

MIQDASH BETHEL COVENANT INSTITUTION

*508(c)(1)(a) Free Church • Sole Tanakh Authority
A Study for Judaism • Christianity • Islam*

DOCUMENT 228 • CONDENSED EDITION

OF MAKING MANY BOOKS THERE IS NO END

A Covenant Deep Dive into Ecclesiastes 12:12–14 — *sof davar (the end of the matter)* —
Study, the Fear of Elohim, and the Whole of Man

When Does Study Serve the Covenant, and When Does It Become Weariness of the Flesh?

September 2026 • Condensed October 2026

Elder Kepha Arcemont, Founder

miqdashbethel.ai • miqdashbethel@gmail.com

The Message is Sent to the World

REACHING JUDAISM, CHRISTIANITY, AND ISLAM

✧ JUDAISM	† CHRISTIANITY	✪ ISLAM
The Talmud (Shabbat 30b) records that the Sages sought to hide away the book of Ecclesiastes, and kept it because its beginning and its end are " <i>words of Torah</i> ." Ecclesiastes 12:13 is that end.	Paul warns of those " <i>always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth</i> " (2 Timothy 3:7). The Tanakh's older witness: " <i>of making many books there is no end</i> " (Ecclesiastes 12:12).	A supplication of Muhammad asks refuge from " <i>knowledge that does not benefit</i> " (Sahih Muslim 2722). The Tanakh's older witness: " <i>Fear Elohim, and keep His commandments</i> " (Ecclesiastes 12:13).

DOCTRINAL AUTHORITY — STANDING RULE OF MIQDASH BETHEL COVENANT INSTITUTION

The sole binding authority of Miqdash Bethel Covenant Institution is the *Tanakh* — the written covenant of **Yahweh**. No Talmudic tractate, Church council decree, papal encyclical, hadith collection, or extra-biblical tradition carries doctrinal weight equal to or greater than the written Torah. Where any tradition conflicts with the written covenant, the written covenant governs without exception. The Talmud, New Testament, and Qur'an are cited as historical reference and comparative witness — never as superseding authority. Miqdash Bethel uses the Written Tanakh as its sole source for four reasons: it is the only text Judaism, Christianity, and Islam all recognize as originally given by **Yahweh**; it predates and underlies the Talmud, New Testament, and Qur'an, so testing those traditions against it follows the evidentiary direction of **Deuteronomy 19:15** — the earlier witness governs the later commentary;

every later tradition that departs from the Tanakh does so by addition or reinterpretation, never by overturning the text itself, so the text remains the fixed standard; and **Yahweh**'s own words declare the covenant unchanging (Malachi 3:6; Psalms 119:89), making the written covenant — not evolving institutional interpretation — the only stable ground for doctrine. All three great covenant traditions — Judaism, Christianity, and Islam — are addressed simultaneously and equally in every Miqdash Bethel document, because **Yahweh**'s covenant belongs to every nation that will receive it. The **Deuteronomy 19:15** two-or-three-witness evidentiary standard governs all textual claims in this document.

HOW TO READ THIS DOCUMENT

This is the condensed edition of Doc 228, prepared under the printing plan of Doc 334 (And Gave the Sense). It keeps the text, the key Hebrew words, the five witnesses, the application, and the declarations of the full study. The word-study tables, Tanakh Books Cited and Comparative Texts tables, Three-Religion Audit, and Scripture Index remain in the full edition. **Yahweh** (יהוה) and **Elohim** (אֱלֹהִים) appear in bold throughout. Tanakh books are cited by their English names only. Hebrew transliterations appear in *bold italic (with the English meaning)*. Scripture references are bold. **Verse numbers follow the English version. In a few chapters the Hebrew Bible divides the chapter at a different point, so the same verse carries a different number in the Hebrew text. Where that happens, the Hebrew number is given in brackets on first citation, for example Numbers 30:13 [Hebrew 30:14].** Scripture is rendered in a literal working translation from the Hebrew. Findings are graded Corroborated, Single witness, or Not in the text. Rabbinic literature, the New Testament, and the Qur'an are cited as comparative reference only. The Written Tanakh governs all conclusions.

I. THE TEXT

Ecclesiastes closes with an epilogue (**Ecclesiastes 12:9–14**) that first praises the Teacher for careful writing — *"the words of the wise are like goads ... given by one Shepherd"* (**Ecclesiastes 12:11**) — and then turns to a warning about books and study. The three closing verses form one unit:

"And beyond these, my son, be warned: of making many books there is no end, and much study is a weariness of the flesh" (Ecclesiastes 12:12).

"The end of the matter; all has been heard: Fear Elohim, and keep His commandments, for this is the whole of man" (Ecclesiastes 12:13).

"For Elohim will bring every deed into judgment, with every hidden thing, whether good or evil" (Ecclesiastes 12:14).

