

ॐ Is passing away with the COVID-19 virus considered an unnatural death? 卐  
How to perform a Covid Funeral and other covid related information.



Pranaams प्रणाम दोस्त Prem Namaste and Vanakkum friend/s.

Dipika, has received numerous e-mails and questions in recent months, regarding the procedures to follow if one passes on due to the Covid-19 virus - which would usually require a closed and sealed casket due to possible contagions. This article discusses this in detail and a few other important information pertaining to Covid-19 death related procedures. This matter, along with other pertinent information in relation to Covid-19 and the related death procedures, are discussed in further detail below.

This much needed article was compiled on short notice based on an urgent need for guidance on how to perform a Covid funeral and should passing away with the Covid-19 virus considered an unnatural death?

How should the family of the deceased observe the 10th day, 13th day and other Shraddha ceremonies (6<sup>th</sup> month and 11 and half months) if various (or all) persons in the household have contracted the virus (i.e. are Covid-19 positive)?

The outbreak of Covid-19 and the ensuing worldwide pandemic has meant that the traditional Hindu last rites, to be performed upon death, have to be accelerated and adapted to minimize the number of people involved. Additionally, close contact with the dead body is not possible without Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). This makes it even more challenging for family and friends of the deceased to cope with their loss, and to perform the necessary procedures.

A lack of familiarity with cultural and religious practices on the part of the personnel involved in the handling of the dead can have serious consequences. This article later on provides guidance on the management, or handling, of the remains of people believed or confirmed to have died from the coronavirus disease (Covid-19) in the context of Hinduism (Sanatan Dharma).

This article will also aid in understanding Hindu perspectives on management/handling of the dead, and how last rites might be adapted to minimize the possible risk of further infection. It is meant to give a practical overview of key recommendations for managing infectious human remains to practitioners, managers and planners, including decision-makers involved in the overall response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Firstly, the most important question and one of the main reasons for this article - is a death due to the Covid-19 virus considered to be an "unnatural" death in terms of Hinduism?

This is a pertinent question. While, on the surface, a Covid-19-related death (eg. lung failure or heart failure) may seem like a "normal"/"natural" death, in my humble opinion, this is not the case.

Additionally, there are various additional questions relating to a Covid-19 death that also needs to be answered.

- \* Why are such strict procedures adhered to in the case of a Covid-19-related death?
- \* Why is the corpse of a person who has passed on due to Covid-19 usually wrapped in plastic, twice?
- \* Why is the coffin of a person who has passed on due to Covid-19 usually sealed?
- \* Why are protective suits (eg. HAZMAT suits) worn by the claimant and presiding priest?

Therefore, the additional precautions and procedures mentioned above imply that a death due to the Covid-19 virus is simply not "natural". As Lord Narayana states in the Garuda Purana, this is an example of a "great disease/ailment" (view the scriptural proof below).

Hence, to remedial this type of death, the Narayan Bali puja is performed on the 11<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup> or 13<sup>th</sup> day before the Sapindi puja is performed. To learn more about what the Narayan Bali prayers entails kindly follow this link...

### [Narayan Bali Rites - Prayer for an unnatural death](#)

Lord Vishnu (a.k.a Lord Krishna/Raam/Narayana) said to Shree Garudaji in the Garuda Purana: "The Narayana Bali rite is performed in all cases of abnormal death which is defined as follows: death by fasting, one who is killed by animals, death by arson, death by a curse, death by cholera or any disease or great ailment, who commit suicide, fall from a mountain, tree or any height, who hang themselves to death, who are drowned in a tank, river or ocean, death by muggers or robbers, by snake bite, struck by lightning, murder and persons who are great sinners – for such persons O Garuda, the rite of Narayana Bali should be performed."

(Source - Garuda Purana Preta Kanda chapter 40 verses 4-12)

I am providing the Narayan Bali puja proper in Sanskrit for Pandits and Guru's only. Kindly click on this link [Narayan Bali Prayoga Vidhi in Devanagiri \(Sanskrit\)](#) 19 pages.

Vedic Shastras strongly recommend cremation for most dead bodies. Burials are only set aside for great, austere/pious/revered gurus and children 24 months and younger. (Source - Garuda Purana Preta kanda chapter 25 verse 7 and Sat Kriya Sara Dipika). But in these Covid times I strongly that all deaths due to covid-19 be cremated.

When a family member or resident of the house passes away due to Covid-19, the corpse should **NOT** go to or pass the deceased residence, even if it is wrapped in plastic and/or in a closed coffin. This may be distressing or upsetting to some, especially grieving family members and loved ones, however, with the contagious nature of Covid-19 and the new strains which are more contagious and possibly more harmful, it is safest for all to follow proper procedures and avoid contamination at all costs - especially where they may be persons at higher risk in the household (eg. elderly persons, persons with co-morbidities or weaker immune systems, etc.)

