

mixture seven times on the front door. Phyllis then entered the house carrying a box of kosher salt and said, "Adonai, may this salt kill all infections and illness within our home." Tears came to her eyes as she placed the salt upon a small table in the foyer. Mark then entered with a broom, sweeping the illness out of his foyer through the front door with hard, almost desperate waves that took every ounce of energy at his command. Amy carried a lit *havdalah* candle through the front door into the foyer, placed it on the table next to the

salt, and prayed: "May the light of Adonai bring illumination to every corner of our home and rid us of the plague that is afflicting us!" Sally then entered the front door carrying hyssop and pleaded: "May this hyssop that purged our ancestors' homes of all affliction bring to Phyllis and Mark an end to all illness and affliction!" The ceremony concluded with the group standing in a circle around me holding hands as I said, "Adonai, our God, we pray: May You who blessed our ancestors, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Sarah, Rebecca,

Rachel, and Leah, bless and heal Phyllis and Mark. May You, O Blessed One, be filled with compassion for them. Restore their health and revive their strength. May You swiftly send them a complete renewal of body and spirit. May the home they love be a source of comfort and peace. May all affliction be banished from it. May this house only bring them blessing and love."

Towards the end of the ceremony, Mark and Phyllis became less anxious. They were being proactive, doing something important to help Mark deal with his upcoming cancer surgery. And by the time we finished, Mark, Amy, Phyllis, and her Orthodox friend had smiles on their faces.



I next saw Mark in the recovery room following his surgery. "How are you feeling?" I asked.

Mark did not say anything about the surgical procedure, its outcome, or the level of pain he was experiencing. Instead he said simply, "Rabbi, thank you for what you did for us. Thank you, Rabbi, for giving me hope." □

## Letters

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Protestant and one Catholic memorial are on site. My friend Sol Moglen is trying to raise \$30,000 to erect a memorial to the eight Jewish chaplains who perished in WWI, WWII, and the Vietnam War. Contributions, payable to the Association of Jewish Chaplains of the Armed Forces, may be sent to Rabbi Harold Robinson, director of the JWB Jewish Chaplains Council, 520 Eighth Ave, 4th floor, New York, NY 10018.

*Richard Manberg  
Hackensack, New Jersey*

The article "This Rabbi Wears Combat Boots" neglected to include three members of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association (RRA) serving in the U.S. armed forces: Rabbi Bonnie J. Koppell, Hanoch Fields, and John Cutler.

*Rabbi Richard Hirsh  
Executive Director, RRA  
Wyncote, Pennsylvania*

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