feelings the section on the binding of Isaac in the preliminary service.

I wondered if Isaac would recite the order of the animal sacrifices. He did. Evidently to the orthodox, Isaac would be orthodox.

Isaac read the Torah from the Book of Deuteronomy and the prophetic readings from Jeremiah. I shuddered to think what would happen if he added readings from what he called, "The Later Books of the Torah." He did not.

Instead Isaac gave a sermon, and many at the Wall pushed their way towards the minyan to hear Isaac speak:

I am the son of the suffering of Tisha b'Av
I was with Eve and Adam
To comfort them
On the death of their son

I was with Noah
Submerged in that great Mikvaism
The waters salty with Noah's tears

I was with Isaac on Moriah
An offering of Love
No sacrifice to fear
I was with God when
The word of the Lord came to the
Son of Ezekiel, son of Man
And Woman:
"You sinned grievously
On this land
I sent famine exile to purify
I sent water to purify
I sent fire to purify

Yet only the Noahs
And the Daniels
And the Jobs
Who were righteous in their generation
Only themselves
Could they save

And one who could not save
Even himself

Therefore says the Lord God
The vineyard of Jerusalem
I cut back
The Grapes of Wrath, blood red
Fallen from the vine

The vine of Jerusalem that bore no fruit
God gave to the fire for fuel
Sanctification
On blood red wine

The word of the Lord came to me
Son of Tisha b Av, son of Man
Prophecy to Jerusalem so she may know her abominations
Confront Jerusalem with her detestable practices
For when I, God, turned from you, leaving you as
An abandoned child
Swaddled in clothes
As you lay there in your blood
After travails of suffering and love
I said "Live"
I cut the umbilicus
A covenant, afterbirth
Of water
The water of Shiloh

The water of Sealah
Indeed, I washed away the blood
From my firstborn, my son
And anointed Sealah with oil
Again
The word of the Lord came to me
Son of Jeremiah, son of Lamentation

Oh how
The city envisioned in Peace
Weeps bitterly - her tabernacle
and the covenant within, in pieces

Oh how
The city that could not answer
God's question to Adam

Where are you?
Naked, ashamed, the Garden
A walled city
Fencing the Tree of Life
From the orchard man
Who
Now asks

Oh how
And asks of God
Where are you?

Behold, the man
This son of Lamentations
Tis Sealah man
Has carried the scepter of affliction
As Isaac carried the wood
To his Offering

My path made crooked
My altar
Walled with hewn stone

(Isaac touched the Wall)

The Lion of Judah
Tearing at its own flesh
A laughing stock to all my people
To all people
This my song, all day long:

Misery wormwood and gall
Desolation and destruction

In my name they call
Atonement for the Fall
Altars of hewn stones
Strewn with Israel's bones

Judah
Sons and daughters
Of God
Has heard all insults
As villains of the plot
Slapped and smitten
Again and again
Defamed and murdered
Again and again

I and my people
Are one

We sat in submission
And kept silent
The sadists seeing even
This as insult

We lowered our heads
But hoped

We offered the other cheek
To those who struck us

Believing God would forgive
Reborn each morning
Great is God's
Faithfulness
But greater is our
Faithfulness

Another vision of Isaac son of Abraham

I was with Abraham
Forged in the fires of Ur

I was with Isaac on the altar
Under the sword

I was with Jacob, struggling
When Israel became a word

I was with Joseph
Raised from the pit of despair
I was at Sinai with Moses
Weeping for the Promised Land
I was in Jerusalem with Jeremiah
Imprisoned in wormwood walls

I was in Jerusalem with Yochannan
The son of Merit, Yavnah Man

I was in Spain with the Marranos
Crossed with stars

My flesh was torn
By tongues of Inquisitors and fire
My heart was torn
As Jew fought Jew
In the great war
The Tishba Av War

A war that ended
Worlds

My flesh ascended, ash
From the Holocaustum altar
That ash
Again flesh

We survived the cross
Neither were we totally consumed
In the Holocaust

Your star
Over the Eagle of Israel
In exile, America
The United States
Your menorah
Shall be over all nations
States in
The United States of Israel

All the world then
Israel
Israel a Jerusalem

Jerusalem
The holy of holies
The holy of holies, now
Sealah
God's living
Tabernacle of Peace

The crowd began to murmur, "Who are you?" A black-jacketed American Yeshiva student shouted, "Who are you!"

I am Isaac
Son of Abraham
Called to deliver this Torah
Of Sealah's living waters

The Israeli Chassidim moved towards the crowd. They asked Americans to translate since Isaac spoke in English.

I see thousands crucified
On these roads to Jerusalem
Rabbis carrying Roman crosses
Crosses of exile
Crosses of baptism
Crosses of martyrdom
Crosses of crusaders

The Final Cross
On the Gethsemane
The oil press
Of Germany
Anointed with fire and blood
By the anti-messiach
Herr Heil
Whose soothsayers said:

"Christ is born again
Among the Jews
Let us murder
Every first born
Jewish child

Knowing not the year
Crucify them all
Sons and daughters
Of the crucifiers
Of the first Christ

A number of rabbis moved away from the crowd. They decided to call the police. Soldiers guarding the Wall must also have been alerted. This would not be the Wall's first riot. Chassidim on their way to the Wall were also attracted. They filled their deep black pockets with
pebbles that they threw at Sabbath desecrators, shouting "Shabbos, Shabbos." Sabbath, Sabbath. This time a number of elders came armed with large rocks.

The police and solders arrived as Isaac said:

I am the son of the suffering
Of Tisha B'Av
I am the Eternal Survivor
I am the Eternal Jew
My wandering
My sufferings

Now are ended

We, alone
Weathered Spengler's season
We alone, the living fossils

Survive

Where are the Nations that hated
Us? Their glory
Past
Dead fossils

Yet the people of Israel Live
I am the son of Abraham
Who saw
I am the son of Israel
Who saw
I am the son of Moses
Who saw
I am the son of Isaiah
Who saw:

Dark Jews in Jonah ships
Spit up upon many shores
To the farthest harbor

Starving there, the torch lady
At her feet, our people
Her message, our message
A New Israel

Isaac continued:
I am the son of the prophets
Son of seers
Son of Herzl
Whose body was a body of Europe
His soul the soul
Of the Promised Land
Who said
On his deathbed

It is time for this Moses to die
The land of the Seven Nations
Is inhabited by worshipers
Of the Idol called Power
These sons of Pilate
Will be the Final Test
Herzl the seer, saw and said
I see a New Jerusalem -
Golden on the Temple Mount
The Lord's Temple
The walls for singing
not wailing
I see a New a Joshua
Tumbling the Wall
A second Joshua
(or say - a third)

Bringing Peace
Saving, with God
Herzl said:...

Isaac was interrupted.
The Chassidim and orthodox were ready to storm Isaac. The Israeli police and soldiers made it clear they wanted Isaac to continue.

Herzl said:
"When you return to our Land
Bring my bones to Zion
To our Land of Promise
Where Joseph's bones are buried"

Isaac continued after the mob was quieted:

The Word of the Lord came to David Gruen:

"I give you a new name
Ben Gurian
You are the Lion cub of Judah

The Lion of Judah will come
And be known as a son of
Ben Gurion -

Prepare yourself for war - but
Beware the son of Korach
All beginnings are difficult

And so this Father of a land
And Judah
Resurrected bodies
As many as stood
On Sinai
From the wilderness of exile
To the land
Of Promise
Where I
Isaac, son of Abraham, son of
Israel, son of Joseph, son of slavery,
Son of Moses, son of Hillel,
Son of Gamaliel, son of Joshua
Son of Man

"Son of a bitch, bastard!" one of the black-hatted Yeshiva students shouted.
"Silence him, silence him!" the crowd shouted. The soldiers and police surrounded Isaac.
Isaac reached into his Tallit bag and removed the flag of Israel. The flag, a Tallit, was fringed on all four corners.

I am the Lion of Judah
the son of the star
the son of the scepter

I am Sealah
I am Joshua
Come to lead you to the Final
Tranquility and peace
Our Promised Land

Isaac deflected the first rock with his Tallit flag.
"Tishabav Tishabav!" they shouted, pelting Isaac with pebbles. Isaac held the flag Tallit over his head and moved towards a man holding his petition. It was Sechelman. The police and soldiers encircled Isaac and me. Sechelman shook his head at Isaac. The crowd followed us as we were led away. A large rock flew towards Isaac's head. "Tishabav Tishabav," the fanatics yelled. Isaac's hand moved swifter than the rock and he plucked it, Kung-fu style, from the air. The soldiers smiled. The police smiled. I did not want to go with the police. We had committed no crime. Isaac smiled as timidly and docilely as a tame dove. We moved away from the crowd with the police.

In jail we were told we were in protective custody. At nightfall we would be released. The police apologized. They told Isaac they enjoyed his modern day prophecy. They apologized again for the reaction of the orthodox, explaining they were shadow figures from the ghetto, shades. They used the term Shadem.

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The conversation ended when Isaac said, "We too are observant orthodox Jews."
In our cell Isaac, still very much the Rabbi, answered the question he had posed earlier, and promised to
answer after services. This dove could not be caged. He was free and the bars which made me feel confined
like an animal, Isaac did not seem to notice.

"The essence of Tisha b'Av?" Isaac asked again.
I shrugged.
"One verse," the Master answered. He turned to the end of Lamentations.

"Turn us to Thee O Lord
And we shall be turned
Renew our days as of old."

I thought of how we sang this one line in our synagogue in America as we returned the Torah to the Ark.

Renew
Renew our days
Renew our days
As of old

"Isaac," I said. "Isn't this exactly what is wrong with Judaism today? Our vision of the future is based
on an imperfect past."
"In the days of old," I continued, "we offered animal sacrifices. Are we to return to the ancient
priesthood? The orthodox at the Wall believe so. This prayer is unutterable. I noticed in Laguna you omitted it
from your Torah service."
"Yes," Isaac said. "Omitted, past tense. Since then I have found a Midrash in Eicha Rabbati, that
explains the verse 'sanctify our days as of old.'
"The Midrash on Lamentations gives one rabbinic view that this verse from Lamentations is a prayer for
the reinstitution of animal sacrifices.
"Another view is offered which is far more illuminating. The beginning of the verse speaks of a turning
and returning to God, as two lovers who quarrel and turn their backs on one another, are reconciled. This return
is a renewing of our days as of old, like it was with Adam and Eve. A return to the Garden."
I laughed. Isaac always showed me light where I saw shadow.
I would now also sing this verse as the Torah was returned to the Ark.
The Fifteenth of Aviv

Christina met us at the jail. We broke the fast with fresh falafel in Mea Sharim. I was afraid we would be recognized. Actually, we were invisible. The orthodox averted their eyes from women and strangers.

The falafel were Manna Yerusalemi, Jerusalem portions, not the falafel that are half a pocket bread that smile when you squeeze them. Manna Yerusalemi, the bread is a large circle of bread laid flat, and folded up and around the falafel balls, chopped cucumbers and chopped tomatoes. One portion was filling. After the fast I ate two. Isaac and Christina split a portion. Isaac made no comment about my overeating. My stomach strained against my belt.

