

## The Imprints On The Ashes On The 10<sup>th</sup> Day After Cremation.

Quite a few Hindus inquired about this ritual because it has caused a lot of controversy and confusion amongst us Hindus in South Africa. So we are going to try to analyze this ritual step by step.

So this is what Hindus actually do. This ritual is performed at night just before one sleeps. One must have outside fire so whatever one cooks, the ashes from the wood is used. This ash is gathered and kept. Now at night in the room where the deceased slept, in the corner of the room a lota of water, a saucer of rice, and the ashes, which is now sieved on a white paper, is kept on the floor. No one sleeps in the room, and there should be hardly any noise at night. In the morning one then checks what imprint/mark/symbol/image... is on the ashes. If the imprint was a human baby feet that means the deceased has taken birth as a human, an Om imprint, the person has gone to heaven or an animal imprint the person is born as an animal.

Well let's try to analyze this ritual step-by-step.

Firstly after the death of a person a 10<sup>th</sup> day ceremony is performed at the riverside. This is a purification rite. According to the Garuda Purana when a person dies the deceased remains a preta/ghost/subtle body for 12/13 days until the Sapindi rites (performed on the 12<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> day) have been performed.

The soul without the body is like a flame without fire. After leaving the earthly body, the soul immediately obtains an airy body. In that actionless body he moves in air only. [\(Garuda Purana Preta Khand Chapter 10 verses 72-75\)](#)

When the Pindas (rice balls offer to the deceased) have been merged on the 13<sup>th</sup> day ceremony then only the person mystically changes from a preta/ghost/subtle body and he/she can then join his/her (forefathers/foremothers family).

“As long as the pindas are not merged, one remains impure. The dead man gets a new appellation (name, designation) after the merge. No joyous ceremony such as marriage, etc. can be performed if the householder dies and the Sapinda Rite has not been performed. [\(Garuda Purana Preta Khand Chapter 26 verses 11-13\)](#)

Once Sapindya is completed, the pretahood ends. On the thirteenth day, Yamaraja's attendants take him. So in 348 days he/she reaches Yama's city.

[\(Garuda Purana Preta Khanda Chapter 5 verses 78-89\)](#)

So to place in context what has been compiled thus far, it is not possible for the deceased to be born so quickly again. As stated above in the Garuda Purana the deceased after the 13<sup>th</sup> day ceremony is completed, is taken on a 348-day journey to Yamaloka. So the 348-day journey in addition to the 13 days adds up to 361 days. So after 361 days after the cremation of a person the deceased faces Lord Yamaraja (the god of death). There he (Lord Yamaraja) will decide what kind/type of body that the deceased should receive. If he decides that the deceased should

receive another human body, then he/she has to go through the process of being born again, which takes approximately 9 months. It takes a lot less time if Lord Yamaraja decides to give the deceased an animal body (for example the gestation period for a dog is approximately 65 days). Thus it is not possible to be born so quickly like what is said in the ashes.

So to these people who says that the deceased has taken birth again after they see the imprints on the ashes, they should really rethink their beliefs because as stated in the Garuda Purana this cannot be possible.

So the million-dollar question is how do these imprints, etc. gets imprinted on the ashes. There can be a rather simple answer to this. Garuda Purana states that pretas/subtle bodies can perform some rather strange and playful acts. If you watch the English movie called "Ghost " (the characters played by Demi Moore and Patrick Swayze), you would see in the movie how if a subtle body really concentrates he/she could move objects, write, type, et al. The part played by Patrick Swayze did just that in the movie.

So in a gist preta/airy bodied beings/ghosts do a lot of nonsense and playful things. These imprints on the ashes in all likelihood can be the work of other ghosts or pretas residing in the area.

The basic point about this topic is that the ashes ritual is not sastric backed thus we cannot accept it. I have asked many learned gurus about this ritual and they all have said that is not backed by the sastras. If someone has proof of this ritual please let me know.

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