

SCROLL OF SIMEON

THE TESTAMENT OF THE TWELVE PATRIARCHS

BY R. SELAH

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This is a work of sacred historical fiction. while grounded in scripture, ancient texts, and the historical memory of Israel and -Egypt, certain characters, events, and conversations are fictionalized or expanded. Creative liberties have been taken where the biblical record is silent, poetic, or interpretive. -very effort has been made to remain reverent and faithful to the spiritual heart of the narrative.

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Acknowledgement

This series was written as sacred offering—each scroll a breath, a prayer, a return. I have not walked this path alone.

To the Sabbath study circle that has gathered faithfully each week for years: you have shaped me more than you know. Your insights, your questions, your hunger for Torah have become part of my voice. These pages are richer because of your presence.

To those who walk through these stories with reverence: thank you. May you hear echoes of the patriarchs, and something deeper still.

Author's Note

A Note on the Scroll of Simeon

This scroll is a narrative reimagining of the *Testament of Simeon*, one of twelve sacred writings found in *The Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs*, traditionally attributed to the sons of Jacob. The version I have drawn from is the 1908 English translation by R. H. Charles, published in *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament* (Volume II, Oxford University Press). This public domain text has been preserved in various forms—some rendered in plain translation, others accompanied by scholarly commentary.

I have not chosen that path.

Storytelling is its own kind of scholarship. It predates the written word. It flourished in gardens and deserts, across cultures and centuries, because it is how we remember—not just with the mind, but with the heart. We often learn best when truth arrives wrapped in a story.

What you are reading is not a direct translation, but a sacred reimagining. In this twelve-book series, I have shaped a heavenly realm where flame-scribes and archangels bear witness to the final words of each patriarch. Each scroll is told in the first person, through the eyes of the scribe assigned to carry that particular witness. Their task is not only to record the patriarch's words, but to discern the spiritual echoes and unspoken weight that their lives left behind.

The original source is treated with reverence. The full text of the *Testament of Reuben* is included in the appendix for your study and reflection, and is also available online or through the Selah Publishing House website. I encourage you to read the original first—it will deepen your engagement with this story and invite a more devotional posture as you move through the narrative.

You may also notice that the order of release does not follow birthright or the sequence of death. After spending time with the ancient texts, I chose to release these stories in a rhythm that felt more like a sacred unfolding—an intentional sequence of devotions. I've taken creative liberty as an author, but always with reverence.

Because these scrolls are intentionally short—poetic in tone and sacred in cadence—they are being released individually as eBooks, audiobooks, and podcast readings. When all twelve have been completed, they will be gathered into a single 12-scroll box printed set.

Until then, may the fire in each scroll find you where you are.

— R. Selah

Chapter One

Jedid—Son of the Quiet Flame

It had been a long dusk in my valley.

The kind of dusk that does not fall, but lingers—folding softly around the stones like an old robe re-creased for prayer. There are corners of Beit Zachar where time pools differently, where the light dims but never leaves, and where the breath of angels rarely passes. My dwelling sat in such a place, far from the bridge of emeralds, far from the stir of summoning bells or the quiet murmurs of scrolls being copied in the lower gardens. I had not spoken aloud in four days. Not out of solemnity, but because there had been nothing to say.

Here, I could write without recording.

Here, I could remember without transcribing.

Here, I was allowed to sit inside memory and let it pass through me without flame or ink—an old discipline learned from Amasael and blessed once by Seth himself, when he told me, “Not every word deserves paper. Some must haunt you before they find their shape.”

I had come to believe that.

I had also come to believe that my season of assignments had passed.

My first scroll had been quiet. A prophet no one below remembers, a man who died mid-sentence, mid-prayer, with only a whispered phrase left behind—“I am not afraid anymore.” I had written it slowly, carefully, without flourish. Sariel had sealed it himself without comment. That was over sixty years ago.

I had waited since then without complaint.

Some scribes wait centuries between assignments. Some are never summoned again.

And I had been content—until the stone appeared.

It did not fall.

It did not knock.

It simply was.

I found it not upon my writing desk, but nestled between the folds of a woolen shawl I had laid across the threshold of my reading alcove. I knew immediately that I had not placed it there. The cloth had not been disturbed. The air had not shifted. But there it sat—triangular, heavy, and black as burned obsidian, veined with lines of dull red like the cracked skin of earth before the flood.