Isaac and Christina went to their hotel. They would walk the land for five days and meet me in Jerusalem the day before the wedding. I would see them the next morning for breakfast and then they would be on their way.

Sealah, Israel

The minister from Princeton arrived that evening. His plane had been held up in London because of fog. A Tisha ba Aviv wedding was not yet meant to be.

We discussed the wedding at Sealah with the minister during breakfast the next morning. All agreed that the wedding of unification would be in the Israel of America, the South, in Sealah, Tennessee. The Princeton minister was not disappointed. In fact he was relieved. He toured Israel with Isaac and Christina.

The Wedding

Standing on Sealah, I understood why this place had been sanctified by the first Joshua. The mountains were round about Sealah the way they surrounded Jerusalem.

The tribes had been unified in Sealah. This area of Samaria was the landed legacy of Ephraim and Mannasheh, the children of Joseph. This land of Joseph the sages teach, "is the most blessed in the world."

The dew still lives on the ground of Sealah. In Sealah stood the Tabernacle, the sanctuary before it stood in the temple in Jerusalem.

Standing on Sealah, watching the sun begin rising over a cloudless horizon, I asked Isaac about the ruins of Sealah. The women were about to ascend to the top of the mountain. The Rabbi of Sealah also made the ascent, leaving his Yeshiva to witness the wedding.

Isaac recited a Psalm, a maskil of Asaph, an insight into exile and ingathering, Psalm Seventy-eight. He added Midrash.

Moses' song: sung again
From Sinai to Sealah
From Promise to Promise
I teach a theme
Listen to my parable
On riddles since ancient times
Still go unheeded
Hidden from my children
The testimony of Jacob

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The Torah in Israel

The teachings, as at Sinai
The covenant broken
At our feet

_Maida Bnai Yisrael_

The broken tablets
Broken
By the children of Israel
And Judah

Heaped - piles of scorn
The broken pieces
Of the hardened heart -

In the desert
The food was wholesome
"But where," they complained,
"Is the meat of the meal?"
"Where the dessert?"

(Isaac grinned - then laughed)

Then they spoke against God saying:

"Can God set our table
In this wilderness?
We want
White tablecloths
And napkins!"
(In exile they would have them)

The gracious host, offended,
Overturned the table.
That altars pieces
Also part of this ruin

Still I led you into Sealah
Granting _Menahem_ before _Av_

But the tribes carved idols
On these high places
Hewing them from stone

They would not dwell in my tent
Deserting me again
When Israel would not dwell in Sealah
I ordained
Sealah to dwell in Israel
The presence dwelling as
In Adam the first

God's Oz, __._
God's strength in captivity
Given to the sword

No strength, no peace, no song

Now the wedding
Now the strength
Now the song
Now is heard
In the cities of Judah
In the Outer Jerusalem

The song of Sealah
The song in Sealah

The sanctuary is built
Heaven our canopy
The heavens are again God's
The Earth, our tabernacle
Is again ours
On Earth as in Heaven

Judah is chosen
Zion is Loved
David again chosen
The Shepherd of Jacob
The inheritance of Israel

My children are suckling ewes
Israel, my very own
God - Judah - and Israel are one

Sealah is home
To tend with blameless heart
To heal with skilled hands
Amen, Sealah

The bride ascended the mountain with her entourage, the sun also ascending in the sky. Isaac handed
me the script of the wedding service and opened his arms to his bride. I read:

    We welcome all who come
    In the name of God
    We welcome you

    Sechinah - Christina
    Now called Judith
    To wed Isaac - now called Sealah

We spread out a Tallit with rainbow stripes. The Rabbi of Sealah held one end. The minister of Princeton the other. An elderly Chassidic couple held the other ends as Sealah and Judith stood under the canopy - a Sukkah of peace.

    (Hebrew)

I read from my script:

    Singularly, the groom and bride
    Enter this canopy
    Spread over them
    Like the heavens

    As one they will leave
    Under the wings
    Of the divine presence

    (Hebrew)

    We acknowledge you
    Hallowed Sechina

I said handing the cup to Judith:

    ( Hebrew)

    Blessed are Thou - O Lord
    Ruler of the world

I said handing the cup to Isaac:

    Who creates the vine
And its fruit - this wine
In the cup of salvation

Up raised - (I raised up)
And overflowing

I handed a braided Challah loaf to both Judith and Sealah. They raised their loaves and said with one voice:

We acknowledge Thee as She
Known as He - Adonai - Our God
Also She - eternally

Bringing forth new bread
From this Earth

I read the blessing of Kiddushin with the same new blessing formula. We shared the Seven Blessings. The Rabbi of Sealah used the old formula.

Isaac smiled. The world would not be transformed in the blink of an eye or as we stood on one foot.

The Rabbi of Sealah proved himself to be a loving tolerant teacher. He would not sign the wedding document, but went beyond Gamaliel in witnessing the event. May he people the earth with offspring, male and female.

We walked down the mountain towards the road to Jerusalem. All the inhabitants of Sealah sang and danced.

Parked at the bottom of the hill was the Volkswagen. It was white and simple - not a bug, but an open vehicle. I do not remember what it was called.

**The Car**

I chronicle beyond time and event again my friend, and want to tell you about renting the car. We will continue for a time, out of chronological order and speak of the wedding in Sealah, Tennessee.

Isaac insisted on an open car. The car Isaac wanted was rented. The representative showed Isaac a Chevy, a Buick, a Volvo. Isaac wanted a Volkswagen - the least expensive vehicle he had. The only car was sitting in Haifa. Isaac asked that the car be driven to Jerusalem. He would pay the extra gas and traveling mileage, and the driver's return trip home. When Isaac paid with his "gold card" the proprietor could do nothing but shrug.

An open top car was necessary to make portable the Ark we carried from Sealah to Jerusalem. Isaac began the journey by singing - and then stopping with the Ark.

We have come to the rest
Sealah is here
Shalom
Shalva
Sealah
Amen

Over and over. Soldiers from Sealah accompanied us on foot and in jeeps. They sang and danced with Isaac. Isaac leaped in the air with dance and song, spinning like a dervish. Christina sat in the front seat next to the minister from Princeton.

Isaac acted more like Pan than the anointed one. He blew his Challel with abandon. I felt joy and fear as we danced by the Arab village. Isaac wanted to enter with the Ark. The soldiers, thank God, would not let him. I envisioned another near riot or mob scene.

In the back seat was the Ark of the Covenant. It was about the size of a standing man. Isaac reverently approached the ark, parted the curtain, opened it, and sang.

Whenever the Tabernacle traveled and came to a rest Moses would proclaim 'Arise O Lord and your enemies will be dispersed. Scattered will be those who despise you presence.' He continued, as is the practice in Sealah congregations to this day, with a proclamation of the true Zionism of Isaiah.

Isaac took out the red Torah, leaving one blue and one white Torah in the Ark. This Torah was thicker than the other two. On its mantle was an inscription in Arabic.

Yew my friend, Theophilos. Isaac had included the Holy Qur'an in this newest edition of the Bible. The logo of Sealah was also embroidered in the velvet mantle, highlighting the crescent of Islam.

Every arm of the Menorah was a crescent. A Menorah of crescents. Stars of light. To me it looked amazingly like a Joshua tree.

Isaac danced into the Arab village near Sealah with his Torah. He sang over and over again:
"Nation shall not lift up sword against nation."
"Neither shall they learn war anymore."

Isaac presented the villagers with a copy of his handwritten Torah and a prayer shawl. The flag of Palestine fringed with Sealah's healing Tzitzit.

Villagers joined as we danced to Jerusalem through Joshua and Joseph's land. I tired and sat in the back seat of the Volkswagen next to the Ark. I noticed that the Ark wobbled when we hit bumps and steadied the Ark with my hand. Isaac made it a point to ask seventy people to take their turn on the other side, insisting they touch the Ark.

Each time a new person sat by the Ark Isaac stopped his dancing and proclaimed:

"In atonement for the fifty thousand plus seventy
Of the House of the Sun."

and then:

"In atonement for Uzzah
Son of Sealah - son of man."

Only upon reaching the outskirts of Jerusalem would Isaac rest and ride with his portable Ark. He got into the car on the driver's side, sat low at first and then lifted himself up and around the Ark of the Covenant and grinned an Isaac grin at me and said:
"The two Lions of Judah," still upholding Tablets of the Law.

In Jerusalem we parked on the outskirts of the courtyard leading to the path to the Temple Mount. We lifted the Ark of the Covenant out of the car and carried it to the Wall. Isaac took Christina by the hand and they danced in the courtyard facing the Wall. They danced just beyond the partition that separated the women
Theophilos, the meaning of the Volkswagen dawned on me much later after the event. Isaac wanted to fulfill the spirit, if not every letter, of prophecy. He did not tether his rented Volkswagen to a vine or look for a colt and a red vine, but he did flash his milk white smile at all who accompanied the bride. One other detail Theophilos. Isaac had a bumper sticker printed. One was on the fender of the Rented car. It is the same sticker you see everywhere these days - Sealahites announcing the Final Age®. The stickers, as you must have guessed, say it all: (Gen. 49:10.)

The Wedding II

Theophilos, I must confess that my attitude towards the South parallels that of many or ignorant people. I expected prejudice and vile oppressive narrow minded bigots who hate Blacks, Catholics, Jews, and anyone not their own kind.

The only thing oppressive I encountered in the South was the humidity. The people of Tennessee were courteous and respectful even to a rabbi with beard and skullcap.

On the third day after the wedding in Israel, Judith and Sealah were wed in Sealah, Tennessee. The Church allowed Sealah to take down all symbols of the Old Covenant. Sealah placed hand-sewn banners with crosses of stars that were menorahs all around the Church.

I hold in my hand a picture of Sealah, myself, and the minister from Princeton. The stained glass of the Church is behind us and we appear to be part of the colorful scene. I must say, Theophilos, that even today as I chronicle the wedding I am not sure of the meaning of the scenes or the symbols in the five windows. In the middle - wearing a red cape, is the Christ, arms extended, palms up. By his side are two branches. Perhaps this is Christ as the Tree and the Fruit. I am not sure., I remain Laurence - a Jewish Sealahite. I attend classes with Christian Sealahites, teaching them the old or they teach me the new as I chronicle the Final Testament.

All that happened at the wedding could fill a book so I shall focus on the act itself, which is the paradigm for Sealah weddings to this day - they are re-enactments.

We, the minister from Princeton, and I, wore white cotton robes. The minister wore his fringeless vestment and I wore my Tallit. Now the ministers all wear fringes on their vestments.

Isaac wore a pocketless white kittle shroud and a Tallit with the Sealah menorah on the back. At the time I saw the cross, not the stars or the Menorah, and shuddered.

I had by that time had my revelation - say better - transformation - and still the cross upset me.

I began the service with a teaching:

"Rabbi Israel the Baal Shem Tov teaches about marriage:
'From every human being there arises a light. When two souls that are destined to be together, find one another, their lights come together and a brighter light goes forth from their united being.'"