I have heard and seen reports of hearses with persons who passed on due to Covid-19, going to the funeral home for the deceased person's relatives and loved ones to view the corpse. Please note that this is extremely dangerous and **is not recommended under any circumstances** - it places the residents of the house under direct and very high risk of contracting the virus, and can be lethal for persons who are higher risk. It is paramount to prioritize the health and safety of the persons involved.

There is a high possibility that the driver of the hearse may have come in contact with someone with the virus with loading and transporting the body. This isn't the time to be sentimental. If the body does go to the house of the deceased, the body should not leave the hearse and **NO** prayers are performed at the house. Hence further proving that the body should go straight to the cremation hall.

**At the cremation hall and then in the ante-chamber:-** The Pandit/Priest/Guru and claimant must have HAZMAT suits on. All the prayers are then performed in the ante-chamber. During the Hindu funeral prayers/last rites, six pindas (obsequial rice balls) are offered/placed on the kusha grass body and not the actual body since the coffin is sealed. I've conducted numerous funerals over the years and there have been various unfortunate incidents where the body was not found, or excessively damaged, or the deceased body was eaten by wild animals (a few bones was left), or the body was totally burned in a fire, or the body lost at sea and eaten by fishes etc., and a closed coffin was required, hence, this type of procedure has been utilized before.

In this case a Patule/Puttala (photo next page) {a body/figurine/effigy made out of kusha (darbha) grass} is made. The prayers are then performed on this "kusha grass body", representing the deceased. It is then placed on the coffin and then cremated.



Below is a guideline for the procedures that a priest (pandit) or guru should adhere to. The kusha grass body/effigy is placed in a shallow box and should look like the photo above. This box should be placed on a low table.

\* **Acamana** (Sprinkling water for Purification). Prepare a lota/container of water containing clean water, for Acamana (and possibly a few drops of ganga jal if available). Since the Hazmat suit is on, the mantra is chanted and water is sprinkled on the claimant.

\* **Kusha ring** is generally placed on the claimant's right ring finger. But this is disregarded as wearing the HAZMAT suit, the hands are covered. So there is no exposed limbs or skin of the "claimant". However the Kusha ring mantra is still chanted by the priest.

\* **Chandan dot** on the claimant's forehead. But this is disregarded as wearing the HAZMAT suit, the face is covered with a shield. So there is no exposed limbs or skin of the "claimant". However the chandan mantra is still chanted by the priest.

\*\*\* **Sankalpa** (an intention, a solemn vow) is chanted where the deceased name, vedic day, vedic phase of the moon, vedic month and the place where the cremation is taking place, is uttered and thus the spirit of the deceased enters into the kusha effigy to accept the prayers that going to be shortly performed.

- \* The **six pindas** are now placed on the kusha effigy. It is compulsory to offer **six** pindas.
- \* The **first pinda** (with a two inch length of kusha grass underneath it) is placed above the head of the effigy while the pandit chants the appropriate pinda mantra.
- \* The **second pinda** is placed on the right shoulder of the effigy while the pandit chants the appropriate pinda mantra.
- \* The **third pinda** is placed on the left shoulder of the effigy while the pandit chants the appropriate pinda mantra.
- \* The **fourth pinda** is placed on the right knee of the effigy while the pandit chants the appropriate pinda mantra.
- \* The **fifth pinda** is placed on the left knee of the effigy while the pandit chants the appropriate pinda mantra.
- \*\*\* The **sixth pinda** is placed in the right hand of the effigy while the pandit chants the appropriate pinda mantra.

This is a very important step as stated in Garuda Purana Preta Kanda Chapter 10 verse 21. Lord Vishnu said to Shree Garudaji “The corpse is placed on the pyre and 2 pindas are offered, from the time the pinda is placed in the right hand of the corpse (effigy) the departed soul assumes the name of Preta (Spirit) until the Sapindi puja (12/13<sup>th</sup> days prayers) is concluded”.

**So on the calculation of the number of days for carrying out the rituals is based on the time of cremation (and not the time of death of the deceased) when the final Pinda is placed in the right hand of the deceased (effigy).**

It is noted in the Valmiki’s Ramayana, that the body of Dasharatha Maharaja was preserved in oils for 14 days before the arrival of Bharata Maharaja who had been at His uncle's residence. Upon His return, the Antyesthi (final) rites was performed. If the day of death was the reference point then the Antyesthi rites would have been completed on the death day.

- \* Now the **Havan proper** commences. The priest will chant many mantras while the claimant offers ghee or havan samaghee into the havan kund.
- \* If the deceased passed on in **Panchak**, then the Panchak Shanti puja is now performed on the kusha effigy. Every priest should be familiar with this vidhi (procedure).
- \* Thereafter, the claimant performs the “**Daag**” prayers, and the claimant walks around the kusha effigy seven times while the pandit chants the appropriate mantra from the Varaha Purana.
- \* Thereafter, two mantras are chanted from the Śrī Īsopaniṣad praising Lord Vishnu.

