



# Escape from Babylon

a musical about parallel lives and redemption

*original concept, music, and lyrics by Charles Thomas Betz*

*Book by TBD*

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# Overview

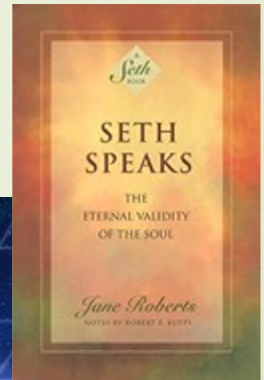
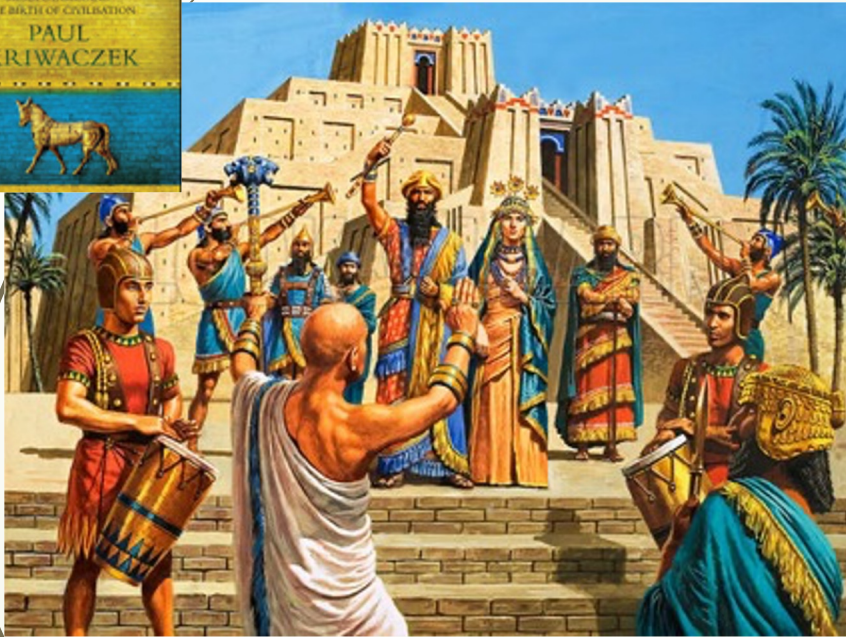
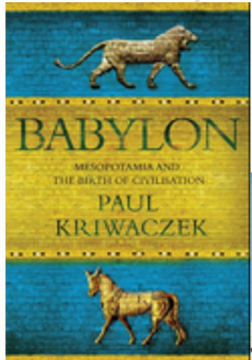


- ❓ **Logline:** A 21st century man makes contact with a closely connected soul in 1500 BC Babylon. What appears to be a tragic end takes an unexpected turn.
- ❓ **Synopsis:** Shawn, a 21st century man makes contact with Balthazar, a closely connected soul in 1500 BC Babylon. Both rise and fall in their respective communities, with Balthazar losing his life, viscerally experienced by Shawn via past life regression. Due to the non-linearity of time, they realize together that Balthazar's apparent fate is only one possibility and the two of them together make different choices leading to freedom for both.

Explores themes of spiritual growth, materialism, divine feminine, and the New Age movement and its contradictions.

# Setting

- ❑ There are two socio/political contexts
  - ❑ Modern era (21<sup>st</sup> century), New Age spiritual community
  - ❑ Babylon (aka Mesopotamia) circa 1500 BCE, in particular religious life





# Themes

- ? Being a spiritual seeker and struggling with earthly temptations
- ? Probable realities and simultaneous time -- signature song: **"The Passing Of Time (Is Only For The Moment)"**
  - ? If this seems far out, check out the streaming media. These themes are explored in dozens of movies and series, such as *Being Erica*, *Dark*, *Cloud Atlas*, *Sliding Doors*, *The Lake House*, even the latest Marvel Cinematic Universe (multiverse concepts).
  - ? *On A Clear Day (You Can See Forever)* is a well-known musical about reincarnation. *Groundhog Day* (which was turned into a musical) has indirect similarities. *If/Then* is a recent musical exploring probable realities, but this will be a very different take.
- ? Soul groups (like *Sense8*)
- ? The sacred sexual and reclaiming feminine power
- ? Babylon
  - ? As metaphor for modern society and its ills (cf. Bible and Rastafarianism)
  - ? Subverting the "Whore of Babylon" concept





