

What to Expect When a Loved One Passes

By Sandra Goldman

As the director of the Hebrew Cemetery, I spend time with families in deeply personal and painful moments. My role is both a tremendous privilege and a responsibility towards the community. Over the years, I have observed how much stress a family experiences when losing a loved one.

One of the reasons end of life is so stressful for many families is that we just don't know what to expect. Getting an orientation to the process before death occurs has helped many families. Temple Israel's Rabbi Murray Ezring could not agree more. "When a loved one is dying," he says, "we should be as prepared as possible and family and friends should spend as much time as possible with him or her. Everyone participating will give invaluable aid to the family."

Knowing that a loved one's time is limited does not necessarily make his or her passing any easier when it does happen. Somehow, we can never completely be ready to say goodbye. No matter how much we may realize in our minds that our loved one is no longer suffering, our loss is a difficult and complicated situation to bear.

The Hebrew Cemetery is there to assist you and navigate you through this unknown territory. When death occurs, you will be faced with important tasks. You may not know what to do or when to begin making arrangements. Bearing the responsibility can be

overwhelming, but remember that you are not alone.

If death occurs at a hospital or hospice, the staff will help you with contacting a funeral home. If death takes place at home you will have to notify a doctor or coroner to obtain a death certificate. Your next step is to contact a Rabbi who will come to the house and will do whatever is necessary. Following that you will have to notify a funeral home. They will transport the body and help you to complete the death certificate, to finish all other paperwork and to prepare the obituary.

The Rabbi or the Funeral home will call the Chevra Kadisha. This sacred society is a group of devout men and women who have taken on the obligation of ritually preparing the deceased. Abe Bober, who has been involved with Temple Israel's Chevra Kadisha for decades, notes, "It is often unknown that we do not charge anything for our services." Immediately following a death, the deceased should not, according to tradition, be left unattended. A Shomer, or watchman, stays with the deceased from the time of death until the funeral and burial.

The Chesed Shel Emet, the ultimate act of love and kindness, is shown to the deceased when the mourners and friends partake in the actual burial. Many people symbolically participate by placing a few shovels of earth onto the casket or vault. Because this is something the deceased cannot do for him or herself, and since the deceased cannot thank the mourn-

ers for seeing to his or her proper Jewish burial, this becomes the ultimate, unselfish deed.

Although extremely difficult and emotionally painful, the actual burial of our dead has proven, psychologically benefits. Participating in and witnessing the burial gives closure to the mourners. It also helps to minimize any illusions that the death might not have been real.

John Tallent, Director at JB Tallent Funeral Services, has witnessed the strength of Charlotte's Jewish community when a family sustains a loss. "In all my years in funeral service, I have seen the Jewish community of Charlotte coming together to provide caring and compassionate assistance to all families during this most difficult time," shares Mr. Tallent. "The Hebrew Cemetery does an outstanding job making this process as painless as possible."

Save the date: Please note that this year's Annual Memorial Service will take place Sunday, September 23 at 10 AM onsite at the Hebrew Cemetery, 1801 Statesville Avenue.

To learn more about pre-planning, to arrange a personal tour or to donate towards the Steinberger Funeral Assistance Fund, please contact Hebrew Cemetery Director, Sandra Goldman, by phone at 704-576-1859 or by email at director@hebrewcemetery.org.

Meetings can be arranged either at the cemetery or in the office at 5007 Providence Road, Suite 105. Information about the history of

the cemetery and updates about the cemetery's 2012 expansion and construction are available online at www.hebrewcemetery.org. ✪





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Charlotte Film Society to Screen "Miral"

Directed by Julian Schnabel

"Sure to excite curiosity thanks to the reputation of director Julian Schnabel (*The Diving Bell and the Butterfly*) and its controversial topicality, *Miral* dramatically but unevenly explores the lives of four Palestinian women during the years of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Although too schematic and unfocused to garner much critical support, it has the kind of direct simplicity that could reach out to historically challenged audiences – a category that includes most people – and politically minded festival juries. Inspired by the life of Palestinian-born, Western-based TV journalist Rula Jebreal, who penned the 2004 book and the screenplay, *Miral* is very much an artistic collaboration between the writer and Schnabel, a Jewish-American. The film is permeated by an American liberal sensibility and an urgency to acquaint viewers with the reality of Middle East conflict seen through Palestinian eyes. Here, the key words are 'education' and 'tolerance' as well as a need to defeat fanaticism on both sides." – Deborah Young,



The Hollywood Reporter

According to Lisa Palmieri-Billig's review of the film in *The Jerusalem Post*: "Israel is portrayed as the unequivocal villain... Not only did [director Julian] Schnabel choose not to tell the whole story, but he also shirked a director's responsibility of providing the historical framework necessary for even his half of the story."

Rated PG-13 (strongly cautioned). It has scenes of violence, none terribly graphic.

There will be a post-screening discussion at which a presence from the local Jewish community would be beneficial.

June 2, 3 PM and 7:30 PM (box opens at 2:30 PM & 7:00 PM) at Theatre Charlotte, 501 Queens Road – Charlotte. ✪

I want to thank the entire community for all the kind cards and letters about my mother, Eichel Montag. After living in Charlotte for over 40 years she felt the need for a smaller community and moved to Hilton Head three and a half years ago. I still remember how excited she was the first time she brought me over to the JCC. I had been away at college when it was built and she just thought it was the best thing the Jewish Community had done together. Thanks again for the continued support of our family.

Emily, Jeff, Rachel and Shelby Vaughan and Jim Montag

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