MIQDASH BETHEL COVENANT INSTITUTION

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A Study for Judaism · Christianity · Islam

DOCUMENT 449

Do Not Say, I Am a Youth

A Covenant Deep Dive into the Youth of a Nation — The Government of the Hebrew Nation and Its Covenant/Constitution, Parts 3 & 4 (Revised)

אַל־תֹּאמַר נַעַר אָנֹכִי

How Does Yahweh's Government Raise Its Next Generation, and What Has the Invention of the "Teenager" Cost the Nations? — A Guide for Parents, Elders, and Every Assembly, and a Three-Religion Covenant Response

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Elder Kepha Arcemont, Founder

miqdashbethel.ai • miqdashbethel@gmail.com

The Message is Sent to the World

REACHING JUDAISM, CHRISTIANITY, AND ISLAM

✡ JUDAISM	† CHRISTIANITY	☪ ISLAM
Rabbinic tradition sets stages for a child's learning — ***"at five, Scripture; at ten, Mishnah; at thirteen, the commandments"*** (Mishnah, Avot 5:21) — and marks the age of the commandments as bar mitzvah (and bat mitzvah for girls). It draws its duty to teach children from **Deuteronomy 6:7**.	Most churches mark a young person's own profession of faith by confirmation or believer's baptism. Many teach children from ***"bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord"*** (Ephesians 6:4), and many divide the young into youth ministries by age.	The Qur'an gives the counsel of Luqman to his son: worship God alone, pray, enjoin right, and be patient (Q. 31:13–19). A widely cited hadith tells parents to command their children to pray at seven (Sunan Abi Dawud 495). Accountability begins at puberty (***bulugh***).

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 The Talmud, New Testament, and Qur'an are cited as historical reference and comparative witness — never as superseding authority.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 is the Doc 250 edition of Parts 3 and 4 of Elder Kepha Arcemont's study ***The Government of the Hebrew Nation and Its Covenant/Constitution: "A Guide for All Governments"*** — the parts on the youth of a nation. It brings together the first edition (***"The Youth of a Nation, Part 3,"*** written in January 2012), the revised edition (***Hebrew Nation Parts 3 & 4 2026***, March 2026), and the same text as carried into ***GoHN Volume II***, Chapters Three and Four (May 2026). It keeps the study's order and its main argument — that **Yahweh**'s government lasts only as long as each generation is taught, that the modern ***"teenager"*** is a status the nations invented and the Covenant never gave, and that the answer is the Covenant taught at home and in the assembly — and it tests every claim twice: the scriptural claims by the written Tanakh, and the historical, scientific, and statistical claims by the records they cite. Where the earlier editions leaned on the New Testament, on long quotations from other writers, or on figures that have changed, the Tanakh witness now carries the point and the record is brought up to date. Each change is listed in Section XV.

Yahweh and **Elohim** appear in bold throughout, as do the names of the prophets. Tanakh books and personal names are given in English. Every Hebrew word is given with its English meaning, English first and the Hebrew after it in parentheses, both in ***bold italic***, for example ***youth (na'ar)***. Hebrew letters are set in bold. Scripture references are bold. Where a verse is quoted from the Hebrew, the Hebrew line comes first and the English verse follows in gold, with the reference after it in black. Scripture is given in a literal working translation from the Hebrew of the Leningrad Codex (Unicode/XML Leningrad Codex, UXLC 2.6, Tanach.us); the one Aramaic passage cited (**Daniel 7**) is translated from the Aramaic of the same codex.

Scriptural findings are graded under the two-or-three-witness standard as **Corroborated** (two or more independent Tanakh witnesses), **Single witness**, or **Not in the text**. Historical, scientific, and statistical claims are graded by the outside record: **Corroborated** (the record, study, or survey says it), **Single witness** (one source, not checked against a second), **Not corroborated** (no source found that says it), or **Corrected** (the source says something different, and the correct wording is given).

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 lexicons cited are: Strong's — James Strong, ***The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*** (New York: Hunt & Eaton; Cincinnati: Cranston & Curts, 1890), a concordance of the King James Version with a short Hebrew and Chaldee dictionary, whose numbers (H5288 and so on) are given for reference only; BDB — Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs, ***A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*** (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1906), the classic English-language Hebrew dictionary, built on the work of Gesenius; and Gesenius — Wilhelm Gesenius, ***Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament Scriptures***, translated by **Samuel** Prideaux Tregelles (London: **Samuel** Bagster and Sons, 1857), a nineteenth-century Hebrew dictionary that the 2012 edition used for several of its definitions. Each is a witness, never the authority; the Tanakh's own usage was checked first, and where a lexicon gives a meaning the Tanakh's usage does not carry, this document says so. HALOT and DCH were not opened for this document.

The 2012 edition drew its research section largely from an encyclopedia article on adolescence and reprinted at length articles by Dr. Michael Platt, Doni Joszef, and Rabbi Yakov Horowitz. Those writers are credited here, and their points are given briefly in this document's own words. The New Testament, the Mishnah, Josephus, the Qur'an and hadith, laws, studies, and surveys are cited only as historical, scientific, and comparative witness, never as doctrinal authority. The Written Tanakh governs every conclusion.

TANAKH BOOKS CITED IN THIS DOCUMENT

DIVISION	BOOKS CITED	PURPOSE IN THIS STUDY
Torah	Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy	The son who asks; teaching diligently; the assembly of men, women, little ones, and stranger; honoring father and mother; rising before the gray head; Melchizedek; the kingdom of priests; the covenant of peace
Prophets	Joshua, Judges, 1 **Samuel**, 1 Kings, **Isaiah**, **Jeremiah**, **Ezekiel**, **Malachi**	The generation that did not know **Yahweh**; **Samuel** the youth; Eli and Adonijah; Rehoboam's young men; **Jeremiah**'s call; youths as princes; all your sons taught of **Yahweh**; the hearts of fathers and sons
Writings	Psalms, Proverbs, Song of Songs, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, **Daniel**, Nehemiah, 2 Chronicles	Telling the generation to come; training a youth; the instruction of father and mother; the enticing of sinners; the young man lacking heart; remembering the Creator in youth; **Daniel** and his companions; Josiah; the Levites who taught

COMPARATIVE TEXTS CITED — HISTORICAL AND COMPARATIVE REFERENCE ONLY

TRADITION OR RECORD	TEXT	WHY IT IS CITED
Judaism	Mishnah, Avot 5:21; Mishnah, Sotah 3:4; Josephus, ***Against Apion*** 2.178–181	Stages of a child's learning; the debate over teaching daughters; Josephus on the people's agreement
Christianity	Ephesians 6:4; 1 Corinthians 6:18; Revelation 20:12; 22:18; Hebrews 10:16; 1 Peter 4:17; John 6:44; 1 John 2:6; Mark 10:30; Matthew 8:12; Romans 8:19	Texts the earlier editions used as support; the true source of a verse the March 2026 edition credited to Proverbs
Islam	Qur'an 31:13–19; Sunan Abi Dawud 495	Luqman's counsel to his son; prayer at seven

TRADITION OR RECORD	TEXT	WHY IT IS CITED
Historical works	Michael Platt, ***"The Teenager and the West"***; Thomas Hine, ***The Rise and Fall of the American Teenager*** (1999); Harvard College Laws (1642); Laws of King's College (1760) and Statutes (1763); Donald S. Lutz, ***American Political Science Review*** 78 (1984); John Locke, ***Second Treatise of Government*** (1689)	The invention of the teenager; the founders' schooling; the Bible in founding-era writing; the source of ***"life, liberty, and estate"***
Law	U.S. Constitution, Preamble; Declaration of Independence (1776); National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2012, §1021; USA PATRIOT Act (2001), §802	The 2012 edition's examples of man-made law
Data and studies	CDC/NCHS Data Brief 535 (2025) and provisional 2025 births (2026); CDC Youth Risk Behavior Survey (2023, 2025); Pew Research Center, ***Teens, Social Media and Technology 2024***; Common Sense Census (2021); Bridge et al., ***Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*** (2019); National Television Violence Study (1994–1997)	The 2026 updates

I. A NATION LASTS ONLY AS LONG AS ITS CHILDREN ARE TAUGHT

In continuance of the subject of the Hebrew Covenant and its constitution, Parts 3 and 4 take up a question that flows straight out of the self-government set out in Part 1 (**Doc 448**): how a nation passes its Covenant to the next generation. No government lasts beyond one generation if it fails to hand on its knowledge, its wisdom, and its covenant to its children. The author first wrote this study in January 2012, when two of his daughters were fourteen and fifteen, and he wrote it as a father as much as an elder. He found that the hardest test of a parent was not the youth themselves but the status the world had handed them — ***"teenager"*** — and the culture sold along with it.

