

MIQDASH BETHEL COVENANT INSTITUTION

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A Study for Judaism • Christianity • Islam*

DOCUMENT 306

WHERE THE GOOD WAY IS

A Covenant Deep Dive into Jeremiah 6:16 — the *netivot olam* (ancient paths), the *derekh hatov* (good way), and the *margoa* (rest) Promised to Those Who Walk in It

What Are the Ancient Paths, How Does a Person Find the Good Way, and Why Did a Nation Answer, "We Will Not Walk in It"? — A Three-Religion Covenant Response

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The Message is Sent to the World

REACHING JUDAISM, CHRISTIANITY, AND ISLAM

✡ JUDAISM	✝ CHRISTIANITY	☪ ISLAM
Jeremiah 6:16 stands in the Prophets, read in the synagogue as part of the written covenant. Jewish readers have long heard in the <i>netivot olam</i> (ancient paths) a call back to what was given at Sinai. This study tests that reading against the verse's own chapter, which names the paths in verse 19: <i>"My words ... and My Torah."</i>	Matthew 11:29 echoes the close of this verse: <i>"you will find rest for your souls."</i> Its wording follows the Hebrew <i>margoa</i> (rest) rather than the Greek Septuagint, which reads <i>"purification."</i> Christian preaching often makes the ancient paths the old faith of a denomination. This study asks what Jeremiah himself named as the path.	The Qur'an asks for guidance to <i>"the straight path"</i> (Q. 1:6), and it rebukes those who defend a practice only because they found their fathers keeping it (Q. 2:170; 43:22). Jeremiah sets the same test: a path is not good because it is old. It is good because it is the way Yahweh gave.

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 The Talmud, New Testament, and Qur'an are cited as historical reference and comparative witness — never as superseding authority.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 document applies the sole authority of the written *Tanakh* to one verse, **Jeremiah 6:16**, read phrase by phrase and inside its own chapter. **Yahweh** (יהוה) and **Elohim** (אֱלֹהִים) appear in bold throughout. Tanakh books and personal names are given in English. Hebrew transliterations and their English meanings appear together in ***bold italic*** at every occurrence, and anything in quotation marks is set in ***bold italic***. Scripture references are bold; Strong's numbers are plain. Scripture is rendered in a literal working translation from the Hebrew. **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].** Findings are graded **Corroborated** (two or more independent Tanakh witnesses), **Single witness**, or **Not in the text**. The Septuagint, the New Testament, rabbinic literature, and the Qur'an appear only as historical and comparative reference. The Written Tanakh governs all conclusions.

TANAKH BOOKS CITED IN THIS DOCUMENT

DIVISION	BOOKS CITED	PURPOSE IN THIS STUDY
Torah	Deuteronomy	Ask the days of old; walk in the way that was commanded; the rest in the land; nothing added and nothing taken away; the word that is near
Nevi'im (Prophets)	1 Samuel, 1 Kings, 2 Kings, Isaiah , Jeremiah , Ezekiel , Hosea , Micah , Haggai , Malachi	The verse and its chapter; the good and right way; Josiah and Huldah ; the rest refused; the watchmen; the fathers' ways tested; return and remember
Ketuvim (Writings)	Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Lamentations, 2 Chronicles	The ancient landmark; ask the former generation; search our ways; the rest of the soul; the way everlasting; the last verse of the Tanakh

COMPARATIVE TEXTS CITED — HISTORICAL AND COMPARATIVE REFERENCE ONLY

CATEGORY	TEXTS CITED	PURPOSE IN THIS STUDY
Ancient translation	Septuagint, Jeremiah 6:16	How the earliest Greek rendered the verse: " <i>paths of the Lord</i> " and " <i>purification</i> " for the Hebrew <i>margoa</i> (<i>rest</i>)
New Testament	Matthew 11:28–30	The Christian echo of " <i>rest for your souls</i> "
Qur'an	Q. 1:6–7; 2:170; 5:44; 43:22	The straight path; the rebuke of following the fathers without test; the Torah as guidance
Earlier library material	Doc 170; Doc 258; the March 6, 2026 report " <i>Standing at the Crossroads</i> "; the April 1, 2026 Covenant Witness to President Pezeshkian	Earlier uses of Jeremiah 6:16 , checked in Section X

I. FRAMING THE QUESTION — A PROPHET AT THE CROSSROADS

I-A. The Verse

"Thus says Yahweh: Stand by the ways and see, 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."
(Jeremiah 6:16)

כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה עֲמְדוּ עַל־דַּרְכִּים וּרְאוּ וּשְׁאַלּוּ לִנְתִּיבוֹת עוֹלָם

אִי־זֶה דֶּרֶךְ הַטּוֹב וּלְכוּ־בָּהּ וּמְצְאוּ מְרוּגָה לְנַפְשְׁכֶם וַיֹּאמְרוּ לֹא נֵלֶךְ

The verse is often quoted on its own, as a saying about tradition, heritage, or the good old days. It was not spoken that way. It was spoken to a particular nation, at a particular hour, in the middle of a chapter that names exactly what the ancient paths are. This study reads it the way it was given: phrase by phrase, and inside its chapter.

I-B. The Hour in Which It Was Spoken

Jeremiah was called *"in the days of Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah, in the thirteenth year of his reign"* (Jeremiah 1:2). Chapter 6 belongs to the warnings of his early years. It opens with an alarm: *"evil looks out from the north, and great destruction"* (Jeremiah 6:1), and it closes with the same enemy: *"a people comes from the north country"* (Jeremiah 6:22). Between those two alarms, the prophet describes the nation that will face it.