\* The claimant then sprinkles black Til and sandalwood sticks on the kusha effigy in the shallow box. Thereafter, on a clay lamp, the claimant lights a piece of camphor and places this in the center of the small shallow box while the pandit chants the final mantra “Om Kravyaadaya Agni namastubhyam” (I pay my respects to the personality of funeral fire) three times.

Thereafter, the coffin along with the kusha effigy, enters the incinerator.

\* The rituals do not end here. Outside, in the cremation grounds, there is a designated place where the claimant and the pandit performs a prayer called Thilanjali. It is a very short but important prayer.

\*\*\* In South Africa, it seems that most times, the presiding priest departs the funeral once the body is being cremated. This is most unfortunate and disappointing, when a priest does this. However during this Covid affected period this can be laxed. Strictly speaking however, the priest must wait until the ashes are released, which is generally around two hours after the body has entered the incinerator. When the claimant collects the ashes, the priest must chant a mantra while the claimant walks around the ashes (which is in a large clay pot wrapped in a large white cloth) three times. Thereafter, the priest and claimant proceeds to the ocean, river or Ghat to dispose of the ashes. The priest then chant a Ganga devi mantra during the dispersing of the ashes.

\*\*\* However the if the ashes are only available the next day then this changes. And then ones priest shall advise further.

Thus, the Antyesthi Samskara (Sanatan Dharma/Hinduism Final Rites) is concluded.



## Questions and Answers.

**Question:-** Given the contagious nature of COVID-19, and the increase in cases experienced in many countries (eg. the current second wave in South Africa), how should the family of the deceased observe the 10<sup>th</sup> day, 12<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> day and other Shraddha ceremonies (6<sup>th</sup> month and 11 and half months) if various (or all) persons in the household have contracted the virus (i.e. are COVID-19 positive)?

**Answer:-** Please consider and adhere to the following guidelines and procedures.

- \* On the morning of the 10<sup>th</sup> day puja, the family members should pare their nails and dispose into a packet (to dispose off later in the river or ocean – not the packet).
- \* Thereafter, sprinkle Hurdi water inside and outside the house.
- \* Then, smoke inside and outside the house with lobhaan/samarani/frankincense.

\* I humbly suggest having just two selected members (who don't have the virus and with their mask/s on at all times) of the family or two family friends (who don't have the virus) cook the meals for the 10<sup>th</sup> day prayers. The meals prepared should be at a minimum.

Suggested food/meals that should be prepared are Hurdi rice, unsalted Urad Dal, Herbs curry, one curry (for example potato, pumpkin or a curry of your choice), salad, one to three types of fruits, and sweet rice (kheer). You may cook more items, however, I humbly suggest you don't. More food/meals means more time required to prepare the foods, and more risk for those involved, due to the virus. Keep it simple and basic.

The claimant and a member (or two) of the family then proceed to the Ghat/river side/sea side to perform the 10<sup>th</sup> day prayers. Minimum contact with the Barber and the Mahapathar should of course be observed (in addition to wearing a mask, etc.). After the 10<sup>th</sup> day puja, the food/meals and gifts is then offered to the Mahapathar, and then the persons involved depart.

The 12<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> day, 6<sup>th</sup> month or 11 and half month ceremonies should be performed via teleconferencing software, eg. Whatsapp video call, Zoom, Google Meet, etc. If the family prefers the priest at their house, then the prayers should be performed by just the priest and the claimant, with others in the family sitting at quite a distance from the prayers. Minimum contact should be observed once again.

The guidelines for the food/meals to be prepared for the 10<sup>th</sup> day prayer, also applies for the 13<sup>th</sup> days, 6 months and 11 and half month prayers. As suggested above is to keep the preparations to a minimum, together with possibly preparing "biryani". Biryani has the rice and all the vegetables included. It is a simple meal that encompasses all the vegetables etc. Once again, as few people as possible should attend the prayers.

### Can the Last Rites be performed after sunset?

Most certainly, due to extraordinary circumstances (for example, the huge volume of bodies), this is permitted. In Manikarnika Ghat in Varanasi (Kashi), India, bodies are cremated at all hours, all throughout the year. If this is permitted in such a sacred place, then surely this will be allowed in other places in the world, as and when necessary.

### Why are scriptural readings and satsangs conducted in the first 12 nights after a cremation?

Since the soul does not begins his/her journey on the Path to Yamaloka until the 13<sup>th</sup> days prayers, it tends to linger around the home during this time. Immediately upon death, the soul remains in a state of unconsciousness, emerging from which it may be disoriented and confused. It may not yet be aware that it is in an intermediate state, detached from its gross physical body. If there is weeping and mourning and loud expressions of uncontrollable grief by the relatives, this creates severe problems for the

departed soul and hinders its progress in its afterlife. So prayers, bhajans, scriptural readings etc create and emit potent, positive psychic vibrations which in turn, give tremendous solace to the departed soul. The readings also serve to provide comfort to friends and the family of the deceased, to divert their minds which may be distracted by grief. In this time the Garuda Purana, Bhagavad Gita, Srimad Bhagavatam, Ramayana and other holy shastras are read.