Isaac and Christina beamed at me.

I sang:

( Hebrew)

May the one who is glory
May the one who is blessing
May the one who is infinite

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Yet concerned with each creature  
Bless this bride and groom  

To this point the marriage was according to Jewish tradition. Then Christina circled Isaac three times, saying:

"I marry you forever  
I marry in righteousness and justice  
I marry in lovingkindness and mercy  
and faithfulness  
We shall know the Lord."

Isaac then circled Christina seven times, singing:

"Listen, listen, listen  
To my heart's song  

Listen, listen, listen  
To my heart's song  

I will always love you  
I will always be here."

Christina and Isaac thus made one another the center of each other's lives. We proceeded to the rings. This also was fairly traditional. Rings were exchanged - circles of commitment and Isaac said:

"We are kadaish  
We are Holy  
We separate to one another  
To again be Adam  
And Eve  
We are wed  
With these rings  
The circle  
Not the gold  
The symbol  
Of our devotion  
To one another  
And God."

Up to this time Isaac refused to wear gold. He felt gold was vanity - the stuff of golden calves. "Gold is also the stuff of tabernacles." I reminded him. "No," Isaac said. "This time the Ark is acacia wood uncovered of gold. The gold will go to the poor." "Fine," I answered, "but we can still use the rings of the breastplate."

This - Theophilos - became part of the wedding ritual.
Then Isaac read from the script.  
"The Lord commanded the children of Israel to make two gold rings on the breastplate of Judgement and Unity.  On the plate are the stones of the Twelve Tribes.  It was worn over Aaron's heart when he came into the sanctuary, a constant remembrance before God.  The message of the breastplate was the Urim and Thumin, the lighting of perfection, the uniting of the Twelve tribes projecting the divine reflection.  Aaron was bound to the breastplate and its message by the gold rings.

I give you this ring as a sign of our binding to the tabernacle of God - so that we may dwell together in the tent of God's presence."

Christine read from her script.  
"I accept this ring so we may dwell together in the tabernacle of God all the days of our lives."

She read: "Hear O Israel the Lord our God, the Lord is One.  And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with your very being.

And these words which I command you this day shall be on your heart.  Teach them to your children - while talking, while sitting, while walking in the Way, when you lie down and when you rise up.  Bind them for a sign on your hand and totaffot between your eyes.  Write them upon the door posts of your house and on your gates."

The congregation, who also had scripts, responded:
"And New Jerusalem had a Wall great and high, and twelve gates, and at the gates, twelve angels.  On the gates were written the names of the Twelve Tribes of Israel."

I read the Psalm of Ellul.  "I am to my beloved as my beloved is to me."  - A Psalm of David:

"One thing I ask of the Lord
Only that I seek
To live in the House of the Lord
All the days of my life."

The congregation responded:

"For every house is built by someone
But God is the builder of everything."

I read:

O Gates, Lift up your heads!
Up high you everlasting doors
So the King of Glory may enter."

The congregation responded:

"Here I am
I stand at the door and knock
To anyone hearing my voice
Who opens the door
I will come in
And eat with them
And they with me."
I read:

"Therefore anyone
Who hears these words of mine
And puts them into practice
Is wise, their home is built
On the rock."

They responded:

"He has opened the door of Faith to the Gentiles."

I delivered my sermon, as Isaac had asked me.
"The Torah in the Book of Genesis describes the meaning of marriage: (Gen. 1:27)
“So God created each one of us in the Divine image, male and female.
“And God said 'Have children and replenish the world and establish your dominion.'
“This great teaching of the Torah describes the marriage of two individuals in the image of the one God. Bride and groom are called to be one flesh - the woman, the helper of the man, and the man of the woman - and both of God.
“The first marriage is in the Garden of Eden. Marriage, of all the covenants, most represents life in Eden. Our blessing - the blessings of family and friends - each of us here at this moment - is that your marriage be an Eden - in all its beauty, tilled with love and devotion to God.
“The Rabbi of Kotzk, Menachem Mendel, once asked - as it is recorded in Or Ha Gamuz: 'Where is the dwelling of God?' A group of learned rabbis visiting him scoffed and replied, 'The question is absurd! We all know the 'whole world is full of God's glory.'
“Slowly and sharply the Rabbi of Kotzk answered his own question: 'God dwells wherever we let the presence enter.'"
“Love between two people may be considered the highest spiritual value of Sealah.
“One who says 'I love God - but not life' - loves only their own ideas.
“One cannot love God until they know how to love the world and other people...Every person contains a spark of God, and only when this spark is ignited and becomes light do we see God.
“To the Bride and Groom:
“Please close your eyes for a moment to feel the special blessing this marriage is to the world. You have enclosed yourselves off into a circle of relationship symbolized by the rings you now wear. You are surrounded by the love of family and the new family created by your wedding. You feel the excitement of love at this moment - as we say together - Amen."

The minister from Princeton read his sermon. His words may be found in "The Wedding Service for Christian Sealahites."
Isaac and Christina then read the joint wedding commitment. Isaac called this part of the ceremony Ketubah. It was written. They read.
Isaac: "I wear the Menorah. I am clothed in God's garment, surrounded by God's light."
Christina: "I wear the Circles of Sealah, my shawl of modesty."
Together they said, as they grasped one another's fringes:

"I hold these fringes in my hand
Accepting the healing of Christ
And of God's Commandments

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66
My heart is circumcised
By the circles of this wedding
Born again to God
And to one another
With Peace and Mercy
Joining together
In the Israel of God."

Isaac said:

"Let me be a seal on your heart and arm
Only love is stronger than death
Turning Sheol to Sealah."

Christina answered:

"Our love is united to the Lord
The Lord cannot be defeated
Neither will our love."

Christina then changed the script, inverting Proverbs 12:4, "A virtuous husband is a crown for his wife."

Isaac laughed and answered, "May I always be that crown to you."

Together they said, from the Talmud:

"A man and a woman who love another as themselves - honoring one another more than themselves, guiding their children in the Righteous Way. The Torah says of them, 'You know that you dwell in Peace.'"

Together they said, from the old Epistles:

"And now I speak the excellent way (the way of Theophilos)
If I speak many languages
But not the language of Love
I speak brassily
Clanging symbols

Though I have the gift of prophecy
Fathoming all mysteries and knowledge
And mountain-moving Faith
But have not Love
I am nothing

Love is patient
Love is kind
Love does not boast
Love is not proud
Love is not rude
Love is not self-seeking

Love like God
Is not easily angered
Love thinks no Evil
Love is charitable
Love bears all
Love believes
Love hopes
Love endures

Love never fails

Prophecy may cease
Tongues will be stilled
Knowledge passes away
For knowledge is inherently incomplete
And prophecy is partial

A child speaks things and understands as a child
While an adult puts away childish things

Isaac and Christina turned to face one another.

The past
Is a poor reflection
In a haze
It is mirrored
In our marriage
We see - now
Face to face
The image Divine
Startling and clear

And these three remain:
Faith
And Hope
And Love
Now love is seen clear
For love is the mirror

I turned to Christina:

Do you see
The divine
Mirrored

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Christina: "I do."
The Princeton minister asked Isaac:

    Do you circumcise your heart
    In the circle of Love
    To mate your soul
    And body
    To this woman
    Judith Christina, daughter of Joseph?

Isaac: "I do."
The minister: "In the name of the Lord God, Jesus Christ...
Me: "In the name of Sealah...
Together: You are married."

And so Judah and Israel were also married in Sealah, Israel and Sealah, Tennessee. Our next destination, The New Jerusalem.
The Reception

The reception was at a resort on the Tennessee River near Sealah. Sealah was by then a fledgling movement and many devotees came by to see the miracle of Sealah's wedding.

Isaac began the reception by singing the "Battle Hymn of the Republic." This really raised the eyebrows of the humorless press. Sealah disciples - chronicling every word of the event - were also constrained. Isaac laughed.

Isaac's mother purchased wine for the reception. She knew Christina's parents did not believe in alcohol - so she only brought one case of wine. The crowd was larger than expected. Misguided disciples rolled large barrels of water towards Isaac. Isaac's mother - not wanting to disappoint her guests, looked towards her son expectantly.

Isaac turned toward the camera, smiled and said, "Mother - I turn wine to water."

Isaac continued, "This time we shall not offer New Wine in Old Skins but Old Wine in New Skins."

With this out of the way, we spent the rest of the reception singing and dancing. It was a good, old-style Chassidic wedding reception.

As the sun set, the reception ended and Isaac and I went for a walk by the river.

Isaac wanted me to return to Princeton. The East Coast headquarters for Sealah. I would co-direct with the minister who performed the wedding. Isaac handed me a ticket to Princeton. I did not take the ticket.

Theophilos, the day before the wedding I was Isaac's shomar, his guardian - an old Jewish tradition. We went to the Shiloh (sic) National Park in the late afternoon and Isaac - animated - spoke of the civil wars between North and South, between Judah and Israel.

Isaac wept as he spoke of the bloodshed of the Battle at Shiloh. He prayed the evening prayer and I joined him. He recited the Mourners' kaddish. I protested that we needed eight more for a minyan - a quorum of Ten the Law requires. The melody Isaac used was as haunting - as the twilight. I felt frustrated. Isaac had his minyan. He roused the dead. I felt the presence of the soldiers. I heard their death cries. Isaac sang:

\[Yitkadal Veyitakadash Shemay Raba\]
Great and Holy is God's name.

I said Amen.

In a world created by God's will
May God establish the kingdom
In our lives
During our days
In the life - in the house - of all Israel
Soon, soon
In a near time
And say"

I said "Amen."

Isaac said:

Blessed
Praised
Glorified
Exalted

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Extolled
Honored
Adored
Lauded
Be the name of the Holy One

I said “Blessed by God.” Then Isaac continued:

Beyond all song and psalm
Praises and consolation which
Are uttered in this world
And say

I said Amen

Let there be abundant Peace from
Heaven with life's goodness
For us and all people - Israel
And let us say
Amen

May God who brings us higher peace
Bring peace to us
And to all people - Israel

And let us say
Amen

I was happy to leave Sealah cemetery.
I did not speak. Isaac said, "We say Kaddish for the Old Age. The Age of Sealah begins. The shame demands unity. We shall bring the Ark from Sealah to New Jerusalem, the capitol of the United States of Israel. I remained silent. Intrigued. I had no idea how Isaac planned to make his Bible dream a reality.

After the wedding, Isaac, Christina, and I drove to the airport. They flew to Princeton, and I to Jerusalem.
Old Jerusalem

I immediately regretted my decision to return to Jerusalem. I was no longer an orthodox rabbi. The Sealah wedding was a wedding to a new reality. The streets of Old Jerusalem appeared dirty. Every piece of litter annoyed me. Soon after arriving, I knew I must leave Old Jerusalem.

The Heights

I volunteered to work on a kibbutz in the mountains of Northern Israel in the Golan Heights. I worked from sunup until noon and wrote in the afternoons and evenings.