"From the least of them to the greatest of them, everyone is greedy for gain; and from the prophet to the priest, everyone deals falsely. They have healed the wound of My people lightly, saying, Peace, peace, when there is no peace." (Jeremiah 6:13–14)

Verse 15 adds that they were not ashamed and did not know how to blush. Verse 16 comes immediately after. It is the remedy offered to a people whose own leaders had told them nothing was wrong. The false prophets said, *"Peace, peace."* Yahweh says, in effect: if you want peace, stop, look, ask, and walk the path I gave you, and you will find the rest your prophets only promised.

I-C. What This Study Builds On

The Library has used this verse before. **Doc 258** (*Ask for the Old Paths*) took its title from it and used it to frame the question of Bible translations. **Doc 170** (*The Living Embodiment of the Covenant*) used it to explain why sole Tanakh authority is a return and not a new religion. The March 6, 2026 report *"Standing at the Crossroads"* and the April 1, 2026 Covenant Witness to President

Pezeshkian applied it to nations at war. None of these studied the verse itself, word by word, with its chapter. This document does, and it answers four questions.

First: what does each phrase of the verse say in Hebrew?

Second: what, according to the chapter itself, are the ancient paths?

Third: what is the rest that is promised, and why was it refused?

Fourth: how does a covenant believer walk this verse today, and how is it misused?

II. THE WORD STUDY — THE HEBREW OF JEREMIAH 6:16–19

The verse is built from ordinary words: stand, ways, see, ask, paths, good, walk, find, rest, soul. Each one carries weight in the covenant's own vocabulary. The table sets them out with the related words from the verses that follow.

HEBREW TERM	STRONG'S	CORE MEANING	KEY TEXT
<i>amad (to stand)</i> , עָמַד	H5975	To stand, stop, take a position	Jeremiah 6:16
<i>derekh (way, road)</i> , דֶּרֶךְ	H1870	A road; a course of life; conduct	Jeremiah 6:16; Deuteronomy 5:33
<i>ra'ah (to see)</i> , רָאָה	H7200	To see, look carefully, consider	Jeremiah 6:16
<i>sha'al (to ask)</i> , שָׁאַל	H7592	To ask, inquire, request	Deuteronomy 32:7; Job 8:8
<i>netivah (path)</i> , נְתִיבָה	H5410	A trodden path; poetic partner of <i>derekh (way)</i>	Jeremiah 6:16; 18:15
<i>olam (of old, everlasting)</i> , עוֹלָם	H5769	Long duration, looking back to antiquity or forward to perpetuity	Deuteronomy 32:7; Proverbs 22:28
<i>tov (good)</i> , טוֹב	H2896	Good, pleasing, beneficial	1 Samuel 12:23; 1 Kings 8:36
<i>halakh (to walk)</i> , הָלַךְ	H1980	To walk, go; to live in a manner	Deuteronomy 10:12; Micah 6:8

HEBREW TERM	STRONG'S	CORE MEANING	KEY TEXT
<i>matsa (to find)</i> , מָצָא	H4672	To find, reach, attain	Jeremiah 29:13
<i>margoa (rest)</i> , מָרְגוּעַ	H4771	Rest, repose; found only in this verse	Jeremiah 6:16
<i>margeah (rest)</i> , מָרְגָעָה	H4774	Rest, repose; from the same root as <i>margoa (rest)</i>	Isaiah 28:12
<i>nefesh (soul, life)</i> , נֶפֶשׁ	H5315	The living person, the whole self	Psalms 23:3
<i>tsofim (watchmen)</i> , צִפִּים	H6822	Those who keep watch and sound the warning	Jeremiah 6:17; Ezekiel 3:17
<i>qashav (to give heed)</i> , קָשַׁב	H7181	To pay attention, listen closely	Jeremiah 6:17, 19
<i>ma'as (to reject)</i> , מָאָס	H3988	To reject, refuse, despise	Jeremiah 6:19, 30
<i>torah (instruction, law)</i> , תּוֹרָה	H8451	Instruction; the written law of the covenant	Jeremiah 6:19; 26:4

Four lexical observations govern what follows.

First: the verse gives five commands in a row. *imdu (stand)*, *re'u (see)*, *sha'alu (ask)*, *lekhu (walk)*, and *mitsu (find)*. The people's answer is two Hebrew words, *lo nelekh (we will not walk)*. The refusal uses the same verb as the fourth command. They did not refuse to stand or to look or even to ask. They refused to walk.

Second: the word *netivah (path)* is neutral in itself. In **Jeremiah 18:15** the same word names the wrong roads: Israel was made to stumble from the *shevilei olam (ancient tracks)*, שְׁבִילֵי עוֹלָם, "to walk in bypaths, a way not built up." The Hebrew for those bypaths is נְתִיבוֹת, *netivot (paths)*. What makes the paths of 6:16 good is not that they are footpaths. It is *olam (of old)* and the question that follows: "where is the good way?"

Third: the Masoretic text spells the word of 6:16 without the letter yod, לְנִתְבוֹת עוֹלָם, *lintivot olam (for the ancient paths)*. The meaning is the same as the full spelling; the point matters only because the Library should reproduce the text as it stands (see Section X).

Fourth: the word *margoa (rest)* appears nowhere else in the Tanakh. Its root, *raga*, רָגַע, gives the noun *margeah (rest)* in **Isaiah 28:12**, in a sentence that ends exactly as **Jeremiah 6:16** ends, with

refusal. Two prophets, one root, one offer, one refusal. That is the first witness that this verse states a pattern and not a passing remark.