### **Is the 3-day havan after death mentioned in our scriptures?**

This is a concoction and not prescribed in our scriptures. From the verses of the sacred Garuda Purana if one performs the 3-day havan for the deceased, the family members will incur the wrath of the deceased. When one offers pindas for the 10 days i.e. one for each of the 10 days then the new body is formed. {On the first day by offering the first pinda the head is formed, by the second, the ears, eyes and nose are formed. By the third, the neck, shoulder, arms and chest are formed. By the fourth pinda, the navel and private parts are formed. The fifth pinda the thighs and calves are formed. The sixth pinda all the vital organs are formed. By the seventh pinda the nerves are formed, by the eighth pinda the teeth and hair are formed. By the ninth pinda semen is formed. By the 10th day fullness is achieved and hunger is satisfied. {[Garuda Purana Preta Kanda Chapter 5 verses 31-37](#)}. So by the 3<sup>rd</sup> day when one offers the daily pinda only up to the neck/chest is formed. The new body of the deceased is only formed in 10 days, thus by performing the 3-day havan you are shant-ing (ending) the process but the new body is still incomplete. Now this is where the problem arises. Garuda Purana states that one has to perform the 10<sup>th</sup> days and 12<sup>th</sup>/13th days prayers, and so forth to form the new body, which takes 10 days. There are no short cuts in life especially in the final rites.

### **Is there a need to perform or observe a 40-day ceremony after the death of a person?**

Definitely Not! There is no such observance required by our scriptures. However in the Sat Kriya Sara Dipika (Page 150) mentions “a 10 day contamination period for a Brahmin and a 30 day contamination period for a non-Brahmin should be observed”.

**NB:** In this contamination (aashauca) period one should refrain from visiting the temple, study of scriptures, perform havans, Deity worship in the temple, entertaining guests, entering a new house, any type of Samskara (purificatory rite), shaving of the hair or cutting nails. An example: imagine that you have passed stool and have not taken bath. So of course you cannot go your prayer place or a temple since you have not

taken a bath. So in the same way in this 10 or 30 days period if you visit a temple and so forth it is like passing stool and not taking a bath and visiting the temple.

**Is a father/mother or grandparents permitted to light the funeral pyre at the cremation of their son/grandson, or perform the other Shraddha prayers?**

The Garuda Purana (11.19) states, "A father should neither light the pyre, nor himself perform the Antyesthi Samskara (Funeral rites) or any ceremony related to the death of his son."

**What is the significance of the practice of touching fire, iron and water on returning from the cremation ground?**

Fire, water and iron are considered especially important times of purification. Therefore, the close relatives returning from the cremation purify themselves by touching water, fire and iron with a syringaberry branch and then sprinkling the water on themselves. After this ritual they enter the house and take a bath.

**Is the priest/brahmin/guru permitted to accept daan (cash) or kind for performing a funeral rite or during the first 10 days after death, for his/her services?**

NO! Even for the performances of the last rites he/she should not accept any type of daan.

**What is or isn't permitted during the mourning period until the 12<sup>th</sup> / 13<sup>th</sup> days prayer.**

Lord Vishnu said "Offering of Ashirbaad (blessings), Deity worship, direct contact with the public, giving of Daan (charity/gifts), Hawan, Tarpana, Fasts, and Brahmin bhojan (feedings Brahmins) are forbidden in this period". ([Garuda Purana Preta Khanda chapter 13 verses 20-21](#)). Also the offering of Surya jal, lighting of deeyas, performing aartee and other forms of daily poojaa which constitute one's nityakarma (daily worship) should be suspended during the 10 days period. But I advise to resume worship once the 12/13<sup>th</sup> day puja has been completed. This excludes, however, the single deeya that is kept lit throughout the 12 day period in the name of the departed.

### Why is the Deeya kept lit until the 12<sup>th</sup> day?

The soul exists in darkness after death, sometimes in a confused state and the deeya is lit to provide a guiding light for the soul until the completion of all funeral rites. So how do we go about doing this. Keep a picture of the deceased and a clay lamp in front of the picture, in a room or a designated area in a southerly direction. This clay lamp must be kept lit continuously for 12 days. On the 12<sup>th</sup> day this lamp must go off by itself.

AND THIS LAMP MUST NOT BE TAKEN ON THE 10TH DAY TO THE RIVER.