Theophilos - the setting was perfect for me to collect my thoughts and write Final Testament. We ate communally in the dining hall. Mt. Herman filled the window of the hall. I made friends with kibbutz volunteers from England, Finland, and Ireland. On Friday evenings I ate with an Israeli family from India. God blessed me with friends and family. Praise the Lord - for all my time was spent working and waiting.

Work was wonderful. The orchards needed pruning after the harvest. I was an orchard man! The work was so demanding it was difficult to hold my fork at lunch. Muscles spasmed involuntarily. When this happened I offered all around me a full Isaac grin.

Final Acts

These Final Acts were chronicled at the kibbutz. When Final Testament became a burden I moved to Final Acts. I also learned (in a vision) that I would write Final Revelations.

Isaac had instructed me to read Paul's letters again. I did so with great difficulty. The Letters as you know, Theophilos, are not easy.

I wanted to meet Saul before he became Paul. Saul was more accessible to my rabbinic mind.

I sought Saul on the mountain near the kibbutz. I found myself.

Volcano

The mountain was surrounded by brown porous volcanic rock. They appeared heavy, but were stage rocks. Anyone could lift the rock. A Hercules.

The volcanic mountain itself, felt scaled down, a Hollywood Mountain at Disneyland.

On the mountain top was a military bunker from the Yom Kippur War. At night the bunker protected me from the elements. I always brought a candle.

My ritual was to run to the top of the mountain every day after work. If I was blocked writing, I would also ascend in the late afternoon. On the Sabbath I would walk to the top - In honor of my Rabbinic training.

With each ascent I carried a rock and started a pile on the mountain top. Being an orchard man - I was also striving to be an Arete man. I became physically and spiritually stronger with each ascent. When I reached the top of the Mt. I always called out: Shema! Yisrael Adonai Clokaynew Adonai Echad.

The more my body became a temple, the more I was filled with the divine presence.

I felt God began to answer my Shema: "Who is like my people?"

“One people on Earth” was God's response.

One winter day it was not God but Saul who answered. "Baruch Shame Kavod Malchuto La Olam Va-Ed."
Blessed is God manifest ruling eternally.
Saul is that you?
The voice laughed: "It is I, Saul, King over Israel.
"Yes it is Sha-oul, lent by the Lord to this world."
"Saul the Benjamite?" I asked.
I then saw him. His head floated with the mist of the mountain. He was much taller than I. His body was a long white robe, the color of the mist. Now I could see him from his shoulders and upward, clearly. He was a handsome man - more handsome than the average Israelite.
His head and beard were dripping with mist and oil.
I looked and saw Rembrandt's Saul. I moved closer and saw that he wore a shroud and a Tallit with one of the fringes cut.
"Are you Saul who became Paul?"
"I am Saul, King of Israel - the Lord's first anointed," he said, fading from sight.
"Saul," I said. "Saul." There was no answer. A bit frightened, I walked down the mountain.

**The Next Day**

The next day after work I changed into my jogging clothes, picked up a stone and began my run. A group of Israeli soldiers were marching to the top of the mountain. Many were winded from the sharp ascent. I waved as I passed them.
On the mountaintop I sang out the *Shema* loudly. I waited for Saul's response. Saul again gave the Yom Kippur response, but in a different voice. The voice was directed away from me. He sat on a rock facing West, staring at the road to Damascus. I walked toward the figure and put my hand on his shoulder.
The soldiers arrived on the top of the mountain and went through some kind of induction service. Saul shook his head and did not speak again until they left.
I sat nearby and studied his face. He was as odd looking as Socrates. He had a bald head covered with a rough-cut cloth skullcap. The prominent nose supported eyebrows that were thick and bushy and grew together. When he wrinkled his brow it looked like a bird in flight. Paul's thick white beard appeared as a cloud. In the midst of the cloud were two light sky-blue eyes - full of the light of the sunset. His was the face of a man who wanted to be an angel.
"Who are you?" I asked, after the soldiers left.
"I am Saul," he answered.
Confused by yesterday's vision, I asked "Anointed one, King of Israel?"
"Israel has only one king, our Father in Heaven. Israel has only one Christ, son of Jesse, son of David, son of Man."
We stood and faced one another. He was my height.
"Are you Saul the Benjaminite?"
"Yes."
"But not a king?"
"No, I am the King's scepter bearer."
"Which king?"
"The King Messiah."
The Letters

"I have been reading your letters," I said.
"Yes."
"And I am writing a New Gospel and New Book of Acts."
"So I have heard from Theophilos," Saul answered, smiling.
"I am trying to understand you from your letters," I said. "The old Acts read like a travelogue, not history, more like a Greek romantic novel."
"You are right my friend," Saul answered.
"Let's talk about your conversion," I said as we both stood overlooking the Road to Damascus.
"Transformation is a better word," said Paul.
"Okay," I said. "Transformation."
"This Rabbinic caterpillar," Paul said, "was transformed into a butterfly."
"Exactly," I agreed. "And you became a bit flighty?"

Paul smiled. "When God appeared to Abraham and said, “It is time to go,” Abraham moved on to the Holy Land, passing his first test. When God said to Abraham, “Go into yourself and experience the future of your people in a vision on Moriah,” Abraham went.

When God bound Isaac to the altar, Abraham saw the future of Israel, bound on the altar of history. Each sacrifice on the altar, the blood of every animal offered for a sin offering, was a reminder of the blood of Isaac. On Yom Kippur the scapegoat atoned for the sins of Israel.

When God bound Isaac to the altar, Abraham saw the second Isaac bound on his cross. By the sacrifice, all sin was atoned, for all who would ascend the cross and experience this ultimate form of prayer.

Our people could not perceive God in the Temple service. Animals were offered daily as sacrifices but the people continued to sin. The sacrifice of the animal became the focus of worship, not the sacrifice of the animal soul of the worshiper. The blood of the animals was then only blood staining the Temple Mount, so God destroyed the Temple. A new perfect sacrifice was required, so God sent his second Isaac, this time to atone for all sins in the final sacrifice."

"God desires not sacrifice, but mercy," I protested.
"You are right Laurence, it was not God who required the sacrifice, it was Man. Does a father wish to see the death of his only beloved son?"

"And if Christ had not died on the cross?" I asked.

Paul sat and thought. "If Christ had not died," he said, "The crucifixion would have been another akeda. Abraham never desired to slay his son on Moriah. God did not desire the death of Christ. Yet Christ was crucified. If Isaac had been slaughtered on Moriah he would have risen after three days. It was God's choice that Isaac live. Christ was crucified on the mountain over against Moriah by Man. And so it is Man who is obligated to see the sublime meaning of the sacrifice. The Lamb of God, the final Passover offering, was the final atonement. The ancient Jewish worship by animal sacrifice was replaced by the sacrifice of the Lamb of God. Those who offered bullocks and doves for sin offering did so, often, with hardened hearts. The act of sacrifice, not atonement with God, became central. And what is sacrifice without inwardness? What is prayer without intention? What meaning can we give an act if it has no inwardness?"

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I interrupted. "Paul - I do not believe you have found an answer to the problem of inwardness. Bread and wine, body and blood, are at the center of much of Christian worship. When the Jews ate the flesh of burnt offerings there was no guarantee they were eating a sacramental meal. When a Christian drinks the wine of the Last Supper there is no guarantee they will experience the blood of atonement.

"Come to think of it," I added, reflecting on my polemics, "perhaps it is better for the Christian if the bread remains bread and the wine remains wine."

"Listen," Paul said, "for my time I offered a spiritual solution to all who would share in the suffering of God's servant. No ritual act can guarantee a connection with the spirit."

"But the spirit and ritual are the basis of everything spiritual," I said.

"I agree," said Paul.

"So why reject the Law?" I asked.

"I do no such thing!"

"Isaiah and the prophets were called to be messengers of god." I attacked, "and you write in Corinthians, it is your first contention that you are called to be a messenger of Jesus Christ."

"Let's take on one issue at a time," Paul said, responding patiently to my attack. "I know in the heat of the argument of the time, I made many ambiguous statements about the Law. But you know from your readings that the basic direction my thought takes is to see the Law as Good. I even argue that doing the Law is good."

"But," I interrupted again, "you opt for the argument that salvation is only through Christ. Doesn't this make the Halachic system worthless for salvation? If you deny that the Torah and its observance is a way to salvation, do you not deny Judaism?"

Paul was silent. I understood his silence as an assent and said, "I will tell you what you find lacking in Judaism, It is not your Christianity." Paul did not answer.

The Next Day


"I hear," Paul answered.

"The Lord our God, the Lord is One," we chanted together.

"So we still believe in the same God?" I asked.

"We do," Paul answered.

"And the Lord and God are One?" I asked.

"You said it," Paul smiled, "In truth," he said, "the Shema is better translated: 'Hear O Israel, God Our Lord, God is One.'"

"Explain," I said.

"God means the transcendent eternal impersonal deity," Paul explained. "The transcendent deity beyond thought and time.

"Elohim, Our Lord, is the God of Creation. In the beginning Elohim created Heaven and Earth. In Genesis we are taught that Adam Kadman, the first human being, was created in Elohim's image. Each person is a microcosm of creation.

"Being created in God's image we are all types of God. We resemble God the way a son resembles a father."
Genesis Three

"That's the story in Genesis One," I said. "In Genesis Three, Eve and Adam's rebellion makes them godlike, like Elohim, knowing Good and Evil. The act of eating of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil makes Eve and Adam like Elohim. Does this mean that what you call the original sin makes Adam and Eve Christ-like?"

"Rabbi," Paul answered, "as you know, Elohim is the name of God. If an error occurs in the Torah - in the sacred scroll - the name Elohim may not be erased. It is cut from the parchment and buried. Sometimes in scripture Elohim does not stand for the Deity. It means a great man, a judge, a leader. In those cases it may be erased. In this passage Elohim is not holy. It means 'you shall be as the great - knowing good and evil.'"

"That is the reading of the Scribes," I protested. "It is clear from the Midrash on Genesis that Elohim here means God. Rabbi Joshua said in Rabbi Levi's name, 'The serpent slandered God the Creator, saying 'Of this tree God did eat and then create the world. God therefore orders you not to eat the fruit so that you do not create other worlds.'"

Saul smiled and disappeared.

Evening Prayers

I thought I might have offended Paul, for he did not answer my Shema in the morning. That day I was unable to complete the end of Final Testament.

The sun descended in the western sky as I ascended the mountain. I chanted.

"Hear O Israel
God our Lord
God is One."

I chanted. A voice whispered with me.

And together we said

"Love God Your Lord with all your heart and with all your soul and with your very being. And these words I command today shall be upon your heart. Teach them to your children. Speak of them in the home, when you journey, when you are lying down and rising up. Bind them as a sign on your hand - let them be enshrined between your eyes. Write them on the doorpost of your house and gates."

"Paul - do you accept the Yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven?"
"I do," he laughed - "but for me it is no yoke."
"And do you accept the Yoke of the Mitzvot?"
"I do," Paul said. "This commandment - to love God as God loves us - this is the commandment that sets us free."
"So you do not deny the Law - justifying all by faith?"