It was not a box in the usual sense.

It was a container of stillness, a vessel shaped not for beauty or utility, but for judgment that had not yet spoken.

The surface was not reflective in the human sense. It did not show my face. But when I leaned closer, the black sheen changed. Not with color—with memory.

The unfinished scrolls of my youth flickered faintly across its planes—phrases abandoned in fear, lessons copied but never lived, the names of those I had studied but never written. And then, as if embarrassed by my gaze, the box erased them one by one until only silence remained.

I reached for it with both hands, knowing what it was before I touched it.

No scribe mistakes a mirrored container.

They do not appear without permission. They do not remain visible to any soul who is not the intended recipient. Even the angels who pass near them avert their eyes—not out of disrespect, but because they know: this is how heaven whispers, not to all, but to one.

The moment my fingers made contact, the container grew warm.

Not bright, not burning—just aware. As if a breath within it had waited centuries to exhale.

It opened without sound.

The lid did not lift so much as recede, vanishing into itself like mist curling into ash. And inside, resting alone upon a square of rough flax, was a single bead—dark blue, almost black, polished like river-stone, but dense with unseen gravity. It was the size of a fig seed, but when I lifted it, I gasped.

It was heavy.

Not in weight, but in consequence.

It sank slightly into my palm, not piercing the skin, but pressing into it with a knowledge I could not name. There was no ribbon, no clasp, no flame. The bead did not hum. It simply stayed, rooted in place beneath the thin membrane of my flesh, like a coal buried beneath snowfall.

This was Phaniel's doing.

There was no mistaking his hand.

Only one flame in Beit Zachar moves this slowly, this deliberately, and leaves no trail but stillness in its wake.

Phaniel—The Still Flame of Warning—whose eyes turn soft only for the penitent, whose presence arrives not to announce wrath, but to measure the moment before it falls.

He does not escort the dying.

He does not guard the righteous.

He stands at the threshold of reckoning and waits to see whether the soul will rise or fall.

And he had summoned me.

To Simeon.

The second to die.

I sat in silence for some time after that.

Long enough for the light to shift across the valley stones and for the smell of olive ash to rise faintly from the hearth.

I did not pray.

I did not speak.

I simply let the bead rest in my hand and thought of what I had heard.

Reuben's scroll had already been sealed. Word had passed, slow and respectful, among the inner wings of the Hall. I had not read it. I did not need to. It was enough to know that the first banner had been lifted.

And now... the second.

Simeon.

The strong one. The sword-bearer. The man whose rage burned brighter than Reuben's shame, and whose judgment had once spilled blood in Shechem with a silence so loud it still echoed across the stones of covenant.

And it was his final words I was now being asked to receive.

Would I be enough?

I, who had never learned war?

I, who wrote in one breath because I could not endure the pause?

I, who had never needed to raise my voice or correct another's memory?

I did not feel ready.

But readiness was never the standard.

Only obedience.

The bead pulsed once.

Not with light—but with permission.

I stood.

The Gates of Glass would know me now.

And the Hall of Final Words would open—for Simeon.

...

The valley did not resist my leaving.

Some places in the outer rings of Beit Zachar are known to cling, as if memory itself tries to slow your steps—old trees that lean toward your ankles, stones that whisper the names of scrolls not yet written. But not mine. My dwelling had been a place of retreat, not possession. The vines that curled near the threshold of my door loosened as I passed, and the moss under my sandals softened, blessing me without word.

The bead was now embedded in my palm, its weight steady, its temperature neither warm nor cold.

I walked alone.

We scribes do not need an escort.

When an angel sends you a mirrored container, it means two things: the scroll is ready, and so are you—whether or not you believe it. The summons does not lie. It does not flinch. It has already passed through the Hall of Assignments, been weighed in the Wings of Remembrance, and been acknowledged by Sariel himself.

The choice is not whether to obey.

The choice is how to carry the weight of obedience.

...

The landscape changed as I left the valley.

The outer rings of the campus are quiet—earth-toned and slow. But the nearer I walked to the Gates of Glass, the more the air shimmered, as if memory were thickening around me.

Not my memory—ours. The kind that belongs to Heaven itself.

Scrolls that had already been sealed seemed to hum in the stones beneath the path. Angels moved in gliding silence between pavilions of light, their forms veiled from me by intentional distance. They do not break rhythm to acknowledge a scribe on assignment. Their flame is not for comfort. It serves as a record.