### MANAGEMENT OF THE DEAD IN HINDUISM

The funeral or Anthyesti is the last rite of passage in the Hindu life cycle. It is traditionally arranged as soon as possible, usually within 24 hours of death, though exceptions may be made given the circumstances of the death or the needs of the family. The details of Hindu funeral rites vary considerably depending on the school of thought, community, caste, gender and age of the dead, and only a very generalized description can therefore be presented here. Since the dead body is regarded as impure, extreme care is taken by all mourners to otherwise avoid unnecessary touching of the body, which is considered an act of disrespect.

### THE IMPACT OF COVID-19

While Hindu last rites are therefore flexible and already well adapted to minimizing contact with the dead body, the Government of India has published the following guidelines related to the final rites of those who are confirmed or believed to have died due to COVID-19.

- Crematorium staff should be sensitized to the possible risk of infection and provided with personal protective equipment (PPE) so that COVID-19.
- Staff must practice standard precautions of hand hygiene, use of masks and gloves.
- Bathing, kissing, hugging etc. of the dead body should not be allowed.
- The funeral staff and family members of the deceased should wash their hands thoroughly after performing the last rites.
- The ashes of the deceased do not pose any risk and may be collected to perform the last rites.
- Large gatherings at the crematorium should be avoided as a social distancing measure as it is possible that close family contacts may be infected with the virus. Autopsy has also been debated widely in relation to COVID-19 in India. The central government has advised against conducting autopsies of confirmed COVID-19 patients. For suspected cases, the decision-making power remains with Indian states and hospitals depending on the availability of testing kits. With proper preparation and

planning, the safety of healthcare workers on the frontline of the response can be ensured, as well as the dignity of those who are confirmed/believed to have died due to COVID-19.

- Apart from physical distancing and avoiding contact, there should be extreme caution with respect to the handling of COVID-19 dead bodies, since it remains unclear for how long the risk of infection from the dead body or bodily fluids persists.
- PPE must be used by those handling the body, which must be completely wrapped in a body bag that is not easily penetrated (or double-bagged) before being moved to the mortuary.
- The body bag(s) should not be opened again prior to cremation.
- Bodies should not be embalmed or injected with preservatives. The process of embalming can result in the unnecessary manipulation of the body that may expel fluid from the body's cavity and/or result in aerosolization leading to an increased risk for those performing such procedure.
- Every effort should be made to ensure reliable documentation, identification and traceability of the dead so as to avoid misidentification and trauma for loved ones. While dead body management and funeral rites must be accelerated and adapted to maintain social distancing, hasty and careless disposal of the bodies must be avoided. Irrespective of whether the body is infectious or not, there is a chance that family members of the deceased are infected. Funeral gatherings are highly inadvisable regardless of how the dead body is handled and have sometimes been banned. Those who attend the funeral must safely dispose of the PPE and properly clean themselves with soap, water or alcohol-based sanitizer.

The next three pages consists of **The full Final Rites - if a priest or guru isn't available.**



