

MIQDASH BETHEL COVENANT INSTITUTION

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A COVENANT WITNESS IN THE FIELD:

COURTNEY BONNEAU AND THE TESTIMONY OF THE WATCHMAN

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Issued: May 5, 2026 | Kepha Arcemont, Elder and Founder

PART I — WHO IS COURTNEY BONNEAU?

BACKGROUND AND PROFILE

Courtney Bonneau is an independent American-Dutch photojournalist and war correspondent, born and raised in Plainville, Massachusetts, who has dedicated her life to documenting the human cost of conflict across the Middle East. She holds dual United States and Dutch citizenship and lived in Groningen, Netherlands for approximately fourteen years before establishing her base in Lebanon. She also works with the University of Groningen when not in the field.

Bonneau describes herself as a photojournalist who fell into the work "by accident" — drawn first to Palestine in 2014 while visiting a friend in Tel Aviv, only to make the decision to take a bus into Ramla and see conditions for herself. What she witnessed at the separation wall — a structure she compared to the perimeter of a maximum-security prison, lined with barbed wire and sniper towers — shattered every media narrative she had previously absorbed. From that day, she committed herself to on-the-ground documentation.

She began formally contributing to a Palestinian media outlet in 2016–2017 and developed her photojournalism skills alongside academic co-authorship, including a published paper on the reconstruction of Mosul, Iraq. She has since worked in Palestine, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, and Iran. She maintains a permanent photographic exhibition at the Mosul Eye — a UNESCO World Heritage Site — and has exhibited her work in Boston and Beirut. She is represented through Middle East Images and operates as a contributor to independent outlets including Vocal Politics (VPol).

By early 2026, Courtney Bonneau had become one of the only foreign journalists documenting conditions on the ground in South Lebanon during the Israeli military campaign designated by Israel as Operation Eternal Darkness. Her Instagram account (@courtneybonneauphotography) carries over 44,000 followers as of this writing.

KEY PERSONAL FACTS

CATEGORY	DETAIL
Full Name	Courtney Bonneau
Born	Plainville, Massachusetts, USA
Citizenship	Dual: United States and Netherlands
Base	South Lebanon (active field posting, 2023–2026)
Prior Residence	Groningen, Netherlands (14 years); Beirut; West Bank
Education/Academic	University of Groningen affiliation; co-author, academic publications
First Field Assignment	2017, Lebanon — Almacasid Hospital project
Field Territories	Palestine, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Iran
Notable Exhibitions	Mosul Eye (UNESCO World Heritage), permanent; Boston gallery; Beirut Sage Parlour
Affiliation	Middle East Images; Vocal Politics (VPol); independent
Personal Notes	Autistic; mother of a son; mother passed 2025; former partner in Lebanese Air Force

PART II — HER WORK IN THE FIELD

DOCUMENTATION OF WAR CRIMES

Courtney Bonneau does not merely report — she archives. Her stated mission is to produce a comprehensive photographic and video record of Israeli military conduct in South Lebanon sufficient for submission to the International Criminal Court. University colleagues have confirmed to her that the evidentiary record she has assembled meets the threshold for ICC war crimes proceedings.

Her documentation covers: the demolition of civilian homes — including the use of C4 explosives to rig and detonate residential structures after Israeli forces crossed the Blue Line; the progressive expansion of illegal military bases in territory that remained beyond the ceasefire lines; the targeting of medical workers (over one hundred confirmed killed in Lebanon since March 2, 2026, per her on-the-ground tracking); the assassination of Lebanese journalists; and the systematic destruction of border villages she describes as now resembling Gaza after air and ground campaigns.

On September 12, 2025, standing near the Blue Line at Mais Al-Jabal with an IDF base behind her, Bonneau filmed Israeli forces crossing into Lebanese territory on all-terrain vehicles, detonating a civilian home with C4, and leaving unexploded ordnance behind — violations documented and broadcast through VPol. The Lebanese army was subsequently photographed clearing the site of mines and bombs.

In December 2025, while reporting outside the illegal Israeli base in Houla, South Lebanon, Bonneau was subjected to loudspeaker warnings broadcast from the base. When she continued filming, Israeli soldiers advanced toward her position, and footage captured a Merkava tank moving in the direction of her vehicle — a direct intimidation operation against a civilian journalist.