I passed a fountain of silence—not water, but smoke—that rises eternally in a spiral, one for each unfinished scroll. I did not pause there. I never do.

I had passed through the Gates of Glass once before, many years ago, when I received my first assignment. Even now, I felt that first walk pressing quietly against this second one. My feet moved differently. My heart did not race. But something deeper stirred—a recognition that I was not returning to a place. I was being drawn to a soul.

And that soul was Simeon.

In life, Simeon had been the second son of Jacob and Leah. A strong man. A hard man. A man whose sense of justice had once bled into vengeance with such fury that his name had become synonymous with the sword. His anger had scorched not only the sons of Hamor, but the reputation of the covenant family itself.

And yet—he had lived.

And he had been loved.

And now... he was dying.

Somewhere in Goshen, or beyond the veil of time as we measure it, his breath was beginning to slow. The bead in my hand pulsed again—faintly, steadily. Phaniel was watching him already.

The flame of warning stands close when judgment draws near. But it does not strike. It waits.

That is why I was called.

Not to defend Simeon.

Not to explain him.

But to record how he ended—and whether the fire that once consumed others had finally burned through him, or whether it still lingered, waiting to rise again one last time.

...

The Gates of Glass loomed ahead.

They do not shine like crystal.

They do not shimmer like morning dew.

They are a veil of memory woven from stillness, framed not in stone but in braided light that bends only for those with purpose.

To the uncalled, they remain impassable—a surface that reflects only the unfinished things inside the soul. Those who approach with divided hearts see themselves distorted. Those who lie see nothing at all.

But for those summoned—they part.

Not with noise.

Not with movement.

With knowing.

I stood before the Gates in silence.

They were thirty cubits high, arching without edge, the left panel veined with the Book of Silent Testimonies, the right with the Refractions—moments when souls almost turned back, when testimony nearly rose but was never spoken.

I had been told once, as a novice scribe, that the Gates grieve those Refractions.

That the glass hums longer when those echoes pass.

That sometimes Sariel places his hand upon them and does not move for hours.

I believe it.

I placed my hand on my chest, the bead now pulsed in rhythm with my steps.

No words.

No ritual.

Just presence.

And the Gates...learned me.

They did not slide.

They did not open.

They folded, like mist parting around breath. And I stepped through.

On the other side, the Bridge of Emeralds unfurled like a ribbon of memory.

Three paths: one to the left for the Scribes' Training School; one straight ahead to the Hall of Assignments, where purpose is whispered into souls waiting to become flesh; and to the right—the way I turned—the Hall of Final Words.

There is no banner above its entrance.

There is no inscription on its outer wall.

Only a shadowed archway and a single phrase etched into the threshold stone in the language of flame:

“Speak now, child of covenant.
Your breath will become your banner.”

I paused there.

For I knew that beyond that archway, Simeon’s scroll waited.

And so did Phanuel.

And I would not be the same once I emerged.

Phanuel

The archway opened around me like breath drawn through linen.

There was no hinge, no clatter of stone—only a thinning of what was firm and a quiet parting of light. I stepped across the threshold of the Hall of Final Words not with confidence, but with full awareness that I would not emerge unchanged.

The Hall does not receive the living the way it receives the dying. For the patriarchs, it opens wide and luminous, making space for their soul’s final exhale. For the scribes, it opens inward. It presses. It compresses. It bends the air as if time itself were leaning in to observe how the scroll will begin.

I took three steps into shadow before the light steadied.

My feet did not echo.

This part of the Hall—this threshold chamber—is not meant to be grand. There are no banners. No vaulted ceilings. No song. It is where we are stripped of assumption, where we wait without being told why, where we find out who has truly sent for us.

And I knew, even before I saw him, that Phanuel was already there.

I felt him before I heard him.

He does not announce himself, because his purpose is not to impress or overwhelm. His presence is the feeling just before grief becomes speech—the moment when a soul hesitates on the brink of sorrow and wonders if it will be allowed to weep.

He stood to the left of the room, not against the wall, not in the center—off to the side, as if refusing to interfere with something still unfolding.

His flame did not flicker.

It glowed low, blue-gold and steady, like the last ember in a lamp that refuses to die.

