

chapter of his life. Knowing he would not enter the Promised Land and that his sons would not inherit his calling, gave Moses the opportunity and the motive to pass on his wisdom to all who were to follow.

Dr Sacks concludes that whatever life has been thus far, there is another chapter focused on being a blessing to others, sharing whatever gifts we have with those who have less, handing on our values across the generations, using our experience to help others, doing something that has little to do with personal ambition and much to do with wanting to leave some legacy of kindness that made life better for somebody. There is always a second mountain to climb, and it may turn out to be our greatest legacy to the future.

In 2010 Pope Benedict spoke to elderly people in the Philippines: He said: *“Every generation can learn from the experience and wisdom of the generation that preceded it.... our physical capacities are often diminished; and yet these times may well be among the most spiritually fruitful years of our lives. These years are an opportunity to remember in affectionate prayer all those whom we have cherished in this life, and to place all that we have personally been and done before the mercy and tenderness of God. This will surely be a great spiritual comfort and enable us to discover anew his love and goodness all the days of our life.”*(1) Judaism’s Life-Changing Ideas (2)The Second Mountain

**-Stephen S**

**Entrance antiphon: You are just, O Lord, and your judgement is right; treat your servant in accord with your merciful love.**

**First Reading: Isaiah 35: 4-7**

**Responsorial Psalm: 145: My soul, give praise to the Lord. /R**

**Second Reading: James 2: 1-5**

**Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia! Speak, Lord, your servant is listening: you have the message of eternal life. Alleluia!**

**Gospel: Mark: 7: 31-37**

**Memorial Acclamation: We proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection until you come again.**

**Communion Antiphon: Like deer that yearns for running streams so my soul is yearning for you, my God; my soul is thirsting for God, the living God.**



## **Twenty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle B, 2024**

### **Weekly Reflection: Some thoughts of Dr Jonathan Sacks (6): The Second Mountain:**

Towards the end of his book (1) the former Chief Rabbi, Jonathan Sacks, addresses how we

should, consistent with our Judaeo-Christian beliefs and values, approach retirement after a lifetime of work. He refers to a book by David Brooks (2) who interviewed people over 70. Brooks found that early in their lives many had identified the mountain they wished to climb, with specific aspirations about family and career. By age 70 some had achieved that mountain and were happy, others had achieved it and found it not entirely satisfying and yet others had been knocked off their mountain by misfortune (or otherwise). As they grew older many identified a second mountain. This mountain was not about achieving but about giving. It was less about external accomplishment (success) and more about internal accomplishment. It was spiritual and moral, a desire to do good.

In this context Dr Sacks takes us to Moses who, when younger, had spoken directly to God, led his people out of slavery and been the agent through whom God had performed His miracles and delivered His word. What was left for Moses to do as an old man? He knew that he would not be allowed to enter the Promised Land. Unlike his brother, Aaron, whose children inherited the priesthood, Moses knew that his sons would not become his successor. These would seem to be huge disappointments. Deuteronomy (ch. 1) provides the answer. Moses undertakes to explain the law of God to the next generation. He does not simply, as before, articulate the law, but gives a full exposition of its theology, of the love of God and about the challenges both past and future. He warns the young that the real future challenge will not be failure but success, not slavery but freedom, not affliction but the temptations of affluence. He tells them to listen to God’s voice and rejoice in what He has given them. Teaching those who would live after him was Moses’ second mountain. Perhaps his disappointments helped shape this last great