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Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks receives Templeton Prize at London ceremony

Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks, who has spent decades bringing spiritual insight to the public conversation through mass media, popular lectures and more than 25 books, received the 2016 Templeton Prize today at a ceremony at Central Hall Westminster, London. The Prize was presented to Rabbi Sacks by Heather Templeton Dill, President of the John Templeton Foundation.

In prepared remarks, Rabbi Sacks warned about the dangers of outsourcing morality. “You can’t delegate moral responsibility away. When you do, you raise expectations that cannot be met. And when, inevitably, they are not met, society becomes freighted with disappointment, anger, fear, resentment and blame.”

“We need to reframe the ethics of responsibility in forms suited to the twenty-first century, using the media of the twenty-first century, and in ways that are uniting rather than divisive.”

HRH The Prince of Wales hosted a private reception in honor of Rabbi Sacks at Clarence House, London, earlier this spring.

Rabbi Sacks, 68, first gained attention by leading the revitalization of Britain’s Jewish community while Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the Commonwealth from 1991 to 2013, a feat he accomplished in the face of dwindling congregations and growing secularization across Europe. During his tenure he catalyzed a network of organizations that introduced a Jewish focus in areas including business, women’s issues and education, and urged British Jewry to turn outward to share the ethics of their faith with the broader community.

Central to his message is appreciation and respect of all faiths, with an emphasis that recognizing the values of each is the only path to effectively combat the global rise of violence and terrorism.

Performers at the ceremony included the Shabbaton Choir, the Sacks Morasha School Choir, and organist Gerard Brooks, Director of Music at Central Hall Westminster.

Valued at £1.1 million (about \$1.6 million or €1.4 million), the Templeton Prize is one of the world's largest annual monetary awards given to an individual and honors a living person who has made exceptional contributions to affirming life's spiritual dimension, whether through insight, discovery, or practical works.

Rabbi Sacks joins a group of 45 former recipients including Mother Teresa, who received the inaugural award in 1973 and Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn (1983). The 2015 Prize Laureate was Canadian philosopher and theologian Jean Vanier, founder of L'Arche, the international network of communities for people with intellectual disabilities. Czech priest and philosopher Tomáš Halík was the 2014 Laureate, preceded by Archbishop Desmond Tutu in 2013 and the Dalai Lama in 2012.

Established in 1972 by the late investor and philanthropist Sir John Templeton, the Templeton Prize is a cornerstone of the John Templeton Foundation's international efforts to serve as a philanthropic catalyst for discoveries relating to the *Big Questions* of human purpose and ultimate reality.

A video of the ceremony will be available on www.templetonprize.org from Friday May 27.

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