Verse 12 warns against an endless pursuit of books cut off from a conclusion; verses 13–14 supply the conclusion. The *sof davar* (סוף דבר) (*end of the matter*) of verse 13 answers the *ein qets* (אין קץ) (*there is no end*) of verse 12. The epilogue supplies exactly the end that endless book-making cannot supply for itself.

II. THE KEY WORDS

Many books. *Sefarim* (ספרים) (*books*), H5612, is not a negative word — the Torah itself is a *sefer* (*book*) (Deuteronomy 31:24–26), and the Teacher's own writing has just been praised. What the epilogue names is *harbeh sefarim* (*many books*) — their unbounded multiplying — as the thing with no *qets* (*end, limit*), H7093.

Much study. *Labag* (להג) (*study, devotion*), H3854, occurs only here in the Tanakh; most translations read "*study*." Whether study or talk, the warning is the same: pursued without an end, it consumes the one who pursues it. **Grading: Single witness** for the word's meaning.

Weariness of the flesh. *Yegi'at basar* (יגעַת בָּשָׂר) (*weariness of the flesh*) is bodily exhaustion, matching the book's own report: "*in much wisdom is much grief, and he who increases knowledge increases sorrow*" (Ecclesiastes 1:18). Study is not sinful; study without an end becomes one more *hevel* (*vapor, futility*).

Fear Elohim. *Et-ha'Elohim yera* (אֶת־הָאֱלֹהִים יִרָא) (*fear Elohim*), H3372. Proverbs puts the fear of **Yahweh** at the beginning of knowledge (Proverbs 1:7); Ecclesiastes puts it at the end — the destination the whole book has been circling. It is covenant reverence, not terror.

"The fear of Yahweh is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding" (Proverbs 9:10).

Keep His commandments. *Mitzvotav shemor* (מִצְוֹתָיו שְׁמֹר) (*keep His commandments*) joins fear to obedience, returning the reader to the Torah's oldest pattern: "*what does Yahweh your Elohim require of you, but to fear Yahweh your Elohim, to walk in all His ways ... to keep the commandments of Yahweh*" (Deuteronomy 10:12–13).

The whole of man. *Ki zeh kol ha-adam* (כִּי־זֶה כָּל־הָאָדָם) (*for this is the whole of man*) — not one option for the thoughtful, but the whole human calling, addressed to all mankind.

Judgment and the hidden thing. Every deed comes *ba-mishpat* (*into judgment*), H4941, including *kol ne'lam* (*every hidden thing*), H5956, whether good or evil. Nothing escapes the account (see also Doc 148).

III. A BOOK THE SAGES ALMOST HID AWAY

The Talmud (Shabbat 30b) records that the Sages sought to hide away Ecclesiastes because its words seemed to contradict one another, and kept it *"because its beginning is words of Torah and its end is words of Torah"* — naming Ecclesiastes 12:13 as that end. The Mishnah (Yadayim 3:5) records the dispute between the Houses of Shammai and Hillel over whether the book was holy writing, and Leviticus Rabbah 28:1 says the Sages kept it once they read its closing word about judgment. Shlomo Zuckier notes the irony: the Teacher *bikkesh* (*sought*) to find words of truth (Ecclesiastes 12:10); the Sages *bikshu* (*sought*) to bury his book. The book about the futility of endless study survives because it knows when to stop and conclude.

IV. FIVE COVENANT WITNESSES

Witness One — Ecclesiastes 1:18: In Much Wisdom Is Much Grief

"For in much wisdom is much grief, and he who increases knowledge increases sorrow" (Ecclesiastes 1:18).

The first chapter already anticipates the twelfth: knowledge pursued for itself does not give the peace it promises. The Teacher pursued wisdom more than all before him (Ecclesiastes 1:16) and reports honestly where it ends alone.

Witness Two — Proverbs 25:27: Too Much Honey

"To eat much honey is not good; so to search out one's own glory is not glory" (Proverbs 25:27).

Honey is good; too much sickens. Study is commanded (Deuteronomy 6:6–7); study cut off from its purpose becomes weariness without fruit.

Witness Three — Deuteronomy 17:18–19: The King's One Copy

"He shall write for himself a copy of this Torah in a book ... and it shall be with him, and he shall read in it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear Yahweh his Elohim, to keep all the words of this Torah and these statutes, to do them" (Deuteronomy 17:18–19).

The king's book was not multiplied without end; it was one copy, read continually, for the very purpose of Ecclesiastes 12:13 — *lema'an yilmad le-yir'ah* (*that he may learn to fear*).

Witness Four — Psalms 1:2: Day and Night, on One Object

"But his delight is in the Torah of Yahweh, and in His Torah he meditates day and night" (Psalms 1:2).

The meditation is continual, but fixed on one object — not scattered across many books without end.

Witness Five — Ezekiel 33:31–32 and Malachi 3:16: Hearing Without Doing

"They hear your words, but they do not do them ... and behold, you are to them like a lovely song of one who has a pleasant voice and plays well on an instrument; for they hear your words, but they do not do them" (Ezekiel 33:31–32).