**The full Final Rites procedure – if a priest or guru isn't available.**

<p>3. <b>Sankalp - Declaration of Intention</b> अद्यामुक प्रेतस्य प्रेतत्वं निवृत्त्या उत्तमलोक प्राप्त्यर्थायैकैहिकं करिष्ये । <i>adyāmuka pretasya pretatva nivṛtyā uttamloka prāpṣyārtham aurdhavadāhikam karisyē</i></p> <p>4. <b>Offering of Pindas:</b> 6 Pindas are made with the following): Rice flour, perfume, thil, honey, milk, ghee - all doughed together and formed into round shapes.</p> <p>4.1 First Pinda (where the corpse is placed after being bathed) (at head): अद्यामुक गोत्र अमुक प्रेत मृत्स्थाने शवनिमित्तो ब्रह्मदेवतो वा एष ते पिण्डो मया दीयते तवोपतिष्ठताम् । (Place the pinda in coffin)</p> <p>4.2 Second Pinda (Place in coffin on right side) 1) <i>adyāmuka gotra amuka preta mṛtisthāne śavanimitto brahmadāyivo vā eṣ te pinda mayā dīyate lavopṣiṣṭātam</i> अद्यामुक गोत्र अमुक प्रेत द्वारदेशे पाप्य निमित्तो विष्णुदेवतो वा एष ते पिण्डो मया दीयते तवोपतिष्ठताम् । 2) <i>adyāmuka gotra amuka preta dvārādēṣe pānith nimitto viṣṇudāyivā vā eṣ te pinda mayā dīyate lavopṣiṣṭātam</i></p> <p>4.3 Third Pinda (Place in coffin) (at left side)</p>	
	<p>अद्यामुक गोत्र अमुक प्रेत चक्र खचर निमित्त एष ते पिण्डो मया दीयते तवोपतिष्ठताम् ।</p> <p>3) <i>adyāmuka gotra amuka preta cakra kṣacar nimitta eṣ te pinda mayā dīyate lavopṣiṣṭātam</i></p> <p>4.4 Fourth Pinda (At entrance to crematorium) (at head): अद्यामुक गोत्र अमुक प्रेत विश्रन्ती भूत नात्ना रुद्र देवतो वा एष ते पिण्डो मया दीयते तवोपतिष्ठताम् ।</p> <p>4) <i>adyāmuka gotra amuka preta viśraṅṅtāyā bhūta nātnā rudra dāyivā vā eṣ te pinda mayā dīyate lavopṣiṣṭātam</i></p> <p>4.5 Fifth Pinda (In cremation room; place pinda in coffin) (at head): अद्यामुक गोत्र अमुक प्रेत चितस्थाने वायुनिमित्तको यमदेवतो वा एष ते पिण्डो मया दीयते तवोपतिष्ठताम् ।</p> <p>5) <i>adyāmuka gotra amuka preta cittaśthāne vāyuniimitthiko yamādāyivā vā eṣ te pinda mayā dīyate lavopṣiṣṭātam</i></p> <p>Note: Keep three small pieces of kusa. Put water on kusa thrice. Place Pinda on kusas with appropriate mantra. Each pinda offered should be placed in coffin.</p> <p>5. Hawan (to be performed in Kunda)</p> <p>5.1 अद्यामुक प्रेतस्य प्रेतत्वं निवृत्त्या उत्तमलोक प्राप्त्यर्थं हवनं करिष्ये । 5.2 <i>śaṅka</i> (at <i>adyāmuka pretasya pretatva nivṛtyā uttamloka prāpṣyārtham havanam karisyē</i>) 5.2 Light fire with camphor in Hawan Kunda: ऋव्याट अग्नि इहागच्छेत्तद्विधिः</p> <p>5.3 <i>kravyāṭa agni ihāgṣṣṭha ihāṭiṣya</i> 5.3 Sprinkle water on hawan wood.</p> <p>5.4 Read once, offer two ghee ahuts: लोमस्यः स्वाहा, इदं लोमेष्यो न मम । त्वचे स्वाहा, इदं त्वचे न मम । लोहिताय स्वाहा, इदं लोहिताय न मम । मेदोभ्यः स्वाहा, इदं मेदोभ्यः न मम । मासेभ्यः स्वाहा, इदं मासेभ्यः न मम । स्नायुभ्यः स्वाहा, इदं स्नायुभ्य न मम । अस्थिभ्यः स्वाहा, इदं अस्थिभ्यः न मम । मज्जाभ्यः स्वाहा, इदं मज्जाभ्यः न मम । रेतसे स्वाहा, इदं रेतसे न मम ।</p> <p><i>lomasya svāhā idam lomēbhyo na mama. tvace svāhā idam tvace na mama. lohityā svāhā idam lohityāyā na mama. medobhyā svāhā idam medobhyā na mama. māsebhya svāhā idam māsebhya na mama. snāyubhyā svāhā idam snāyubhyā na mama. asthibhyā svāhā idam asthibhyā na mama. majjābhyā svāhā idam majjābhyā na mama. retse svāhā idam retse na mama.</i></p> <p>5.5 Read once. Offer Samagrec:</p>

पायवे स्वाहा। अथासाय स्वाहा। प्रायासाय स्वाहा। सहासाय स्वाहा। विद्यासाय स्वाहा। उदासाय स्वाहा। शुचे स्वाहा। शोचते स्वाहा। शोचमानाय स्वाहा। शोकाय स्वाहा। तपसे स्वाहा। तपते स्वाहा। तप्यमानाय स्वाहा। तप्साय स्वाहा। धर्माय स्वाहा। निष्कृत्यै स्वाहा। प्रायश्चित्त्यै स्वाहा। भेषजाय स्वाहा। यमाय स्वाहा। अन्तकाय स्वाहा। मृत्यवे स्वाहा। ब्रह्मणे स्वाहा। ब्रह्महत्यायै स्वाहा। विश्वेभ्यो देवेभ्यः स्वाहा। द्यावाभृथिवीभ्या २ स्वाहा। इदं द्यावा भृथिवीभ्यां न मम।

*pūyave svāhā. vṛkṣāvaya svāhā. prāyāsāyaya svāhā. sahasāyaya svāhā. vidyāsāyaya svāhā. udāsāyaya svāhā. śuče svāhā. śocate svāhā. śocamānāyaya svāhā. śokāyaya svāhā. tapase svāhā. tapyamānāyaya svāhā. tapsāyaya svāhā. dharmāyaya svāhā. niṣkṛtyai svāhā. prāyāścittya svāhā. bheṣajāyaya svāhā. yamāyaya svāhā. antakāyaya svāhā. mṛtyave svāhā. brahmaney svāhā. brahmahatyāyaya svāhā. viśvebhya svāhā. dyāvābhṛthiḥvībhya 2 svāhā. idam dyāvābhṛthiḥvībhyaṃ na mama.*

