

# THE 38TH ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL BIBLE CONTEST FOR JEWISH YOUTH

JOSHUA J. ADLER

Sixty-five students from 31 countries, during a two-week "Israel Experience," took part in the Annual Bible Contest for Jewish Youth. It was held in Jerusalem on April 26, Israel's 53rd Independence Day. The event was sponsored by a number of organizations, including the Israel Defense Forces, the Jewish Agency, and our own Jewish Bible Association.

The most important goal of this contest is not merely to keep scores and determine a winner, but to highlight the importance of Bible study for all Jews, and to give the young contestants an opportunity to become familiar with Israel, meet with some of its leading personalities, and perhaps be inspired to aliyah. Especially memorable was their meeting with Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, who took almost an hour out of his busy schedule to be with the group, taking pictures, signing autographs, and telling them that *Eretz Yisrael* was holy to many people but is the Promised Land to no other people.

It is impressive that Israel, unique among the nations, includes such an event in its Independence Day celebrations, and gives it two hours of live coverage on television and radio. It is also unique that the Israel Defense Forces foster and host such a cultural project.

There are two preliminary contests, one for Israeli youngsters and one for participants from the Diaspora. The latter was held this year in Kiryat Malachi (a town whose Mayor Lior Katzav is the brother of Israel's President Moshe Katzav). The group was warmly received, and a large auditorium was filled to capacity when 12 contestants won places in the final contest, where they would meet four Israeli contestants. First place in the Diaspora round went to Eliav Danziger of Canada, followed by Nuphar Deskal of Belgium

In the final-round international contest, first place went to Israel's Shai Hason, of Moshav Elyakim, who has triumphed over congenital cerebral palsy. Second place was taken by Eliav Danziger; third by Rachel Kohelet of Israel, and fourth by Havah Chitovsky of the United States.

Diaspora youth has a grand opportunity to share in this experience, and to make contact with young people from other countries (including this year

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David Kellerman from Germany whose family converted to Judaism several years ago and has, most recently, moved to Israel). Diaspora communities can give them this chance by preparing students through study and local Bible contests. For further information about participation in the Bible contest, contact the Jewish Agency representative in your country or write to: Mr. Yitzhak Ben Ari, Department of Jewish Zionist Education POB 92, Jerusalem, Israel.

**THE SPEAKER OF THE KNESSET, MR. AVRAHAM BURG,  
PRESENTING AWARD TO ELIAV DANZIGER**