He was tall, but not in height—in sorrow. The sorrow of things not yet spoken. His form seemed carved from restraint itself, wrapped in robes that looked less like fabric and more like threads of tempered memory, pulled taut across a frame that had never tasted sleep.

He did not look at me.

He looked through me.

And yet, somehow, I felt seen.

Not as a scribe. Not as a vessel. As a soul.

As one who might break, but had not.

Not yet.

Phanuel does not offer greetings. He offers presence.

He does not say what the scroll will contain. He does not warn of what the patriarch has said or failed to say. He does not name the fire to come.

He simply waits to see if you are still willing to receive it.

I lowered my head and placed my palm with the bead embedded across my chest. It pulsed twice in response—not warmly, but like a clock resuming after silence.

That was my assent.

Phanuel moved.

Only slightly.

One arm lifted, and for a moment, the flame around him dimmed so much it appeared to die. Then, with a motion so slow I doubted it had happened, he pointed toward the corridor beyond—the path to the inner rotunda, where the scrolls await and where the dying breathes his last.

His eyes met mine then.

And I saw it.

Not judgment.

Not power.

Warning.

But not the warning of wrath. Not the kind that shouts or cracks thunder.

It was the warning of the moment just before a father strikes a son, or just after a brother buries his own knife in the chest of his kin.

It was the stillness that watches, to see whether grief will come in time.

I bowed.

Deeper than I had ever bowed in my first assignment.

Not out of fear. Out of *recognition*.

We entered the chamber, and I steadied myself.

This scroll would not be easy.

Not because of Shechem.

But because the man had almost become his sin.

There is a difference. Some men sin and flee it. Others let it become their breath, their language, their measure of justice. Simeon, I feared, had been one of the latter.

The bead beneath my palm glowed faintly, pulsing not with light but with readiness. Phaniel walked beside me—not with step, but with presence. He did not open the flame-sight immediately. His silence was not permission. It was patience.

We paused before the stone dais, the space where the scroll would eventually be written.

But not yet.

I did not reach for the writing stand. I let my hands remain open.

And that's when it began.

Chapter Two

Flame-sight does not fall. It does not snap into place like a veil or explode into light like glory torn from heaven.

It wraps.

It curls upward from the feet, a heat without pain, like stepping slowly into water that remembers sorrow. It hums near the ribs, then enters the breath—not as fire, but as a second inhale. And when it reaches the eyes, it does not burn. It *changes the color of seeing*.

Each angel allows it differently.

Uriel's flame is exact—sharp, surgical. When he opens vision, it's like a blade slicing time, laying bare every secret in still rhythm.

Phanuel's flame is slower.

It does not slice. It seeps.

It lingers in the corners first. It lets you see the room, the stone, the silence—and then slowly, from the edges inward, memory steps forward.

It does not rush.

It observes... are you willing to enter fully?

...

The air shifted. I felt the presence of fabric.

Heavy linen, damp with birth. Not a tent. A womb-room. A woman's chamber sealed against the wind.

The smell of afterbirth and warm oils filled my throat.

I blinked.

The Hall was gone.

I stood near a woman—Leah.

She was turned on her side, her face damp, her back to the doorway. She lay as one who had not yet decided whether she would speak or scream. Her hair clung to her neck. The afterbirth had already been cleared. The child was wrapped in a dark brown cloth and placed just beyond her shoulder—but she did not reach for him.

She stared forward, eyes dry, lips parted. Not in peace.

In... defense.

The room held no joy. No singing. No men.

Only the midwife, now asleep in a chair, and the presence of Leah's breath—measured, purposeful, tight.

“Because the Lord has heard...” she whispered.

I turned my head to listen—not with ears, but with that deeper part of me that flame-sight awakens. In Phanuel's visions, *you do not hear the words—they enter you as if remembered.*

“...that I was hated.”

I knew the name would come.

I had read the scroll.

Simeon. The hearing one.

But here, in the heat of this room, the name was not a prayer.

It was a *rebuttal*. A defense laid over a wound.

I stepped closer.

The baby stirred slightly. A faint hiccup. A motion of fingers searching without sight.
But Leah did not move.

She looked at the space beyond the wall.

Toward a tent she could not see, where another woman surely lay—smiling, perhaps,
or laughing, or holding a man in her arms who should have been there for the birth of
his second child.

The candlelight shifted.

And in that flicker, I saw Simeon’s face—not as the dying man I would soon record,
but as the newborn whose name was a consequence, not a celebration.