The Tanakh records what happens when one generation does not teach the next. After **Joshua** and the elders who outlived him died, the book of Judges gives the result in a single verse:

וְגַם כָּל־הַדּוֹר הַהוּא נֶאֶסְפוּ אֶל־אֲבוֹתָיו וַיָּקָם דּוֹר אַחֵר אַחֲרֵיהֶם אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יָדְעוּ אֶת־יְהוָה וְגַם אֶת־הַמַּעֲשֶׂה אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה לְיִשְׂרָאֵל

"And also all that generation were gathered to their fathers, and another generation arose after them who did not know Yahweh, nor the work which He had done for Israel." (**Judges 2:10**)

The next verse says what that generation did: ***"the children of Israel did evil in the eyes of Yahweh"*** (**Judges 2:11**). The fathers had seen the works of **Yahweh**; the sons had not been told. **Moses** had warned of exactly this: ***"make them known to your sons and your sons' sons"*** (**Deuteronomy 4:9**). The Psalmist gives the purpose of the testimony in the same terms — that ***"the generation to come might know, sons yet to be born, that they might arise and tell their sons, that they might set their hope in Elohim"*** (**Psalms 78:5–7**).

The word for generation is ***generation (dor)***, **דּוֹר** (H1755). The Tanakh's picture is a chain: each ***generation (dor)*** receives the testimony and passes it on. Where one link is not taught, the chain breaks, and the government of **Yahweh** is lost to that people in a single lifetime.

Finding — that **Yahweh**'s government is lost in one generation when the fathers do not teach the sons, and kept when they do. **Corroborated (Judges 2:7–11; Deuteronomy 4:9–10; Psalms 78:4–8).**

I-A. What This Study Builds On

Since the earlier editions were written, the Library has examined many of the questions this study raises: the **Elijah** and Elisha schools and how a child should be taught in **Doc 434** (***"All Your Children Shall Be Taught of Yahweh"***); honoring father and mother in **Doc 413**; the rod and the father's discipline in **Doc 390**; rising before the gray head in **Doc 269**; men and women of valor in **Docs 375 and 376**; adultery and polyamory in **Docs 414 and 435**; the deceitful heart and the eyes in **Doc 429**; teaching little by little in **Doc 249**; and the other Parts of this series — **Doc 448** (Part 1), **Doc 447** (Part 2), and **Doc 446** (Part 5). This edition agrees with them and points to them where they say more.

II. WHAT THE TANAKH CALLS A YOUNG PERSON

Before the ***"teenager"*** can be weighed, the Tanakh's own words for the young must be heard. The Tanakh has several, and none of them marks off the years thirteen to nineteen as a class of their own.

ENGLISH (HEBREW)	HEBREW	STRONG'S	HOW THE TANAKH USES IT
youth (na'ar)	נַעַר	H5288	A boy from infancy to young manhood: the baby **Moses** in the basket (**Exodus 2:6**); **Samuel** when newly weaned (**1 Samuel 1:24**); **Joseph** at seventeen (**Genesis 37:2**); **David** before Goliath (**1 Samuel 17:33**); **Solomon** as a new king (**1 Kings 3:7**); and also a servant or attendant (**Ruth 2:5**). The feminine is ***young woman (na'arah)***.
young man (bachur)	בָּחוּר	H970	A young man in his strength: ***"the glory of young men is their strength"*** (**Proverbs 20:29**); the years of youth are ***youth (bechurot)***, H979 (**Ecclesiastes 12:1**).
child (yeled)	יֶלֶד	H3206	A child, one born; used of infants (**Exodus 2:6**) and of the young men who grew up with Rehoboam (**1 Kings 12:8**).
little ones (taf)	טַף	H2945	The little children of a household, named among those who must hear the Torah read (**Deuteronomy 31:12**).
youth, early years (ne'urim)	נְעוּרִים	H5271	The time of youth: ***"O Elohim, You have taught me from my youth"*** (**Psalms 71:17**); ***"the wife of your youth"*** (**Proverbs 5:18**).
elder, old (zaqen)	זָקֵן	H2205	Old, an old man (**Leviticus 19:32**); and the elders who held office (**Exodus 3:16**; **19:7**). Age stays in view even when it names the office (**1 Kings 12:6–8**).

The Tanakh does set ages for some duties. The men numbered for war and for the half-shekel were ***"from twenty years old and upward"*** (**Numbers 1:3**; **Exodus 30:14**), and the generation judged in the wilderness was counted from twenty years old (**Numbers 14:29**). But it never names a class between child and adult whose mark is that it is neither. A ***youth (na'ar)*** could be a servant, a shepherd, a soldier, a prophet, or a king. **Solomon**, already king, called himself ***"a little youth"*** (**1 Kings 3:7**) — not to excuse himself, but to ask for wisdom to govern.

Finding — that the Tanakh has no separate status between child and adult defined by the years thirteen to nineteen; its words for the young cover infancy to young manhood and carry duties, not exemptions. **Corroborated (Exodus 2:6; Genesis 37:2; 1 Samuel 17:33; 1 Kings 3:7; Numbers 1:3).**

III. THE INVENTION OF THE TEENAGER

The earlier editions opened with the claim that ***"the term 'teenager' did not exist before World War II."*** The record is close to that, but not exact. The two words ***"teen ager"*** were printed in an American newspaper as early as 1913, and the hyphenated noun ***"teen-ager"*** was in print by April 1941 in ***Popular Science***; the word became common only in the 1940s and 1950s, as a new market and a new youth culture grew up around it. The 2012 edition, following Dr. Michael Platt, added that the noun does not appear in Webster's Second Edition (1934) and first appears in the Third (1961). That comparison is Dr. Platt's; it was not checked for this edition.

Finding — that the noun ***"teenager"*** came into common use only during and after World War II. **Corroborated** (dictionary records date the noun to 1941, with a two-word form from 1913; historians of the period, among them Thomas Hine, place its spread in the 1940s).

Finding — that the word did not exist at all before World War II. **Corrected** — it was in rare use from 1913.

III-A. Youths, Heroes, and a Horizon

Dr. Platt, in his essay ***"The Teenager and the West,"*** argued that before the War there were youths, not teenagers: young people who, however confused or wayward, wanted to become adults and looked up to adults as heroes. He wrote that the day the teenager was created was ***"a sad day for every youth in America."*** In his account a youth wants to be trusted and given responsibility, feels shame for his mistakes because he respects the virtues he sees in grown men and women, and chooses heroes — statesmen, explorers, teachers, parents — whom he hopes to become. The teenager, in his account, has no such horizon; his highest hope is to become a more perfect teenager. That is Dr. Platt's argument as a social critic, and it is offered here as his witness.

The Tanakh gives its own youths, and every one of them is given work, not a holiday. **Joseph** at seventeen was shepherding with his brothers (**Genesis 37:2**). **Samuel** ***"ministered before Yahweh, a youth, girded with a linen ephod"*** (**1 Samuel 2:18**), and ***"Samuel grew, and Yahweh was with him"*** (**1 Samuel 3:19**). **David** went out against Goliath while **Saul** still called him ***"but a youth"*** (**1 Samuel 17:33, 37**). **Josiah** ***"in the eighth year of his reign, while he was still a youth, began to seek the Elohim of David his father"*** (**2 Chronicles 34:3**). **Daniel** and his three companions were youths when ***"Elohim gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom"*** (**Daniel 1:4, 17**). These are the heroes the Covenant sets before the young.

Finding — that the young people the Tanakh holds up were given duties and grew in wisdom before **Yahweh** while they were still youths. **Corroborated (Genesis 37:2; 1 Samuel 2:18; 3:19; 17:33; 2 Chronicles 34:3; Daniel 1:17).**

III-B. Parents Who Gave Up

Dr. Platt laid the blame for the teenager not first on the young but on their parents: the post-War generation, he argued, turned their children over to the entertainment industry, the television set, and the merchants of pleasure, gave them discretionary money, and told them to enjoy themselves. The earlier editions put it in one line: ***"They created teenagers because they gave up being parents."*** As a description of every family it is too broad; as a warning it has strong witnesses in the Tanakh, which twice records a father's failure to restrain a son and the ruin that followed:

"...because his sons made themselves vile, and he did not restrain them." (**1 Samuel 3:13**)

"And his father had not grieved him all his days, saying, Why have you done so?" (**1 Kings 1:6**)

The first is **Eli**, whose sons corrupted the service of the sanctuary; the second is **David** and his son **Adonijah**, who grew up never once corrected and then tried to seize the throne. **Proverbs** states the principle:

שֵׁבֶט וְתוֹכַחַת יִתֵּן חָכְמָה וְנַעַר מְשֻׁלָּח מֵבִישׁ אִמּוֹ

"The rod and reproof give wisdom, but a youth left to himself brings shame to his mother." (**Proverbs 29:15**)

A ***youth left to himself (na'ar meshullach)*** is literally a youth ***"sent off"*** or ***"let loose."*** The Library has examined the rod in **Doc 390** and found that the Tanakh's discipline is a father's correction given in love (**Proverbs 3:12**), not a beating. The point here is the other half of the verse: a youth let loose is not set free; he is abandoned.

Finding — that a parent who does not correct and guide a child brings ruin on the child and shame on the house. **Corroborated (1 Samuel 3:13; 1 Kings 1:6; Proverbs 29:15).**

Finding — that the post-War generation of parents as a whole created the teenager by giving up their role. **Single witness** — it is Dr. Platt's argument as a social critic; historians also name the growth of high school, a new consumer market, and wartime prosperity.

