



NATIONAL BIBLE CONTEST

Dear Educators, Teachers, Principals, and Coaches,

Enclosed please find the syllabus for the Dr. Shimshon Isseroff USA National Bible Contest (Chidon Hatanach) for the 2024-2025 academic year (5785) as well as other important information about the upcoming season of the Dr. Shimshon Isseroff USA Chidon Ha'Tanach.

Goals of the Chidon Ha'Tanach

The Tanach is the basis of our existence as a people. It connects us to our past and contains our hopes for the future. The study of the Tanach increases our student's identification with the Jewish people, their love of the land of Israel, their love of text, and their love of Torah. What better way to encourage students to study and learn the Tanach than by involving them in a National Bible competition? And like the Tanach itself, the Chidon Ha'Tanach unites young Jews from all over the country, through study and mastery of a shared text and our shared heritage! To hear more about what Chidon students gain, check out the following speeches:

- **Contestant Ariella Fohrman** - <https://youtu.be/jNMQS223VwA>
- **Contestant Josh Knoll** - <https://youtu.be/YH3637RcOXU>
- **Contestant Sarah Shaye** - <https://youtu.be/E7fZOunIJ5I>
- **Contestant Tamar Dahan** - <https://youtu.be/z-uH5gUcf5k>
- And hear from **Former Coach Zippi Klein** - <https://youtu.be/akBHG1cNIHA>

National Bible Contest

Coordinated by the Jewish Agency, the United States National Chidon Hatanach (Bible Contest) has existed for over 60 years. Students from many different schools and communities around the United States study throughout the year and national finalists advance to the United States National Chidon, both a contest and a full day celebratory event held once a year in New York. Several top finishers in each division are announced as national champions for the United States and receive prizes for their achievement. This year we will continue to run additional programming throughout the day for students to showcase their Tanach knowledge. In 2024, over 700 students from more than seventy schools participated in the Chidon over the course of the year. The top students traveled to New York to compete and participate in the national finals.

[Here's some inspiring footage from this year's inspiring National Finals held at SAR High School.](#)



Resources

We have worked hard to develop resources for the Chidon Ha'Tanach. For supplementary material, please see the book of study questions on this year's material created by Dvir Dimri (former Chidon Coach) , Jacob Colchamiro (Former Chidon National Champion), and Avi Shaver (Former Chidon National Champion and English Division Consultant). The material is sponsored by the Chidon Ha'Tanach. **The material will be sent out in its entirety to schools that registered and fully paid for this season of the Chidon Ha'Tanach.** This material is paid for by the Dr. Shimshon Isseroff USA Chidon Ha'Tanach.

Regional Bible Contest

Over the course of the year, three exams are administered on the material listed at the bottom of this email. Qualifying for the national finals is based purely on the cumulative results of the three written tests composed by the Chidon Ha'Tanach staff. Students who score above the national cutoff score on regional exams advance to the national finals. The cutoff score for each division varies slightly each year. *This year, a cumulative score of 65/90 on the regional exams will automatically qualify for the national finals.* Anything below that score will be invited to the finals on the basis of the final cutoff score determined in March. Qualifiers for the National Finals will be notified in mid-March. Samples of the regional exams as well as other study resources can be found on our website. A slightly more detailed explanation of qualifying for nationals can be found [here](#).

Divisions

There are some significant changes that have been made to the divisions of the USA Chidon Ha'Tanach as of this past year's season. In conversation with the steering committee, starting last year schools have the option to take regional exams in either Hebrew or English. A contestant's division is no longer determined by whether they are taking the exam in Hebrew or English. The content on the exams given in Hebrew and English is identical. All contestants compete in the same division which is entirely determined by the grade that they are in. The following are the four divisions of the USA Chidon Ha'Tanach:

- *Middle School - **Sixth** Grade Division*
- *Middle School - **Seventh - Eighth** Grade Division*
- *High School - **Ninth - Eleventh** Grade Division*
- *High School - **Twelfth** Grade Division*



Please note the following important details about the divisions listed. Material for everyone in both middle school divisions will be the same. Material for all contestants in both high school divisions will be the same.

- Winners of the sixth grade division will walk away with significant commemorative prizes and be able to compete again for a spot in the International Competition in following years.
- In the Middle School Division **the first place** finisher in the National Finals will qualify for a spot in the International finals for the following year. Second and third place will receive significant prizes.
- In the High School 9-11 division **first place, second place, and third place** finishers in the National Finals will qualify for a spot in the International finals for the following year.
- Due to overwhelming interest, this year we will continue with the senior division. **The first place winner** will receive **1200 dollars toward a ticket to study in Israel for the year** and **two tickets** to the following year's **international Chidon Ha'Tanach**. **Second** and **Third** place will both receive one ticket to the international Chidon Ha'Tanach. All seniors who are national Finalists will be noted at the national finals.

Please note that contestants can only take the exams in *either Hebrew or in English*. Contestants may not take both the Hebrew and English exam. Please note that all questions in English are based on the NJPS translation – Tanakh: A New Translation of the Holy Scriptures According to the Traditional Hebrew Text. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1985. Please feel free to be in touch directly about these new significant changes.

