

## MIQDASH BETHEL COVENANT ASSEMBLY

Pearl River, Louisiana USA

miqdashbethel@gmail.com

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### To the Honored Rabbis of Israel:

My name is **Kepha Arcemont**. I am the Elder and founder of **Miqdash Bethel Covenant Assembly** in Pearl River, Louisiana — a Hebrew covenant ministry grounded exclusively in the Tanakh as sole doctrinal authority. I am a former New Orleans firefighter, retired early due to an on-the-job injury, and a Gold Star son. My father, **SFC Terry Gilman Arcemont**, was killed in action in 1967. I know what it costs a family when a nation sends its sons and daughters into a war built on something other than truth.

### A Word on the Name Yahweh (יהוה):

Throughout this letter and the enclosed study, I use the name **Yahweh** (יהוה) — the Tetragrammaton — as the personal covenant name of the Holy One of Yisra'el. I am fully aware that the tradition of Klal Yisra'el substitutes *Adonai* in prayer and *HaShem* in conversation, out of deep reverence for the sanctity of the Name. I honor that tradition.

My ministry speaks exclusively from the Tanakh as written. The Tanakh itself declares this Name as the covenant-identity by which **Yahweh** is known — as He said to Moshe (Mosheh) at the burning bush: ***"This is My name forever, and this is My memorial to all generations"*** — **Shemot (Exodus) 3:15**. For this reason, I use the Name in full — not out of disrespect, but out of covenant fidelity to the text. No offense is intended, and I ask that none be taken.

### Why I Am Writing:

The enclosed covenant study is addressed to you specifically because you are among the most respected voices in religious Yisra'el — and because, according to my research, several of you have publicly framed the current war against Iran as divinely ordained, as messianic fulfillment, or as cosmic end-of-days confirmation. With the deepest respect, I am writing to show you — from the Tanakh alone — that this framing is not supported by the covenant text, and that the path **Yahweh** calls the nation to walk in this moment is very different from the one currently being walked.

This is not a political letter. This is not written from the perspective of any government, intelligence service, or political organization. It is written from the covenant — by a minister whose sole authority is the Tanakh, whose sole loyalty is to **Yahweh's** word, and whose sole purpose is that peace be established on the foundation that the prophets described.

### **What Is Enclosed:**

Enclosed with this letter is a full covenant study titled: ***"The Covenant Test: What the Tanakh Says About This War."*** It addresses five specific areas:

- The Tanakh's standard for a lawful war — and whether this war meets it
- The prophetic vision of Yehezkel (Ezekiel) for the covenant future of the Land and its peoples
- The covenant history between Persia (Iran) and Yisra'el — including Koresh (Cyrus) and the 2,500-year Persian-Jewish community
- The Tanakh's explicit warnings against trusting in military strength and alliances over covenant faithfulness
- The ancient path — **HaDerekh HaYeshanah** — that **Yirmeyahu (Jeremiah)** called the nation to stand at the crossroads and choose

I am asking you, as men of the Torah, to read this study — not as a political brief, but as a covenant challenge from the text you have devoted your lives to. The prophets did not speak only to priests and kings. They spoke to *all* who have ears to hear.

In covenant and in shalom,

**Kepha Arcemont**

Elder, Miqdash Bethel Covenant Assembly

Pearl River, Louisiana USA  
miqdashbethel@gmail.com

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## THE COVENANT TEST:

### What the Tanakh Says About This War

*A Covenant Study for the Rabbis of Yisra'el*

Prepared by Elder Kepha Arcemont | Miqdash Bethel Covenant Assembly

March 22, 2026

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#### **Prefatory Note: The Only Standard That Matters**

This study does not argue from political theory, military strategy, international law, or comparative religion. It argues from **one source only** — the Tanakh. Every claim made here is grounded in the Hebrew text. Every citation uses the Hebrew name of the book and the Hebrew names of **Yahweh** (יהוה) and **Elohim** (אֱלֹהִים) as they appear in the covenant text. The reader is invited to open their own Tanakh at every reference and examine the evidence directly.