III. THE VERSE PHRASE BY PHRASE

III-A. "Stand by the Ways" — Stop First

The Hebrew is *imdu al-derakhim* (*stand by the ways*). The picture is a traveler at the point where roads meet. Some translations render it "*stand at the crossroads*," which is an interpretation, but a fair one: the person is standing where more than one road is open. The first command is not to choose. It is to stop. A man running on a wrong road does not find the right one by running faster.

The covenant gives the same first step elsewhere. Haggai says twice, "*Consider your ways*" (Haggai 1:5, 7). The poet of Lamentations, after Jerusalem had fallen, wrote the step the nation had refused before the fall:

"Let us search and examine our ways, and return to Yahweh." (Lamentations 3:40)

III-B. "And See, and Ask" — Inquire Backward

The verb *sha'al* (*to ask*) sends the traveler to witnesses. Moses used the same verb when he told Israel where to look:

"Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations; ask your father, and he will declare it to you, your elders, and they will tell you." (Deuteronomy 32:7)

זְכֹר יָמֹת עוֹלָם ... שֶׁאֵל אָבִיךָ וַיִּגְדֶּךָ

The phrase is *yemot olam* (*days of old*), the same *olam* as Jeremiah's *netivot olam* (*ancient paths*), joined to the same verb *sha'al* (*to ask*).

And Moses tells them what the fathers will report: not the customs of the fathers, but what Yahweh did (Deuteronomy 32:8–14). The same instruction appears in Deuteronomy 4:32 ("*ask now of the days that are past*") and in Job 8:8 ("*inquire of the former generation*"). The asking looks backward, but it looks backward for evidence of Yahweh's acts and words.

III-C. "For the Ancient Paths" — What Olam Means

The word *olam* (*of old, everlasting*) looks in both directions.

Looking back, it means antiquity: the *gevul olam* (*ancient landmark*) "*which your fathers have set*" (Proverbs 22:28).

Looking forward, it means perpetuity: David prays, "*lead me in the way everlasting*", *derekh olam* (Psalms 139:24). In **Jeremiah 6:16** the sense is mainly backward. The paths are old; they were there before the nation turned from them.

Jeremiah 18:15 shows what the alternative looks like. Israel left the *shevilei olam* (*ancient tracks*) to walk in "*a way not built up*", an unbuilt road with no foundation under it. The contrast is not old against new for its own sake. It is the built road against the unbuilt one.

Finding — In **Jeremiah 6:16** the phrase is *netivot olam* (*ancient paths*). The phrase *derekh olam* (*the way everlasting*) belongs to **Psalms 139:24**. Both are covenant phrases, but they are not the same phrase. **Corroborated** by the Hebrew of both verses (see Section X, Correction 5).

III-D. "Where the Good Way Is" — Among the Old Paths, Which?

The Hebrew is a question: *ei-zeh derekh hatov* (*where is the good way*). Asking for old paths is not the end of the search. Among the old paths, the traveler must ask which one is good. Tanakh answers that question by naming who teaches the good way.

"Far be it from me that I should sin against Yahweh by ceasing to pray for you; but I will teach you the good and the right way." (1 Samuel 12:23)

וְהוֹרִיתִי אֶתְכֶם בְּדֶרֶךְ הַטּוֹבָה וְהַיְשָׁרָה

"Then hear in heaven, and forgive the sin of Your servants and of Your people Israel, that You teach them the good way in which they should walk." (1 Kings 8:36)

Samuel and **Solomon** both use the same words **Jeremiah** uses: *derekh* (*way*), *tov* (*good*), and *halakh* (*to walk*). In **Samuel** the teacher is the prophet; in **Solomon's** prayer the teacher is **Yahweh** Himself.

Moses had already named the road: "*You shall walk in all the way which Yahweh your Elohim has commanded you, that you may live, and that it may be well with you*" (Deuteronomy 5:33).

III-E. "And Walk in It" — Knowing Is Not Walking

The verb *halakh* (*to walk*) is the covenant's ordinary word for living.

"*What does Yahweh your Elohim require of you, but to fear Yahweh your Elohim, to walk in all His ways*" (Deuteronomy 10:12).

"*To do justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your Elohim*" (Micah 6:8).

Isaiah gives the same command with the same words as **Jeremiah**:

"And your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, This is the way, walk in it, when you turn to the right hand and when you turn to the left." (Isaiah 30:21)

A person can stand, look, ask, and even locate the good way, and still not walk in it. That is exactly what happened in **Jeremiah's** generation.

III-F. "And Find Rest for Your Souls" — The Promise Is on the Path

The final command is *umitsu margoa lenafshekhem (and find rest for your souls)*. The grammar matters: the finding is joined to the walking. The rest is not offered at the crossroads, and it is not offered to those who only ask. It is found on the road. Section VI follows this promise through the rest of the Tanakh.

III-G. "But They Said, We Will Not Walk in It"

The verse ends with a quotation of the people: *vayomru lo nelekh (but they said, we will not walk)*. The very next verse repeats the pattern with a second offer and a second refusal:

"Also I set watchmen over you, saying, Listen to the sound of the shofar. But they said, We will not listen." (Jeremiah 6:17)

The refusal is not a confused people choosing wrongly between two good options. It is a stated answer.

