

THE FIFTIETH ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL BIBLE CONTEST FOR JEWISH YOUTH 5773

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This year's International Bible Contest for Jewish Youth in Jerusalem was unique: for the first time in over twenty years, there was a tie in the contest between Elior Babian aged 16 from Bet Shemesh, Israel and Yishai Eisenberg, aged 15 from New Jersey. Some felt that Yishai should have been declared the winner prior to the fourth round because when the fourth round was called for, all past scores were erased and both Elior and Yishai answered a series of thirteen questions correctly thus resulting in a tie. This meant that this year there was not one but two Bible champions called in Hebrew *Hatanei Hatanakh*.

Despite the world economic crisis, the contestants represented 26 countries and totaled 54 individuals from overseas. There were separate contests earlier for both Israeli and Diaspora youth which selected those who would participate in the grand contest on Independence Day which is televised live.

There were several new speakers at the *Hidon* this year such as the new Minister of Education, Rabbi Shai Piron and the new chairman of the Knesset Yuli Edelstein. The film clips, on which the first sixteen questions were based, were both educational and entertaining. As in every year the contestants were treated to tours of the country and meetings with important leaders including Prime Minister Netanyahu.

The annual *Hidon* is sponsored by the IDF chief education officer, the IDF rabbinate, the Ministry of Education, the Jewish Agency, the Keren Kayemet (JNF) and representatives of the Jewish Bible Association. Jewish communities around the world are urged to prepare pupils for local Bible contests wherever they are held or to prepare pupils privately so that they can become future participants in the international *Hidon*. Pupils may study the Bible either in Hebrew or their native languages. For further information about how to involve pupils in the international contest contact a Jewish Agency representative www.jafi.org.il

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