6. Sixth Pinda (to be placed in right hand of corpse)  
अष्टामुक गोत्र अमुक प्रेत शवहस्ते साधक निमित्तः प्रेतदैवतो वा एष पिण्डस्ते मया दीयते तत्रोपलिष्ठताम्।

(7) *adyātmuka gotra amuka preta śavahaste sādhaḥ nimittaḥ pretaivaivato vā eṣa pīṇḍaste māvā* in Panchak, then special ritual should be done - see item 10, then continue with item 7)

7. Light the cloth tied to the stick

त्वं	भूतकृष्णाद्योने	त्वं	लोक	परिपालकः।
उक्त	सहारकस्तस्मादेनं	स्यां	मृतं	नय॥
<i>tvam</i>	<i>bhūtakṛṣṇādyoṇe</i>	<i>tvam</i>	<i>loka</i>	<i>paripālakaḥ</i>
<i>ukta</i>	<i>sahāraḥkastasmādenam</i>	<i>svāraṃ</i>	<i>mṛtaṃ</i>	<i>naya</i>

7.1 Walk around the corpse seven times, each time touching the head with the burning stick. Other close family members may follow, placing a sandalwood stick in the coffin, for each round.

कृत्वा	तु	दुःकृतं	कर्म,	जानता	वाप्यजानता।
मृत्युकाले	कश	प्राप्य,	सं	पञ्चरत्नमागतम्॥	
धर्माधर्मं	समायुक्त,	लोभ	मोह	समावृतम्।	
दहेय	सर्वान्नाशि,	द्विर्वालोकान्म	गच्छतु॥		
<i>kṛtvā</i>	<i>tu</i>	<i>duṣkṛtāṃ</i>	<i>karma</i>	<i>jānā</i>	<i>vāpyajānātā</i>
<i>mṛtyukāle</i>	<i>kaśa</i>	<i>pṛāpya,</i>	<i>saṃ</i>	<i>pañcāratanmāgataṃ</i>	
<i>dharmādharmaṃ</i>	<i>samāyukta,</i>	<i>lobha</i>	<i>moha</i>	<i>samāvṛtaṃ</i>	
<i>dāheya</i>	<i>svānāśi,</i>	<i>dvīrvalokānsm</i>	<i>gacchata</i>		

7.2 Read the following mantra, six times, offering ghee and thil

अस्मात्सर्गर्ष	जतोऽग्नि	तदय	जगता	पुनः।
असौ	स्यार्य	लोकाय	स्याथा	ज्जन्तु
<i>asmātsarṣa</i>	<i>astō</i>	<i>agnī</i>	<i>taḍaya</i>	<i>jagata</i>
<i>asau</i>	<i>syārya</i>	<i>lokāya</i>	<i>syātha</i>	<i>jjantu</i>
<i>asa</i>	<i>svāryāya</i>	<i>lokāya</i>	<i>svāhā</i>	<i>jjātāna</i>
				<i>pāṇava</i>

7.3 Empty the contents of the hawan kund into the coffin and put the corpse into the furnace.

8. Thilanjali (to be performed outside the crematorium)  
Wash hands: Offer palm full of water mixed with thil, three times on a kusa stem planted in the ground

अष्टामुक गोत्र अमुक प्रेत दाहवृत्तनिवारणार्थं एष हिल तैर्वाकस्ते मया दीयते तत्रोपलिष्ठताम्।

*adyātmuka gotra amuka preta dahavṛttanivāraṇāṅgāṃ eṣa hila tairvākaṣṭe maya*

9. Collection of ashes (अग्नि संचय)

9.1 Light camphor. Circumambulate ashes three times. Sprinkle milk, water and thil on ashes; then put ashes in a clay pot

नमोस्तु धर्मराजाय, भित्तुः प्रेतसमुक्तये।

स मे प्रीतः शुभं ददादस्मिन् लोके परत्र च॥

9.2 Cast the last remains into a river chanting:

गोता गंगा च गायत्री, सीता सत्या ससस्वती।

ब्रह्मविद्या ब्रह्मवक्षी, त्रिसंध्या भवन्ती।

अर्द्धमात्रा चिदानन्द, भवन्ती भवन्श्रितो।

वेदत्रयी पराऽनन्दा, तत्कार्यं नान्मञ्जरो॥

*gītā gangā ca śyatrī, sītā satyā sarasvatī*

*brahmi vidya brahmvakṣī, trisandhyā bhavantī*

*ardhamātra chidānanda, bhavantī bhavanshṛitō*

*vedatrayī parāḍannda, tatkāryaṃ nānmanjaro*

9.3 Return to home of the deceased: Performance of purificatory act of touching fire (which should have already been lit), water and iron with syringa berry leaves, sprinkle water on the body, then have a bath; this is done by the immediate members of the family returning from the cremation.