Jeremiah heard it again years later in Egypt: *"As for the word that you have spoken to us in the name of Yahweh, we will not listen to you"* (Jeremiah 44:16).

And earlier still: *"It is hopeless! No, for I have loved strangers, and after them I will go"* (Jeremiah 2:25).

Finding — **Jeremiah 6:16** is a five-step covenant call: stop, look, ask, walk, and find rest. Each step is attested elsewhere in the Tanakh in the same vocabulary. **Corroborated (Deuteronomy 5:33; 32:7; 1 Samuel 12:23; 1 Kings 8:36; Isaiah 28:12; 30:21; Lamentations 3:40).**

IV. WHAT ARE THE ANCIENT PATHS? — THE CHAPTER ANSWERS

IV-A. Verse 19 Names Them

Readers often fill the phrase "ancient paths" with whatever they already value: a denomination's history, a family's customs, a nation's golden age. The chapter does not leave the phrase empty. Three verses later, **Yahweh** names what the people refused:

"Hear, O earth: behold, I am bringing evil on this people, the fruit of their thoughts, because they have not given heed to My words, and My Torah — they have rejected it." (Jeremiah 6:19)

כִּי עַל־דְּבָרֵי לֹא הִקְשִׁיבוּ וְתוֹרָתִי וַיִּמָּאֲסוּ-בָהּ

The two refusals of verses 16 and 17 become the two charges of verse 19. They would not walk in the ancient paths; they rejected *torati* (*My Torah*). They would not listen to the watchmen; they did not give heed to *devarai* (*My words*). The same verb, *qashav* (*to give heed*), ties verse 17 to verse 19. The ancient paths of verse 16 are the words and the Torah of verse 19.

The chapter ends with the other side of the same verb. The people *rejected* the Torah (*vayim'asu, ma'as*, verse 19); and at the close, *"Rejected silver they shall be called, because Yahweh has rejected them"* (Jeremiah 6:30). The nation that refused the path was itself refused.

IV-B. Jeremiah's Own Witnesses

Jeremiah says the same thing in the same terms throughout his book.

"Obey My voice, and I will be your Elohim, and you shall be My people; and walk in all the way that I command you, that it may be well with you. But they did not listen or incline their ear, but walked in the counsels and the stubbornness of their evil heart, and went backward and not forward." (Jeremiah 7:23–24)

"If you will not listen to Me, to walk in My Torah, which I have set before you ..." (Jeremiah 26:4)

"They have not humbled themselves even to this day, nor have they feared, nor walked in My Torah nor in My statutes, which I set before you and before your fathers." (Jeremiah 44:10)

Each verse joins *halakh* (*to walk*) to the Torah or the commanded way. The path that **Jeremiah** offered in chapter 6 is the same path he offered in chapters 7, 26, and 44: walking in what **Yahweh** commanded.

IV-C. Old Is Not Enough

This is the point most often missed. **Jeremiah's** opponents also appealed to the old ways. When he rebuked the people in Egypt for burning incense to the queen of heaven, they answered that they would keep doing *"as we have done, we and our fathers, our kings and our princes, in the cities of Judah"* (Jeremiah 44:17). Their argument was antiquity. **Jeremiah's** argument was the source.

"But they have walked after the stubbornness of their own heart and after the Baals, which their fathers taught them." (Jeremiah 9:14 [Hebrew 9:13])

"Surely our fathers have inherited lies, futility, and things in which there is no profit." (Jeremiah 16:19)

"Do not walk in the statutes of your fathers, nor keep their judgments, nor defile yourselves with their idols. I am Yahweh your Elohim; walk in My statutes." (Ezekiel 20:18–19)

A custom can be very old and still be a bypath. The Baals of **Jeremiah 9** were taught by fathers. What makes an ancient path good is that Yahweh laid it down and wrote it, not that someone walked it a long time ago.

Finding — The ancient paths of Jeremiah 6:16 are Yahweh's words and Torah, the commanded way given to the fathers. Corroborated (**Jeremiah 6:19; 7:23; 26:4; 44:10, 23; Deuteronomy 5:33**). That the ancient paths are any custom that is old, or the tradition of one's fathers as such, is **Not in the text**, and is contradicted by Jeremiah 9:14; 16:19; 44:17 and Ezekiel 20:18.

V. THE WATCHMEN, THE SHOFAR, AND THE OFFERINGS THAT WERE REFUSED

V-A. The Second Offer

Yahweh did not offer the path once and then waited. *"I set watchmen over you"* (**Jeremiah 6:17**). The *tsofim (watchmen)* are the prophets; **Ezekiel** received the same office in the same words: *"Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel"* (**Ezekiel 3:17; 33:7**). The shofar is the alarm before danger. A people that would not walk was still warned, and it refused the warning too.

V-B. The Nations and the Earth as Witnesses

Verses 18 and 19 call witnesses: *"Hear, O nations ... Hear, O earth."* This is courtroom language, the same that opens the Song of **Moses** (*"Give ear, O heavens"*, **Deuteronomy 32:1**) and the book of **Isaiah** (*"Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth"*, **Isaiah 1:2**). The judgment that follows is called *peri machshevotam (the fruit of their thoughts)*. The disaster is not arbitrary. It is the harvest of the road they chose.

V-C. Incense from Sheba, and the "Good Cane" from Far Away

"To what purpose comes frankincense to Me from Sheba, and the good cane from a far country? Your burnt offerings are not acceptable, nor your sacrifices pleasing to Me."
(Jeremiah 6:20)

The people who refused to walk were still worshiping. They imported the finest frankincense and spice. The Hebrew for the cane is *qaneh hatov (the good cane)*, using the same word *tov (good)* as the *derekh hatov (good way)* of verse 16. This is a literary observation, offered as such and not as doctrine: they went to a far country for *"the good"* in their offerings, and would not walk *"the good way"* that was near.