# Characters



- ❑ SHAWN, 21st century seeker
- ❑ SOPHIA, Shawn's mentor
- ❑ SONYA, Shawn's toxic mother
- ❑ BALTHAZAR, Babylonian priest 1000 BC
- ❑ ANATU, (ah-NA-too), Babylonian priestess
- ❑ ARDORACH, power-hungry high priest infatuated with Anatu
- ❑ LAKHMU, Baltazar's friend
- ❑ BELTIS, high priestess and Anatu's mentor
- ❑ TBD: Shawn's sister. Mentor/guide figure for Shawn other than Sophia.

# Relationships

"For your own good"  
"I only want what's best for you"



Sonya

**Control**



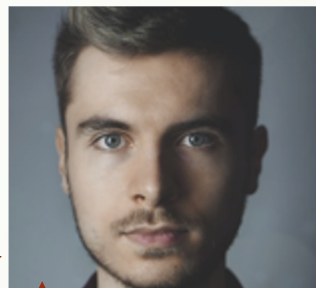
**Sister**



**Guide?**

Missing the wise one in the current day

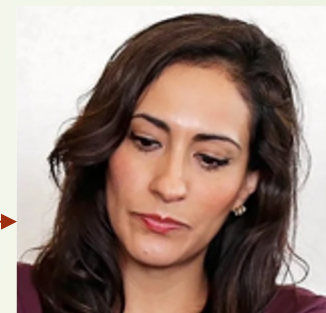
Someone who has time traveled themselves? Quantum physicist?



Shawn

**Mentor**

**Eventual love**

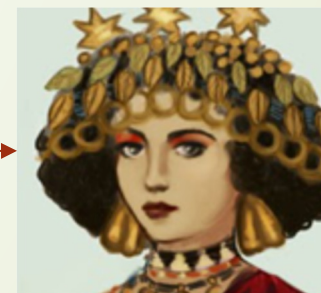


Sophia

**"Parallel incarnation"**

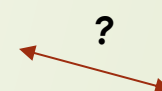


Balthazar



Anatu

**?**



Beltis

**?**



**Mentor**



**Friend**



Lakhmu

**Ruin**



Ardorach

**Lust**



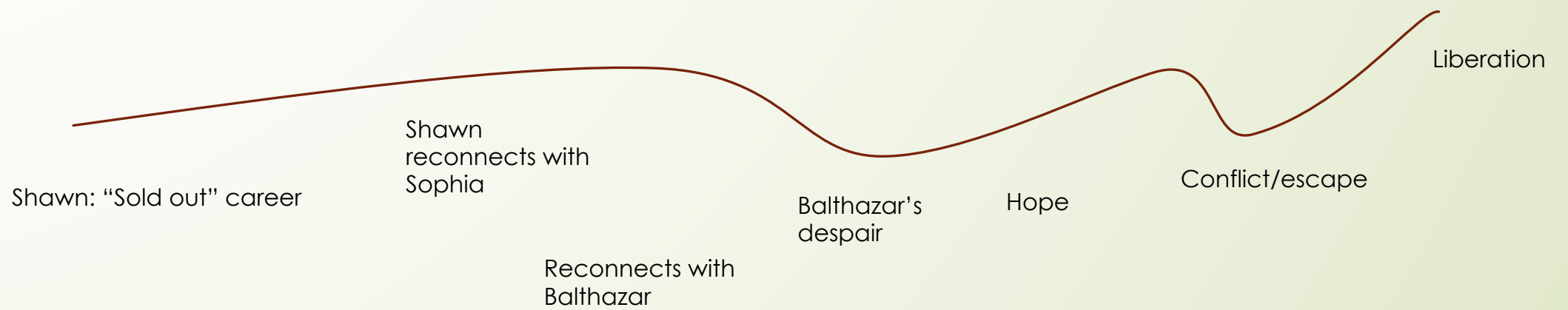
"For the greater good"

# Arcs

## Act I



## Act II





# Act I

(It's a Matter of Time). A Welcome to a world of simultaneous time man in the mid-90s (Shawn) is a seeker with a history of depression, troubled and ill at ease in his life (**Something Beneath the Surface**), money and relationship issues. He becomes involved in a New Age church/spiritual community (**New Age Smorgasbord**).

