MIQDASH BETHEL COVENANT INSTITUTION

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A Letter to the Wampanoag Nation

DOCUMENT 399

ASK YOUR ELDERS, AND THEY WILL TELL YOU

A Letter of Truth and Peace to the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe and the Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah), Sent with Document 382, *"Offer to Elohim Thanksgiving"*

"Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations; ask your father, and he will show you, your elders, and they will tell you." — Deuteronomy 32:7

November 2026
Elder Kepha Arcemont, Founder
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The Message is Sent to the World

ADDRESSED WITH RESPECT TO

RECIPIENT	OFFICE	ADDRESS
Chairman Brian Weeden and the Tribal Council	Chairman, **Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe**, the People of the First Light of Mashpee	483 Great Neck Road South, Mashpee, Massachusetts 02649
Chairman Kevin Devine and the Tribal Council	Chairman, **Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah)**	20 Black Brook Road, Aquinnah, Massachusetts 02535

It goes also to the elders, historians, and families of every Wampanoag community, and to all who keep the memory of Patuxet, Pokanoket, and the people of Ousamequin and Metacom.

HOW TO READ THIS LETTER

This letter rests on one authority: the written covenant of **Yahweh**, the Tanakh (the Hebrew Scriptures, which Christians call the Old Testament). **Yahweh** and **Elohim** are set in bold throughout. Hebrew words are given English first, with the Hebrew word in parentheses, for example ***truth (emet)***. Scripture quotations are set apart in bold in Miqdash Bethel's own rendering of the Hebrew; where a verse is given first in Hebrew, the English under it is set in gold and the reference in black.

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].

The full study behind this letter, with every claim tested by the two-or-three-witness standard of **Deuteronomy 19:15**, is **Document 382**, ***"Offer to Elohim Thanksgiving,"*** which is sent with this letter.

To the honored Chairmen, Councils, elders, and people of the Wampanoag Nation: greetings, and *peace (shalom)*, in the name of Yahweh, the Creator of heaven and earth.

We write with respect. This letter does not ask for money. It does not ask any Wampanoag person to leave his people, his elders, or his ways. And it does not come to tell you your own history; you hold that history, and you have kept it through four hundred years in which others told it for you. We write because we have tried to tell part of it truthfully, and we want the people whose history it is to see what we wrote and to correct us where we are wrong.

I. WHY WE WRITE

Every November the people of the United States sit down to Thanksgiving and repeat a short story: the Pilgrims came, the Indians helped them, and they shared a feast. Many Christians and Sacred Name believers have asked our Institution whether they may keep the day at all. When we set out to answer them, we found that no honest answer could be given without the Wampanoag part of the story, told whole.

So this month we published **Document 382**, ***"Offer to Elohim Thanksgiving."*** It tests the holiday against the Hebrew Scriptures, and it sets out, as plainly as the records allow, what happened to the Wampanoag before, during, and after the harvest of 1621. We send it to you first among all readers, before this year's fourth Thursday of November, because it concerns your ancestors more than anyone's.

II. WHO WE ARE

Our Institution. Miqdash Bethel Covenant Institution was founded on February 12, 2012, as a covenant research and teaching work. Its sole binding authority is the written Tanakh: the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings. It belongs to no denomination and is not affiliated with any other group that uses the name of **Yahweh**.

Our Library. We have prepared a numbered library of nearly four hundred studies, each tested by one standard:

"At the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established" (Deuteronomy 19:15)

Our Founder. I am Elder Kepha Arcemont, a retired New Orleans firefighter and a former leader in the Sacred Name movement who has spent the years since in study of the Hebrew text. My own family traces part of its line to the Mi'kmaq people of the north, so I do not write to you as a stranger to the history of this continent's first peoples.

Our Earlier Witness. In July 2026 our Institution published **Document 201**, ***"The Covenant and the First Peoples,"*** which weighs the treaty, removal, and land record of the American Indian nations against the Hebrew Scriptures. It found that the doctrine that inhabited land is free for whoever ***"discovers"*** it has no ground in the covenant. That study is also available to you.

