



Rabbi Micha Berger

Founder, The AishDas Society

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Rabbi Berger has spoken to audiences that varied in background from non-Orthodox to Orthodox yeshiva graduates on subjects of Jewish Thought, *Mussar*, and the meaning of our *tefillos*. In addition he regularly writes for *Mesukim MiDevash*, a weekly newsletter on these topics. His work has been described in HaModia and Yated Neeman, as well as having earned mention in the Orthodox Union's Jewish Action and The Jerusalem Report.

Bio:

Rabbi Micha Berger is a father and husband, and sees in those roles much of the expression of his Judaism - and his *Mussar* work. He was a student of Rav Dovid Lifshitz, the Suvalker Rav, at Yeshivas Rabbeinu Yitzchak Elchanan (a Yeshiva University affiliate). From this contact, R.abbi Berger took away a dream to infuse his Jewish practice with the blend of love, *Mussar* and grounding in Jewish thought that marked Rav Dovid's Torah and life.

To that end, he established The AishDas Society. As Rabbi Micha Berger is a computer programmer by profession, AishDas can provide both in-person contact with people seeking similar goals, as well as electronic communication for people may otherwise feel alone in this dream. AishDas is a community of Orthodox Jews looking to create a synthesis of the "*aish*", the fire of inspiration and faith, with the "*das*" of full halachic observance, to create a Judaism that both fully is and yet is greater than either of the parts.

Publications:

- **Every Day Holy Day**: researched and assisted in the writing of a yearlong program of Mussar practice by Dr Alan Morinis, Trumpeter Press, 2910
- "**Watering our Weeds**", an essay in Daas Torah: Child and Domestic Abuse vol. I, by R' Dr. Daniel Eidensohn and Dr. Baruch Shulem, CreateSpace Printing and Daas Torah Publications, 2010
- "**Connections**", an essay on *middos*, for the journal Hirhurim: Musings Along the Way, Summer 2010

Sample Topics:

Below is a brief description of some recently presented lectures. It is offered as a sampling of Rabbi Berger's normal range of topics.

Jewish Thought:

- **Anatomy of a Soul:** An exploration of one rabbinic model for understanding the human condition and how this model sheds light on understanding various *mitzvos*.
- **The Role of Man:** Why would an Infinite Creator make man? What do various Orthodox movements conclude from this about the goals we should set ourselves for in life?
- **The Semitic Perspective:** The difference between the basic assumptions that frame Western Philosophy and those behind the Jewish worldview.
- **Jewish Time:** Time during the Six Days of Creation and today. Cyclic vs. linear time. Telephones, beepers and cell phones and their effect on how we relate to time.
- **The Four Sons Confront Tragedy:** What kind of reaction are we supposed to have to the experience of tragedy? A study structured around the four sons of the Passover *Seder*.
- **Creation and Science:** A survey of various opinions about the conflict between contemporary cosmogony and evolution and the Torah's description in *Beresishis*.

Mussar:

- **Living a Life of Mussar:** What is Mussar, and how does it differ from "self-help" programs? A brief overview of the basic tools of Mussar and a practical guide to adopting and adapting them to our lives.
- **Paths in Mussar:** A comparison of the different schools of Mussar and their place in the spectrum of Jewish thought. Criteria for deciding how to take elements of each to utilize for our own growth as Jews.
- **Emunah and Philosophy:** The difference between knowing G-d and knowing about G-d, and the essential role of each.
- **Three models of Love:** The differences in how each of the forefathers expressed love – both in their family lives, and in their love of G-d – and how to emulate each.
- **Menuchas Hanefesh: Maintaining your equilibrium:** An exploration using ideas from *Shabbos*, *tefillah*, and traditional *Mussar* techniques.
- **Giving and Receiving:** A perspective on the meaning and centrality of *chessed*, its role in defining sanctity, and why G-d created self-interest.
- **Davening with Hispa'alus: Birchas Avos:** An analysis of the structure of the first *berachah* of the Amidah, and understanding the meaning and nuances of the words of the *berachah* from their places within that structure.