The Torah had already said the word is near: *"the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may do it"* (Deuteronomy 30:14).

Finding — Worship offered by those who refuse to walk in the commanded way is not accepted.
Corroborated (Jeremiah 6:20; 7:21–23; 1 Samuel 15:22; Hosea 6:6; Micah 6:6–8).

VI. THE REST THAT IS PROMISED

VI-A. One Root, Three Witnesses

The root *raga* gives three witnesses. In **Jeremiah 6:16** it is *margoa (rest)*, promised to those who walk. In **Isaiah 28:12** it is *margeah (rest)*, offered and refused:

"This is the rest; give rest to the weary; and this is the refreshing. Yet they would not hear."
(Isaiah 28:12)

זֹאת הַמְנוּחָה הַנִּיחוּ לְעַיִן וְזֹאת הַמְרַגְעָה וְלֹא אָבוּא שְׂמוּעַ

And in **Jeremiah 31:2** the same root appears in the promise of return: Israel *"found grace in the wilderness ... when I went to give him rest."* The rest that the nation refused in chapter 6 is the rest **Yahweh** promises to give again in chapter 31, in the same book, from the same root.

VI-B. The Ways and the Rest Belong Together

The Psalms join the two words of **Jeremiah's** verse into one sentence of judgment:

"It is a people that err in their heart, and they have not known My ways; so I swore in My anger, They shall not enter into My rest." (Psalms 95:10–11)

Moses described the rest as the land given in the covenant: *"you have not yet come to the rest and to the inheritance which Yahweh your Elohim is giving you"* (Deuteronomy 12:9). In every case the rest is at the end of a road, and the road is Yahweh's way.

VI-C. No Rest Off the Path

"For thus says the Lord Yahweh, the Holy One of Israel: In returning and rest you shall be saved; in quietness and trust shall be your strength. But you would not." (Isaiah 30:15)

"But the wicked are like the troubled sea, for it cannot rest ... There is no peace, says my Elohim, to the wicked." (Isaiah 57:20–21)

The false prophets of **Jeremiah 6:14** promised *"Peace, peace"* without the path. **Isaiah** says that kind of peace does not exist. The rest of the soul is the rest of the one walking:

"He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake" (Psalms 23:3),

and *"Return to your rest, O my soul, for Yahweh has dealt bountifully with you"* (Psalms 116:7).

Finding — The rest promised in Jeremiah 6:16 is found by walking in Yahweh's way and is refused by those who will not walk. Corroborated (Isaiah 28:12; 30:15; 57:21; Psalms 95:10–11; Deuteronomy 12:9). Rest offered apart from the way is the *"Peace, peace"* of the false prophets, and is **Not in the text** as a promise of **Yahweh**.

VII. FIVE WITNESSES — THE PEOPLE OF YAHWEH CALLED BACK TO THE OLD PATH

Under the **Deuteronomy 19:15** standard, a teaching rests on more than one witness. Five witnesses across the Torah, the Prophets, and the history books show that **Jeremiah 6:16** states a pattern that runs through the whole covenant.

Witness One — Moses. At the end of the Torah, **Moses** tells Israel to ask the days of old (**Deuteronomy 32:7**) and sets the road before them:

"I have set before you today life and good, and death and evil, in that I command you today to love Yahweh your Elohim, to walk in His ways" (Deuteronomy 30:15–16).

The good, the walking, and the commanded way are all in one sentence.

Witness Two — Samuel. When Israel demanded a king, **Samuel** warned them,

"do not turn aside; for then you would go after futile things which cannot profit or deliver" (1 Samuel 12:21),

and he promised to keep teaching them *"the good and the right way"* (1 Samuel 12:23). The futile things are the bypaths; the good way is the one Samuel taught from the covenant.

Witness Three — Josiah and Huldah. In **Jeremiah's** own lifetime a king did what **Jeremiah 6:16** asks. When the book of the law was found, **Josiah** tore his clothes and sent to inquire:

"Go, inquire of Yabweh for me ... for great is the wrath of Yabweh that is kindled against us, because our fathers have not listened to the words of this book" (2 Kings 22:13).

The prophetess **Huldah** answered him, and the king made a covenant *"to walk after Yabweh and to keep His commandments"* (2 Kings 23:3). **Josiah** stood, looked, asked, and walked. Yet **Jeremiah** recorded that in those same days Judah *"did not return to Me with her whole heart, but in falsehood"* (Jeremiah 3:6, 10). A king can find the path; each person must still walk it.

Witness Four — Isaiah. A century before **Jeremiah**, **Isaiah** offered the same rest and recorded the same refusal:

"This is the rest ... yet they would not hear" (Isaiah 28:12); *"In returning and rest you shall be saved ... but you would not"* (Isaiah 30:15).

And he promised the voice that says, *"This is the way, walk in it"* (Isaiah 30:21).

Witness Five — Malachi. The last of the Prophets takes the call further back than the fathers:

"From the days of your fathers you have gone away from My statutes and have not kept them. Return to Me, and I will return to you, says Yabweh of hosts" (Malachi 3:7).

Even the fathers had wandered; the standard is the statutes themselves. The Prophets close with the ancient path named plainly:

"Remember the Torah of Moses My servant, which I commanded him at Horeb" (Malachi 4:4 [Hebrew 3:22]).