III-C. A Family Is Not a Democracy

Dr. Platt also answered what he called the excuse of choice: that children must be given their own way to learn responsibility. A republic, he wrote, rightly tolerates opinions it does not share, but a family run on ***"one child, one vote"*** cannot teach its young, and parents who give up the titles Mother and Father do not gain friends; they lose children. The Tanakh puts the order of the house in the Ten Words themselves:

"Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which Yahweh your Elohim gives you." **(Exodus 20:12)**

Moses set it beside reverence for the Sabbath (**Leviticus 19:3**), and **Isaiah** described a society under judgment as one where ***"the youth shall behave proudly against the elder, and the base against the honorable"*** (**Isaiah 3:5**). The Covenant does not make the young the subjects of a tyrant; it makes them the students of their parents, and it binds the parents to teach (Section VII). The Library's fuller study of the command is **Doc 413**.

Finding — that the Covenant orders the household with parents over children, and treats youth set against elders as a mark of a nation under judgment. **Corroborated (Exodus 20:12; Leviticus 19:3; Isaiah 3:4–5; Micah 7:6).**

IV. WHAT THE RESEARCH ON ADOLESCENCE SHOWS

The word ***adolescence*** comes from the Latin ***adolescere***, ***"to grow up."*** It names the passage from puberty to adulthood. The 2012 edition gave a long survey of the research, drawn largely from an encyclopedia article, on the physical, mental, and social changes of these years. Its main points, checked against the research they summarize, are these.

Identity. The psychologist Erik Erikson described adolescence as the stage of identity against role confusion, roughly from twelve or thirteen to eighteen or nineteen, followed by young adulthood. James Marcia's later research sorted young people by how far they had explored and committed to beliefs, and found that settled commitment is seldom reached before eighteen. The earlier editions' summary of this research is fair.

Self-esteem. The 2012 edition reported that, contrary to popular belief, research finds no general collapse of self-esteem in adolescence, though it swings from day to day. That is a fair summary of the studies it drew on.

Family and peers. Young people who have good relationships with their parents are less likely to smoke, drink, fight, or begin sexual activity early. Time with peers rises sharply in these years, and

susceptibility to peer pressure rises in early adolescence and declines in the later teens. Both points are well supported in the research.

Hormones. The earlier editions said hormonal changes have ***"a very small impact"*** on adolescent behavior. Reviews of the research have found that hormones alone explain only a small part of adolescent moodiness and conflict, and that family and social setting explain more. The claim stands if it is read as ***"hormones alone explain little,"*** not ***"hormones do nothing."***

Finding — that a young person's relationship with his parents is among the strongest protections against risky behavior, and that peer pressure is strongest in early adolescence. **Corroborated** (CDC Youth Risk Behavior Survey reports, 2023, on family connectedness; developmental research on peer influence).

IV-A. Identity: The Covenant Answer

Modern research treats identity as something a young person must find by exploring. The Covenant gives it first, by declaration, and then teaches the child to live it out: ***"You are sons of Yahweh your Elohim"*** (**Deuteronomy 14:1**); ***"Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name; you are Mine"*** (**Isaiah 43:1**); ***"You formed my inward parts; You wove me together in my mother's womb"*** (**Psalms 139:13**). The covenant-raised child knows whose he is before he knows who he will become.

The verse most often quoted for this is **Proverbs 22:6**:

חֲנֹךְ לַנַּעַר עַל־פִּי דַרְכּוֹ גַּם כִּי־יַזְקִין לֹא־יָסוּר מִמֶּנָּה

"Train up a youth according to his way; even when he is old he will not turn from it." (**Proverbs 22:6**)

The verb is ***train, dedicate (chanakh)***, **חָנַךְ** (H2596). Everywhere else in the Tanakh it means to dedicate — a new house (**Deuteronomy 20:5**) or the house of **Yahweh** (**1 Kings 8:63**; **2 Chronicles 7:5**). Only here is it used of a child, so the sense ***"train"*** rests on this one verse, while the picture of a child dedicated, as a house is dedicated to its purpose, has several witnesses. The words ***"according to his way"*** (***al-pi darko***) are rendered here as the Library corrected them in **Doc 434** and **Doc 413**: the Hebrew does not say ***"in the way he should go."*** Teaching that fits each child's way is still teaching toward **Yahweh**'s way (**Psalms 119:9**).

Finding — that the Covenant gives the child his identity as a son or daughter of **Yahweh** before it asks him to choose. **Corroborated (Deuteronomy 14:1; Isaiah 43:1; Psalms 139:13–16).**

Finding — that ***chanakh*** in **Proverbs 22:6** means ***"train."*** **Single witness** for that sense; the sense ***"dedicate"*** is **Corroborated (Deuteronomy 20:5; 1 Kings 8:63)**.

IV-B. Peers: The Counsel of the Young Men

The research finds that peer pressure is at its height in early adolescence. The Tanakh warns the young against it by name. Its first lesson to ***"my son"*** after the opening verses of **Proverbs** is not about money or work but about companions:

"My son, if sinners entice you, do not consent." (**Proverbs 1:10**)

Proverbs adds, ***"He who walks with wise men will be wise, but the companion of fools will suffer harm"*** (**Proverbs 13:20**), and the Torah says, ***"You shall not follow a multitude to do evil"*** (**Exodus 23:2**). The Tanakh also records what peer counsel cost a nation. When **Rehoboam** came to the throne, he ***"forsook the counsel of the elders which they had counseled him, and took counsel with the young men who had grown up with him"*** (**1 Kings 12:8**), and ten tribes were torn from the house of David (**1 Kings 12:16**). The kingdom divided over a king who trusted his peers above his elders.

Finding — that the Covenant warns the young against following companions into evil, and records the loss of a kingdom when the counsel of the young men was taken over the counsel of the elders. **Corroborated (Proverbs 1:10–19; 13:20; Exodus 23:2; 1 Kings 12:6–16).**

IV-C. What the Young Ask of Their Parents

The 2012 edition reprinted two articles on talking with teenagers. The counselor Doni Joszef advised parents to listen more than they lecture, to check their motives, and to meet their children where they are. Rabbi Yakov Horowitz reported asking a large group of teenage boys to whom they turned when tempted; parents came last on their list — yet about seven in ten said the first thing that came to mind when tempted was what their parents would think. That is his own survey and a single witness, but it agrees with the larger research on family connection above.

The Tanakh builds the conversation into the Covenant. It expects the child to ask, and it gives the father his answer:

"When your son asks you in time to come, saying, What are the testimonies and the statutes and the judgments which Yahweh our Elohim has commanded you? then you shall say to your son, We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt, and Yahweh brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand." (**Deuteronomy 6:20–21**)

The same pattern runs through the Passover (**Exodus 12:26–27**; **13:14**) and the stones at the Jordan (**Joshua 4:6–7, 21–22**). **Proverbs** adds the listener's wisdom: ***"Counsel in the heart of a man is deep water, but a man of understanding will draw it out"*** (**Proverbs 20:5**), and ***"He who answers a matter before he hears it, it is folly and shame to him"*** (**Proverbs 18:13**).

Finding — that the Covenant expects the young to ask and binds the parent to answer with the testimony of what **Yahweh** has done. **Corroborated (Deuteronomy 6:20–25; Exodus 12:26–27; 13:14; Joshua 4:6–7).**

V. THE MEDIA AND THE YOUNG MIND

The earlier editions spoke of an unannounced war on the minds of the young, waged by an industry that profits from youth cut loose from parents and covenant. That is the author's judgment of the industry, offered as a covenant witness. The specific claims made for it are graded here.

Violence on television. The March 2026 edition said ***"sixty percent of television programs that children regularly view contain violence."*** The source of that figure is the National Television Violence Study (1994–1997), which found violence in about six in ten of the programs it sampled across all of television, not only children's viewing. The figure is three decades old.

Imitation. The edition said that when a film depicts a suicidal character romantically, teenage suicide rates temporarily rise. A study funded by the National Institute of Mental Health found that in the month after a 2017 television series portraying a teenager's suicide was released, the suicide rate among U.S. youth ages ten to seventeen was 28.9 percent above what earlier trends predicted (Bridge et al., 2019). The authors noted that the study could not prove the cause. The edition's further claims — that injuries follow every broadcast of dangerous stunts, and that music glorifying violence and promiscuity increases those behaviors where it dominates — were not found in a study that shows cause; studies of music and media mostly show association.

Finding — that young people are especially sensitive to how the media portray suicide and violence. **Corroborated** (Bridge et al., 2019; National Television Violence Study).

Finding — that the media manufacture youth behavior by design and for profit, with cause proven. **Not corroborated** as a proven cause; it stands as the author's judgment of the industry.