Paul took my red New English Bible and turned to his Letters. "I wrote seven letters," he said. "The Letter to the Romans is by my hand." He slipped an old parchment bookmark into my red Bible. "Read Romans 2 and 3," he said, and was gone.
Final Encounter

My last conversation with Paul was on the Sabbath. We prayed together. We studied together. I spent from morning until evening on the mountain. We focused on Genesis, Hebrews and Revelations. I explained to Paul about Isaac and Sealah. I described the Final Act. Paul wept when I described Isaac's encounter with his father.

"So you are reconciled with my Gospel of the Second Coming and the meaning of those events I chronicle in Final Testament?" I asked Paul.

"Yes!"

"How can you answer so quickly?" I asked.

"What else do you think I have been sitting here meditating on for the last 2,000 years?" was his answer.

"Will you then be a Sealahite as Judaism and Christianity, the Father and Son, are reconciled?" I asked.

Paul did not answer - as you may have anticipated Theophilos. My visions ended and I found myself alone on the mountain asking myself the same question.

Final Act

Theophilos: Final Testament and Final Acts - minus my letters - was complete. Standing on the mountain facing Damascus - I understood what I was doing. I would write seven Final Letters. I would help organize Sealah. I returned to America. There I would experience and write Final Revelation.

The Divorce

I was in Israel for one full year. I traveled three times to Tel Aviv to arrange for the Bill of Divorcement to be sent to Lillian. A messenger from the Rabbinic Court of Chicago was appointed to deliver the Bill of Divorcement to Lillian in Indiana. She was not home.

Lillian knew of my whereabouts and travel plans because of the divorce. I was on my way to Princeton to work with Isaac setting up Sealah synagogues and churches. I would have to arrange for the Rabbinic divorce in America.

At the Airport

It was good to be home. The Israel of my imagination and the Israel of Temple - broken stone - and wars in the Middle East had irreconcilable difference. Between the idea of Israel and the reality of Israel, falls the shadow of Israel. Thank God the land had not been named Zion. Israel was not Zion.

In the middle of these thoughts I saw Lillian waiting for me at the airport.

A New Lillian

Lillian was dressed in the manner of the orthodox women of New York. Her long dress was stylish and modest. She wore layers on top - a long-sleeved shirt to cover her arms to the wrists with a short-sleeved sweater over the shirt. Even layers could not camouflage her full shapely breasts.

Lillian's head covering made it clear that she was wearing the uniform of an orthodox Jewish woman. The stark white cotton surrounded her long curls and crowned her head. Lillian's face was set off by the crown. Large brown doe eyes filled the upper half of her heart-shaped face. Lillian's nose appeared more Semitic when
her hair was down. The brown curls softened the effect. Lillian's thin lips fit perfectly with her pointed chin at the bottom of the heart's design. Her tongue flicked through her lips like an arrow as she waved as I approached.

Springhill

Lillian had returned to the faith of her father, to Orthodoxy. I was evidently not ready to join Sealah. My parents were just beginning to observe the Sabbath and my father, retired, was considering a second career as a cantor. My parents did not like Lillian. At that point in my life, Theophilos, I was still a people pleaser and I was uncomfortable with my dilemma. But either choice, Sealah or Lillian, would upset my parents.

Springhill was a pleasant enough place to live. We found an apartment subsidized by a Yeshiva for returnees to Orthodoxy. The rent subsidy was part of the package the Yeshiva offered me.

The Yeshiva

The Yeshiva also had much to teach me. Organizationally they were superb, with branches in Jerusalem and New York and Canada. The head of the Yeshiva was a visionary and master fund raiser. His vision was to open the orthodox door to Judaism to the minions of unaffiliated college-aged Jews in the United States and Canada. Once recruited the returnees were educated in the ways of Orthodoxy and sent to Jerusalem. In Jerusalem the returnees were offered a community that was insulated from Modernity. Women who were uncomfortable with the fierce competition with men engendered by feminism could retreat into a world where a woman's role was clearly and comfortably defined. The men could discover a lifestyle devoted to Torah rather than materialism. Text, black on white, became the model of their existence. The alphabet of the Jews became their garb, all wore black, and all studied to see the white light of the Living Torah.

The orthodox community of Springhill was isolated from the world. They were a world within a world in a self-imposed ghetto. They did not watch television. They did not read newspapers. They studied God's word.

I was astonished, at first, that I was not recognized. Isaac's activities in Princeton were periodically chronicled in the newspapers. The articles made no mention of a Messiah, but did boldly assert that Sealah was the newest monotheistic religion. I called Isaac and he greeted me warmly and patiently accepted my choice to return to Lillian and Orthodoxy. He told me not to worry about our friendship and assured me I would not be recognized.
My Woven Skullcap

My woven skullcap, blue and white and oversized, stood out like a flag at our faculty meetings. The other rabbis wore hats over black velvet yarmulkes. All of this has significance in the world of orthodox Theophilos.

Students in the Yeshiva, not rabbis, wore woven skullcaps. In Israel a woven skullcap usually meant that one affiliated with Mizrachi, - Modern Orthodox Jews who dressed and thought as moderns and supported the state of Israel. The Springhill rabbis were from the traditions of orthodoxy who wanted a Messianic, not a secular state - with a Messiah, not a Prime Minister for the ruler of Israel. Wearing a blue and white woven skullcap indicated that I had hoisted the flag of Israel over my head.

I did wear, however, as do all ultra-orthodox Jews, fringes hanging over the belt of my pants. The Torah commands of the fringes, "You shall see them." My thread of blue, also commanded, set me apart. A small group of Chassidim wore the thread of blue, but the custom was not universally accepted.

When we see the fringes, the Torah teaches, we are reminded of all the Commandments of the Lord and to do them, and not to be lead astray by eyes and a heart that may tempt as to go a whoring after sin. The eye sees, the heart desires, and the body succumbs. The fringes are outward reminders that command inward conformity to the whole of the Law. This leads to holiness and redemption.

When the rabbis saw my thread of blue they were reminded of the ancient controversy concerning the identity and the source of the dye for the blue fringe. All agreed that the sky blue fringe, (following the teaching of Rabbi Meir) resembled the sea which reflects the heavens and that heaven reflects the Throne of glory. Since all the rabbis who taught at the Yeshiva were scholars they knew that, according to Tosefta, Menachote 9:6; the Talmud Yerushalmi, Shabbat 1:3 and Ravaya on the Talmudic Tractate Blessings 3b: The blue dye was from an animal called in Hebrew Chilazone, a boneless invertebrate with a shell, a snail of the purpura family.

Perhaps, I thought to myself, the rabbinic aversion to the sky blue dye was its unkosher origins. Or, I mused, the color would remind them of the purpura and the purpura, being a snail, would remind them of the speed with which they were willing to accept change.

What my colleagues may not have known was the dearness of the dye of the Chilazone. Pliny says that each snail yielded only a few drops of dye. Thousands of snails were required for even a small vial. Perhaps the thread of blue was worn only by royalty. As the rabbis thought of the Talmudic arguments and customs that spoke against wearing the thread of blue, I thought of Isaac.
Tolerance

The Returnees and Devotees of Springhill choose to live in a world within the world. The Jewish Reformation led largely to assimilation and rejection. Jews could not reconcile Judaism and what they perceived to be the truth of the modern world. They rejected religion to become citizens of modernity.

The challenge of other truths was met by many orthodox with an ostrich response. The challenge of others' truths is rejected by denying a forum for the questions they asked. What God has spoken is not in need of justification. The amazing truth Theophilus, one that I realized sitting with my rabbinic colleagues at our meeting, was that their world within a world was comfortable and workable - for them.

I sat and wondered. Was I here as an anthropologist studying ancient moderns? Could I escape the controversies and potential dangers of Sealah by escaping into orthodoxy? I also wondered about Lillian's retreat. Her father, an orthodox Jew, while displeased with our reunion, was pleased that Lillian had replaced her "on the edge" modern lifestyle with ultra-traditional Judaism. At least she was safe from unkosher food, the sexual revolution and lesbianism.

I looked at my colleagues' fringes and smiled to myself. The fringe of Jewish life. I knew I could not remain long within the community. In my lectures at Yale which the Yeshiva sponsored to attract students, I was expected to teach that Judaism was an anti-monastic tradition. No monks or nuns. I smiled again as I understood that this community itself represented an intriguing Monasticism within the world. The structure of orthodox life and the Sabbath quiet of this retreat gave me time to write the Letters. They were finished in seven weeks. This gave me ten months for Final Revelations.

The Meeting

I came back to the meeting when I was being discussed. "Rabbi," the Rosh Yeshiva asked gently - voicing the complaint of other Talmud instructors - "Could you explain your methodology?"

"Certainly," I said. "We were studying the first chapter of the tractate Buba Kama. The Yeshiva was still on the first side of the second page. I was much father into the chapter, and had assigned my students chapters in Maimonides' Legal Code on Acquisitions and Oaths.

"The students must master the conceptual basis of the text," I argued. "They must see the breadth before the depth of the Halachic issues involved." This satisfied the head Rabbi. The next day a number of teachers attended my class to experience my teaching method.

The next item on the agenda was outreach. Eight or nine other rabbis were teaching classes at various universities to bring students into the Yeshiva. Under the guise of enriching the curriculum of the universities' Hillel foundations, designed to serve Jewish university students - our rabbis taught Talmud and Basic Judaism. A number of students each semester left the university or studied with us during the summer and entered the fold. These students wore woven skullcaps until their official initiation into dark-suited and black velvet skullcap Judaism.

The wives were sent out with their husbands to teach female university students. They studied at an institute for women. Marriages were arranged between our Yeshiva students and women at their institute.
Lillian

Lillian did not want to move. She worked in the Yeshiva office. I taught at Yale which was within driving distance of the Yeshiva.

The Rosh Yeshiva's wife and the wives of the Talmud teachers worked with Lillian in the office. They wore wigs covered by cloth *Tichels* or head wraps. Under the wigs their heads were shaved.

Theophilos, I must stop and try to explain the issue of head coverings. During *Mishnaic* and Talmudic times it was considered immodest and unseemly for a woman to go into public with her hair exposed, as you remember from our discussions in Final Testament.

Hair was considered sexually provocative. Chassidic women shaved their heads and wore a head covering. This custom it seems to me Theophilos, is backward. A woman should be desirable to her husband.

A deep anti-sensualism must have taken hold of Orthodoxy. Heads were shaved. Women were told they could not sing because a woman's voice was likened to her nakedness. A custom arose a few hundred years ago - as a type of protest I imagine - for women to cover their shaved heads with wigs instead of tichels. These women could fulfill the rigors of orthodox custom and still wear hair in public.

This is truly remarkable, don't you think Theophilos? A colleague of mine - not a rabbinic colleague, but a literary colleague - who is well-versed in Judaism told me that on the streets Jews are Puritans, but in the bedroom as sensual as David and the ancient Israelites. This was not my experience with the orthodox.