He starts a choir and a music program at the church with some success and recognition (**Haven't I Seen You**).

He meets Sophia, who becomes a spiritual mentor. He has feelings for her, but she is not attracted to him due to poor emotional intelligence and unresolved mother issues (**Beware the Man**).

Sophia also questions Shawn's motivations, which although cloaked in New Age garb are materialistic and status oriented. (**Something Beneath The Surface reprise**)

In working with Sophia and others, Shawn becomes aware of a past life, Balthazar, a young, charismatic priest in Babylon, and Balthazar becomes aware of him. (**Life Next Door**). Shawn notices that he sees Balthazar's life at different points in no particular order. (When he first meets Balthazar, Balthazar says "You again?") Babylon is a sexy place and deeply engaged with the divine feminine as opposed to other contemporary societies. (**The Whore of Babylon**)

Both Shawn and Balthazar become leaders in their communities. (**There Is One - joint musical number**) .

Balthazar is romantically involved with the young and beautiful Anatu (**Shadows In The Moonlight**), who is also lusted after by the powerful high priest Ardorach.

Shawn's leadership at his church suffers - he has taken things as far as he can. He starts to realize that no amount of "spirituality" will "fix" his personal issues. The choir falls apart. Sophia distances herself. He is becoming erratic and is still poor, depressed, and lonely. (Emotional intelligence issues)

Balthazar parallels?

Additionally he is becoming disgusted and cynical with the New Age philosophy and what he perceives as its superficiality. His younger sister starts a family and he feels deep envy. (Darker reprise of **Something Beneath the Surface**) –

Sonya (Mother) wants him to stop being idealistic and "do more with his life" – but she has toxic reasons - In Babylon, friction increases between Balthazar and Ardorach as well. (**For The Greater Good/For Your Own Good – villain song**). Ardorach has Balthazar arrested.

Shawn meets with church leaders in a study/clarity session. An energy reading is spontaneously performed for Shawn which becomes a past life regression, and he and those supporting the regression all perceive and feel Balthazar's execution by impalement. Seemingly harmless New Age practices end with more than what anyone has bargained for.

Everyone is disturbed. No-one reaches out to support Shawn in the aftermath. Shawn leaves the church. (Darker reprise of **Something Beneath the Surface** leading to **I Cannot Abide**).

Act I ends in darkness.





# Act II

Time passes. Years? Shawn is working in the corporate world and has made his peace with it. He's stressed out by modern society (**Cellphone**).

Shawn starts having health? issues (**I Will Not Be Here Tomorrow**), feels his mortality, and starts seeking again, reconnecting with Sophia and then Balthazar. (**Silence of Mind** segues into brief **Life Next Door** reprise.)

As Shawn deepens the connection he realizes (with the help of Sophia) that Balthazar's life is not static, over and done **and actually is unfolding in parallel with his own**. "Time is not an assembly line." (**Passing of Time: "11 o'clock number"**). Sophia starts to develop feelings for Shawn (**Sophia's Song**).

Balthazar is also too attached to his material comforts, in part because of his love for Anatu. This leaves him vulnerable to Ardorach who manipulates his downfall.

Shawn takes the plunge into another regression, and feels Balthazar's terrible guilt in death, that by being materialistic he lost everything and caused his loved ones grief. (**Balthazar's Lament**). **Deepest pathos. Emotional center of the musical.**

Mutual realization that they are both trapped by their materialism. Balthazar thinks Anatu will not love him if he leaves the priesthood. Shawn thinks that he will not attract a partner if he doesn't have a good corporate job. Anatu and Sophia correct them by singing **I Love You Anyways and Always**.

In a third regression Shawn and Balthazar come spiritually closer (**There is One/Passing of Time** reprise/short medley/overlay). There is realization that things are not fixed... that Balthazar has options (**Choose Once Again**.) Balthazar makes a new decision - to take a chance and flee into the unknown with Anatu.

Dramatic action climax with Balthazar (with the assistance of his good friend Lakhmu ) escaping Ardorach's trap with Anatu, and they set out by boat on the Euphrates into an uncertain - but free - future. In the current time, Shawn and Sophia hit the open road in an RV ... (**Liberation Song**)

Finale - reprise of **There Is One**. Or **Liberation Song**.