In May 2026, she gave an interview to PREVAIL journalist Greg Olear, in which she described driving ten kilometers through South Lebanon without seeing a single person — while being followed by an armed drone. She documented the IDF siege of ambulance drivers and the killing of journalist Amal Khalil of Al-Akhbar, who was first targeted in her vehicle, then chased into a house, then killed when that house was shelled, with rescue workers subsequently shot at as they attempted to reach her.

THE KHAZIR CAMP — FORMER CHILD SOLDIERS OF ISIS

Among Bonneau's most internationally significant long-form projects is her work at the Khazir displacement camp in Iraq, where she has been collecting the testimonies and photographs of former child soldiers of ISIS — young men who were forcibly recruited into the organization and now exist in a stateless limbo: unable to return to Mosul due to family rejection, unable to settle in Erbil due to threat of violence, abandoned by NGOs and ignored by the Iraqi government. One subject, Mohammad, approximately 22 years of age at the time of her interviews, became a focal point of this

work. Bonneau's documentation of these young men represents some of the only sustained Western independent witness of their situation.

THE GRANDMOTHER'S PHOTOGRAPH

Among the countless acts of witness Bonneau has performed, one stands as a parable of the purpose of honest journalism. During active bombardment, she discovered a photograph in the rubble of a destroyed building in South Lebanon — the image of an elderly woman. She photographed it and posted it online. A family in London recognized the woman as their grandmother. Through Bonneau, they made contact. She returned to the still-active strike zone with the permission of Lebanese civil authorities, located the photograph, and ultimately mailed it to the family — the last surviving image of their grandmother, whose home had been destroyed. No wire service or network journalist was there to do this. Bonneau was.

PART III — HER BRAVERY UNDER FIRE

WHAT IT HAS COST HER

Courtney Bonneau is an independent journalist. She has no network behind her, no armored bureau, no editorial security team. She operates with a single companion — a local colleague she refers to as Ali — who accompanies her into the field. When she sought guidance from a Lebanese army officer about whether she could be kidnapped while embedded with his unit near an advancing Israeli patrol, the officer responded: "Maybe." She describes this as the one moment of genuine fear she has experienced in her years of field work.

She has been shot at — IDF snipers fired at the ground near her feet — and she has watched Israeli vehicles advance toward her position. She has been strip-searched and had her flight missed at Tel Aviv's airport under fabricated explosives charges after Israeli intelligence officers confronted her with a comprehensive dossier of her contacts, movements, and personal relationships — demonstrating that the state of Israel was actively monitoring her well before the war began.

She has received death threats. She has received rape threats. Segments of the Lebanese population — those hostile to the communities she documents — have publicly targeted her. She acknowledges, flatly, that she has no institutional protection: if the IDF were to seize her, no agency would be able to stop it.

She has watched human beings die in front of her. She has seen what munitions do to a human body. She has heard — and can still hear in her memory — the sound of burning flesh. She has seen the teeth of a toddler removed from the upholstery of a bombed vehicle. She attended her mother's funeral only in her grief and not in body, because she could not leave the war zone. She carries grief home with her, she writes, like an uninvited guest who sits between her and her son like an impenetrable wall.

Against all of this, she remains. As of this writing in May 2026, Courtney Bonneau is still in South Lebanon.

DOCUMENTED SPECIFIC INCIDENTS OF PERSONAL DANGER

DATE / PERIOD	LOCATION	INCIDENT
2014	Tel Aviv / Ramla	First encounter with apartheid wall; personal transformation
2019	Lebanon	Returns to document revolution; meets future partner
~2019–2020	Tel Aviv Airport	Detained, strip-searched, flight missed; Israeli intelligence confronted her with dossier of all contacts

War Onset ~2023	South Lebanon	Stayed in Lebanon after partner relationship ended when war began; embedded in southern communities through full duration
~2024	Mel Jaba / Mice, South Lebanon	IDF snipers shot at feet of her and Ali; Israeli forces advanced in dune buggies/ATVs; asked army officer if she could be kidnapped — he said "maybe"
Sept. 12, 2025	Mais Al-Jabal, Blue Line	Filmed IDF crossing Blue Line illegally, using C4 to demolish civilian home, leaving ordnance behind; Lebanese army cleared mines afterward
Dec. 2025	Houla, South Lebanon	Threatened via IDF loudspeakers; soldiers advanced on her position; Merkava tank moved toward her vehicle; documented by Middle East Eye
Apr.–May 2026	South Lebanon, general	Reporting during Operation Eternal Darkness; followed by armed drone for 10 km; documenting hospital sieges, medical worker killings, journalist assassinations