The Tanakh does not wait for the studies. It tells the believer to guard the gates of the eyes and the heart:

"I will set no worthless thing before my eyes." (**Psalms 101:3**)

The worthless thing is a ***thing of worthlessness (devar beliyya'al)*** — the same word the Tanakh uses for the sons of Eli (**1 Samuel 2:12**). The fringes were given so that Israel would ***"not go about after your heart and after your eyes, after which you go astray"*** (**Numbers 15:39**; see **Doc 429**), and **Proverbs** says, ***"Above all that you guard, keep your heart, for out of it are the issues of life"*** (**Proverbs 4:23**). What a youth sets before his eyes, hour after hour, is what he is being taught.

Finding — that the Covenant charges the believer to guard what he sets before his eyes, because the eyes lead the heart. **Corroborated (Psalms 101:3; Numbers 15:39; Proverbs 4:23–25).**

V-A. Screen Time and the Youth — 2026 Record

The March 2026 edition gave a table of screen-time and mental-health figures. They are corrected and brought up to date below.

INDICATOR	CURRENT RECORD
Entertainment screen media per day, not counting school	Teens 13–18: 8 hours 39 minutes; tweens 8–12: 5 hours 33 minutes (Common Sense Census, 2021, the latest census for these ages)
Teens online every day	96% of U.S. teens 13–17 use the internet daily; about nine in ten use YouTube (Pew Research Center, 2024)
Teens online ***"almost constantly"***	46% of teens 13–17 (Pew, 2024) — this is the internet, not social media alone; about one in six say they are on YouTube or TikTok almost constantly
Persistent sadness or hopelessness	39.7% of U.S. high school students (CDC YRBS, 2023); 33% in the 2025 survey
Seriously considered suicide in the past year	20.4% of U.S. high school students (CDC YRBS, 2023); 14% in the 2025 survey

The 2025 survey shows improvement since 2021, yet the figures still describe a generation that spends more of its waking hours with screens than with parents, teachers, or elders. The CDC's own reports name the same protection this study names: young people who feel connected to family and school fare far better. If a young reader of this study is carrying that kind of sadness, the Covenant's first counsel is the one the Psalms model — tell it to **Yahweh** and tell it to someone who loves you (**Psalms 142:2** [Hebrew 142:3]): a parent, an elder, a teacher. In the United States the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline answers by call or text at any hour.

The March 2026 edition also compared American homework time (about six hours a week) with five hours a day in India, Taiwan, and Japan. That comparison comes from research reviews of the 1990s and is not current data; it is withdrawn from the table.

Finding — that the March 2026 screen-time figures were current. **Corrected** — the screen figures are from the 2021 Common Sense Census, the 46% figure is for the internet, not social media, and the homework comparison is from the 1990s.

VI. PURITY AND THE YOUNG

The 2012 edition gave a 2002 table of teen birth rates across nations, and the March 2026 edition replaced it with current figures. The United States figures, from the CDC's National Center for Health Statistics, are confirmed:

YEAR	U.S. BIRTHS PER 1,000 FEMALES AGES 15–19
1991	61.8
2002	43.0
2024 (final data)	12.6 — a record low
2025 (provisional data)	11.7 — a further record low

Researchers credit the decline to several causes together: less sexual activity among teens, more use of contraception, and access to abortion. The March 2026 edition is right that a falling birth rate is not by itself a moral recovery. Young people ages fifteen to twenty-four still account for about half of all new sexually transmitted infections in the United States each year (CDC estimate). The figures the March edition gave for other nations could not be matched to their sources for this edition and are left out.

The Covenant addresses the root, not the symptom. It does not begin at puberty; it begins in infancy, and it forms purity as character, not only as a rule. **Proverbs** gives a whole chapter to one scene — a father at his window watching ***"among the youths a young man lacking heart"*** walk toward the house of the adulteress at dusk (**Proverbs 7:7–9**). The young man is not called wicked; he is called empty — ***lacking heart***. The answer **Proverbs** gives is a heart filled before the hour of temptation: ***"Say to wisdom, You are my sister"*** (**Proverbs 7:4**), and ***"rejoice with the wife of your youth"*** (**Proverbs 5:18**; see **Doc 374**).

"You shall not commit adultery." (**Exodus 20:14** [Hebrew 20:13])

"He who commits adultery with a woman lacks heart; he who does it destroys his own soul." (**Proverbs 6:32**)

Joseph, a young man far from home, answered temptation with the reason the Covenant gives: ***"How then can I do this great evil, and sin against Elohim?"*** (**Genesis 39:9**). The Song of Songs, three times over, charges the young not to ***"stir up nor awaken love until it pleases"*** (**Song of Songs 2:7**; **3:5**; **8:4**).

Finding — that the Covenant forms sexual purity in the young as a filled heart and a reverent fear of **Elohim**, taught before the hour of temptation. **Corroborated (Proverbs 5:15–20; 6:32; 7:1–27; Genesis 39:9; Song of Songs 2:7).**

The March 2026 edition quoted ***"Flee sexual immorality … he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body"*** and gave it as **Proverbs 6:32** and **Leviticus 18:6**. Those words are from the New Testament (1 Corinthians 6:18), not the Tanakh; Volume II had already marked them as a New Testament record. **Leviticus 18:6** forbids uncovering the nakedness of a close relative; it is the Torah's law against incest, not a general word on youthful purity, and is cited here only for what it says. The 2012 edition also included anthropological descriptions of sexual customs among children in other cultures, a disputed claim from Margaret Mead (her Samoa findings were challenged by Derek Freeman in 1983), and a video link. None of these is needed to make the Covenant's point, and they are not carried forward.

VII. YAHWEH'S GOVERNMENT DEMANDS THE TEACHING OF ITS YOUTH

The Covenant of **Yahweh** is not an optional curriculum for those who find it convenient. It is the law of His government, and it commands that the children of that government be taught it from their earliest years, continually. The instruction was given through **Moses**:

וְשִׁנַּנְתָּם לְבָנֶיךָ וְדִבַּרְתָּ בָּם בְּשִׁבְתְּךָ בְּבֵיתֶךָ וּבְלֶכְתְּךָ בַדֶּרֶךְ וּבְשָׁכְבְּךָ וּבְקוּמֶךָ

"And you shall teach them diligently to your sons, and shall speak of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise up." (**Deuteronomy 6:7**)

The verb is ***teach diligently, sharpen (shanan)***, **שָׁנַן** (H8150). Its other uses are of sharpening a blade or an arrow: ***"If I sharpen My glittering sword"*** (**Deuteronomy 32:41**); ***"who sharpen their tongue like a sword"*** (**Psalms 64:3** [Hebrew 64:4]); ***"Your arrows are sharp"*** (**Psalms 45:5** [Hebrew 45:6]). Only in **Deuteronomy 6:7** is it used for teaching. The picture the verses give is of

words driven home again and again, at every hour of the day, until they cut a lasting mark — not mentioned once a week. The usage of the root is well witnessed; that ***shanan*** in **Deuteronomy 6:7** means ***"repeat, teach incisively"*** is how BDB and the translations read this single use.

Finding — that the Covenant charges parents to teach its words to their children continually, at home and on the way, morning and night. **Corroborated (Deuteronomy 6:6–9; 11:18–21; 4:9–10).**

VII-A. The Elders and the Words of the Covenant

The 2012 edition traced the teaching from **Yahweh** to **Moses**, from **Moses** to the elders, and from the elders to the people, with a word study of each step.

"Now therefore go, and I will be with your mouth, and teach you what you shall speak." (**Exodus 4:12**)

The word for mouth is ***mouth (peh)***, **פֶּה** (H6310). The 2012 edition gave its meaning as ***"spokesman, orator, messenger."*** The word means mouth, but the Tanakh itself uses it that way four verses later, when **Yahweh** says of **Aaron**, ***"he shall be your spokesman to the people; and he shall be to you for a mouth"*** (**Exodus 4:16**). The word for teach is ***teach, cast (yarah)***, **יָרָה** (H3384), which in other forms means to throw or shoot (**Exodus 15:4**; **1 Samuel 20:36**) and once to lay a cornerstone (**Job 38:6**); ***instruction (torah)*** comes from the same root. The 2012 edition's gloss ***"to lay foundations"*** rests on that one verse. The root picture is suggestive, but the Library's rule is that usage decides, and in **Exodus 4:12** the word means teach.

"And Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and set before them all these words which Yahweh commanded him." (**Exodus 19:7**)

The elders are ***elders (zeqenim)***, the plural of ***zaqen*** (H2205). The earlier editions defined the word as ***"chief men, rulers, magistrates, without reference merely to age."*** The Tanakh uses ***zaqen*** for the office (**Exodus 3:16**; **19:7**), but its plain sense is old, and age stays in view when it names the office: the young are to ***"rise up before the gray head, and honor the face of the old man (zaqen)"*** (**Leviticus 19:32**), and **Rehoboam**'s ***"elders"*** are set against the ***"young men"*** (**1 Kings 12:8**). The elders were men of age and of wisdom together (**Deuteronomy 1:13**).