"Then those who feared Yahweh spoke one with another, and Yahweh listened and heard, and a scroll of remembrance was written before Him for those who fear Yahweh and who think on His Name" (Malachi 3:16).

The prophet's hearers loved to listen and never acted — study and discourse with no end of the matter. Against them stands the one book **Yahweh** Himself keeps, recording those who fear Him — the very conclusion of **Ecclesiastes 12:13**.

Finding — Five witnesses establish that the Tanakh commends study bound to a fixed text and a fixed purpose, and warns against learning, hearing, or writing that never reaches fear and obedience. **Grading: Corroborated.**

V. THE WARNING APPLIED TO A COVENANT LIBRARY

This document is one of more than three hundred thirty in the Miqdash Bethel library. **Ecclesiastes 12:12** is addressed to any covenant work that makes many books, this one included. The measure is not the number of documents but whether each one moves the reader toward the fear of **Elohim** and the keeping of His commandments.

First test: Does the writing move toward obedience, or only toward more writing?

Second test: Does each study reach a *sof davar (end of the matter)*, or does research become its own endless pursuit? That is why every deep dive closes with covenant declarations.

Third test: Does the labor bear covenant fruit that outlasts it? Every deed comes into judgment (**Ecclesiastes 12:14**), the writing of covenant documents included.

This is why the library is now printed in short condensed editions in a set teaching order (Doc 334): so that a beginner receives a few pages that lead to obedience, not three hundred documents that lead to weariness (Doc 249).

VI. CORRECTIONS TO EARLIER LIBRARY MATERIAL

Correction 1 — Doc 228 (full edition) has been revised to the Doc 250 standard. Its corrections — the Leviticus Rabbah 28:1 source for the "*heresy*" remark (not Shadal), the Zuckier source for the

bikkesh / bikshu observation, Sahih Muslim 2722 (not 6906), **Ezekiel 33:31–32** in place of **Jeremiah 22:29** as Witness Five, and Tanakh witnesses for every declaration — are carried into this edition and listed in full in the revised edition's Section VIII.

VII. SEVEN COVENANT DECLARATIONS ON ECCLESIASTES 12:12–14

#	COVENANT DECLARATION	BASIS
I	The multiplying of books and study without a governing end has no end and wearies the flesh without covenant fruit.	Ecclesiastes 12:12; 1:18; Proverbs 25:27
II	The Tanakh does not condemn writing, books, or study as such; the Torah itself is a book to be written and read.	Ecclesiastes 12:9–10; Deuteronomy 17:18–19; 31:24–26
III	The conclusion of all study and covenant inquiry is to fear Elohim and keep His commandments.	Ecclesiastes 12:13; Deuteronomy 10:12–13; Proverbs 1:7
IV	This standard is addressed to all mankind, not to one community alone.	Ecclesiastes 12:13; Micah 6:8; Isaiah 45:22
V	Every deed, including every hidden thing, good or evil, will be brought by Elohim into judgment.	Ecclesiastes 12:14; 3:17; Psalms 90:8; Jeremiah 17:10
VI	A book's worth is measured by where it finally leads its reader: toward Yahweh and His commandments, or away from them.	Ecclesiastes 12:13; Deuteronomy 13:1–4 [Hebrew 13:2–5]; Isaiah 8:20
VII	The same standard binds every covenant institution that makes many books, this one included.	Ecclesiastes 12:12–14; Deuteronomy 4:2; Malachi 3:16

VIII. THE COVENANT RESPONSE

First: Study one book continually. Read the Torah *"all the days of your life,"* as the king did, so that you learn to fear (**Deuteronomy 17:19**).

Second: Let every study reach its end. Ask of every book, lesson, and document: does it end in *"fear Elohim, and keep His commandments"*? (**Ecclesiastes 12:13**).

Third: Do what you have heard. Do not be like the hearers who loved the song and did nothing (Ezekiel 33:32). *"Be careful to do them, for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples"* (Deuteronomy 4:6).

Fourth: Remember the judgment. Every deed and every hidden thing will be brought into judgment (Ecclesiastes 12:14); *"I, Yahweh, search the heart ... to give every man according to his ways"* (Jeremiah 17:10). Write and teach as one who will give account.

Fifth: Test every book, this one included. *"To the Torah and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them"* (Isaiah 8:20).

"The end of the matter; all has been heard: Fear Elohim, and keep His commandments, for this is the whole of man."

Ecclesiastes 12:13 — The Written Covenant of Yahweh

MIQDASH BETHEL COVENANT INSTITUTION

DOCUMENT 228 • OF MAKING MANY BOOKS (CONDENSED EDITION) • OCTOBER 2026

MIQDASHBETHEL.AI • MIQDASHBETHEL@GMAIL.COM •

THE MESSAGE IS SENT TO THE WORLD

508(C)(1)(A) FREE CHURCH • SOLE TANAKH AUTHORITY • REACHING JUDAISM, CHRISTIANITY, AND ISLAM