PART IV — WHAT YAHWEH SAYS

A COVENANT AUDIT OF THE WATCHMAN'S TESTIMONY

SECTION 1 — THE DUTY OF THE WITNESS

The foundation of covenant jurisprudence in the Torah is the witness. **Devarim (Deuteronomy) 19:15** establishes that no matter may be adjudicated on the testimony of a single person — the truth must be confirmed by two or three witnesses. This is not merely a legal procedural standard; it is a theological one. **Yahweh** designed His covenant order around verified truth. The witness who sees and speaks accurately — who goes to the scene, takes photographs, interviews the survivors, and presents what cannot be denied — fulfills one of the most sacred functions in the covenant community.

Courtney Bonneau's entire methodology is Devarim 19:15 in practice. She does not rely on press releases. She does not rely on government statements. She drives to the border, stands near the Blue Line, photographs what is built and what is destroyed, and presents what she finds to the world. Her photographic archive represents a multi-witness documentary record — corroborated by the Lebanese army, UNIFIL, and independent journalists — of systematic violations of international law and covenant moral standards.

SECTION 2 — DAM NAKI: THE WEIGHT OF INNOCENT BLOOD

Among the most serious charges in the Hebrew covenant is the shedding of *dam naki* (דָּם נָקִי) — innocent blood. **Devarim (Deuteronomy) 19:10** commands that innocent blood not be shed in the land **Yahweh** has given. **Bemidbar (Numbers) 35:33** declares that blood pollutes the land, and the land cannot be cleansed of blood except by the blood of the one who shed it. The killing of over one hundred medical workers in Lebanon; the targeting of journalists by name; the demolition of civilian homes with military explosives; the drone-tracking of ambulances — all of this falls under the covenant category of *dam naki*. Courtney Bonneau is a witness to the shedding of innocent blood, commissioned by conscience to ensure that the record is not suppressed.

SECTION 3 — LO TIRTZACH: YOU SHALL NOT MURDER

Shemot (Exodus) 20:13 — the sixth of the Ten Words — declares in the Hebrew: *Lo tirtzach* (לֹא תִרְצַח). The root *ratsach* (רָצַח) — Strong's **H7523** — carries the specific connotation of premeditated, willful killing of persons outside the legitimate boundaries of covenant law. It is not a blanket prohibition on all taking of life; it is a targeted indictment of murder. The pattern Bonneau documents — in which the IDF identified journalist Amal Khalil, struck her vehicle, pursued her as she fled for cover, shelled the building where she sheltered, and then fired on her rescuers — constitutes *ratsach* in

its most unambiguous form. The Sinai standard applies regardless of military designation, national citizenship, or diplomatic classification.

SECTION 4 — TZELEM ELOHIM: THE IMAGE OF ELOHIM

Bereishit (Genesis) 1:26–27 establishes that every human being — without ethnic, national, or religious qualification — is created in the *tzelem Elohim* (צֶלֶם אֱלֹהִים), the image of **Elohim**. This is the irreducible foundation of human dignity in covenant law. The Palestinian child navigating fourteen checkpoints to reach school — head-level with the barrel of an AK-47 — bears the image of **Elohim**. The grandmother whose photograph was retrieved from rubble in South Lebanon bore the image of **Elohim**. The toddler whose teeth were removed from bombed vehicle upholstery bore the image of **Elohim**. Courtney Bonneau, though an atheist who would not use this language herself, is — in her daily work — acting as a defender of *tzelem Elohim*. She sees the face of **Elohim** in the violated, even if she does not yet know the Name of the One whose image she defends.

SECTION 5 — TZEDEK TZEDEK TIRDOF: JUSTICE, JUSTICE YOU SHALL PURSUE

Devarim (Deuteronomy) 16:20 issues one of the Torah's most famous imperatives: *Tzedek tzedek tirdof* (צֶדֶק צֶדֶק תִּרְדֹּף) — Justice, justice you shall pursue. The repetition of the word *tzedek* is deliberate and weighty. The rabbis have long taught that the doubling signals urgency, totality, and the obligation to pursue justice by just means — not merely to desire justice as an abstract value, but to run after it, hunt it, not stop until it is found. The phrase concludes: "...that you may live and inherit the land that **Yahweh** your **Elohim** is giving you." There is a covenant connection between justice and dwelling in the land. Where *dam naki* is shed and justice is suppressed, the land is defiled. Courtney Bonneau's photographic archive is, in covenant terms, an act of tzedek — pursued at personal cost, across war zones, under drone surveillance, at the risk of kidnapping and death.