The words they received are ***word, matter (davar)***, **דָּבָר** (H1697), and ***commanded (tsivvah)***, from **צָוָה** (H6680). The 2012 edition said ***davar*** means ***"the proposed plan, business, a counsel,"*** from a root meaning ***"to lead, guide, rule."*** The Tanakh uses ***davar*** for word, matter, and business (**Exodus 18:16**), so ***"the matter, the business"*** is fair; but the sense ***"lead, rule"*** rests on two disputed verses where a different verb means to subdue (**Psalms 18:47** [Hebrew 18:48]; **47:3** [Hebrew 47:4]), and it is not the meaning in **Exodus 19:7**. ***Tsavah*** means to command, charge, or appoint — **Yahweh**

"commanded him to be prince" **(1 Samuel 13:14)** — so the 2012 gloss ***"to constitute, to appoint"*** is supported.

Finding — that **Moses** set the words of **Yahweh** before the elders, who were to teach and judge the people by them. **Corroborated (Exodus 19:7; 18:20–22; Deuteronomy 1:13–15; 31:9).**

Finding — that ***zaqen*** is used ***"without reference to age."*** **Not in the text** — the office keeps the word's sense of age (**Leviticus 19:32**; **1 Kings 12:8**).

Finding — that ***davar*** in **Exodus 19:7** carries the sense ***"to lead, to rule."*** **Not in the text** — it means the words or matters that **Yahweh** commanded.

VII-B. The Levites, the Assembly, and the Little Ones

The earlier editions said the Levites served as ***"the educational corps of the Hebrew republic, going throughout the estates,"*** quoting **Deuteronomy 33:10**. The verse says they shall teach; the going throughout the land is recorded later:

"They shall teach Jacob Your judgments and Israel Your Torah." **(Deuteronomy 33:10)**

"And they taught in Judah, having the book of the Torah of Yahweh with them, and went about through all the cities of Judah and taught the people." **(2 Chronicles 17:9)**

The priests were charged ***"to teach the children of Israel all the statutes"*** **(Leviticus 10:11)**, and King **Jehoshaphat** sent princes, Levites, and priests through the cities (**2 Chronicles 17:7–9**). Above all, the Covenant would not let the young be taught apart from the whole people. Every seventh year, at the Feast of Booths, the Torah was read before all Israel:

הַקְהֵל אֶת־הָעָם הָאֲנָשִׁים וְהַנָּשִׁים וְהַטַּף וְגֵרְךָ אֲשֶׁר בִּשְׁעָרֶיךָ

"Assemble the people, the men and the women and the little ones, and your stranger who is within your gates, that they may hear and that they may learn, and fear Yahweh your Elohim, and take care to do all the words of this Torah; and that their sons, who have not known, may hear and learn to fear Yahweh your Elohim." **(Deuteronomy 31:12–13)**

Joshua read every word of **Moses** ***"before all the assembly of Israel, with the women and the little ones and the stranger who walked among them"*** **(Joshua 8:35)**, and **Ezra** read it before ***"men and women, and all who could hear with understanding"*** **(Nehemiah 8:2–3)**. The children stood in the assembly and heard the same words as the elders.

Finding — that the priests and Levites were charged to teach the Torah, and that the young were taught in the full assembly with their parents, not apart from them. **Corroborated (Leviticus 10:11; Deuteronomy 33:10; 31:10–13; Joshua 8:35; Nehemiah 8:2–3; 2 Chronicles 17:7–9).**

VIII. THE CALLING OF JEREMIAH — A PATTERN FOR THE YOUNG

The account of **Jeremiah**'s calling is one of the plainest words in the Tanakh about the young and the service of **Yahweh**. **Yahweh** told him:

"Before I formed you in the belly I knew you, and before you came out of the womb I set you apart; a prophet to the nations I appointed you." (**Jeremiah 1:5**)

Jeremiah answered, ***"Ah, Lord Yahweh! Behold, I do not know how to speak, for I am a youth"*** (**Jeremiah 1:6**). **Yahweh**'s answer is the title of this study:

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֵלַי אַל־תֹּאמַר נַעַר אָנֹכִי כִּי עַל־כָּל־אֲשֶׁר אֶשְׁלָחֵךְ תֵּלֵךְ וְאֵת כָּל־אֲשֶׁר אֲצַוֶּךָּ תְּדַבֵּר

"And Yahweh said to me, Do not say, I am a youth; for to all to whom I send you, you shall go, and all that I command you, you shall speak." (**Jeremiah 1:7**)

Yahweh did not deny that **Jeremiah** was young. He denied that youth was an excuse. The word is ***youth (na'ar)*** (H5288), the same word used of **Samuel**, **David**, and **Solomon** (Section II), and in each of those accounts the young person's strength came from **Yahweh** being with him: ***"Do not fear them, for I am with you to deliver you"*** (**Jeremiah 1:8**); ***"Yahweh was with him"*** (**1 Samuel 3:19**); ***"Yahweh who delivered me from the paw of the lion ... will deliver me"*** (**1 Samuel 17:37**).

Finding — that **Yahweh** calls the young to His service and does not accept youth as an excuse, because His presence, not their age, is their strength. **Corroborated (Jeremiah 1:6–8; 1 Samuel 3:19; 17:37; 1 Kings 3:7–9).**

The earlier editions went on to say that the Covenant's instruction was to be taught ***"from the womb,"*** and called that ***"the standard of Yirmeyahu's calling."*** **Jeremiah 1:5** speaks of **Yahweh** knowing and setting apart the prophet before birth; it does not speak of teaching in the womb. The witnesses for teaching from the earliest years are others: the little ones in the assembly (**Deuteronomy 31:12**), **Samuel** serving before **Yahweh** from the time he was weaned (**1 Samuel 1:24–28**; **2:11, 18**), and the Psalmist taught ***"from my youth"*** (**Psalms 71:17**).

Finding — that **Jeremiah 1:5** sets the standard that children be taught from the womb. **Not in the text** — it records **Yahweh**'s knowledge and consecration of the prophet before birth; teaching from the earliest years is **Corroborated** by **Deuteronomy 31:12**, **1 Samuel 2:11, 18**, and **Psalms 71:17**.

The Tanakh speaks to the young themselves as well as to their parents:

וּזְכֹר אֶת־בּוֹרְאֶיךָ בִּימֵי בְחוּרֹתֶיךָ

"Remember also your Creator in the days of your youth." **(Ecclesiastes 12:1)**

"How shall a young man keep his path pure? By guarding it according to Your word." **(Psalms 119:9)**

"It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth." **(Lamentations 3:27)**

And it promises the young who wait on Him a strength their own youth cannot supply: ***"Even youths shall faint and be weary, and young men shall utterly stumble; but those who wait for Yahweh shall renew their strength"*** **(Isaiah 40:30–31)**. In 2026 this calling is not only a metaphor. The author urges covenant assemblies to prepare young people to speak, with knowledge and respect, before city councils, legislatures, and every body that governs — as **Jeremiah** was sent ***"over the nations and over the kingdoms"*** **(Jeremiah 1:10)**. That is the author's application of the text, and the Tanakh's youths give it a warrant.

IX. THE EDUCATION OF THE FOUNDERS

The earlier editions held up the education of the American founders as evidence that an educated youth produces sound government. The record bears out much of what was said, with some corrections.

Harvard. The Harvard College laws of 1642 admitted a scholar only when he could read Cicero (Tully) or a classical Latin author at sight, speak and write true Latin in verse and prose, and decline perfectly the Greek nouns and verbs. The earlier editions quoted this correctly. They added that students had to translate both Testaments from Greek and Hebrew into Latin. That was not an admission rule; it was the requirement for the first degree — a scholar had to be able to read the original of the Old and New Testaments into the Latin tongue.

King's College. The earlier editions said that when Alexander Hamilton entered King's College (now Columbia) in 1773, he had to read three orations of Cicero and ***"the entire Aeneid"*** and translate the first ten chapters of John from Greek into Latin. The college laws of 1760, which John Jay copied out, required the first three of Cicero's orations and the first six books of Virgil's Aeneid read into English,

and the first ten chapters of John's Gospel put into Latin; the statutes of 1763 asked for the Gospels from the Greek into Latin. The college's register places Hamilton among the admissions of 1774.

The Convention. The earlier editions said that thirty of the fifty-five delegates to the Constitutional Convention were college graduates, that James Madison had read a long list of classical authors before entering Princeton, and that Tracy Lee Simmons, in ***Climbing Parnassus***, named ***"the pulpit and the schoolroom"*** as the founders' two schools. These were not checked for this edition. Patrick Henry's words, ***"I have but one lamp by which my feet are guided, and that is the lamp of experience,"*** are from his speech to the Virginia Convention of March 1775.

Finding — that the colonial colleges required Latin and Greek for entrance and the reading of the Scriptures in their original tongues for the first degree. **Corroborated** (Harvard College Laws, 1642; Laws of King's College, 1760; Statutes, 1763).

The earlier editions concluded that ***"the founding fathers were trained in the government of the Covenant of Yahweh."*** That goes further than the record. A study of American political writing from 1760 to 1805 found the Bible the most-cited source, and Deuteronomy the most-cited book of it (Lutz, 1984; see **Doc 448**). The founders were schooled in the Scriptures, but their colleges were Christian institutions, and many of the founders were shaped as much by Rome and the Enlightenment as by **Moses**. The lesson the author draws stands on firmer ground: a people that wants its sons to govern well must teach them hard things young, and if covenant households pair that seriousness with the whole instruction of the Torah, their children may do more than the founders did.