The question before us is not whether Iran is a threat to Yisra'el. The question is whether this war — as it has been launched, as it has been framed, and as it is being conducted — aligns with the covenant standard that **Yahweh** established for His people. That is the only question a rabbi can legitimately answer from the Tanakh. And the Tanakh's answer demands an honest hearing.

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## SECTION I: THE TANAKH'S STANDARD FOR LAWFUL WAR

### 1.1 — War Is Not Self-Authorizing

**Yahweh** authorized specific wars in the Tanakh — and each authorization was explicit, direct, and bounded. The Torah does not give Yisra'el a blanket license to wage war whenever a perceived threat arises. The command to go to war came from **Yahweh** Himself — through the prophet, through the Urim and Thummim, through direct divine instruction. When Yisra'el went to war on its own authority, without that divine mandate, the result was defeat and catastrophe.

#### **Bemidbar (Numbers) 14:41–45**

*"But Moshe said, 'Why are you transgressing the command of Yahweh? This will not succeed. Do not go up, lest you be struck down before your enemies, for Yahweh is not among you. For the Amalekites and the Canaanites are there before you, and you shall fall by the sword. Because you have turned back from following Yahweh, Yahweh will not be with you.' But they presumed to go up... Then the Amalekites and the Canaanites who lived in that hill country came down and defeated them, pursuing them as far as Hormah."*

This passage from **Bemidbar** establishes a covenant principle that the entire history of Yisra'el confirms: war waged without **Yahweh's** explicit authorization, however righteous the motivation of those fighting, does not receive divine protection. The issue is not the courage of the fighters. The issue is *the authorization of the Commander*.

### 1.2 — The Test of the Prophet

Under the covenant, when the nation faced a crisis of war, the king and leadership were required to seek **Yahweh's** word through His prophets. The Tanakh records numerous instances of this pattern — and the consistent warning is that kings who consulted false prophets, or who went to war because their prophets told them what they wanted to hear, brought disaster on themselves and the nation.

#### **Melakhim Alef (1 Kings) 22:5–6, 17–18**

*"And Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel, 'Inquire first for the word of Yahweh.' Then the king of Israel gathered the prophets together,*

***about four hundred men, and said to them, 'Shall I go to battle against Ramoth-gilead, or shall I refrain?' And they said, 'Go up, for Yahweh will give it into the hand of the king.'... And Micaiah said, 'I saw all Israel scattered on the mountains, as sheep that have no shepherd. And Yahweh said, these have no master; let each return to his home in peace.' And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, 'Did I not tell you that he would not prophesy good concerning me, but evil?'"***

The four hundred prophets who approved the war were wrong. The one who spoke **Yahweh's** true word was rejected because his answer was uncomfortable. This is the eternal pattern: *a nation that seeks prophets to validate the war it has already decided to fight is not seeking Yahweh — it is seeking itself.*

### **1.3 — Has a Prophet of Yahweh Authorized This War?**

The question must be asked plainly: **Has any prophet of Yahweh — speaking with Tanakh authority — declared that the current war against Iran is commanded by Yahweh?**

Framing current events as End-of-Days fulfillment based on Talmudic passages about Persia and Rome, however sincere and however learned the rabbi making the argument, is *not* the same as a Tanakh prophetic mandate. The Talmud is rabbinic commentary, not prophetic authorization for military action. A rabbi may believe a war aligns with his understanding of prophetic trajectory. That is a theological opinion. It is not a covenant mandate.

The Torah explicitly commands: ***"You shall not add to the word that I command you, nor take from it"*** — **Devarim (Deuteronomy) 4:2**. Presenting a Talmudic interpretation of prophetic trajectory as a divine mandate for war is a form of adding to what **Yahweh** has commanded.

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## **SECTION II: THE WARNING AGAINST TRUSTING MILITARY STRENGTH**

## 2.1 — The Covenant Principle: Not by Might

One of the most consistent themes in the entire Tanakh — in the Torah, the Nevi'im, and the Ketuvim alike — is that **Yahweh** does not protect Yisra'el because of its military strength. He protects Yisra'el because of covenant faithfulness. When Yisra'el placed its trust in armies and alliances rather than in **Yahweh**, the prophets declared that **Yahweh** Himself would bring judgment — not through Yisra'el's enemies alone, but through history itself turning against the nation.

