



**Executive Council
of Australian Jewry Inc.**

Baruch Dayan HaEmet – passing of Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks z"l
8 November 2020

With the passing of Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks, a scholar, writer and former Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the Commonwealth, the world has lost a towering moral and intellectual figure at a time when it is most in need of people of his calibre.

For Rabbi Sacks there was no hard and fast division between Jewish and secular knowledge. There was just knowledge. More important was the wisdom that comes with knowledge, and he had it in abundance. His favoured adage was Torah vehokhmah, 'Torah and Wisdom'. As one of his admirers noted, "Torah, for Jonathan Sacks represents the particularistic, inherited teachings of Judaism, while hokhmah (wisdom) refers to the universal realm of the sciences and humanities."

He had an extraordinary command of Jewish learning, moral philosophy and ethics, and a wonderful ability to convey his ideas to a wide audience, regardless of their level of education. When he visited Australia some years ago, religious leaders and others from many faith communities came to hear him speak, and were overflowing in their praise of his erudition and insights.

His books were widely quoted, most especially *The Dignity of Difference*, a plea for humanity, compassion and mutual respect. In an age of material abundance and spiritual poverty, Jonathan Sacks' writings and radio broadcasts made accessible his profound understanding of the human condition and the nature of spirituality and morality. For this he was revered by millions of people of all backgrounds and religions.

The Jewish world, and the whole of humanity, has been left much the poorer for his passing.

Contact

Peter Wertheim | Co-CEO

ph: 02 8353 8505 | m: 0408 160 904 | fax 02 9361 588

e: pwertheim@ecaj.org.au www.ecaj.org.au