As Jews were are by association, by title, bound to the teachings of the Torah which we celebrate tonight. Just as parents are bound to their children and spouses to each other, so too are we the Jewish people by very definition eternally linked to this sacred text, but that does not mean that we know what to do with it, only that we are obligated, by honor and responsibility to seek out the answer, to study it, to debate it, to live b'chai ba-chem, in its words, so that we can become our title and responsibility.

The Torah was given both as a gift to us and a challenge to us. It was a gift, as the title Rabbi was given as a gift to me last weekend. Enabling a life of meaning and commitment to ideals and history. But both are challenges as well, challenging us to live up the precepts contained with in Torah, to know them and grapple with them personally, the title Rabbi too, challenging me to take my place in a sacred tradition, a calling built on trust, community and integrity.

In this sense the transformation that the Jewish people experienced at Sinai and the one I experienced through my twenty foot walk to the open ark were indeed immediate and complete. At the moment we accept Torah, at the moment one becomes a spouse, a parent, a rabbi all of the expectations of those roles are thrust upon us, and at that same moment, like no other before in our training and preparations we must become serious about our undertaking, students of the intricacies of actually doing what we have only studied in abstract.

May we live up the challenge of not simply being the Jewish people in name only, but in deed as well. May we hold tight to the branches of the Torah as if their were indeed a tree of life, and may I too, live up to the sacred calling and title the community

has placed upon me, not only in name but also in deed. May this be our blessing and our purpose.