### Tehillim (Psalms) 20:7–8

***"Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of Yahweh our Elohim. They collapse and fall, but we rise and stand upright."***

### Tehillim (Psalms) 33:16–17

***"The king is not saved by his great army; a warrior is not delivered by his great strength. The war horse is a false hope for salvation, and by its great might it cannot rescue."***

### Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 31:1, 3

***"Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help and rely on horses, who trust in chariots because they are many and in horsemen because they are very strong, but do not look to the Holy One of Yisra'el or consult Yahweh!... The Egyptians are man, and not Elohim, and their horses are flesh, and not spirit. When Yahweh stretches out his hand, the helper will stumble, and he who is helped will fall, and they will all perish together."***

These are not isolated passages. They represent the *consistent prophetic witness* from Yeshayahu through Zekhariah: the nation that places its confidence in the strength of its military coalition — even a powerful one, even a seemingly victorious one — has shifted its dependence from **Yahweh** to flesh. And **Yahweh** has consistently refused to honor that shift.

## 2.2 — The Specific Sin of the Alliance

The current war is not a war of Yisra'el alone. It is a joint war waged with the United States. The Tanakh has specific, pointed things to say about Yisra'el entering into military alliances with great foreign powers.

### **Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 30:1–3**

***"Woe to the rebellious children, declares Yahweh, who carry out a plan, but not mine, and who make an alliance, but not of my Spirit, that they may add sin to sin; who set out to go down to Egypt, without asking for my direction, to take refuge in the protection of Pharaoh and to seek shelter in the shadow of Egypt! Therefore shall the protection of Pharaoh turn to your shame, and the shelter in the shadow of Egypt to your humiliation."***

Egypt in this passage is the great military superpower of the ancient Near East — Yisra'el's most powerful potential ally. **Yahweh** does not say Egypt is weak. He says that aligning with Egypt — choosing the shadow of the superpower over the covenant of **Yahweh** — is rebellion against Him. The principle is not Egypt-specific. The principle is: *an alliance made without Yahweh's direction, however strategically sound it appears, is a step toward shame.*

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## **SECTION III: THE COVENANT HISTORY OF PERSIA AND YISRA'EL**

### **3.1 — Koresh: The Anointed One**

The most remarkable designation in the entire Tanakh for a Gentile ruler is found in **Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 45:1**: ***"Thus says Yahweh to His anointed — to Koresh (Cyrus), whose right hand I have grasped, to subdue nations before him and to loose the belts of kings, to open doors before him that gates may not be closed."***

The Hebrew word used is ***mashiach*** — the same root as Messiah. Koresh, the Persian king, is the only Gentile in the entire Tanakh given the title of ***mashiach***. **Yahweh** called Koresh by name *before he was born* (Yeshayahu 44:28) — and then used him to issue

the decree that returned the Jewish exiles from Babylon to rebuild Yerushalayim (Jerusalem).

This is not a minor historical footnote. This is **Yahweh** declaring that the Persian people — the ancestors of today's Iranians — were instruments of covenant redemption. They freed the Jewish people. They funded the rebuilding of the Temple. The relationship between Persia and Yisra'el, in the Tanakh's own testimony, is a covenant relationship, not an eternal enmity.

### 3.2 — 2,500 Years of Persian-Jewish History

The book of **Ester (Esther)** is set entirely in the Persian court. It is read annually at Purim — which this year fell on March 2–3, 2026, the week the current war escalated. The book's message is not that Persia is an eternal enemy of Yisra'el. The message is that within the Persian empire, through covenant faithfulness, **Yahweh** worked deliverance. The Jewish community of Persia — Shushan, Babylon, and beyond — was one of the oldest and most continuous Jewish communities in the world, surviving for 2,500 years.