SECTION 6 — THE NAVI: THE PROPHETIC TRADITION OF SPEAKING TRUTH TO POWER

Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 1:17 charges: *"Learn to do good; seek justice, rescue the oppressed, defend the orphan, plead for the widow."* This is the prophetic mandate in its most concentrated form. The *navi* (נָבִיא) — the prophet in the Tanakh — was not primarily a predictor of future events. The *navi* was a covenant enforcer: one who stood before rulers and nations and declared, in the name of **Yahweh**, what the Torah required and what was being violated. The *nevi'im* — Yeshayahu, Yirmeyahu, Amos, Michah — consistently spoke on behalf of the poor, the widow, the foreigner, the one without power. They named the crimes of kings and nations without flinching.

Courtney Bonneau occupies this prophetic function in secular form. She stands before IDF bases and films their expansion. She stands in bombed villages and photographs what remains. She names what she sees without diplomatic hedging. Like **Amos** before the court of Bethel, she is not a professional spokesperson of the powerful — she is an independent voice called by conscience to declare what the powerful would prefer remain unseen.

SECTION 7 — MISHLEI 31:8–9: THE COMMAND TO SPEAK FOR THOSE WHO CANNOT

Mishlei (Proverbs) 31:8–9 declares: *"Open your mouth for the mute, for the rights of all who are destitute. Open your mouth, judge righteously, defend the rights of the poor and needy."* The residents of South Lebanon's bombed villages — displaced, impoverished, unable to access international media, living hour to hour under drone surveillance — cannot speak for themselves to the world's audiences. Courtney Bonneau opens her mouth for them. She carries their stories, their photographs, their evidence of crimes committed against them, to every platform she can access. This is **Mishlei 31:8–9** walking in a war zone with a camera.

SECTION 8 — VAYIKRA 19:33–34: THE FOREIGNER IN THE LAND

Vayikra (Leviticus) 19:33–34 commands: "When a foreigner sojourns with you in your land, you shall not oppress him. The foreigner who sojourns with you shall be to you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself, for you were foreigners in the land of Egypt. I am **Yahweh** your **Elohim**." Courtney Bonneau is a foreigner living among the Lebanese people of the south — a Dutch-American woman embedded in Shia Muslim communities, welcomed at their tables, supported through the death of her mother by the community she serves. This is covenant hospitality in practice. And when the same Torah standard is applied to the Israeli government's treatment of Palestinians and Lebanese civilians — **Yeshayahu 56:6–7** makes clear that **Yahweh** makes no distinction for nationality in His covenant standards — the contrast with what Bonneau documents is a damning covenant indictment.

SECTION 9 — YESHAYAHU 5:20: WOE TO THOSE WHO CALL EVIL GOOD

Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 5:20 pronounces: *"Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter."* The Western media apparatus that Bonneau critiques — which fails to broadcast UNIFIL ceasefire violation statistics, omits Lebanese government statements, frames IDF operations as defensive while ignoring the "Eternal Darkness" operation's imperial scope, and describes a political organization with parliamentary representation as a terrorist entity without scrutiny — fulfills the precise description of

Yeshayahu 5:20. **Yahweh's** rebuke falls not only on the perpetrators of violence but on the mouthpieces of false narrative who make the violence possible by keeping it invisible.

SECTION 10 — COVENANT VERDICT

COVENANT STANDARD	APPLICATION TO BONNEAU'S WITNESS
Devarim 19:15 — Two or Three Witnesses	She embodies the standard: corroborated, on-ground, photographic testimony submitted to ICC-quality evidentiary threshold
Dam Naki — Innocent Blood (Devarim 19:10)	She documents and names every incident of innocent blood shed in South Lebanon; this is the primary function of her archive
Lo Tirtzach — Shemot 20:13	Her work establishes a named record of premeditated killing of journalists, medical workers, and civilians — ratsach in covenant law
Tzelem Elohim — Bereishit 1:26–27	She honors the image of Elohim in every person she photographs, regardless of their religion, nationality, or political affiliation
Tzedek — Devarim 16:20	She pursues justice by just means, without pay from a state or network, at personal risk, as the text commands
Navi — Prophetic Tradition	She speaks truth to power in the tradition of Yeshayahu and Amos, without fear of political consequence
Mishlei 31:8–9 — Advocate for the Voiceless	She carries the stories of the displaced and silenced of South Lebanon to international audiences
Vayikra 19:33–34 — Protection of the Foreigner	She lives among and with the Lebanese community; she and they demonstrate mutual covenant hospitality across religious lines
Yeshayahu 5:20 — Against False Narrative	Her work is a direct counter to the covenant violation of calling evil good — she restores accurate testimony to the record