III. WHAT OUR STUDY FOUND

Document 382 sets out the following, drawn from the colonists' own writings, the national archives, historians, and the published words of Wampanoag spokesmen. We list it here so you can see at once whether we have told it rightly.

Before the Mayflower — In 1614 Thomas Hunt carried more than twenty men of Patuxet and Nauset away to Spain to be sold as slaves; Tisquantum was among them. Between about 1616 and 1619 an epidemic brought by European traders emptied Patuxet and killed most of the people in many communities.

Corn Hill, November 1620 — Before settling at Plymouth, an armed party took stored corn from the pits of Nauset people and opened a grave of a man and a child, carrying away ***"sundry of the prettiest things,"*** by their own written account. The corn was later repaid; the grave was not.

The treaty of March 1621 — Ousamequin made a covenant of peace and mutual defense with the colony, with Tisquantum interpreting. The Wampanoag kept that peace for forty years.

The harvest of 1621 — Ousamequin and about ninety men came to Plymouth and stayed three days; the Wampanoag brought five deer. The colonists never called it ***"Thanksgiving"***; that name was given to it two centuries later.

What followed — After Ousamequin's death, Wamsutta died in Plymouth's custody, and Metacom's war followed. When it ended, Metacom's head was set on a pole at Plymouth, and Wampanoag captives, among them his wife and young son, were sold into slavery in the West Indies.

Since 1970 — When the Commonwealth would not let Wamsutta Frank James give the speech he had written for the 350th anniversary, he gave it on Cole's Hill, and the National Day of Mourning has been kept there every Thanksgiving Day since.

Our study also rejected the false stories told on the other side: it found no record that Thanksgiving began as a celebration of the Pequot massacre, and it called the widely printed ***"1623 Bradford Thanksgiving Proclamation"*** a later invention. A witness must be true whichever way it cuts.

IV. WHAT THE COVENANT SAYS OF THESE THINGS

We do not speak for the colonies, the Commonwealth, or the United States, and we cannot undo what was done. But we teach from a Book that the colonists themselves claimed to follow, and that Book judges what they did. We set its witness before you in five points.

IV-A. The land belongs to the Creator

וְהָאָרֶץ לֹא תִמָּכֵר לִצְמִתֻת כִּי־לִי הָאָרֶץ כִּי־גֵרִים וְתוֹשָׁבִים אַתֶּם עִמָּדִי

"The land shall not be sold forever, for the land is Mine; for you are strangers and sojourners with Me" **(Leviticus 25:23)**

These words were spoken to Israel itself. No people holds the earth as its owner (**Psalms 24:1**), and no one gains it by being the first of his kind to see it.

IV-B. A covenant of peace binds before Him

When Israel's leaders swore peace to the Gibeonites, they kept it: ***"We have sworn to them by Yahweh, the Elohim of Israel; now therefore we may not touch them"*** (**Joshua 9:19**).

When King Saul later broke that oath, **Yahweh** sent three years of famine on the land for it (**2 Samuel 21:1–2**).

Ousamequin kept his covenant. The Scriptures do not excuse those who did not keep theirs.

IV-C. Man-stealing is a capital crime

"He who steals a man and sells him, or if he is found in his hand, shall surely be put to death" (Exodus 21:16)

The same law is repeated in **Deuteronomy 24:7**. By the covenant's own measure, the taking of Tisquantum and the sale of Metacom's family were among the gravest crimes it names.

IV-D. Blood shed on the land is not forgotten

"Blood pollutes the land, and no atonement can be made for the land for the blood that is shed in it, but by the blood of him who shed it" (**Numbers 35:33**)

The covenant gives a public ceremony for blood that no one has answered for, so that a people may not simply pass over it (**Deuteronomy 21:1–9**). We read the National Day of Mourning in that light. It is not ingratitude; it is a refusal to let the record be smoothed over.