And I understood.

He was not loved into being.

He was named into survival.

Flame-sight trembled.

Not because the vision was unstable.

Because I was.

I had seen grief before—aged grief, grief that bore testimony. But this was
foundational sorrow. This was the beginning of a wound.

And I felt Phaniel’s flame at my back—cooler now, almost tender.

He did not need to explain. The stillness around me did that for him.

Simeon was not born into wrath.

He was born into justification.

He would spend his life making up for what his mother never received.

And that... that changes a soul.

The flame began to fold.

Not collapse—fold, like cloth being turned gently on a line.

The room faded.

The scent of oil gave way to dust.

And I felt the next breath rise—not mine.

Phanuel was not finished.

He would show me more.

...

The warmth of birth faded.

In its place: sun.

Not harsh sun—spring sun, dusty, slow, pouring through the branches of olive trees that had stood since before language. The light sifted in diagonals, falling across the edges of a woven cloth where a woman sat stitching.

Leah again.

Older now. Her hair streaked with grey near the temples. Her face drawn tighter, less from age than from strain long since normalized. She worked without pause, head bowed, eyes squinting over thread she barely glanced at.

The tent was open behind her.

The camp was still.

Only two children played at a distance.

And one—

One came running.

Simeon.

Seven years old, maybe eight. Hair unkept. Elbows scraped. Bare feet kicking up puffs of dust as he clutched something in his hand.

A carved ox.

Crude, misshapen, the wood still too thick at the legs, the face uneven—but it was whole. Made with small hands, and with effort.

He ran not toward the field, but toward her.

“Mother,” he said—too loud, too eager.

She did not startle. But neither did she look up.

He knelt beside her, thrust the ox into her lap, smiling. “I made it.”

No answer.

He held it there—just long enough to begin to doubt.

Then she exhaled, still stitching, still unblinking.

“Place it there,” she said. Her voice was flat. Not angry. Just... preoccupied.

He paused.

Then set the ox gently beside her thigh, on the woven cloth.

He remained silent.

She kept sewing.

And she was not staring into space—I saw that now. She was watching someone else.

Across the field, walking with a servant girl, Rachel laughed—not loudly, not mockingly, just with the fullness of a woman who was treasured.

A boy trailed behind her—Joseph, younger, clean, bouncing with the energy of someone born into favor.

Leah’s gaze did not shift.

Not even once.

Simeon stood.

Not abruptly. Not with anger.

He turned, almost too carefully, and walked away.

Behind him, the ox tipped onto its side.

No one reached to lift it.

Not even me.

The flame held the silence longer than I expected.

I watched the dust settle. I watched the cloth move slightly in the breeze.

I watched Leah's needle fall once, thread slipping through her fingers, and still she did not look back.

And for the first time since the flame-sight opened, I felt Simeon inside me.

Not as fire.

Not yet.

But as something worse: the weight of worth unacknowledged.

I had been trained never to interfere.

But I wanted to reach out, to lift the ox, to call after him. To say, "She saw. She did."

But I could not.

Because she hadn't.

And he knew.

This was not a boy learning to hate.

This was a boy learning he was non-existent... he could be dismissed.

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He would remember this. Not the moment, perhaps, but the *texture* of it.

The silence.

The way effort was ignored.

The way love could aim in another direction even while he knelt beside it.

The vision flickered.

Not like a torch.

Like a wound being reopened.

I could feel Phaniel's presence shift behind me—not approval, not correction. Just stillness. Watching.

He was letting me absorb what rage would later mask:

This boy only wanted to be seen.

I turned in the vision. The camp remained still.

But I could feel the next shadow approaching.

It came not from dust—but from firewood, from fists, from names spoken too freely in the mouths of others.

The anger was near now.

Phaniel would not delay.

And I was not ready.

But readiness was never the requirement.

Only willingness.

...

The light changed again.

Not in brilliance, but in weight.

The olive sun dimmed into dusk, and the warmth in the vision gave way to dryness—the dry heat of work, of sweat behind the ears and dust in the nostrils.

We were outside the camp now, where wood was gathered and laid for the evening fires. A wide plain of thornbush and stone. Three boys moved across it—barefoot, silent.

Simeon was now twelve.

The quiet strength of adolescence had begun to settle into his limbs. His hands were longer, shoulders broadening, legs dusted from walking barefoot too long. His jaw was set—not as if to defy, but as if to brace.