PART V — PERSONAL COVENANT WITNESS

I, Kepha Arcemont, Elder and Founder of Miqdash Bethel Covenant Institution, Pearl River, Louisiana, issue the following personal covenant witness:

I have examined the body of work produced by Courtney Bonneau across multiple independent sources — her own website, the Northern Times of the Netherlands, Beirut.com, the PREVAIL Substack of journalist Greg Olear (published this date, May 5, 2026), Vocal Politics, Middle East Eye, Spotify podcast documentation, and the testimony recorded in the transcript provided to this institution. I apply the Devarim 19:15 evidentiary standard: the record is corroborated by independent witnesses, on-the-ground documentation, institutional verification (UNIFIL ceasefire violation counts; Lebanese Army operations), and academic peer review.

Courtney Bonneau is not operating under the banner of **Yahweh**. She has stated plainly that she is an atheist, that she does not think of a Creator, and that she cannot imagine believing. This covenant witness does not require her to confess the Name to recognize that **Yahweh** works through the hands and eyes of people who may not know His Name. The Hebrew prophets themselves addressed pagan kings and foreign peoples as instruments of covenant justice. **Yeshayahu** called the Persian king Cyrus — an idolater — **Yahweh's** anointed (**Yeshayahu 45:1**). **Yahweh** is not limited by the confessional status of the instruments He uses to accomplish His purposes.

What Courtney Bonneau is doing — going where others will not go, seeing what others will not see, speaking what others suppress — is a work of covenant conscience even if she has never opened a Torah scroll. She defends the widow and the orphan. She gives voice to the voiceless. She preserves the evidentiary record against which the nations will one day answer. She mailed a grandmother's photograph home across a war zone so that a family in London might hold something of the one they loved.

This institution prays for her safety, for clarity of the Name to find her in due time, and for the strength to continue the work. And this institution issues a formal covenant witness: what she documents in South Lebanon is being seen by **Yahweh**. The blood of the innocent cries out from the ground (**Bereishit 4:10**). The record is being kept, in heaven and on earth. Courtney Bonneau is keeping part of the earthly record. May **Yahweh** protect her and every honest witness who stands in the field.

Issued in Covenant Witness,

KEPHA ARCEMONT, ELDER AND FOUNDER

Miqdash Bethel Covenant Institution | Pearl River, Louisiana | May 5, 2026

SOURCES AND WITNESSES

The following sources constitute the evidentiary foundation of this document, applied per the Devarim 19:15 two-or-three-witnesses standard:

1. Courtney Bonneau, personal website and portfolio — courtneybonneau.com (multiple verified field reports and photographic documentation)
2. The Northern Times (Netherlands) — "Capturing humanity: An interview with conflict zone photographer Courtney Bonneau," November 2022 (northerntimes.nl)
3. Beirut.com — "An Interview With Photographer Courtney Bonneau," May 2023 (Bachar Bzeih, interviewer)
4. Greg Olear, PREVAIL Substack — "An Empire Problem: On the Ground in Southern Lebanon," May 5, 2026 — full interview and written analysis (gregolear.substack.com)
5. Not From Here Podcast — Spotify episode featuring Courtney Bonneau, January 19, 2026 — transcript provided (open.spotify.com)
6. Vocal Politics (VPol) — X/Twitter field dispatch, September 12, 2025 — Mais Al-Jabal IDF illegal base and C4 demolition report
7. Middle East Eye / Threads — December 30, 2025 — Houla IDF threat incident; Merkava tank advance against Bonneau's vehicle
8. Preservation Framer / Churchwood Gallery — artist biography and exhibition notes
9. Instagram @courtneybonneauphotography — 44,000+ followers, war correspondent designation, Middle East Images affiliation

NON-AFFILIATION NOTICE: Miqdash Bethel Covenant Institution is NOT associated with the House of Yahweh out of Clyde/Abilene, Texas.

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