

Straight talk article On Death

Welcome to Str8 Talk. The purpose of this article is to share with you my thoughts on issues, both religious and otherwise.

My aim in writing down spiritual anecdotes to deliver short yet thought-provoking messages. Please note that some of these anecdotes would conflict with others, so please read these anecdotes open mindedly and what ever I write it is up to you to accept it or not. I will not accept responsibility for what I say. We live in a crazy world and I do not want to get embroiled in something that's going to waste my precious time. A lot of the information that I will write is from lectures and conversations with gurus and devotees over the years, so certain information unfortunately I cannot substantiate.

Death is something that's very close to me. So the following is something for you to ponder about.

One cannot outwit Sri Yamaraja (the Lord Of Death). A few months (some say 6 months) before one's death it is said that one knows that one will die. If people could only know what happens at death and after death they would not make so many mistakes or commit such sinful acts during their life. When I perform funerals some Hindus get rather upset when I say that the deceased is now a ghost. But it is true. Another name for a preta or subtle body is ghost. So now I just say the person is a preta. That somehow or the other does not offend them. So when a person leaves his body his subtle body is hovering around here and there confused. Suppose you came from work one day to find that your landlord had thrown you out of your flat, and the building had been condemned by the city and then demolished. Wouldn't you hang around the area for a few hours or even a few days to reorient yourself? Every dead person hovers about the body, wondering what to do next. Why do you think that we as Hindus cremate the dead only after a few hours after death? Because the spirit may have some hope of returning to the body as long as the body exists. When that body has been reduced to ashes, though, the spirit has to find its own path. Burial encourages the spirit to hover about for quite some time, especially if the body is well preserved. Some religions hold a forty day reading of the their holy books to which the spirit is specifically invited, but this is not good because it makes the spirit linger for some time. The sooner the spirit leaves and begins its journey the better for everyone connected to the deceased. We as Hindus cremate our dead. We only bury the Sannyasis (renounced people) and little children. By burying certainly is not a good idea. By burying we contaminate Mother Earth even further. By burying Sannyasis and little children Mother Earth gets purified.

The dead person wants to let everyone know he is still alive and may become quite perturbed when no one around his body is listening to him, which of course is only reasonable. You too would feel offended if all your relatives suddenly started to act as if you weren't there, when it is obvious to you that you are quite present. You can't blame the friends and relatives either for failing to respond to the deceased's calls. We as humans except those few who possess very subtle perceptions, cannot

see or hear the dead.

We Hindus are mainly vegetarian and when we die we are eaten by vegetables; that is, we are consumed by wood, which is plant material. We eat plants during our lives and when we die the plants eat us in return. This is the **LAW OF KARMA**. Other religions are predominately meat-eaters, and when they die they are buried and become meat for the worms to eat. There is no escaping the law of karma.

I will never cease to be in awe of Mother Nature, of the power she had over the human mind. Five minutes before he dies a man's wife hugs him, kisses him, and cries over him. Five minutes after he dies she is afraid to touch the death body that peculiar feeling is there. Of course she feels peculiar. You never feel like holding a dead person, there is nothing to hold, only the outer shell remains.

Both Hindus and Parsis offer food to their departed loved ones. The deceased consume the food ethereally by smelling rather than tasting it. The external form of the food does not change. I really caution everyone never to eat food offered to the dead. Such food has been polluted by the spirit's intense desire to return to physical life, which has a ruinous effect on the mind. A practical example of this is to find a yogi in full meditation (which I might add is quite difficult these days) and place some food in his mouth; he will directly come down from his meditation, the pull of the physical is so strong.

Another thought came to my mind now; do you have any idea why Hindus always lay the corpse out on the ground with the head to the North? Well I am sure you know that the magnetic lines of the force of the Earth run north and south. There are two important benefits in this practice. First, rigor mortis sets in quickly and decomposition is hastened. Second, the magnetic field reacts with the body in such a way that the spirit cannot reenter the body even if he tries.

And finally please note that one should **NEVER** perform a death ceremony, 10th day, 13th day, 6th month and 12th month ceremonies on Ekadashi. This is the day of Lord Hari where grains, beans and meat are not eaten. For these days please check your local Hindu calendar. Ekadashi comes twice a month. If one performs these ceremonies on Ekadashi, the priest, the family members and the deceased all go to hellish planets for this great sin. Ekadashi is set aside only for the worship of Vishnu and thus these prayers should not be performed on this most auspicious day. I am aware that many priests do not bother if it's Ekadashi or not, and this is very dangerous, because if the proper prayers are not performed Lord Vishnu has said that "If the funeral rites are not performed properly", he (the deceased) returns to his home, stays on the roof and watch the activities of his family members. He then causes diseases and grief to his relatives.

"If the funeral rites are not performed in the prescribed way, the soul of the deceased (in rebirth) deviates from the righteous path and falls in the company of the wicked."— Garuda Purana Chapter 20.

We pray that this short anecdote helps you in some way.

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Thank you so much for taking the time to read this article. We pray that this article will assist you in some way and we also pray that it helps you to appreciate the beauty and remarkable foresight of our ancient Hindu culture. We wish to educate all readers and demystify the path of Hinduism (Sanatan Dharma). Please feel free to share these articles with friends and family who do not have direct access to our website or articles. If you use the articles in any form including blogs and/or as part of other articles kindly credit our website as a source. We hope that the articles serve as a reference to you and your family when you need clarification of certain topics. Jai Hind. Jai Shree Radha Krsna.

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