



NATIONAL BIBLE CONTEST 2019/5779

Dear Educators, Teachers, Principals, and Coaches,

Enclosed please find the syllabus for the U.S. National Bible Contest (Chidon Hatanach) for the 2018-2019 academic year (5779) as well as other important information.

Goals:

As Jews, we must learn and study the Tanach, the Jewish people's richest resource. 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 identity 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 Bible Contest unites young Jews from all over the country, through study and mastery of a shared text and our shared heritage!

Divisions:

The United States Chidon Hatanach is coordinated by the Jewish Agency for Israel. Students in the U.S. competitions may participate in one of three divisions:

- 1) *Hebrew Grades 6-8*
- 2) *Hebrew Grades 9-11*
- 3) *English Grades 6-11*

The Hebrew divisions are open to students in Jewish day schools, while the English division is open to students in supplementary schools and those in no formal Jewish educational institution. *Community Day Schools with minimal textual study of Judaic texts in the original Hebrew may also apply for special permission to participate in the English Division.*

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.

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 divisions 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 final basis on the basis of the final cutoff score determined in



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March. Qualifiers for the National Finals will be notified in late-March. Samples of the regional exams as well as other study resources can be found on our website.

National Bible Contest: The United States National Chidon Hatanach (Bible Contest) has existed for over half a century. 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 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 2018, over 200 students traveled to New York City to compete and participate in the US National Bible Contest. We are excited to announce that we will be running the Chidon Ha'Tanach at Yeshiva University this year as well. Stay tuned for more exciting developments. For an exciting video from this past year, see [here!](#)

International Bible Contest First-place winners in each division of the national competition are the U.S. representatives to the International Bible Contest in Israel, along with the second-place winners in the high school division. 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.

National Bible Quiz National Bible Contest Fees

In order to maintain the Chidon Ha'Tanach and continue to enhance the National Finals we are instituting a small registration fee this year. If you are registering as a private registrant or as a club/school with less than three students the rate is 40 dollars per student. The flat rate for all other remaining schools/clubs is 100 dollars. Please see the link to the paypal on the registration form. Students who qualify for the national finals are responsible for their own travel to New York.

Eligibility:

In order to be eligible to compete in the *National Finals*, students must take all stages of their regional examinations, and score above that year's cutoff for students in their division. Please note an important recent change regarding qualifying for the *International Finals*. Per discussions with the steering committee and the Jewish Agency, the following changes will be made to eligibility requirements for the International competition. In the Hebrew middle school division, only students in the 8th grade will be eligible to qualify as International finalists. In the English Divisions as well, only students in the eighth grade and up will be eligible to qualify as



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International finalists. An overall sixth -seventh grade champion will be crowned, and awarded a significant prize at the National Finals. This participant will still be able to compete to qualify as an International Finalist in following years. Please be in touch if you have any questions about this new policy. As a general rule, in order to be eligible for the International Contest, students must also meet the following criteria:

- 1) *MUST NOT BE THE CHILD OF AN ISRAELI GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE OR ISRAELI SHALIACH*
- 2) *MUST HAVE RECEIVED MOST OF HIS OR HER EDUCATION IN THE DIASPORA*
- 3) *MUST BE A STUDENT IN HIGH SCHOOL AT THE TIME OF THE COMPETITION IN ISRAEL (MAY, 2020)*
- 4) *MUST 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

Resources

We hope to continue to develop resources for the Chidon Ha'Tanach over the course of the coming year. For supplementary material, please see the following book of study questions on this year's material created by Dvir Dimri. The link to his website is [here](#).

Our website also has samples of old exams. The link to our website is [here](#).

Final Remarks and Important Information

At the end of this message, please find the Syllabus for US National Bible Contest 2019 as well as the dates for this year's regional tests and National Finals. Please make sure that you have registered on our new registration form as well. Thank you in advance for all of the hard work that you do for your students and on behalf of the Chidon Ha'Tanach. I would also like to take this opportunity to note that after deciding to embark on my fourth year of running this special program I am committed to being in close contact with each of you going forward. As always, please be in touch with comments, suggestions, and questions. I look forward to collaborating with each of you on another incredible year of the Chidon Ha'tanach.

בברכות התורה

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2018-2019 US National Bible Contest Schedule at a Glance:

Regional Examinations will be administered on the Following Dates:

Test 1 – Wednesday, November 28, 2018.

Material: שמות/Exodus: Chapters 1- 24

Test 2 – Monday, February 4, 2019

Material: שמות/Exodus: Chapters 30 -34, 40
שופטים/Judges: Chapters 1- 21

Test 3 – Wednesday, March 6, 2019

Material: אסתר/Esther: Chapters 1-10
יונה/ Jonah: Chapters 1-4

Additional Material for Hebrew High School: יואל, עמוס, עובדיה, חגי All Chapters

Important notes: Please note that schools in the English division have the option of either taking one cumulative regional exam on March 10, 2019, or taking three regional exams over the course of the entire year on the dates listed above. Please note the additional material for those in the Hebrew High School division.

National Finals

The **2019 National Finals** will take place on **May 5, 2019** at Yeshiva University in Manhattan, New York. The National Finals will cover the entire syllabus.

ואמץ חזק!



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