To frame modern Iran as the inheritor only of Haman's hatred — while ignoring that the same text celebrates Koresh's faithfulness — is a selective reading of the covenant history that serves a political narrative more than it serves the truth of the text.

### 3.3 — The Tanakh's Call to Distinguish Between Regime and People

The prophets consistently distinguished between the sins of a ruling power and the fate of the people under that power. **Yirmeyahu (Jeremiah)** wrote to the Jewish exiles in Babylon — the very empire that had destroyed Yerushalayim — and commanded:

**Yirmeyahu (Jeremiah) 29:7**

***"But seek the welfare (shalom) of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to Yahweh on its behalf, for in its shalom you will find your shalom."***

If **Yahweh** commanded His people to seek the *shalom* of Babylon — the destroyer of the Temple — then what does the covenant require toward the people of Iran, who have not destroyed the Temple, who include millions of ordinary citizens with no voice in their

government's ideology, and who include a documented Jewish community that has lived in Persia since the exile?

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## SECTION IV: THE BLOOD OF THE INNOCENT

### 4.1 — B'Tselem Elohim: Every Person Made in the Image of Elohim

The foundational covenant principle of human dignity is stated in **Bereishit (Genesis) 9:6**: *"Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed, for Elohim made man in His own image."* The Hebrew phrase is *b'tselem Elohim* — in the image of **Elohim**. This principle is universal. It does not apply only to Jewish blood. It applies to every human being — Iranian, American, Israeli, Palestinian — because every human being is made in the image of **Elohim**.

The current war has already killed approximately 2,000 civilians in Iran, Lebanon, and Yisra'el, with hundreds of thousands displaced. The opening strike on February 28, 2026 killed approximately 170 people when a missile struck a girls' school adjacent to a naval base in Minab, Iran. Whatever the strategic calculation behind that strike, **Yahweh's** covenant standard does not permit a rabbi to declare dead Iranian schoolgirls as acceptable collateral in a divine plan. They bore the image of **Elohim**. Their blood cries out.

### 4.2 — Mishpat: The Justice Standard

**Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 1:17**

*"Learn to do good; seek justice, correct oppression; bring justice to the fatherless, plead the widow's cause."*

**Amos 5:21–24**

*"I hate, I despise your feasts, and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies. Even though you offer me your burnt offerings and grain offerings, I will not accept them... But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream."*

The prophet **Amos** delivered this word to a Yisra'el that was externally prosperous and religiously active — maintaining the Temple, performing the sacrifices, observing the feasts. **Yahweh's** response was that He despised all of it, because *mishpat* (justice) was absent. The warning is not directed at a godless nation. It is directed at a nation that performs religion while allowing injustice to flow through its policies. The test of covenant faithfulness is not military victory. It is whether *mishpat* is flowing like a river.

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## SECTION V: THE PROPHETIC VISION — WHERE YAHWEH IS CALLING THIS NATION

### 5.1 — Yirmeyahu at the Crossroads

#### Yirmeyahu (Jeremiah) 6:16

***"Thus says Yahweh: Stand at the crossroads, and look, and ask for the ancient paths — where the good way is; and walk in it, and find rest for your souls. But they said, 'We will not walk in it.'"***

This is the verse that stands over this entire moment. **Yahweh** is not asking Yisra'el to be weak. He is not asking it to surrender. He is asking it to *stop* at the crossroads — to look at the ancient covenant path — to ask where the *derech hatovah*, the good way, is — and to walk in it.

The tragedy of **Yirmeyahu's** ministry is captured in the last four words of the verse: **"We will not walk in it."** The nation heard the covenant call. It chose the other path. And **Yahweh** allowed the consequences to unfold. The prophets do not moralize about this. They mourn it. **Yirmeyahu** wept. But he did not stop declaring the ancient path.