Finding — From Moses to Malachi, the call to the ancient path is a call to the commanded way, and the people's answer is tested by whether they walk in it. Corroborated by five

witnesses. **Jeremiah** himself looked ahead to the day when that same Torah would be written on the heart (**Jeremiah 31:33**; see **Doc 281**).

VIII. WALKING THE ANCIENT PATHS TODAY

VIII-A. Five Steps for the Covenant Believer

The verse gives its own method, and it can be followed by anyone.

First: stand. Stop before the next decision and ask where the road you are on is going. *"Consider your ways"* (**Haggai 1:5**).

Second: see. Look honestly at the roads in front of you, including the one you are already on. *"Let us search and examine our ways"* (**Lamentations 3:40**).

Third: ask. Inquire of the written witness, not of the loudest voice. *"To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because they have no dawn"* (**Isaiah 8:20**). Use two or three witnesses for every point (**Deuteronomy 19:15**), and read the text in the oldest form available (**Doc 258**).

Fourth: walk. Do the next thing the text plainly commands, and then the next. The command *"is not too hard for you, nor is it far off"* (**Deuteronomy 30:11**). Do not wait until every question is answered; **Jeremiah's** generation asked and still refused to walk.

Fifth: find rest. Expect the rest to come on the road, not before it. It is the rest of a person no longer divided between what he knows and what he does.

VIII-B. Four Ways the Verse Is Misused

First: as a defense of denominational heritage. Many churches quote **Jeremiah 6:16** to mean the faith of their founders or their grandparents. The verse cannot carry that weight. Verse 19 names the path as **Yahweh's** words and Torah, and a heritage that has set aside the Torah is not the path the verse describes.

Second: as a defense of tradition as such. The same test applies to any body of custom handed down as binding alongside the written text. Some of it may agree with the text; where it adds to the text, **Deuteronomy 4:2** governs. Old age is not the test; **Jeremiah 9:14** shows that fathers can teach Baals.

Third: as a banner for a group that claims to have restored the old ways. Any group can say it has returned to the ancient paths. The question is whether its distinctive teachings stand in the written

text or were added to it. **Doc 251** (*The Place He Chooses*) applied this test to groups that claim to be the one place **Yahweh** chose; the same test applies here.

Fourth: as nostalgia for a national past. The ancient paths are not a golden age of any nation. Judah's own past included Manasseh and the Baals. The verse calls a people back to **Yahweh's** way, not to a political era.

VIII-C. To the One Who Has Said, "We Will Not Walk"

The refusal of verse 16 was not the last word. The same prophet carried the same invitation for forty years.

"Return, O backsliding Israel, says Yahweh; I will not cause My anger to fall on you, for I am merciful" (Jeremiah 3:12).

"Return now, every one from his evil way, and make your ways and your doings good" (Jeremiah 18:11).

A person who has refused before can still stand at the crossroads again.

VIII-D. The Same Test Applied to This Institution

Miqdash Bethel claims to stand on the ancient paths. That claim is tested by the same verse 19. If anything this Institution teaches is not found in Yahweh's words and Torah, it is a bypath, and the reader should say so. That is why every document carries a section of corrections (Section X).

IX. THREE-RELIGION AUDIT — HOW EACH TRADITION READS THE ANCIENT PATHS

The table sets the three traditions against the findings of this study. Comparative texts are cited as historical reference only.

ELEMENT	✡ JUDAISM	✝ CHRISTIANITY	☪ ISLAM
How the verse is heard	As a call back to the covenant of Sinai and the ways of the fathers.	As a call to the old faith, often joined to Matthew 11:28–30 and the rest offered there.	The verse is not in the Qur'an; the nearest idea is the prayer for the <i>"straight path"</i> (Q. 1:6).

ELEMENT	✡ JUDAISM	✝ CHRISTIANITY	☪ ISLAM
Covenant strength	Keeps the Torah at the center of the ancient path, which is what Jeremiah 6:19 names.	Matthew 11:29 keeps the Hebrew word " <i>rest</i> ," pointing readers back to the verse itself.	Rebukes following the fathers without test (Q. 2:170; 43:22), the same test Jeremiah 9:14 sets.
Covenant departure	Treats the tradition of the fathers as binding alongside the written text, though Jeremiah 9:14 and Ezekiel 20:18 test the fathers by the text.	Often offers the rest apart from the path, teaching that the Torah of Jeremiah 6:19 no longer needs to be walked.	Holds a later revelation as final over the Torah it calls " <i>guidance and light</i> " (Q. 5:44), so the commanded way of the Torah is not walked as written.
Covenant witness	The written Torah in Jewish hands is the path Jeremiah named.	Read from the Tanakh outward, " <i>rest for your souls</i> " is found on the road of Jeremiah 6:19 .	Q. 5:44 points the Muslim reader to the Torah, which is the ancient path.

X. CORRECTIONS TO EARLIER LIBRARY MATERIAL

Under the standing rule of October 2, 2026, every correction found while preparing this document is listed here. Corrections marked **Made** have been entered in the affected Google Doc so the website copy can be replaced. Those marked **For Elder Kepha's decision** were left unchanged.

Correction 1 — Doc 170, Section II (Hebrew spelling). Made. Doc 170 printed the phrase of **Jeremiah 6:16** with a yod, נְתִיבוֹת. The Masoretic text of this verse writes it without the yod, נְתִבוֹת. All three occurrences were corrected.