Finding — that the founders were trained in the government of the Covenant of **Yahweh**. **Not corroborated** as stated; that they were schooled in the Scriptures and cited Deuteronomy often is **Single witness** (Lutz, 1984).

X. FUTURE GOVERNMENTS REST ON THE TEACHING OF THE YOUTH

Yahweh's government needs a taught people, beginning with the youngest. The covenant assembly cannot treat the teaching of children as secondary to the preferences of adults. **Solomon**, who governed a kingdom, opened **Proverbs** with its purpose:

"To know wisdom and discipline, to understand words of understanding … to give prudence to the simple, to the youth knowledge and discretion." **(Proverbs 1:2, 4)**

The next verse turns to the grown man: ***"The wise will hear and increase learning"*** (**Proverbs 1:5**). The same book was written for the youth and for the wise at once — young and old learning from one source, in one community, under one Covenant. Then comes the first charge to a son:

שְׁמַע בְּנִי מוּסַר אָבִיךָ וְאַל־תִּטֹּשׁ תּוֹרַת אִמֶּךָ

"Hear, my son, the discipline of your father, and do not forsake the instruction of your mother." (**Proverbs 1:8**)

The father gives ***discipline (musar)***, **מוּסָר** (H4148) — instruction that corrects. The mother gives ***instruction (torah)***, **תּוֹרָה** (H8451) — the same word used for the Torah of **Yahweh**. The earlier editions translated it ***"the covenant of your mother"***; the Hebrew says her ***instruction***, her ***torah***. They also said the word ***mother (em)***, **אֵם** (H517), means ***"the one who binds the family together."*** In the Tanakh the word simply means mother; that sense is a guess about the word's root, not its use. The point the earlier editions were making does not need it: **Proverbs** gives the mother a ***torah*** of her own, and puts it beside the father's ***musar*** (**Proverbs 1:8**; **6:20**; **31:1, 26**). The home, with father and mother both teaching, is the first school of **Yahweh**'s government.

Finding — that the Covenant makes father and mother both teachers of their children, the father's discipline and the mother's instruction together. **Corroborated (Proverbs 1:8; 6:20; 31:1, 26; Deuteronomy 21:18).**

Finding — that ***em*** means ***"the one who binds the family together."*** **Not in the text.**

X-A. Rulers Who Were Not Taught

The 2012 edition turned from the home to the halls of government. The kings and rulers of Israel, it said, were given the Covenant to rule by and did not follow it, and the rulers of the nations since have written constitutions of their own because they rejected the one **Yahweh** gave. The Torah required the king to be taught: he was to write a copy of the Torah for himself, ***"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"*** (**Deuteronomy 17:18–19**). The study's point is that a ruler is a youth grown up. If he was not taught the Covenant young, he will not govern by it old.

The 2012 edition then quoted the Preamble of the U.S. Constitution — ***"in order to form a more perfect union"*** — and argued that a union of men cannot be more perfect than the Covenant it set aside. As examples of man-made law that is vague and open to abuse, it cited the indefinite-detention provision (Section 1021) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2012, signed on December 31, 2011, which the American Civil Liberties Union opposed, and the definition of ***"domestic terrorism"*** added to federal law by Section 802 of the USA PATRIOT Act (2001), which

turns on acts that ***"appear to be intended"*** to intimidate or coerce. Both are accurately described. Tanakh's measure for such laws is **Isaiah 10:1** — ***"Woe to those who decree unrighteous decrees, and to the writers who write oppression"*** — and **Deuteronomy 4:2**: nothing added, nothing taken away. The Library's fuller study of law written and law made is **Doc 221**.

Several claims in that section of the 2012 edition are corrected. The Constitution was not ***"instituted in 1792"***; it was signed in 1787, ratified in 1788, and took effect in 1789, and the Bill of Rights was ratified in 1791. The claim that the Declaration of Independence originally read ***"Life, Liberty and Property"*** is withdrawn; every draft of the Declaration reads ***"the pursuit of Happiness,"*** and the phrase ***"life, liberty, and estate"*** is John Locke's (***Second Treatise***, 1689). The report that ***"two versions"*** of the Constitution exist, one of them counterfeit, was not corroborated. The quoted website also blamed draft legislation on ***"Zionist Jews"*** as a group. That is a charge against a whole people with no witness behind it, which the Torah forbids (**Exodus 23:1**; **Leviticus 19:16**; **Deuteronomy 19:15**); it is removed, in keeping with the Library's studies of Zionism and antisemitism (**Docs 396 and 410**).

Finding — that a ruler must be taught the Covenant to govern by it. **Corroborated (Deuteronomy 17:18–20; 2 Chronicles 17:7–9; Proverbs 8:15–16).**

XI. PRACTICAL APPLICATION FOR THE COVENANT ASSEMBLY

The youth crisis of 2026 is not only a crisis of biology or technology; the author calls it a crisis of covenant abandonment. The assemblies of covenant believers can answer it. The following principles are drawn from the Covenant, each with its witnesses.

- **Teach from the earliest years.** The Covenant does not wait for a child to come of age. The little ones stand in the assembly (**Deuteronomy 31:12**), and **Samuel** served from the time he was weaned (**1 Samuel 2:11, 18**). Parents are the first teachers (**Deuteronomy 6:7**).
- **Keep the elders with the youth.** The Tanakh's pattern is the whole assembly together — men, women, little ones, and strangers (**Deuteronomy 31:12**; **Joshua 8:35**; **Nehemiah 8:2–3**). The author's warning is that religion divided by age tends to produce faith divided by age, which seldom survives the teenage years.
- **Give the young real work. Joseph**, **Samuel**, **David**, and **Daniel** were trusted with duties as youths (Section III-A). Young people given real assignments — teaching younger children, preparing the assembly, reading the Torah aloud — engage as those who belong.

- **Answer what the culture teaches.** The son will ask (**Deuteronomy 6:20**). If the assembly never speaks of the ***"teenager,"*** of peer pressure, of purity, or of what the screen is teaching, the young will meet those forces with no answer from the Covenant (**Proverbs 1:10**; **Psalms 101:3**).
- **Teach hard things well.** The founders' schooling shows what young minds can carry (Section IX). Joined to the whole instruction of the Torah, serious study of language, history, and reasoning is a worthy goal for every covenant household (**Daniel 1:17**; **Proverbs 1:2–5**).
- **Fathers must lead, with mothers beside them.** ***"Hear, my son, the discipline of your father, and do not forsake the instruction of your mother"*** (**Proverbs 1:8**). The Tanakh records what happens when a father will not restrain his son (**1 Samuel 3:13**; **1 Kings 1:6**). Covenant fathers must take up the work, and the prophets promise a day when **Yahweh** will turn ***"the heart of the fathers to the sons"*** (**Malachi 4:6** [Hebrew 3:24]).

XII. ONE COVENANT FOR ALL NATIONS

A vital principle of the Hebrew government, and one that bears on the forming of the young, is the unity a shared Covenant produces. The strength of the nation was never its army or its wealth but a people of one heart under one law. The earlier editions cited Josephus for it: in his defense of the Jewish people he wrote that their agreement about **Elohim** and the conduct of life was such that one could hear it ***"from our women, and servants themselves"*** (***Against Apion*** 2.181). Josephus is a comparative witness only. The Tanakh gives its own: at Sinai ***"all the people answered with one voice and said, All the words which Yahweh has spoken we will do"*** (**Exodus 24:3**), and the men, women, little ones, and strangers heard the same reading together (**Deuteronomy 31:12**).

That unity was taught to include the stranger:

"And you shall not oppress a stranger, for you know the heart of a stranger, seeing you were strangers in the land of Egypt." (**Exodus 23:9**)

"One Torah and one judgment shall be for you and for the stranger who sojourns with you" (**Numbers 15:16**). The earlier editions said the stranger who entered the Covenant ***"became, by adoption, a son or daughter of Abraham."*** The Tanakh does not use those words; it says the stranger who joins himself to **Yahweh** and holds fast His Covenant lives under the same Torah and is given ***"a place and a name"*** in His house (**Isaiah 56:5–7**). The youth of every nation are the covenant adults of tomorrow. The question before every household and assembly is not whether the young are interested in the Covenant today, but whether their elders are faithful in teaching it.

Finding — that the Covenant made one people of one law out of native and stranger, taught together. **Corroborated (Exodus 12:49; 23:9; 24:3; Numbers 15:16; Deuteronomy 31:12; Isaiah 56:6–7).**

Finding — that the stranger became a son or daughter of Abraham ***"by adoption."*** **Not in the text** in those words.

XIII. IN CONCLUSION — THE KINGDOM GIVEN TO THE HOLY ONES

The earlier editions closed under the heading ***"The Offices of Melchizedek Are Waiting."*** The Kingdom ruled by the Covenant, they said, waits for the sons and daughters of **Yahweh** to be revealed, and it will need judges, officers, counselors, teachers, peacemakers, and peacekeepers — men and women formed in covenant character and taught covenant law. That is the right conclusion for a study of the young. The witnesses for it are tested here.

