

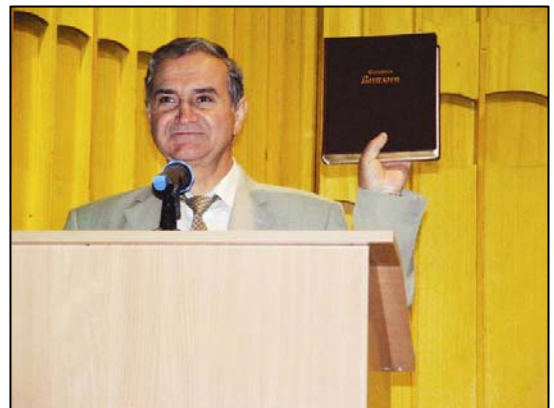
**LATEST NEWS # 521, June 17, 2008**

**The following news concerns Bulgaria.**

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## Building on the success of Bulgaria's *Year of the Bible*

**BULGARIA** — “Please don't stop now!” This was the message that the Bulgarian Bible Society received from people of many different backgrounds in response to last year's *Year of the Bible*. Inspired by the conferences and other activities which made up this initiative, Church leaders and academics were keen that the Bible Society should continue to hold events to publicise the Bible and bring people together to debate and celebrate God's Word.



So, building on the experiences of 2007, the Bible Society has developed a program of conferences, discussions, media events and exhibitions for this year.

Involving many local churches, these initiatives will aim to encourage young people in particular to engage with the Bible.

One of the most recent *Year of the Bible* follow-up events took place on June 7 in Pleven, an important administrative, economic, political and cultural centre located 170 km from Sofia in the north of the country. Here, the Bible Society joined with the Bible League to hold a conference entitled 'The Bible in Bulgaria'. The many Church leaders and theologians who attended were welcomed by Pastor Mladenov from one of the local churches, whose opening words summed up their enthusiasm.

“It is so exciting for Christians to be celebrating the *Year of the Bible* in Bulgaria after so many years of official atheism,” he said.

The presentations which followed, including one by Bible Society General Secretary Pastor Theodor Angelov about how Bulgarians, especially the young, view the Bible, all attracted much interest and prompted eager debate.

Organised alongside the conference were two exhibitions, one of Bibles and the other of paintings by two Bulgarian artists on biblical themes. An exhibition on biblical topics will also run until the end of June in Sofia.

Wherever they take place, the purpose of all the *Year of the Bible* events is the same, says Pastor Angelov.

“The aim is to proclaim the Word of God and bring it to the attention of many people, especially young people who do not know the Bible.”



*For a previous report on the Year of the Bible, see Latest News #456.*

*This report relates to project 73010.*

*Photo (Bulgarian Bible Society):*

*BUL08DJ-1: Pastor Marinov, one of the speakers at the conference held by the Bulgarian Bible Society and the Bible League in Pleven, Bulgaria, in June 2008 as part of the Year of the Bible.*

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