Correction 2 — Doc 170, Section II (meaning of netivot). Made. Doc 170 said the *netivot* (paths) are "*time-tested footpaths ... walked by those who came before and proved them sound.*" The word itself is neutral: in **Jeremiah 18:15** the same word names the bypaths Israel turned into. The sentence now says that what makes the paths sound is *olam* (of old) and the chapter's own naming of them as **Yahweh's** words and Torah (**Jeremiah 6:19**).

Correction 3 — Doc 170, Section III-A (end of the canon). Made. Doc 170 said **Malachi** "*closes the entire Tanakh canon.*" **Malachi** closes the Prophets (and the Christian Old Testament). The Tanakh closes with **2 Chronicles 36:23**. The sentence now reads "*closes the Prophets.*"

Correction 4 — Doc 170, Section I and Summary Table (verse number). Made. Doc 170 cited "*Deuteronomy 13:1*" for "*You must not add to it or take away from it.*" That is the Hebrew

numbering. In English it is **Deuteronomy 12:32** [Hebrew 13:1]. Both places now carry the English number with the Hebrew in brackets.

Correction 5 — March 6, 2026 report "Standing at the Crossroads," Section I (derekh olam). Made in part. The report said that in **Jeremiah 6:16** the prophet points to *"the derekh olam, the eternal way."* The phrase of that verse is *netivot olam (ancient paths); derekh olam (the way everlasting)* is from **Psalms 139:24**. That sentence now reads *"the netivot olam, the ancient paths, which the same chapter names as Yahweh's words and His Torah (Jeremiah 6:19)."* For **Elder Kepha's decision:** the report uses *"derekh olam"* as its motto in Sections II, VII, VIII, and X and in its closing line. As a phrase it is a true covenant phrase (**Psalms 139:24**), so it was left in place; if it stays, consider citing **Psalms 139:24** once so readers do not take it for the wording of **Jeremiah**.

Correction 6 — March 6, 2026 report, Section IX (the "thirty-six times" claim). Made. The report said the command not to oppress the stranger is *"stated thirty-six times across the five books of Moshe, more than any other single commandment."* That count comes from rabbinic tradition, not from a count of the sentence in the text, and the sentence does not appear in that form thirty-six times. It now reads that the command is *"repeated again and again across the five books of Moshe"* and cites **Exodus 22:21** [Hebrew 22:20]; **23:9**; **Leviticus 19:33–34**; **Deuteronomy 10:19**; **24:17–18**.

Correction 7 — April 1, 2026 Covenant Witness to President Pezeshkian, Section VI. For Elder Kepha's decision. Section VI, which quotes **Jeremiah 6:16**, supports its reading of **Micah 4:4** with *"Aben Ezra and Kimchi both confirm,"* which uses rabbinic commentary as support against the September 28, 2026 sources rule. It also says that **Micah 4:1–4** *"was likely shaped in the period of Koresb's edict"* and that **Yahweh** *"associated this vision of peace with Persia."* Neither statement is in the text. Because the letter was sent under its date, nothing was changed. If it is reposted, the two rabbinic names could be removed and the Persia sentence reworded as the author's observation.

Checked, no correction needed — Doc 258. Doc 258's Hebrew of **Jeremiah 6:16** (נְתִיבוֹת עוֹלָם), its rendering of the verse, and its Scripture Index entries for the verse agree with the Masoretic text.

XI. SEVEN COVENANT DECLARATIONS ON JEREMIAH 6:16

Per the **Deuteronomy 19:15** standard, each declaration below rests on more than one witness.

#	COVENANT DECLARATION	BASIS
I	The ancient paths of Jeremiah 6:16 are Yahweh's words and Torah, named by the same chapter.	Jeremiah 6:19; 7:23; 26:4; 44:10
II	The path is not good because it is old. Fathers can teach bypaths; the source of the path is the test.	Jeremiah 9:14; 16:19; 44:17; Ezekiel 20:18
III	The covenant call has five steps: stop, look, ask, walk, and find rest.	Jeremiah 6:16; Lamentations 3:40; Deuteronomy 32:7; Isaiah 30:21
IV	Asking is not walking. The people refused the path, not the question.	Jeremiah 6:16–17; Jeremiah 7:24; Isaiah 28:12
V	The rest of the soul is found on the road of Yahweh's way, and nowhere else.	Jeremiah 6:16; Isaiah 30:15; 57:21; Psalms 95:10–11
VI	Worship offered by those who will not walk in the commanded way is not accepted.	Jeremiah 6:20; 1 Samuel 15:22; Hosea 6:6; Micah 6:6–8
VII	The door to the path stays open to the one who returns.	Jeremiah 3:12; 18:11; 31:2; Malachi 3:7

XII. THE COVENANT RESPONSE — WHAT THE TANAKH SAYS TO THE ONE STANDING AT THE CROSSROADS

Behind this verse there is usually a person who senses that the road he is on is not going where he was told it would go.

Tanakh's answer is fivefold.

First: stop running. *"Stand by the ways and see"* (**Jeremiah 6:16**). A wrong road is not fixed by speed.

Second: ask the right witness. Do not ask only what your fathers did; ask what **Yahweh** said. *"Ask your father ... your elders"* about the acts of **Yahweh** (**Deuteronomy 32:7**), and test every answer by the written text (**Isaiah 8:20**).

Third: know the path by its name. The chapter names it: *"My words ... and My Torah"* (**Jeremiah 6:19**). Any path that sets those aside is not the ancient path, however old it is.