Next to him walked Reuben, taller still, quiet as ever, carrying wood with the ease of someone who does not ask why he’s the one always holding the heavier bundles.

And behind them trailed Levi.

Smaller. Slighter. A few paces back. Eyes sharp.

He carried no wood.

But he watched everything.

The wind picked up as they crossed near the threshing place.

A servant boy—barely older than Levi—stood leaning against a stacked bale of fodder, idling. He looked up when he saw the sons of Leah approach.

And he smirked.

“Sons of the *unloved*,” he muttered, loud enough to hear. “Carrying burdens for a man who loves another.”

Reuben’s hands tightened on the bundle, but he didn’t break stride.

Simeon stopped.

He turned.

Slowly.

His steps back toward the boy were not rushed. Not theatrical. Just deliberate.

The servant didn't flinch. He stood, arms crossed.

But there was fear in his posture.

He knew what he had said.

He knew who he had said it to.

Simeon dropped the bundle of wood.

It hit the ground with a sharp crack, sending splinters into the air.

He closed the space between them in three strides.

And swung.

I winced as the first fist landed.

There was no hesitation, no testing of limits. It was full. Blunt. Final.

The boy stumbled backward. Simeon followed.

A knee. An elbow. Another strike.

The servant fell, shielding his face, gasping.

Blood welled quickly.

“Enough!” Reuben's voice cut through the heat. He rushed forward, pulling Simeon back with effort—grabbing at his shoulder, his arm, trying not to harm but to contain.

Simeon thrashed.

Not wildly. But with purpose.

He could have struck Reuben.

But he didn't.

He stopped.

Only when Reuben gripped him by both shoulders, face close, breath loud.

“That’s enough.”

Levi stood at a distance.

Watching.

He had not spoken. Had not moved.

But something in his face shifted.

He was learning.

The flame did not end there.

It held.

Because that was not the wound.

The wound came later.

Leah arrived.

She had been told—by another servant, or perhaps she'd seen the blood from afar. She came swiftly, veil askew, eyes already set in scolding.

“What have you done?” she said—*not to Simeon*.

To Reuben.

“You let him fight again?”

Reuben stepped back, stunned. Confused.

“I tried—”

But she had already turned away.

Toward the boy on the ground. She knelt. She did not see the bruise on Simeon's cheek, nor the split skin on his knuckles.

Simeon watched her in silence.

His mouth slightly open.

As if he had just realized something.

“I did it for her,” he whispered—not to her, but to Reuben, or maybe to the air itself. “Doesn't she see?”

He stood still as stone.

And in that stillness, I felt it—
the seed of fury.

Not the kind that screams.

The kind that waits.

The kind that remembers.

The kind that writes the script of vengeance before puberty even lifts the voice.

The flame pulsed gently at the edges of my vision.

And I understood.

This is where it began.

The firewood was not the cause.

The insult was not the spark.

It was the disappointment.

To strike in defense of a woman who would not call it defense. To be punished while another was tended. To be bruised for her, and then *erased* in front of her.

Simeon would not forget.

And Levi—who watched everything—would carry it, too.

Phanuel did not speak.

But I felt his presence draw nearer. Not warm. Not cold.

Warning.

Because this anger—this first burn—was still nothing compared to what would come.

And even so, I trembled.

Because I knew.

The next vision would draw blood.

Brothers Bond

The light dimmed again.

Not with sorrow this time—but with evening. That peculiar stillness that settles just after the sun has dropped beneath the hills, but before the stars have made their full proclamation.

There were no tents now.

No siblings. No servants.

Only the wild edge of the grazing fields—brush low, trees sparse, the kind of place where boys went to either be alone or to become something else.

Simeon walked there.

Barefoot, again.

A little taller. The fire of youth cooling into endurance. Maybe sixteen.

Ahead of him stood Levi.

Shorter by a head, but already filled with a sharper presence.

He held a blade.

Not large. Not ceremonial. A camp knife, dulled with use, held not with reverence but with certainty.

There was a stump nearby—an old one, split and scarred, with concentric rings worn smooth by practice. In its center, a mark. Blackened. Repeated.

Levi was training.

He threw.

Missed by an inch.

He retrieved it without muttering.

Simeon said nothing as he approached.

He watched once. Twice.