### 5.2 — The Vision of Yeshayahu: Torah Going Forth to All Nations

#### Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 2:2–4

***"It shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the house of Yahweh shall be established as the highest of the mountains... and all the nations shall flow to it, and many peoples***

***shall come, and say: 'Come, let us go up to the mountain of Yahweh, to the house of the Elohim of Ya'akov, that He may teach us His ways and that we may walk in His paths.' For out of Tsion shall go forth the Torah, and the word of Yahweh from Yerushalayim. He shall judge between the nations, and shall decide disputes for many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore."***

This is **Yahweh's** declared purpose for Yisra'el. The ultimate calling of this nation, in the vision of the greatest of the writing prophets, is not military supremacy — it is *Torah going forth to all nations*. The destiny of Yerushalayim, in **Yeshayahu's** vision, is to be the source of justice and peace for *every people on earth — including Persia*.

A war that makes Yerushalayim a city of missiles rather than Torah — that makes the name of Yisra'el a word associated with bombing campaigns rather than covenant wisdom — is not moving toward this vision. It is moving away from it.

### **5.3 — The Yehezkel Principle: The Stranger Has a Portion**

#### **Yechezkel (Ezekiel) 47:22–23**

***"You shall allot it as an inheritance for yourselves and for the sojourners who reside among you and have had children among you. They shall be to you as native-born children of Yisra'el. With you they shall be allotted an inheritance among the tribes of Yisra'el. In whatever tribe the sojourner resides, there you shall assign him his inheritance, declares Yahweh Elohim."***

This passage from **Yechezkel** — the same prophet whose vision of the Temple in chapters 40–48 is the most detailed blueprint for covenant governance in the Tanakh — explicitly states that the sojourner (*ger*) who has lived among Yisra'el has a covenant inheritance equal to the native-born. The vision of the covenant future is not ethnic exclusivity. It is *covenant inclusion* — the extending of the covenant table to all who come in faithfulness.

## SECTION VI: THE COVENANT PATH FORWARD — WHAT YAHWEH REQUIRES

This study does not end with condemnation. It ends with the ancient path — **HaDerekh HaYeshanah** — that **Yahweh** has already marked out. The prophets did not diagnose without prescribing. Here is what the covenant requires:

### **Step One: Immediate Cessation**

The covenant call to put down the sword does not depend on whether the enemy puts down theirs first. **Yahweh** does not grade Yisra'el on a curve. The standard is: ***“Return, O Yisra'el, to Yahweh your Elohim, for you have stumbled because of your iniquity. Take with you words and return to Yahweh”*** — Hoshea (Hosea) 14:1–2.

### **Step Two: Covenant-Based Diplomacy**

The Tanakh does not prohibit negotiation with enemies. It requires it, when the alternative is bloodshed. **Yahweh** sent **Yirmeyahu** to speak to the Babylonian empire. He sent the prophet **Yonah (Jonah)** to Nineveh — the capital of the Assyrian empire — the most brutal military power of the ancient Near East — and **Yahweh** spared that city when it repented. The door of covenant conversation is never permanently closed.

### **Step Three: Speaking Truth in the Public Square**

The most important thing the rabbis of Yisra'el can do in this moment is what **Yirmeyahu** did: stand at the gate of the Temple — the most public platform available — and speak the covenant word without modification, without political calculation, and without fear of the king's displeasure.

#### **Yirmeyahu (Jeremiah) 7:2–3**

***“Stand in the gate of Yahweh's house and proclaim there this word... Thus says Yahweh of hosts, the Elohim of Yisra'el: Amend your ways and your deeds, and I will let you dwell in this place.”***

### **The Covenant Invitation**

Miqdash Bethel Covenant Assembly extends a covenant invitation to any rabbi, any religious leader, and any nation willing to sit at the table of **Yahweh's** word and examine — honestly, in the light of the Tanakh alone — what **Yahweh** requires of His people and of all the nations in this hour.

***"How good and how pleasant it is when brothers dwell together in unity!"*** —  
**Tehillim (Psalms) 133:1.**

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Miqdash Bethel Covenant Assembly | [miqdashbethel@gmail.com](mailto:miqdashbethel@gmail.com) | Pearl River, Louisiana USA

Tanakh citations drawn from Hebrew text; English renderings based on JPS 1985 and Robert Alter translation traditions.