Daniel saw the kingdom given to the faithful. The passage is in Aramaic:

"...until the Ancient of Days came, and judgment was given to the holy ones of the Most High, and the time came, and the holy ones possessed the kingdom." (**Daniel 7:22**)

The ***holy ones (qaddishin)*** are named again as ***"the people of the holy ones of the Most High"*** (**Daniel 7:27**), and the kingdom is given to them ***"forever, even forever and ever"*** (**Daniel 7:18**). Some scholars read the ***holy ones*** as heavenly beings; verse 27, which calls them a people, supports the reading of the faithful of Israel. The Torah had already given Israel its calling:

"And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation." (**Exodus 19:6**)

The words are ***kingdom (mamlakhah)***, **מַמְלָכָה** (H4467), and ***priests (kohanim)***, from **כֹּהֵן** (H3548). The 2012 edition said ***kohen*** means ***"principal officer, chief ruler ... a prince."*** Its meaning is priest. The Tanakh does use it a few times of royal officers in **David**'s court (**2 Samuel 8:18**; **20:26**; **1 Kings 4:5**), but in **Exodus 19:6** it means a nation of priests — a whole people set apart to serve **Yahweh** and to teach His ways to the nations.

The name ***Melchizedek (Malki-tsedeq)***, **מַלְכִּי־צֶדֶק** (H4442), is formed from ***king (melekh)*** (H4428) and ***righteousness (tsedeq)*** (H6664), and may be read ***"my king is righteousness"*** or ***"king of righteousness"*** (BDB). He was king of Salem and priest of El Elyon (**Genesis 14:18**), and the Psalm says of one king, ***"You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek"*** (**Psalms 110:4**). The Tanakh does not speak of ***"offices of Melchizedek"*** given to the young; that is the study's own picture of righteous government. The 2012 edition went further and named Yeshua as the high

priest and king of that order, whose death ***"was the signing in blood of this Covenant, for us all."*** That teaching is corrected here in agreement with the Library's later studies (**Docs 164, 393, 406, and 431**): the Tanakh names **Yahweh** alone as Savior and Redeemer (**Isaiah 43:11**; **47:4**), and it says that no man can ransom his brother (**Psalms 49:7** [Hebrew 49:8]) and that ***"the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father"*** (**Ezekiel 18:20**; **Deuteronomy 24:16**). The government the young are being prepared for is the government of **Yahweh**, and its standard is righteousness (**Psalms 89:14** [Hebrew 89:15]).

The 2012 edition also spoke of names entered in **Yahweh**'s register. The Tanakh witnesses a book: ***"a book of remembrance was written before Him for those who feared Yahweh and thought upon His Name"*** (**Malachi 3:16**); ***"whoever has sinned against Me, him will I blot out of My book"*** (**Exodus 32:33**); ***"everyone who shall be found written in the book"*** (**Daniel 12:1**). And the earlier editions closed with the covenant of peace — given to **Phinehas** (**Numbers 25:12–13**) and the covenant of life and peace given to **Levi** (**Malachi 2:4–5**). Both are priestly covenants given to particular men; applied to the young of every house, they show what kind of servants **Yahweh** makes of those who fear Him: ***"the Torah of truth was in his mouth ... and he turned many away from iniquity"*** (**Malachi 2:6**).

The land cries out for a righteous government. The youth of today are the answer, if their parents and elders do their part. The last word of the Prophets is a promise about exactly this:

וְהֵשִׁיב לֵב־אָבוֹת עַל־בָּנִים וְלֵב בָּנִים עַל־אֲבוֹתָם

"And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the sons, and the heart of the sons to their fathers." (**Malachi 4:6** [Hebrew 3:24])

Finding — that **Yahweh** will give the kingdom to His holy people, and that He calls a whole people to be a kingdom of priests. **Corroborated (Daniel 7:18, 22, 27; Exodus 19:6; Isaiah 61:6).**

Finding — that the young are being prepared for ***"the offices of Melchizedek."*** **Not in the text** as a Tanakh term; it is the study's picture of righteous government.

XIV. THREE-RELIGION AUDIT — HOW EACH TRADITION ANSWERS

The table sets the three traditions against the Tanakh's own findings. Comparative texts are cited as historical reference only.

ELEMENT	✡ JUDAISM	† CHRISTIANITY	☪ ISLAM
When is a young person responsible?	At thirteen for boys and twelve for girls, by rabbinic tradition (Mishnah, Avot 5:21)	At a profession of faith, confirmation, or an age of accountability that varies by church	At puberty (***bulugh***); children are taught to pray from seven (Abi Dawud 495)
Who teaches?	Parents, with the study house and the synagogue	Parents and the church, often through age-divided youth ministries	Parents, with the mosque and Qur'an school
Where it agrees with the Tanakh	Parents bound to teach (**Deuteronomy 6:7**)	Children brought up in discipline (**Proverbs 22:6**; **29:15**)	Luqman's counsel echoes a father's instruction (**Proverbs 1:8**)
Where it departs	Where tradition held back the teaching of daughters (Mishnah, Sotah 3:4), though the Torah was read to women and little ones (**Deuteronomy 31:12**)	Where the young are taught apart from the assembly, and the Torah's statutes are not taught as the Covenant (**Joshua 8:35**; **Deuteronomy 4:2**)	Where the Torah's statutes are not taught and the Name **Yahweh** is not called on (**Deuteronomy 6:4–7**; **Exodus 3:15**)

XV. CORRECTIONS TO EARLIER LIBRARY MATERIAL

The Library's rule is that its own earlier work is tested by the same standard as everyone else's. This document replaces ***Hebrew Nation Parts 3 & 4 2026*** (Google Doc, March 2026) and the 2012 original, ***The Government of the Hebrew Nation and its Covenant/Constitution: Part 3 "The Youth."*** Both Google Docs are view-only to the Library's tools, so they were not changed in place; the corrections below are made in this edition.

Correction 1 — Name, place, and contact. The earlier editions were issued from ***"Miqdash Bethel Covenant Assembly, Pearl River, Louisiana."*** This edition reads Miqdash Bethel Covenant Institution, ***"The Message is Sent to the World,"*** with miqdashbethel.ai. Hebrew books and personal names (Yirmeyahu, Mosheh, Dawid, Yaaqov, Malakyah) are given in English.

Correction 2 — The word "teenager" (Section III). ***"Did not exist before World War II"*** now reads that it was rare from 1913 and common only after 1941; the Webster's comparison is credited to Dr. Platt and marked unchecked.

Correction 3 — Other writers credited (How to Read, Sections III, IV). The 2012 edition reprinted at length an encyclopedia article on adolescence and articles by Dr. Michael Platt, Doni Joszef, and Rabbi Yakov Horowitz. Their points are now summarized briefly and credited.

Correction 4 — The parents' generation (Section III-B). ***"They created teenagers because they gave up being parents"*** is graded as Dr. Platt's argument, a single witness, with the Tanakh's own witnesses to a father's failure (**1 Samuel 3:13**; **1 Kings 1:6**; **Proverbs 29:15**).

Correction 5 — Media claims (Section V). The sixty-percent figure is tied to its source (National Television Violence Study, all programs, 1994–1997); the stunts claim is withdrawn; the suicide-portrayal claim is replaced with the 2019 study; the music claim is graded association, not proven cause.

Correction 6 — Screen-time table (Section V-A). Common Sense ***"2024, 7–9 hours"*** now reads the 2021 census figures; ***"95% use at least one platform"*** now reads 96% online daily; ***"almost constantly on social media"*** now reads the internet; the 1990s homework comparison is withdrawn; the 2025 YRBS figures are added.

Correction 7 — Teen births (Section VI). The 2024 rate (12.6) is confirmed and the provisional 2025 rate (11.7) added; the causes are restated as the researchers give them; the other nations' figures, which could not be matched to their sources, are left out.

Correction 8 — A New Testament verse credited to the Tanakh (Section VI). The March 2026 edition gave ***"Flee sexual immorality ... sins against his own body"*** as **Proverbs 6:32** and **Leviticus 18:6**. It is 1 Corinthians 6:18. **Leviticus 18:6** is the Torah's law against incest and is cited only for what it says.

Correction 9 — 2012 material not carried forward (Section VI). The descriptions of children's sexual customs in other cultures, the disputed Margaret Mead claim, the line on suicide by sexual orientation, and the video link are not carried forward; none is needed for the Covenant's point.

Correction 10 — Proverbs 22:6 (Section IV-A). ***"In the way he should go"*** now reads ***"according to his way,"*** as corrected in **Docs 434 and 413**; ***chanakh*** is graded (train: single witness; dedicate: corroborated).

Correction 11 — Proverbs 1:8 (Section X). ***"The covenant of your mother"*** now reads ***"the instruction (torah) of your mother"***; the meaning ***"the one who binds the family together"*** for ***em*** is graded Not in the text.

Correction 12 — Elders (Section VII-A). ***"Without reference merely to age"*** is graded Not in the text (**Leviticus 19:32**; **1 Kings 12:8**).