And on the third throw, as the blade embedded near center, he spoke:

“Teach me.”

Levi looked up. Narrowed his eyes.

Not suspicious—measuring.

He pulled the knife free and tossed it.

Not at Simeon.

To him.

Simeon caught it.

Held it wrong at first.

Levi corrected him—not with words, but with a look, and a quick tap of his own thumb against Simeon’s grip.

Simeon adjusted.

He threw.

Too high.

The blade landed in the dust with a dull thud.

No laughter.

Levi stepped forward, pulled it again, and handed it back.

“Again.”

They stayed there until the stars were visible—until the crickets outnumbered the words between them.

Simeon never asked why Levi trained so hard.

And Levi never asked why Simeon had come.

They already knew.

They were Leah’s sons—uncelebrated, unshielded, unclaimed in the way that makes a boy wonder if righteousness must be forged rather than taught.

Simeon did not need Levi’s approval.

He needed a place to become dangerous in peace.

Later, as they walked back toward camp, feet dusty, knife sheathed, Simeon broke the silence.

“Do you think Father sees you?”

Levi didn’t answer.

He didn't flinch.

He didn't even blink.

But he did not answer.

And Simeon, in the quiet of the dusk, nodded once—almost like that was the answer he expected.

The vision lingered there.

In dusk.

Two sons walking back not toward home, but toward inheritance without blessing.

They would carry that together.

Simeon in wrath.

Levi in silence.

Both born into rejection. Both learning to forge their own place in a house that had made room for others.

*
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Phanuel's flame shimmered behind me.

He had shown enough.

Not the whole scroll.

Not the whole soul.

But the foundation—the root system of flame that would one day bloom into blood.

And I—

I stood not as judge, but as witness.

I understood now.

Simeon did not begin in violence.

He began in the ache of the unseen.

And everything after was him trying to prove that he could not be ignored.

Even if it meant becoming a sword.

Chapter Three

The flame lifted.

Not quickly. Not with fanfare.

Phanuel did not dismiss me. He simply withdrew—like light retreating beneath the skin of a still lake. I felt the air change around me, not cooler, not empty, but quiet in the way a chamber becomes when a soul has wept and left no tears behind.

I stood alone in the rotunda.

No one came to replace him.

No scroll appeared.

The dais remained still.

I thought I might move to the reading room—sometimes, after a layered flame-sight, I go there to re-anchor the senses, to let my hands remember how to touch parchment without trembling. But the path beneath my feet turned slightly before I noticed.

A curve, a shift, a breath in the stones.

I followed.

I passed a hallway I did not recognize.

Then another I hadn't walked since my training years.

When I came fully to myself, I was already standing on the Bridge of Emeralds, its glass stones gleaming beneath my feet like old laughter polished into memory.

Across the way, not far, just past the etched columns of the flame-script courtyard, stood a building I hadn't meant to seek.

And when I saw it—I laughed.

Not a loud laugh. Not startled. Not wild.

Just a laugh that came from the ribs, slow and round, the kind that had been waiting for a reason to surface.

Because of course.

Of course the path had brought me here.

The Hall of First Breath.

The place where every scribe begins.

And—more importantly—the place where Cain and Abel still taught.

I hadn't seen them in what felt like two lifetimes, though I knew it hadn't been that long. Time folds strangely in Beit Zachar, especially for those who carry the heavier scrolls.

But as I approached the archway, I saw the familiar torchlight—one side a gentle gold, the other with a faint crimson flicker, like a grin held too long in the mouth of a repentant trickster.

That was them.

Still teaching. Still together.

Still... somehow... whole.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

R. Selah

R. Selah is the sacred pen of Regina Velda Roundtree-Wekesa, founder of Selah Publishing House. Her writing draws from ancient texts, spiritual tradition, and years of Sabbath-rooted study. Through poetic breath, flame-sight, and holy memory, she seeks not to retell history, but to *listen* where the breath of Heaven still lingers.

She writes across genres and under multiple names - always in pursuit of what Heaven has not forgotten.

Regina leads a weekly public Sabbath study that has shaped much of her theological —vision and narrative rhythm. It is in this space of shared wonder, wrestling, and reverence that *The Twelve Patriarchs*, *The Moses Chronicles*, and future works have been prayerfully formed.

She writes not simply to inform, but to awaken and to invite readers into the silence between the verses, the ache between generations, and the covenant that breathes still.

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