Extremely observant Jews protested against the legal fiction of a wig not violating the Law since the wig was not the woman's own hair. The ultra-orthodox rejected wigs. God bless them. To this day the ultra-orthodox in Jerusalem shave their heads and wear a tightly bound black scarf over their heads. But they are, even within Orthodoxy, the fringe of the fringe.
Lillian's Fringes

Lillian and I discussed the hair issue. Her long curls coiled around her head were truly sensual - the crown of her beauty. The curls fell like coiled hair fringes over her shoulders. When I looked upon them I thought of only one Commandment - the first - to be fruitful and multiply - or at least to go through the motions. In the Orthodox community none knew of Lillian's hair - only I would be captured by her tresses.

None knew until the first time Lillian went to the Mikvah in Springhill to be baptized and purified after her monthly menstrual flow.

The Mikvah

At the Mikvah the attendant pared Lillian's nails. Lillian's perfect body might not have offended the attendant if Lillian's hair had been cut to the skull like the other orthodox women. The attendant herself was captured by the tresses. She cut the nails too closely, drawing blood from one of Lillian's fingers. Lillian entered the Mikvah and immersed.

"Not kosher," the attendant said, because her hair was not totally immersed. "Immerse again."

This went on for quite a while until even the attendant tired and declared the immersion kosher.

Lillian arrived home in tears - livid. Her hands were slightly bruised where the attendant had held them. Lillian screamed about the cruelty of the attendant.

Feeling helpless I suggested that the next time she cut her own nails and trim her hair a little.

She glared at me and left the room.

Theophilos, the reason a woman goes to the Mikvah is to prepare for lovemaking.

I sought out Lillian but she fled into the bedroom and went to bed with her wet head still covered by her tightly bound head covering.
In the Office

In the office the next day I saw Lillian when I went to get the keys to the car I would drive to Yale. The rabbi's wives were smiling at Lillian. She wore a wig (I have no idea where she got it Theophilos), covered with her cloth head cover. She avoided my eyes.

Yale

I taught Talmud at Yale the first semester. Three orthodox students and one woman attended the course. None of them were good "catches" by Yeshiva standards. The class was in the evening and I spent the afternoons in the library.

The second semester I decided to teach about the religious basis for peace in the Middle East. The room was filled with Jewish and non-Jewish students and even a few Arabs. The class was well received.

I considered escaping the world of the Yeshiva by enrolling in the Doctoral Program at Yale. My research on Final Revelations was complete. I awaited the vision.

I am tempted, Theophilos, to review with you now my notes and thesis I presented to my Peace Studies class. I will not. In our Sealah newsletters Isaac and I both review our teachings on Peace. Sealah Publishing is printing my studies in the form of a monograph.

I fear, as I did in Final Testament, Theophilos, that I often speak too much of myself in these testaments. On the other hand, God's portrayal of Biblical personalities in the Old Testament is sketchy. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, even Moses and Aaron are only charcoal etchings on the Biblical canvas. We do not hear enough of Jesus' life. Paul we meet through somewhat pedantic letters and travelogues rather than dialogue. This time gentle reader, we see ideas become reality as people live them. Isaac teaches that Judaism had the dwelling place of God's presence - Jerusalem. Christianity, the personality of God's presence, and Islam, the way to God's presence. Sealah - a hybrid monotheism learns from all three and so I focus on personality and plot rather than ideas alone.

Still, the ideas of Sealah are crucial. We shall not over-focus on Gospel works. The Letters will appear soon. After I chronicle Lillian's operation and how I came to experience the religions of the East and envision how they would submit to Sealah's rule.
The Appointment

I encouraged Lillian to seek out a surgeon who could reverse her tubal ligation. She resisted at first, perhaps afraid that the other rabbis' wives would discover her secret. Lillian agreed to see the surgeon however, when I made an appointment for her in Manhattan.

The surgeon, according to my research in the library, was a renowned authority on infertility. Half of his practice was devoted to Chassidim and ultra-orthodox Jews who could not get pregnant. Many in the waiting room that day wore the black uniform of the ultra-orthodox. They averted their eyes from one another and especially from me.

Perhaps, I thought to myself, they felt ashamed, cursed that they could not perform the first and most basic of God's Commandments. They also may have wondered about the mismatch. Lillian wore her ultra-orthodox bonnet and I my woven skullcap. Also, we sat together - a breach of etiquette.

The nurse called us in to the office. The doctor smiled and asked us to tell our story. I was surprised when he began with me. The doctor was even more surprised when he heard the story of my vasectomy. The doctor was a secular Jew raised by orthodox parents. He reacted to my story from his orthodoxy.

"The Torah forbids such mutilation."

"My sperm count is now borderline," I said in my own defense. "The reversal may have been a success."

"How could you let him do such a thing?" the doctor demanded of my very orthodox looking wife. She did not answer, but repeated her habit of darting her tongue out and licking her lips.

The doctor shook his head and said, "Nu," wondering why we were there.

"I had a tubal ligation," Lillian confessed. "I won't even ask," the doctor shot back.

When he heard of the technique used on Lillian he shook his head, took the doctor's number, and said, "I have developed a technique that might allow me to reconnect you. No promises."

We all looked at one another and no one verbalized the obvious. If Lillian's operation was a success, and my sperm count remained borderline, Lillian would have to find another father.

The surgery was scheduled on a Monday, about a month after the original appointment. The surgeon waved us out of the room.
We busied ourselves with preparation for the convention which would end the weekend before Lillian's surgery. Lillian handled the reservations. I called former students and Summer Institute people from around the United States and Canada. All the rabbis were on the many phones in the office. I was assigned the use of the Rosh Yeshiva's office since I would be making the arrangements for the Talmudic scholars and Torah personalities from Israel who would fly in for the convention.

Waiting for the overseas operator to call back I noticed a pamphlet on the Rosh Yeshiva's desk. It was called "Rahda Krsna." I picked up the pamphlet. The author of the pamphlet, Hari-das, began with some translations of the Bhagavad Gita - the Bible of Krshnaism. This first edition of the pamphlet was a translation of chapter one and two of the Gita. The first chapter was called "The Discipline of Arjuna's Despondency." It was almost unreadable. The second chapter called, "The chapter on the Discipline of Reason," I could not comprehend. A short essay by the pamphleteer gave me a frame of reference to understand the Gita:

'The Gita is a Hindu's main devotional book. Krsna - who is God in human form (Bhagavad) sings his song (Gita) in this scripture. Actually the Gita is part of the mystic doctrine (upanisad) sung by the Blessed One. The book is a dialogue (almost a monologue) between Krsna and Arjuna. Krsna is Arjuna's charioteer. Going to battle, Arjuna feels remorse because he will take human life.

Krsna justifies the war by dividing soul and body. Since the soul is immortal independent of the mortal body, there is no slayer or slain. I was reminded of Israel's song at the sea with God as warrior and the Muslim promise to martyrs that they automatically went to heaven when they died in battle.

The next article was entitled "Bhakti - the Most Excellent Mysticism." Hari-das taught that the goal of the Hindu was a direct relationship through a clear vision with God. He used the word "clear" often. Hari-das explained that he could not reveal all aspects of Bhakti worship - some were secret. Hari-das did reveal that he worshiped the dark lord of Jayadeva in the Gitagovinda.

The phone rang and I closed Rahda Krsna. I made arrangements with our keynote speaker in Jerusalem and gave him the time of his talk and his topic for the Sabbath discussions. I made other calls. Before leaving I noticed a short note to the Rosh Yeshiva on the front of Rahda Krsna. "Is this idolatry?"

Hari-das' Wife

Hari-das' wife was coming to the convention. Lillian made arrangements for her, the child and Hari-das. Hari-das was only staying one night and then was flying off to India for business. Hari-das' wife told Lillian she needed to talk to the Rosh Yeshiva about her husband's religious beliefs.

In the light of her new found Judaism she wondered is she was living with an idolater or religious pagan. At the convention I would speak to her and her "Hindu" husband. The snare of Satan would be set by my own hand.
Period

Lillian was bleeding heavily from her period. I was surprised when she walked over and touched me. I remembered our Jerusalem days. Lillian slipped her hand into my pants. She stroked and then squeezed me. Touching, as you know Theophilos, is forbidden by Orthodox Law when a woman is menstruating. Lillian squeezed again like an Eve throttling the serpent before it could speak. I did not protest. I removed Lillian's dress. She was wearing fringes - one of my woolen pairs. She insisted on wearing the Tzitzit and her wig and head covering as she led me into the bedroom.

I tried to kiss Lillian on the lips but she moved me to her breast. She touched herself and rubbed blood from her finger on her nipples. She informed me she would never again go to the Mikvah. She asked me to lick the blood from her nipples. She ordered me to stick my tongue in her mouth.
"Milk and meat," she said, putting more blood on her nipples. "Milk and blood."
Lillian flipped her wig off her head and let her curls fall around her shoulders.
Our rebellions began.

Milk and Meat

That entire week my rebellion continued. I cooked salami and eggs for breakfast, and drank coffee with cream at the Yeshiva, not waiting six hours as the Law requires.

During prayers I imagined myself bound to the altar in place of Isaac - with the black straps of my own Tefillin.

When I recited the Shema I summoned Paul and asked him if "Elohim" included Jesus and Krsna. When I grasped my fringes to recite the third paragraph of the Shema I imagined I was holding - and healed by - Isaac's Tzitzit.

During my week of rebellion I would eat a Glatt kosher sandwich at the deli and then go to the dairy restaurant and eat a piece of pizza made with "the milk of an Israelite" cheese.

Theophilos, it was obviously time that Lillian and I leave Springhill and the Yeshiva world.

New Hampshire

The arrangements were made at the convention. Hari-das' wife spoke to me and Lillian for a few hours about her new found Orthodox - Hinduism - Hari-das - and the legal definition of idolatry.

Hari-das met with the Rosh Yeshiva. They spoke in abstractions. Hari-das would not reveal the secrets of his worship. The Rosh Yeshiva lectured Hari-das about going to Yeshiva after it was clear to him that by his legal Halachic definition - Hari-das was a Jew. The Rosh Yeshiva recognized Hari-das' last name. Hari-das' father was one of the most lauded men in Boston. His name appeared on a Yeshiva list for potential major contributors.

The Rosh Yeshiva offered to personally tutor Hari-das in Hebrew and Talmud and Jewish devotional literature. He asked Hari-das to teach him about his worship. The Rosh Yeshiva mentioned some basic Hindu teachings he must have learned from the copy of Rahda Krsna on his desk - the one I had read. Hari-das raised his eyebrows, smiled, and then agreed. He would study with the Rosh Yeshiva after he returned from India.

Hari-das found Lillian and I in his room speaking to his wife. "Rabbi," he said, eyeing my skullcap, "did she tell you I'm an idolater yet?" Hari-das looked away from his wife, who blushed. Their child - about a year old - began to fuss as soon as Hari-das and his wife were in the room together. Now the child began to cry. Lillian took the baby from Hari-das' wife, but the baby could not be quieted. Lillian stood up to leave. Hari-das
watched Lillian. He wondered why Lillian wore a long-sleeved shirt under a short-sleeved sweater. Hari-das asked, "Why the turbans - are you Sikhs?"

