

A Rabbinic Perspective *By Rabbi Seymour Rosenbloom*

Reprinted from the May 2007 Adath Jeshurun Newsletter

A Guest Perspective



On February 1, at the National Prayer Breakfast, **United States Representative Allyson Y. Schwartz** spoke movingly about American service personnel serving in Iraq and Afghanistan, and framed her thoughts with the memory of her own father's service during the Korean War. At the end of her remarks, she quoted the prayer *Hashkivenu* from the *Ma'ariv* service, using the translation by Rabbi Max D. Klein in *Seder Avodah*. I think you will be moved by her remarks, and by seeing an AJ icon incorporated in them. Rep. Schwartz

represents the Thirteenth Congressional District in which many of our members live. Our member **Julie Slavet** is the director of the Congressman's Jenkintown office.

Reuniting and Reconnecting—In Support of Our Troops

by The Honorable Allyson Y. Schwartz
National Prayer Breakfast
February 1, 2007



I sometimes believe that my first memory was when I was barely three and my father left for the Korean War. I can picture my mother, my brother at 4 1/2 and my sister at 2 all slightly sad—not really sure why.

But, I know that my father's return, more than two years later after serving in an Army MASH unit in Korea, is in fact my own, real remembrance.

I was 5 years old. I was in kindergarten and my father came to my school to get me. I remember seeing him. In his uniform. So unlikely to see a man in uniform at school.

But what I remember most was that I did not recognize him. I did not know him. I was a little awed and a little scared. I remember needing to be reassured by my older brother who, at 6 1/2, was very much my "older brother"—that it was okay, that this man was our Dad.

So, I know, as I watched families see their Dads and Moms off to war, that there are the tough goodbyes — and there are also the not-so-easy homecomings. That reuniting families is not easy. That our troops come home with experiences separate from their families — some good and some very difficult. That reuniting, reconnecting, is often hard.

So, for the men and women serving and returning from Iraq and Afghanistan who are struggling with changes in their work lives, and changes in their home lives. And, for all families who have experienced separation or loss — who have had experiences that are often not revealed and difficult to communicate — but nonetheless are struggling to be as good as they can be to each other and to their children, I offer a prayer for healing, for overcoming the difficulties, for forgiveness, for feeling connected and whole again.

Today, as we offer our public officials our prayers and support, I offer this reading for all of us. The prayer I will read dates from the *Talmudic* period and is offered at evening and *Sabbath* services in synagogues across the world. It is a beautiful prayer for serenity and for protection from danger.

Lord our God: We pray thee that we may lie down this night in peace and awake in the morning to refreshed existence. Spread over us the shelter of Thy divine peace and guide us with Thy good counsel. Help us for Thy name's sake. Be Thou, at all times, our shield and our protector from harm, our guardian against danger, our savior from all manner of trouble and distress. Keep far from us anxiety and sorrow and shelter us under the shadow of thy wings for it is in thee alone, O God, ever-gracious and compassionate, that we put our trust. Guard Thou our going out and our coming in that we may lead a life of peace now and evermore.

CONGREGATION
ADATH JESHURUN



7763 Old York Road
Elkins Park, PA 19027
215.635.6611
www.adathjeshurun.info