Correction 13 — The 2012 word studies (Sections VII-A, XIII). ***Peh*** as ***"orator"*** is now grounded in **Exodus 4:16**; ***yarah*** as ***"lay foundations"*** is marked as resting on **Job 38:6** alone; ***davar*** as ***"to lead, guide, rule"*** is graded Not in the text for **Exodus 19:7**; ***kohen*** as ***"chief ruler"*** is limited to the royal officers of **2 Samuel 8:18**; **20:26**; **1 Kings 4:5**.

Correction 14 — The Levites (Section VII-B). ***"Going throughout the estates"*** is now supported by **2 Chronicles 17:7–9** and **Leviticus 10:11** rather than **Deuteronomy 33:10** alone.

Correction 15 — "From the womb" (Section VIII). Jeremiah 1:5 is no longer given as the standard for teaching from the womb; teaching from the earliest years now rests on **Deuteronomy 31:12**, **1 Samuel 2:11, 18**, and **Psalms 71:17**.

Correction 16 — The founders' education (Section IX). The King's College requirements now follow the 1760 laws and 1763 statutes (six books of Virgil, not the entire Aeneid; Hamilton admitted in 1774); the Harvard Testament requirement is placed at the first degree; ***"trained in the government of the Covenant of Yahweh"*** is graded Not corroborated; the Convention figure, the Madison list, and the Simmons quotation are marked unchecked.

Correction 17 — The 2012 legislation section (Section X-A). ***"Instituted in 1792"*** now reads signed 1787, ratified 1788, in effect 1789; the ***"Life, Liberty and Property"*** and ***"two versions"*** claims are withdrawn; the quoted website's charge against ***"Zionist Jews"*** is removed (**Exodus 23:1**; **Leviticus 19:16**); the 2012 suggestion to contact the Library of Congress about the Covenant of Peace is not carried forward.

Correction 18 — New Testament texts as support (throughout). The 2012 edition's proofs from Revelation 22:18 and 20:12, Hebrews 10:16, 1 Peter 4:17, John 6:44, 1 John 2:6, Mark 10:30, Matthew 8:12, and Romans 8:19, with their Greek word studies, are moved to the Comparative Texts table. The Tanakh carries each point (**Deuteronomy 4:2**; **Jeremiah 31:33**; **Malachi 3:16**; **Exodus 32:33**; **Daniel 12:1**).

Correction 19 — Yeshua and the order of Melchizedek (Section XIII). The 2012 teaching that Yeshua is the high priest and king of the order of Melchizedek, and that his death signed the Covenant in blood, is corrected to agree with **Docs 164, 393, 406, and 431** (**Isaiah 43:11**; **47:4**; **Psalms 49:7** [Hebrew 49:8]; **Ezekiel 18:20**). ***"The offices of Melchizedek"*** is marked as the study's picture, not a Tanakh term.

Correction 20 — Unity and the stranger (Section XII). Josephus is moved to comparative witness with his reference (***Against Apion*** 2.181), and the Tanakh witnesses (**Exodus 24:3**; **Deuteronomy 31:12**) carry the point; ***"by adoption, a son or daughter of Abraham"*** now reads as **Isaiah 56:5–7** says it.

Correction 21 — Malachi 2:5 and Numbers 25:12 (Section XIII). The covenant of peace is shown in its setting — given to **Phinehas** and to **Levi** — before it is applied to the young.

Correction 22 — Daniel 7:22 (Section XIII). The verse is translated from the Aramaic as ***"the holy ones,"*** and the debate over who they are is noted.

Correction 23 — Exodus 20:14 (Section VI). The Hebrew verse number is given on first citation (**Exodus 20:14** [Hebrew 20:13]), as the Library recommended in **Doc 411**.

Made in Google Docs — GoHN Volume II, Chapters Three and Four (May 2026). The compiled volume carries the March 2026 text. Its factual points were corrected in place: the ***"teenager"*** sentence and the Webster's sentence, the television-violence and imitation sentences, the screen-time table rows and the homework row, the causes of the teen-birth decline, **Proverbs 22:6**, the ***zaqen*** definition, the Levites sentence, the three ***"from the womb"*** sentences, the King's College and Harvard sentences, the founders sentence, **Proverbs 1:8** and the ***em*** sentence, the Josephus reference, the adoption sentence, and the Melchizedek definition, as listed in the delivery note.

For Kepha's decision — GoHN Volume II, Chapters Three and Four. Volume II still carries its May 2026 front matter (Pearl River, Hebrew-first book names), its New Testament record box, its other-nations teen-birth figures (not matched to sources), and the phrase ***"the yod of Yahweh"*** in its opening paragraph, which may have been meant as ***yad*** (hand) or as another word; this edition reads ***"the instruction of Yahweh."*** Replacing Chapters Three and Four of Volume II with this document is recommended.

XVI. SEVEN COVENANT DECLARATIONS ON THE YOUTH OF A NATION

Per the **Deuteronomy 19:15** standard, no doctrine may stand on a single text. Each declaration below draws on more than one witness.

#	COVENANT DECLARATION	BASIS
I	**Yahweh**'s government is kept or lost in one generation, by whether the fathers teach the sons.	**Judges 2:10**; **Deuteronomy 4:9**; **Psalms 78:5–7**
II	The Tanakh gives the young duties, not a separate status of exemption; youth is no excuse before **Yahweh**.	**Jeremiah 1:6–8**; **1 Samuel 3:19**; **1 Kings 3:7**; **Ecclesiastes 12:1**
III	Parents are the first teachers, father and mother both, at every hour of the day.	**Deuteronomy 6:7**; **Proverbs 1:8**; **6:20**

#	COVENANT DECLARATION	BASIS
IV	A youth left to himself is not set free but abandoned; correction given in love is part of the teaching.	**Proverbs 29:15**; **3:12**; **1 Samuel 3:13**; **1 Kings 1:6**
V	The young are taught in the whole assembly, with their parents, elders, and the stranger.	**Deuteronomy 31:12–13**; **Joshua 8:35**; **Nehemiah 8:2–3**
VI	The young must guard their eyes and their companions, and take counsel from their elders.	**Psalms 101:3**; **Numbers 15:39**; **Proverbs 1:10**; **13:20**; **1 Kings 12:8**
VII	**Yahweh** will turn the hearts of fathers and sons to one another and give the kingdom to His holy people.	**Malachi 4:6** [Hebrew 3:24]; **Daniel 7:22, 27**; **Isaiah 54:13**

XVII. THE COVENANT RESPONSE — WHAT THE TANAKH SAYS TO THE ONE WHO ASKS

Behind the question ***"What do we do with our teenagers?"*** There is usually a tired parent who loves a child and is afraid for him. Tanakh answers with words already written down.

To the Jewish reader. You keep the age of the commandments and the duty to teach your children. The Tanakh asks that the daughters be taught as well as the sons, for the Torah was read to men, women, and little ones together (**Deuteronomy 31:12**), and that what is taught be the written Torah, with nothing added and nothing taken away (**Deuteronomy 4:2**).

To the Christian reader. You were taught to bring up your children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. The Tanakh shows what that instruction was: the statutes and judgments of the Torah, told from father to son with the story of what **Yahweh** did (**Deuteronomy 6:20–25**), and the young kept in the assembly with their elders, not sent away from it (**Joshua 8:35**).

To the Muslim reader. You read the counsel of Luqman to his son. The Tanakh gives a father's counsel of the same kind, and older: ***"Hear, my son, the discipline of your father"*** (**Proverbs 1:8**). The One whose Torah it is calls Himself by His Name, **Yahweh** (**Exodus 3:15**).

To the parents. You do not have to win every argument. You have to be there, keep teaching, correct in love, and tell the story again. ***"And all your sons shall be taught of Yahweh, and great shall be the peace of your sons"*** (**Isaiah 54:13**; see **Doc 434**).

To the young reader. You are not a ***"teenager"*** in the eyes of your Creator. You are a son or a daughter, known before you were born (**Jeremiah 1:5**). Do not say, ***"I am only young."*** Remember your Creator now, in the days of your youth (**Ecclesiastes 12:1**), keep your path by His word (**Psalms 119:9**), and listen to the father and mother who teach you (**Proverbs 1:8**). This study continues in Part 5, ***"I Will Never Break My Covenant"*** (**Doc 446**).

SCRIPTURE INDEX

REFERENCE	SUBJECT	SECTION
Genesis 14:18	Melchizedek, priest of El Elyon	XIII
Genesis 37:2	Joseph at seventeen	II; III-A
Genesis 39:9	How can I sin against **Elohim**?	VI
Exodus 2:6	The baby **Moses** called a youth	II
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Exodus 12:26–27	When your children ask	IV-C
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REFERENCE	SUBJECT	SECTION
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Psalms 49:7 [Hebrew 49:8]	None can ransom his brother	XIII
Psalms 64:3 [Hebrew 64:4]	Who sharpen their tongue	VII
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"That the generation to come might know, sons yet to be born, that they might arise and tell their sons, that they might set their hope in Elohim, and not forget the works of El, but keep His commandments."

Psalms 78:6–7 — The Written Covenant of Yahweh