"No," I said, trying to break the tension caused by the crying baby, "but we are seekers." As everyone laughed, I took the baby from Hari-das' wife. I made dove sounds and then held her close to my heart. She quieted.

Hari-das' wife spoke. "I can't complain," she started. "Oh, yes you can," Hari-das said, interrupting. She started again.

"I can't complain about our material life together. We could use some more furniture, but the house couldn't be lovelier - or larger. We live on a mountaintop in New Hampshire. I have my own studio. Hari-das has his cow and his Darshan room."

"What's a Darshan room?" I asked.

"A prayer room."

"It sounds like a room where drasha or teachings are taught."

"I think he worships idols in there," said Hari-das' wife.

"Your narrow mindedness is the real idolatry," Hari-das answered.

The child lifted her head and began to cry again. Hari-das asked me to go for a walk with him.

The Walk

Hari-das talked about India. He was there during the '70's for almost ten years. He was fluent in Sanskrit and Hindu scripture. His guru, his teacher, lived in a small village in Northern India.

"My guru said my wife would be difficult," Hari-das said. "But I believed she would be a good wife."

"A good wife?" I asked.

"One who worships and cooks and makes the home into a Holy Temple," he said.

"You do not worship together?"

"No, my worship involves foods which I offer to Rahda and Krishna."

"Judaism also asks that we pray before we eat," I said.

"In Hinduism eating is praying," Hari-das said.

"So by not eating with you, she does not pray with you?"

"That's right. She cooks her own food."

"Will she at least eat at table with you?" I asked.

"I don't use a table, but the answer is no."

"She even mentioned bringing eggs into the house!"

"Eggs are forbidden?" I asked.

"Yes."

"Fried chicken embryos," I said,

"Yes - I see you understand," Hari-das said, misunderstanding.

I asked Hari-das about his religion to change the subject. Do you have a Torah?" I asked, wanting to remind him that I addressed this question to him as a Jew.

"Hindu scripture begins with the Riq Veda," Hari-das explained, "a collection of Psalms to the gods of nature."


"No," Hari-das answered. "Religion at that time was sacrificial. Priests conducted the rituals for the rich. The real religion of the people was different. The people used the Atharva Veda - collection of songs and rituals. Vedic literature also contains the Upanisads which deals with philosophical subjects.

"The popular mind was not drawn to the Upanisads. The Gita unifies the old worship - focusing
worship on one monotheistic deity. The people were also united in their worship of Krishna.”

I must confess Theophilos, his name and the religion known by his gods name, I was inclined to mock. The Hari-krishna movement organized by Jewish boys probably not much different from Hari-das, cruelly mocked Hinduism and Krishna worship. Again my friend, religion becomes a profanation of God's name.

Hari-das may have read my mind because he told me of his plans to organize Krishna worship in America. "True Krishna worship as opposed to Hari-krishna worship." Hari-das explained more of the Gita, which sounded to me like a combination of Christian and Chassidic doctrine. Hari-das knew his scripture well.

I was attentive, thinking of writing a Final Gita. Hinduism and Judaism, in some aspects, I explained to Hari-das, went through similar evolutions. Both begin with cultic animal sacrifice to satisfy primitive needs to appease God.

The Temple destroyed, Judaism and Christianity transformed the ancient worship. The Jew offered the "bullocks of their lips," offering words of prayer instead of the sacrificial act. The Christian offered the Word, Christ Jesus, crucified as a substitute for animal sacrifices. Hari-das said he knew little of Judaism or Christianity, and listened carefully to my comparison.

"Perhaps Hinduism and Judaism are much closer than my wife imagines," Hari-das said.

"Perhaps."

Hari-das explained more about Hinduism.

I coveted the knowledge and wisdom Hari-das had gained in India. I also coveted his easy lifestyle. He received checks weekly - interest on the many accounts his father had already put in his name. Hari-das' life focused on his worship. He went to India for business, but mostly he went to be with his guru. I told Hari-das I was writing a book. I imagined myself in the mountains of New Hampshire with all the day to write Final Revelations and revise Final Testament and Final Acts.

Hari-das invited us to live with him. I protested - saying it would be an imposition.

"No, no," he said. "I need you to help save my marriage."
The Move

The convention ended with many thanks to Lillian and me by the entire hierarchy of the Yeshiva. The next day I drove Lillian into Manhattan for her surgery. She was in the hospital for one week. Hari-das’ wife sent a tropical flower that filled Lillian's room with its fragrance. The surgeon visited the day after the surgery, informing us that the technical part of the surgery had gone well.

Satman Chassidim from Williamsburg brought chicken broth and other kosher food for Lillian. After the week in the hospital Lillian and I drove to New Hampshire. She did not return to Springhill. I dropped her off in New Hampshire, spent the night, and then returned to New York the next morning to rent a U-Haul and move our possessions to Hari-das' house.

A High Place

The Rosh Yeshiva was beside himself. I told him we were leaving. He surprised me by asking how we could even consider going to New Hampshire. I did not answer. The Rosh Yeshiva must have spoken to Hari-das' wife while Lillian was in the hospital.

"Is Lillian alright?" he asked. "What's wrong with her?"
I did not answer.

"You cannot go to New Hampshire," the Rosh Yeshiva said. "The man is an ovade avoda zara. The man is an idolater."

A student of mine, a professor of Economics from Yale studying at the Yeshiva, helped me load the U-Haul. Since I am mentioning him Theophilos, I should also mention that he is now studying for a Sealah Rabbinic ordination as a rabbi economist.

I drove all day, arriving late at night. The last few miles felt exceptionally bumpy in the truck. The final ascent was difficult. Hari-das lived in a high place on top of a mountain.
In the Darshan Room

I made myself at home in the darshan room. What a place for a nature worshiper. You could see all the way to Vermont from the mountain. The view was picture postcard perfect.

Hari-das' library was vast, and all on Gita and other Bhakti works in Sanskrit and English. I revised a few sentences in my letter to the East, based on information in Hari-das' library.

Hari-das planned to be in India a little over a month. He had given me permission to use the library and asked that I not go into the closets. I read and wrote. On Shabbat we prayed together in the darshan room. Saturday mornings we studied the weekly Torah reading. That week we studied the last section of the book of Genesis.

Sealah

I taught Hari-das' wife the meaning of the Sealah passage in Chapter 49 of the book of Genesis. Lillian knew I was finishing Final Acts. I let her read sections of the book. I did not offer her Final Testament to read. Lillian left the room the moment I mentioned the word Sealah.

Hari-das' wife, a neophyte to Judaism, was eager to learn. She studied as often as a nursing mother could. She was building a Torah library and had a number of volumes on the Kaballah. I told her about Sealah without mentioning Isaac. We studied from Hertz's edition of the Pentateuch Haftorahs and discussed his article at the end of Genesis on alleged Christological references in scripture.

Dr. Hertz, a former Chief Rabbi of the British Empire, explains that Genesis 49:10 is a favorite text of Christian missionaries.

Theophilos, you know the verse well. The verse, Jacob's blessing to Israel, reads:

The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.

Hertz translates:

The scepter shall not depart from Judah
Nor the ruler's staff from between his feet
As long as men come to Sealah
And unto him shall the obedience of the people be.

Hertz is right. 49:10 is a difficult verse to translate. He transliterated Sheloh incorrectly as Shiloh. The Rabbi admits in his note that "ad ki Yavo Sealah" means, literally, until Sealah's coming. The Rabbi does better than the New English Bible, which leaves Sealah out of the verse entirely.
The New English Bible

Every morning after prayer, I sat with my New English Bible, reading the Revelation of John. I had used many verses from the book at the end of Final Testament, but felt that I did not understand the book. I called Isaac and he suggested a number of commentaries. Isaac also suggested that I reread the entire Bible from Genesis to Revelations.

I drove into the village and found a verse by verse commentary on the New English Bible and the other books Isaac recommended. I often would leave early so I could eat breakfast and lunch in the village and dinner with Hari-das' wife and Lillian.

Hari-das allowed no eggs or meat in his house. I had eggs for breakfast and meat for lunch and vegetarian dinners with Lillian and Hari-das' wife. Lillian was healing and spent most of the day in her room. In the evenings we studied and sang and discussed religion.

The Second Commandment

This continued until we reached the Torah portion where the Ten Commandments or Principles are read. We were all seated in the darshan room on the Sabbath, discussing the portion called Yitro (Jethro). Hari-das' returned earlier than expected and quietly took a seat and listened.

I read the verse in Hebrew from Rabbi Hertz's Bible and Lillian and Hari-das' wife followed with Torahs containing commentaries.

        God speaks:
            I am the Lord thy God
            Who brought thee out of the land
            Of Egypt, out of the house
            Of bondage.

"We all agree," I said, "that the First Commandment or Principle of religion is to believe in God."
"What else is taught here?" I asked.
"That the Jews would find God through their redemption from Egypt," Hari-das' wife said.
"Excellent," I said. "This is the teaching of Rabbi Moses ben Nachman. What else does this teach us?"
I asked. No answer. I answered my own question.
"God is the God of history. The Jews were chosen for persecution and redemption. God will again make the divine presence manifest by liberating us from all our modern Egyptians."
All were silent. Hari-das sat with legs crossed and eyes closed, meditating.
Exodus Twenty - Verse Three

Jewish tradition considers verse three of Exodus Twenty the beginning of the Second Commandment. I read the Hebrew and translated:

 Thou shall not make unto thee a graven image, nor any manner of likeness, or anything that is heaven above, or that is in the Earth beneath, or that is in the water under the Earth
 Thou shall not bow down unto them nor serve them
 For I, the Lord thy God, Am a jealous God

"My guru teaches," Hari-das continued, "idolatry is forbidden by the Torah. The Torah allows iconolatry."
"What are you talking about?" Hari-das' wife asked.
"After six more chapters in your scripture," Hari-das explained, "the cherubim are sanctioned. Until you understand the cherubim," Hari-das lectured his wife, "you will not experience the Tree of Life. These cherubim are so key to Judaism that they form the throne of God with their outstretched wings. The cherubim are so holy they cover the Ark of the Covenant in the Tabernacle. The word cherub," Hari-das said to his wife, repeating his guru's teachings, "is from the Akkadian word for intercessor - one who brings the prayers of humans to their gods."
"The cherubs were different," Hari-das' wife said, flipping through one of her books. "The worshipper focused on the space between the cherub's wings, not on the cherub itself."
"What did the cherubs look like?" Lillian asked.
"We don't know what the cherubim in the Temple in Jerusalem looked like," I answered, "but the Talmud says the cherubim had the faces of infants."
Lillian looked away from me as tears streamed down her cheeks.
"His worship violates the Second Commandment," Hari-das' wife said.
"I'm not so sure," I answered. "Do the cherubim violate the Second Commandment?"
"Rabbi," Hari-das' wife said, "I would expect you to be the one with the answer. It is simple. The Torah commands that we make images of the cherubs. Any other image is forbidden."
"If you would open your heart to my worship," Hari-das said, "you would understand that I am not an idolater. I do not violate the Second Commandment in my worship."
"Avodah Zorah," Hari-das' wife hissed at him.
Hari-das looked towards me for an explanation.
"To some the two-faced cherubim might be considered strange," Hari-das said to his wife. "I will tell you a story my guru told me. A Buddhist wise man once rebuked a Muslim who was berating an idolater. 'Do you think God cares?' he asked, 'if this devout peasant woman reveres a block of carved wood? Is God not able to perceive the purity of her intention? Will God ignore any seeker, anywhere, who searches, by any means? All prayer goes up to God, the source of prayer."
"I am not convinced of anything by your story," Hari-das' wife said.
"Your narrow mind and hard heart are idolatry," Hari-das said. "You make the commands of your God into idols."
Hari-das' wife looked towards me for help.
"The Gemara says," I said, unsure of how I would finish, "that when the heathens entered the Holy Temple of the Jews in Jerusalem, they were shocked to find the cherubim. The first side of the folia page of this Gemara - Yoma 54a, says that if Israel was performing the Commandments of the Torah, the cherubim not only faced one another, but were interlocked with one another, intertwined in a love embrace." Hari-das smiled. His
wife sat rigidly glaring at me. I looked towards Lillian. She was staring at Hari-das, who again sat with eyes closed, meditating.
Now Hari-das' wife refused to study with me. I told her I could not comment on Hari-das' worship until I had experienced it.

