



The Life of Rabbi Mordechai Berger Z"L

A Story of Doing, Giving, Educating & Guiding

Rabbi Mordechai Berger grew up in a flourishing Jewish community in Cleveland, Ohio. He was the eldest of 6 children. His parents, righteous and G-d fearing Jews were selflessly dedicated to their children's physical and spiritual wellbeing. His father, R' Yerachmiel Menachem z"l was a hardworking shochet and operated a number of successful old age homes. His mother, Rebbitzin Henna Berger z"l was a devoted and loving housewife and mother. After graduating the Hebrew Academy of Cleveland, he went to study in the Telzer Yeshiva, in Wickliffe, Ohio.



At 17 years old, Rabbi Berger went to visit Brooklyn, New York, to partake in a Chassidic farbrengen with the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi



Menachem Mendel Schneerson, of blessed memory. Following this inspiring visit, Rabbi Berger decided to continue his studies at Yeshivas Tomchei Temimim Lubavitch. He became a Chabad Chassid, devoted to the teachings of the Lubavitcher Rebbe. He was especially captivated by the notion of Jewish outreach; bringing the beauty of Judaism to Jews of all affiliations and backgrounds.

In the 60's and 70's Rabbi Berger was well-known as the Greatest Head Counselor at Camp Gan Israel, of La Minerve, Quebec. He spent 5 invaluable

summers as an enthusiastic and creative Head Counselor inspiring hundreds of young boys.

In 1968, Rabbi Avrohom Gerlitzky suggested that his sister, Chaye Leah, meet his dear friend Mordechai ('Motty') Berger. Motty and Chaye Leah were married the following March in 1969.

Following their marriage, Rabbi Mordechai and Chaye Leah lived in Brooklyn for two years. Rabbi Berger served as the Principal of Oholei Torah, The main elementary school for Chabad boys, in Crown Heights, Brooklyn, which now boasts over 1600



students.



In 1974, Rabbi Mordechai and Chaye Leah, moved to Montreal, Canada to run the Chabad Student Centre at McGill University. They hosted lively Shabbat meals on campus and many classes and lectures. During that two year period, Rabbi Berger enriched and impacted hundreds of university students to learn more about their Jewish Heritage. There are many who lead a Torah observant lifestyle today due to Rabbi Berger's direction and guidance.

After two years in Montreal, Rabbi Berger was offered the position as Pulpit rabbi of the Young Israel of Ottawa. With a blessing from the Lubavitcher

Rebbe, Rabbi Mordechai and Chaye Leah Berger became the first shluchim/ Chabad emissaries to Ottawa, The Nation's Capital.

Over the next 31 years Rabbi and Mrs. Berger transformed the Jewish landscape in the city of Ottawa.

The Young Israel thrived under their direction. With compassion, selfless love and dedication, they guided and counseled, taught and inspired young and old. The constant hub of activity and the positive energy inspired many new members to move into the Westboro area.



In 1977, Rabbi Berger established Ecole Maimonides School, a brand new Torah Day School to give Jewish children in Ottawa a Torah True Education. In 1980, Ecole Maimonides became the first French Immersion Jewish Day School in Ontario. Close to 1,000 Jewish Children went through the doors of Ecole Maimonides over the last 30 years. In addition to offering scholastic excellence, the children left with lessons for life and the importance of Jewish tradition and Jewish values.



Rabbi and Chaye Leah established the popular Camp Gan Israel of Ottawa. A Jewish Day

Camp for children of all affiliations, to give a meaningful Jewish experience, through sports, crafts, songs, plays, and exciting trips. For many children, this was their only exposure to Judaism and left an everlasting positive impression.

In 1984, Rabbi Berger was the catalyst in establishing Shikun Oz, reduced cost Senior Citizen Apartments in the West End. Shikun Oz boasts 60 apartments and is currently one of the most comfortable and enjoyable places for seniors to live.



In 2000, Rabbi Berger established Yeshivas Ateres Menachem, the first ever program offering Yeshiva students a full line of vocational, technology, and high school courses while providing an environment and learning program of a traditional Yeshiva. The exciting program of 'Torah,

Trade and Technology' helped develop close to 250 lay leaders of tomorrow.

In 2007, Rabbi Berger accepted a position as principal of Yeshiva College of Melbourne, Australia. Rabbi and Mrs. Berger relocated across the ocean to embark on this new journey. They impacted and inspired the community, teachers, parents and children in the Melbourne Jewish community and were excited to be in close distance to their children and grandchildren in Sydney, Australia.



In 2010, Rabbi and Mrs. Berger moved to Los Angeles, California to be close to five of their children living in the West Coast. In L.A., Rabbi Berger founded a new Educational Consulting program to guide parents, families and teachers with children of all ages. In addition Rabbi Berger helped found and served as principal of the Beverly Hills afternoon school for Jewish High School students.

In September 2012, Rabbi and Mrs. Berger moved back to Ottawa, the city that was always nearest and dearest to them.

Rabbi Mordechai and Chaye Leah are blessed to have 12 beautiful children and over 40 grandchildren;



Throughout the last 40 years, Rabbi Mordechai and Chaye Leah Berger committed their lives to bringing light and warmth to others. They set an extremely high standard of Jewish tradition, motivating thousands to keep a kosher home, observe Shabbat, and study Torah. Today, hundreds of Families across the globe value and treasure Yiddishkeit because of the guidance and inspiration of Rabbi and Mrs. Berger.

Rabbi Berger was a devoted, loving, caring, and supportive son, brother, uncle, father, husband, and zaidy, and will be missed dearly by all his family and friends.