Fourth: take the first step. The people of **Jeremiah's** day were not lost for lack of information. They said, *"We will not walk in it."* Walk in what you already know.

Fifth: expect rest on the road. The promise is plain: *"and find rest for your souls."* It is not the false *"Peace, peace"* of verse 14. It is the rest of a life that has stopped arguing with **Yahweh** and started walking with Him.

SCRIPTURE INDEX

REFERENCE	SUBJECT	SECTION
Exodus 22:21 [Hebrew 22:20]; 23:9	Do not oppress the stranger	X
Leviticus 19:33–34	The stranger as the native	X
Deuteronomy 4:2	Do not add to the word nor take from it	VIII-B
Deuteronomy 4:32	Ask now of the days that are past	III-B
Deuteronomy 5:33	Walk in all the way Yahweh commanded	III-D; III-G; IV-C
Deuteronomy 10:12	To walk in all His ways	III-E
Deuteronomy 10:19; 24:17–18	Love and justice for the stranger	X
Deuteronomy 12:9	The rest and the inheritance	VI-B; VI-C
Deuteronomy 12:32 [Hebrew 13:1]	Do not add to it or take from it	X
Deuteronomy 19:15	The two-or-three-witness standard	Opening; VII; VIII-A; XI
Deuteronomy 30:11–16	The word is near; life and good; walk in His ways	V-C; VII; VIII-A
Deuteronomy 32:1, 7–14	Give ear, O heavens; ask your father, the days of old	III-B; V-B; VII; XI; XII
1 Samuel 12:21–23	Do not turn aside to futile things; the good and right way	III-D; III-G; VII

REFERENCE	SUBJECT	SECTION
1 Samuel 15:22	To obey is better than sacrifice	V-C; XI
1 Kings 8:36	Teach them the good way in which they should walk	III-D; III-G
2 Kings 22:13; 23:3	Josiah inquires of Yahweh and covenants to walk	VII
Isaiah 1:2	Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth	V-B
Isaiah 8:20	To the law and to the testimony	VIII-A; XII
Isaiah 28:12	This is the rest, yet they would not hear	II; III-G; VI-A; VI-C; VII; XI
Isaiah 30:15, 21	In returning and rest; this is the way, walk in it	III-E; III-G; VI-C; VII; XI
Isaiah 57:20–21	No peace to the wicked	VI-C; XI
Jeremiah 1:2	Jeremiah's call in the days of Josiah	I-B
Jeremiah 2:25	I have loved strangers, and after them I will go	III-G
Jeremiah 3:6, 10, 12	Not with her whole heart; return, O backsliding Israel	VII; VIII-C; XI
Jeremiah 6:1, 22	Evil from the north	I-B
Jeremiah 6:13–15	Peace, peace, when there is no peace	I-B; VI-C
Jeremiah 6:16	Ask for the ancient paths; find rest for your souls	Throughout; Closing
Jeremiah 6:17	The watchmen and the shofar refused	III-G; V-A; XI
Jeremiah 6:18–19	My words and My Torah rejected	IV-A; V-B; VIII-B; VIII-D; XI; XII
Jeremiah 6:20	Incense from Sheba; the good cane	V-C; XI
Jeremiah 6:30	Rejected silver	IV-A

REFERENCE	SUBJECT	SECTION
Jeremiah 7:21–24	Walk in all the way I command you	IV-B; V-C; XI
Jeremiah 9:14 [Hebrew 9:13]	The Baals their fathers taught them	IV-C; VIII-B; XI
Jeremiah 16:19	Our fathers have inherited lies	IV-C; XI
Jeremiah 18:11, 15	Return from your evil way; the ancient tracks and the bypaths	II; III-C; VIII-C; X; XI
Jeremiah 26:4	Walk in My Torah	IV-B; XI
Jeremiah 29:13	You will seek Me and find Me	II
Jeremiah 31:2, 33	Rest given in the wilderness; the Torah on the heart	VI-A; VII; XI
Jeremiah 44:10, 16–17, 23	Not walked in My Torah; we will not listen; as our fathers did	III-G; IV-B; IV-C; XI
Ezekiel 3:17; 33:7	The watchman for the house of Israel	V-A
Ezekiel 20:18–19	Do not walk in the statutes of your fathers	IV-C; XI
Hosea 6:6	Mercy and not sacrifice	V-C; XI
Micah 6:6–8	Walk humbly with your Elohim	III-E; V-C; XI
Haggai 1:5, 7	Consider your ways	III-A; VIII-A
Malachi 3:7; 4:4 [Hebrew 3:22]	Return to Me; remember the Torah of Moses	VII; XI
Psalms 23:3	He restores my soul; paths of righteousness	II; VI-C
Psalms 95:10–11	They have not known My ways; My rest	VI-B; XI
Psalms 116:7	Return to your rest, O my soul	VI-C
Psalms 139:24	The way everlasting	III-C; X
Proverbs 22:28	The ancient landmark	II; III-C

REFERENCE	SUBJECT	SECTION
Job 8:8	Inquire of the former generation	II; III-B
Lamentations 3:40	Search and examine our ways	III-A; III-G; VIII-A; XI
2 Chronicles 36:23	The last verse of the Tanakh	X

"Thus says Yahweh: Stand by the ways and see, and ask for the ancient paths, where the good way is, and walk in it, and find rest for your souls."

Jeremiah 6:16 — The Written Covenant of Yahweh

MIQDASH BETHEL COVENANT INSTITUTION

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