IV-E. The true history is told at the table of thanks

The covenant's own harvest thanksgiving required the worshipper to tell his people's history aloud, bondage included, and then to rejoice ***"you, and the Levite, and the stranger who is among you"*** (**Deuteronomy 26:5–11**). That is why our study tells every family that sits down on Thanksgiving to tell the Wampanoag history truthfully, and to give thanks to the Creator who gives the harvest to every people:

"While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease" (**Genesis 8:22**)

V. WHERE WE MAY DIFFER — SPOKEN HONESTLY

We would not honor you by hiding our convictions. Miqdash Bethel holds the written Hebrew Scriptures as its only binding authority, and it teaches that the Creator who gives the harvest is **Yahweh**, the One who made heaven and earth. We test every tradition by that text, our own included, and we have corrected our own earlier studies many times when the text required it.

We know that the Wampanoag have given thanks to the Creator through every season for thousands of years, long before 1620, and that your ways of giving thanks are your own. We do not write to argue with them.

We write to stand with you on the ground the record and the covenant share: that the land was not empty, that the treaty was real, that what followed was wrong, and that the truth should be told.

VI. WHAT WE ASK — AND WHAT WE DO NOT ASK

We Do Not Ask for Money. We ask for no money, donations, or fees of any kind.

We Do Not Ask Anyone to Leave His People. It is not our purpose to draw any Wampanoag person from his community, his elders, or his traditions, or to ask anyone to join a new religion.

We Humbly Ask Only This. That your historians or elders read Sections III and IV of **Document 382** and tell us where we have told your history wrongly or left out what matters.

If you find an error, we will correct it in the published study and say so openly in its corrections section, as is our standing rule.

If you have an account of your own of Patuxet, of the treaty, or of the harvest of 1621 that you are willing to share, we would count it an honor to point our readers to it in your own words. And **if you are willing,** we would welcome a conversation.

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

VII. HOW TO READ OUR MATERIAL

The Companion Study. Document 382, ***"Offer to Elohim Thanksgiving,"*** is sent with this letter. Section IV, ***"The Wampanoag and the Harvest of 1621,"*** is the part written about your people.

The Earlier Study. Document 201, ***"The Covenant and the First Peoples,"*** covers the treaty and land record of the American Indian nations as a whole.

The Website. All our studies are free to read and download at **www.miqdashbethel.ai**

VIII. HOW TO REACH US

You are warmly welcome to write to me directly at **miqdashbethel@gmail.com**, or by post at the address below my name. I would count it a blessing to hear from you, whether in agreement or in correction.

IX. OUR STANDARD

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.

X. IN CLOSING

Honored friends, the people of Ousamequin kept faith with strangers who did not keep faith with them. That record stands before the Creator whether or not any nation tells it. We pray that the truth of it will be told at every table this November, and that **Yahweh**, who hears the afflicted and keeps the account of every people, will grant peace and strength to the Wampanoag Nation and to your children after you.

We close with the blessing **Yahweh** gave to be spoken over His people:

יְבָרֶכְךָ יְהוָה וְיִשְׁמְרֶךָ יָאֵר יְהוָה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וִיחֻנֶּךָּ יִשָּׂא יְהוָה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וְיָשֵׂם לְךָ שָׁלוֹם

"Yahweh bless you and keep you; Yahweh make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you; Yahweh lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace" **(Numbers 6:24–26)**

In the peace of **Yahweh** and with respect,

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Enclosures: Document 382, ***"Offer to Elohim Thanksgiving"*** (PDF); Document 201, ***"The Covenant and the First Peoples"*** (PDF).

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"Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations; ask your father, and he will show you, your elders, and they will tell you."

Deuteronomy 32:7 — The Written Covenant of Yahweh

MIQDASH BETHEL COVENANT INSTITUTION

DOCUMENT 399 • ASK YOUR ELDERS, AND THEY WILL TELL YOU • NOVEMBER 2026

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THE MESSAGE IS SENT TO THE WORLD

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