National Bible Quiz National Bible Contest Fees

The registration fee was instituted a few years ago in order to continue to enhance the Chidon Ha'Tanach programming at the National Finals and throughout the year. If you are registering as a private registrant or as a club/school with less than three students, the rate of 100 dollars per student. The flat rate for all other remaining schools/clubs is 300 dollars. Payment by check is available upon request. *There will be no refunds after the first regional exam.* Thank you for helping support our continued growth! Students who qualify for the national finals are responsible for their own travel to New York. See registration form [here](#) to register and for links to pay.

Eligibility for the International Bible Contest

The following note is only relevant to students that are vying to compete at the international level. For those competing in division whose top finishers can progress to the international competition the following criteria must be met. As a general rule, in order to be eligible for the *International Contest*, students must meet the following criteria:

- 1) *Must not be the child of an Israeli government employee or Israeli Shaliach*
- 2) *Must have received the majority of his/her education in the Diaspora, and the participant must have lived in the country for at least seven years.*
- 3) *Must be a student in eighth grade or High School at that the time of the competition in Israel (May 2026)*
- 4) *May not have participated in the International Bible Contest in any previous year.*

Please contact me if you have any questions regarding a student's eligibility on the international level. None of these restrictions apply to compete and qualify for the National Finals. The International Bible Contest brings together the national winners from the Diaspora and Israel for a two week all-expenses-paid Tanach Camp, during which they tour the country. The competition itself is attended by the Prime Minister of Israel and is broadcast on Israeli television on Yom Haatzmaut, Israel's Independence Day.



Final Remarks

At the end of this message, please find the Syllabus for USA National Bible Contest 2024-2025 as well as the dates for this year's regional tests and National Finals.

Thank you in advance for all of the hard work that you do for your students and on behalf of the Chidon Ha'Tanach. We're confident that this will be another strong year for the Chidon Ha'Tanach. If this is your first time running a chidon program, please be in touch with me over email at dovin@jafi.org in order to set up a time for a phone call.

As always, I would like to mention Dr. Shimshon Isseroff z"l whose name we continue to carry with pride.. For more on Dr. Isseroff see the recently published tribute in the [Jewish Link](#) and our website as well under the [About Dr. Isseroff](#) tab.

Please make sure to register as soon as possible to ensure that you don't miss out on important chidon communications. **Stay tuned for some exciting additions to our programming as well. This year We plan to run a mid-year nationwide Kahoot.** There are also plans for **a biannual newsletter with questions and updates from chidon teams around the country** over the course of the year. The date of the National Finals in New York is set as well. Please mark your calendar with the dates for all of the regional exams as well our National Finals on May 4, 2025. As always, please be in touch with comments, suggestions, and questions. I look forward to partnering with each of you on another wonderful year of the Chidon Ha'tanach.

חזק ואמץ

Rabbi Dovi Nadel

Coordinator, National Bible Contest



Syllabus for Dr. Shimshon
Contest - 2024-2025

Isseroff USA National Bible

Middle School Divisions Grades 6-8

Deuteronomy : All Samuel 1 : All Ruth : All Chronicles 1 : Chapters 13-17, 21-22, 28-29	דברים : הכל שמואל א' : הכל רות : הכל דברי הימים א' : י"ג-י"ז, כ"א-כ"ב, כ"ח-כ"ט
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High School Divisions Grades 9-12

Deuteronomy : All Samuel 1 : All Ruth : All Chronicles 1 : Chapters 13-17, 21-22, 28-29 Jeremiah : 1-2, 18-36	דברים : הכל שמואל א' : הכל רות : הכל דברי הימים א' : י"ג-י"ז, כ"א-כ"ב, כ"ח-כ"ט ירמיהו : א-ב, י"ח – ל"ו
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Please see above in the cover letter for an explanation of the four divisions.

For more information about the Chidon be in contact with the coordinator of the Chidon Hatanach, Rabbi Dovi Nadel, at Dovin@jafi.org.



2024-2025 USA National Bible Contest Schedule at a Glance:

Regional exams will be administered on the following dates.

Regional Exam 1 – Wednesday, November 20, 2024.

Material included on Exam

דברים/Deuteronomy : Chapters 1-27

Regional Exam 2 – Wednesday, February 5, 2025

Material included on Exam

דברים/Deuteronomy : Chapters 28-34

שמואל א / Samuel 1 : Chapters 1-24

Regional Exam 3 – Tuesday, March 18, 2025

Material included on Exam

שמואל א / Samuel 1 : Chapters 25 -31

רות / Ruth: Chapters 1-4

דברי הימים א / Chronicles 1 : Chapters 13-17, 21-22, 28-29

High School Division Regional Exam 3 also includes:

ירמיהו / Jeremiah: Chapters 1-2, 18-20, 29-33

National Finals - Save the Date

The **2025 Dr. Shimoson Isseroff USA Chidon Ha'Tanach National Finals** will take place on **May 4th, 2025** in New York. The National Finals will cover the entire syllabus.

Please note that on Chapter 28 of Deuteronomy contestants will only be tested verses 1-14.

*If you are in the **High School Division**, please note that regional exam three includes selected chapters from our Jeremiah material. The remaining chapters from Jeremiah in our syllabus will be included as*

*part of the National Finals. The
chapters 1-2, and chapters 18-36.*

entirety of the Jeremiah material includes