Monday morning I went to town to buy groceries. Lillian asked me if I would stop by a lab and get a sperm count. At the time, Theophilos, I did not understand.

Hari-das asked Lillian and I if we would eat with him. The groceries I had purchased were cooked by Hari-das and Lillian. Hari-das prepared the food listening to a walkman. A tape of his guru's teachings.

We sang songs in Sanskrit or Hindu that reminded me of Chassidic songs. Lillian danced as she sang, uplifted by the melody. She had not danced during the time of her healing. Hari-das gave Lillian some anklet bells he had brought back for his wife. I tried not to be jealous of the way Hari-das watched Lillian as she danced.

We sat and sang more songs.

Hari-das' wife stuck her head into the darshan room. She was holding the baby. She noticed Lillian's ankle bells and blanched.

"In India women are the lowest caste," she said. "The bells, like the bells that cows wear in India, are so the husband knows where his wife is at all times. I refused to wear mine after the wedding in India."

Lillian moved her leg and the bells sounded. Hari-das' wife turned away. Hari-das got up and closed the door to the room.

Hari-das opened the wood doors to a closet in the room. In the closet was a box the size of a doll house. We all sang more songs and the food was placed on an altar in front of two black statues in brightly colored Indian clothes.

We sang over and over:

 Govindi ji ji  
 Gopali ji ji  
 Radha rama na hari  
 Govindi ji ji  

I grinned. The worship didn't feel like idolatry. Hari-das sang and prayed with great devotion. The worship felt more silly than evil. Even though Rahda and Krishna looked like Hindu versions of Barbie and Ken, it did not seem wrong because of the song and sincerity.

Lillian sang with devotion and her eyes widened as the male and female gods were offered dinner. I hope the gods enjoyed their meal Theophilos. By the time we ate the offered food was cold.
Govinda Jive

Hari-das' wife was really angry. It was morning and we all sat in the darshan room.
"Why did you let them have darshan and not me?" she scolded her husband.
"You have seen all but the final part of the worship," Hari-das explained. "The secret cannot be revealed to a hardened heart."
Hari-das' wife glared at me. "You may have also violated the Second Commandment," she said.

The truth is Theophilos, from a certain point of view, Hari-das' wife was right. Rahda and Krishna were similar to Baal and Ashtaroth. If Rahda and Krishna ate of the meal offering, then they must have been considered alive. Pagan religion allows god to become idol.

Later that week I observed Hari-das washing and dressing the idols before putting them to sleep. Hari-das explained that at night they slept and in the morning they were awakened by the sun rising over the New Hampshire mountains.
The Torah does not consider such worship as fetishism - lecturing that idols cannot see, hear, smell, or eat. The rabbi considered idolatry one of the three cardinal sins. One who recognizes idols denies the whole Torah.

That week we discussed Hari-das' Hinduism and Judaism. I was supposed to be some kind of Solomon and hold forth in judgment.
When the Sabbath came we stood around the table as Hari-das wife lit the candles.
"This is my altar," she said, pointing to the table. She prayed.
"Lord of all worlds, I have come to light these candles to honor the Sabbath. Let my fulfilling this commandment open the flow of the stream of abundant life. Let heavenly blessings flow in upon this house. Dwell in our midst God - Sechinah.
Father of Mercy, let Thy love and kindness into our hearts. Make me worthy to rear my child in the way of Torah, clinging to good deeds. Keep far from us all, shame and grief. Put Peace, Light, and Joy in our midst for with Thee is the Fountain of Life, in Thy light we see the light."
She glared at her husband - a candle reflected in each of her eyes. She repeated the prayer in Hebrew.

Theophilos, it was not the words of her prayer or the content of her prayer. It was the way of her prayer. The words became heavy in her mouth and crumbled. The spaces between the words were empty and the voice bizarre and shrill. Her worship was strange Theophilos. A type of Avodah Zora.

Two meals were served for the Sabbath that evening, The challahs she baked were heavy and stone-like. The kosher sacramental wine tasted overly sweet. I said the prayer after meals with her and joined Hari-das and Lillian in the darshan room. We sang the Sabbath song welcoming the bride. We invited Hari-das' wife into the room. We prayed the evening service together in Hebrew. She looked at her husband and my wife and saw something I did not see..
Hari-das began to sing

Govindi ji ji
Gopali ji ji
Rahdha rama na hari
Govinda ji ji

Hari-das' wife stood to leave and said, "No more Govinda jive for me."
After the Sabbath

After the Sabbath Hari-das' wife informed him she was thinking of leaving him. Lillian's eyes brightened. We all went into the darshan room.

Hari-das' wife exploded at me. "You call yourself a Rabbi, and you continue to eat the food he offers to idolatry. I spoke to the Rosh Yeshiva," she said, "and he said to tell you and Lillian to leave."

Then Lillian exploded. "Who the hell does he think he is?" she said. "There is more devotion to God here than in the entire Yeshiva. Mumblers. Their prayer is mechanical. The chauvinists, how dare they judge!"

"You call Jews chauvinists?" Hari-das' wife said. "There is no more chauvinistic society than the Hindu's."

"Nay," Hari-das said (he really said 'nay' Theophilos, not 'no'). "Radha triumphs over Krishna."

"Your own guru told me," she said, "that the Hindu wife is servant and devotee to her husband who is the servant and devotee of God."

"The woman bears and nurtures the children and is expected to fill the house with well-being, making it a temple of God."

"I will not be your baby factory." she shot back, "producing children for idolatry."

Lillian's eyes narrowed at the mention of "baby factory." I misread this also, Theophilos. Her eyes narrowed at the attack on Hinduism. She had been converted to Hari-das' religion.
Leaving

Before the next Sabbath Hari-das' wife and I would leave. The results of the sperm test arrived in the mail. I found the letter opened on the desk in our bedroom. Borderline. Whatever role she was required to play, Lillian now wanted one thing above all others in life, a child.

Lillith Tamed

She stooped to doing dishes to win Hari-das heart. For ten years we had alternating cooking and had eaten off of paper plates. She served him. I was angry. I thought of Pope's lines of the wife who

'charms by accepting
by submitting sways
yet has her humor most
when she obeys'

Theopilos, I must thank you for living through this with me again in this confession. I informed Lillian that we were to be divorced. Hari-das and I exchanged bedrooms. Hari-das and Lillian's adultery was ritualized into their worship as Radha and Krishna.

Hari-das' wife wanted a Jewish husband. Perhaps she felt it should be me.

No, I will not chronicle all the idolatry of my last days in New Hampshire, my friend. We all settled our emotional debts with one another in cruel and strange ways.

I told Hari-das' wife I was leaving. She understood. We were not meant to be a couple. We spent the night comforting one another.
In the Morning

I prayed the morning prayer while Lillith and Hari-das fed their gods. I was explaining the prayers to Hari-das' wife.

"The Name of God Almighty, the great, powerful, and awe-inspiring king. Holy is God. The angels take upon themselves the yoke of heaven and lovingly grant permission to one another to sanctify God with joy and quietude, with pure speech and sacred melody, answering in awe - declaring in reverence:

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord

The world is filled with God's glory

Hari-das' wife and I chanted this over and over. The door opened and Lillian and Hari-das stared at us. Lillian said, "You pray to angels called Ophanim and Chayot and six winged seraphim. The Holy Ark has cherubim, and you call our worship idolatry."

I had no intention of answering. I was leaving that morning. The phone rang. Hari-das' wife answered Lillian as I went for the phone. "We worship with the angels, we don't worship the angels."

It was Isaac on the phone. Lillian glared when I called him Sealah. I told Isaac what was happening in detail. Lillian and Hari-das retreated into their temple.

"Oh, I am lost," I sighed. "I have unclean lips."

"Rabbi," Isaac said, "are you ready to answer your calling to be Re Shone to Sealah - God's holy messenger?" "I, I," I stuttered, "I will visit, Isaac."

"This time," Isaac said, "you must know that Sealah's message of salvation is sent to the Jews also. This time they will listen. Come to New Jersey. Come soon," Isaac said. "Answer your calling."

"Okay," I said dumbly.

"Go and say this to the people," Isaac said

"This time
You will listen
And understand
You will look
And see
Dark minds
Will brighten
Ears once deaf
Will hear
Eyes once blind
Will see

This time they will turn
To me and be healed."

Theophilos, I was writing Final Revelations at the time. I still feared Sealah. My share of the fruit of the Tree of Life would be taken from me. I stopped in Philadelphia before joining Sealah in Princeton.

In Philadelphia I worked as a pulpit rabbi. Isaac gave me his blessings. When they were in Princeton, Isaac and Christina and their baby would sometimes spend the Sabbath with my new wife and our son and daughter.
"Now the story can begin."
Isaac is SMILING
Now he is LAUGHING
P.G. to W.B.
Kindly be FORGIVING me.

The Final COMING

Lup dup, lup dup, lup dup, a LUPING and a DUPING
EXPANDING and CONTRACTING, the Gyre WIDENING
From the Center outward, BEATING, SPIRALING, GIVING
Life, even when the Body is not LISTENING
The Head and Center HOLDING, The Messiah SAYING:
You, Re Shone, the Mouth, get the Final Word METAPHORING,
MIXING

Eye I Eye

A Lions body with the head of a Lamb
The final COMING, The Final Revelation is at hand

Eye I Eye

The FOCUSING of the Dark by the Light, Eyes SEEING
Order BEGINNING with the FOCUSING, CENTERING

Even the Messiah
is a
has a
Pupil

Me

Eye I Eye

Faust, THEOPHILOSING

REACHING
REACHING
Sit up straight - no SLOUCHING - no GROUCHING

REACHING towards Sealah

ANYTHING
I can do he can do better
In New
New, Say Final

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Jerusalem

God is there
Sealah is here

Genesis 49: Ten
Amen

Re Shone SHINING
Again