

The Son-in-Law w.r.t The Final Rites

The eldest son of a deceased is the one upon who falls the responsibility of being the karma kartaa (the main performer of the rites). However there are many situations in which this may not be possible. Where a son is not available then in accordance with Garuda Purana Preta Khanda Chapter 8 verses 2-4 the following is said by the Lord Himself.

The under mentioned are authorised to perform the rites when there is no son.

Grandson, great grandsons, brothers of the deceased or their sons, or other nephews (sisters sons are permitted in the event a brother's son is not available). The pundit (Purohit), an individual making preparations for his/her death can appoint someone whom he/her considers as a son to be "adopted son" to perform the final rites.

In ancient times the king did it but I don't think President Zuma will have time because of his schedule. While in these times that are no longer feasible any worthy, noble and responsible individual, desirous of rendering such service should be allowed to.

In South Africa women are not allowed to perform rituals but Lord Vishnu does state in Garuda Purana chapter 8 verse 3 that "if both families are male-less the women should perform the obsequies"

So to come to this article's question can a son-in-law carry the coffin and can he offer financial support.

Well there is no clear info on this. The reason this is not done is that is that the son in law is not the Kul (family lineage) of the in laws that's why. The Kul males have the first rights to do the rites.

Many would say that the son in law was like a son to the in laws etc. It's a grey area and in my personal opinion I have no qualms about it. As I stated above that "While in these times that are no longer feasible, any worthy, noble and responsible individual, desirous of rendering such service should be allowed to."

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