

For thousands of years we've been trying to whittle down the essential parts of Jewish teachings, our Torah, into bite size phrases, or tweets. Like, for instance, "the world stands on three things, prayer, study and deeds of lovingkindness"; or "you shall love your neighbor as yourself."; or "do Justly, Love Mercy, & Walk Humbly with Thy God." In reality, no single phrase can capture the true essence of Judaism, and more importantly, no one phrase, or ethic can tell us how to live one's life. However, day by day, month by month, year by year and measure by measure, we must keep learning what the teachings of Judaism has to teach us about how we interact in the world. The most important point is that we keep rereading these texts, these values, living these holy days, over and again, all the while constantly rediscovering ourselves anew. This is the breadth and depth of Judaism.

This July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019, I began a new stage in my life, as the rabbi for the Monroe Temple Beth El, Monroe Temple of Liberal Judaism in Monroe, NY. I feel blessed and honored to have this opportunity to serve their community and engage in this journey of what it means to be Jewish in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. This year we are celebrating their 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary serving the area's Reform Jewish community. Serving the Jewish community is truly a remarkable endeavor and I hope to live up to that task.

Moses spoke to Israelites atop the mountain looking over the Promised Land which he would never enter and said (I paraphrase), "The law that I have given you isn't too difficult nor beyond your reach. It's not in the heavens, that you should say, "who among us can go up to the heavens... It's not beyond the Sea, that it might be too far to cross... No, actually, it's in your mouth and in your heart, to observe it."

I hope you will join me on this journey and explore this path of community and self-discovery, the celebration of our joys and sorrows and especially our growing together in the days and years to come. Thank you and have a blessed day!