Note: At the home of the deceased: On the day of the funeral, no food is cooked. Food without salt and masala should be eaten for ten days. A diya filled with oil and some thil must be lit in the home. This diya must be kept lit continuously for twelve days, commencing from the day following the day of cremation / funeral.  
In the evening, place one glass of milk, one glass of water and light a diya at the gate area / entrance of the home, for three days, commencing from the day following the day of cremation / funeral.

#### 10. Pancaka (पञ्चक विधानम्)

This ritual must be performed during the last rites when death occurs in the following Nakshatras (constellations): Dhanista, Sathisa, Purvabhadrpad, Uttarabhadrpad and Revati).

#### 10.1 Sankalp : संकल्प

अमुक गोत्रस्य अमुक प्रेतस्य धनिश्चिदि पञ्चक जनिद दुर्मरण सूचित कशरिष्टिनिशरण्य पञ्चक विधान करिष्ये।

*amuka gotrasya amuka preta dhanis̥tīdi pancaka janita durnarāṇ śūcīta vaṅśāṅśāvīnāśārāham pancaka vdhānam karisyē*

10.2 Make five putale (forms) with kooś, smeared with flour paste. Place one on head, one on each side of stomach, one on navel and one between feet of corpse.

10.3 Offer ghee ahuti seven times:

प्रेतवाय स्वाहा। प्रेतसखाय स्वाहा। प्रेताधिपाय स्वाहा। प्रेतभूमिपाय स्वाहा। प्रेतहने स्वाहा।

*pretaṅvāyā svāhā. pretasakhāyā svāhā. pretaādhīpāyā svāhā. pretabhūmīpāyā svāhā. pretahatre svāhā.*

10.4 Offer one ahuti, chanting the mantra in respect of the Nakshatra during which death occurred:

10.4.1 शतभिषा मन्त्रः *Śvatibhīṣhā Mantra*

ॐ कशरस्योत्तभनमसि कशरस्य स्कम्प सर्जनीस्यो कशरस्य  
ऽऋतसदनमसि कशरस्य ऋतसदनमसि कशरस्य  
ऽऋतसदनमसिद ।

*oṃ kasharas̥yōttabhanamasī kasharas̥y skamp sarjanīsyō kasharas̥y  
aṅṛatasadanamasī kasharas̥y aṅṛatasadanamasī kasharas̥y  
aṅṛatasadanamasīd ।*

10.4.2 धनिष्ठा मन्त्रः *Dhanīṣṭhā Mantra*

ॐ वसोः पवित्रमसि शतधरं वसोः पवित्रमसि सहस्रधरं। देवस्वा सविता पनतु वसोः पवित्रेण शत धरेण सूवाः कामभुङ्क्तः।

*oṃ vasoh pavitramasī śatadhāraṃ vasoh pavitramasī sahasradhāraṃ devastvā savitā punātu vasoh pavitrena śata dhareṇa sūpavāh kamabhuṅkta*

10.4.3 पूर्वभद्रपद मन्त्रः *Purva bhadrā*

ॐ उत नोहिर्बुधन्यः शृणोत्वजऽयकपात्पृथिवो समुद्रः।

विश्वेदेवा ऋतावृषो हुवाना स्रुता मन्त्राः कविशस्ता अवन्तु॥

*oṃ uta nohibudhnyah śṛṇovjā ekpāpṛthivō samudrah. aum uta nohibudhnyah śṛṇovjā ekpāpṛthivō samudrah. vīśvedevā ṛitāvṛiḥḥo huvaṇā sruā mantrāḥ kavīśastā avanta.*

10.4.4 उत्तरभद्रपद मन्त्रः *Uttara bhadrā*

ॐ शिवोनामसि स्वधितिस्ते भिता नमस्तेऽस्तु मा महि २ सी।  
निकर्याप्यायुषेनाद्याय प्रजन्माय शयस्योषाय सुवीर्याय॥

*oṃ śivonāmasi svadhitiṣṭe bhita namaste'stu mā mahi २ sī।  
nikarīāpyāyūṣēnādyāy prajanmāyā shayas̥yōṣāy sūvīrīāyā॥*

10.4.5 रेवती मन्त्रः *Revati Mantra*

ॐ पूषन्त्व व्रते कयत्रिष्येम कदाचन। स्तोतास्त इहस्मसि स्वाहा॥

*oṃ pūśantva vrate kayatrīṣyēma kadācana. stōtāstā ihasmasi svāhā*

10.5 Offer ghee ahuti:

ॐ प्रेताजयता न इन्द्रोः वः शर्म यच्छतु उग्रा वः सन्तु वाहवो नोभृश्या यथास्य स्वाहा।

*oṃ pretajayatā na indroḥ vah śarma yacchata ugrā aum pretajayatā nara indroh vah śarma yacchata ugrā vah santu vāhavo nābhṛshyā yathāsathā svāhā.*

Continue with items 7, 8 and 9 and complete last rites.

10.6 At the home of the bereaved family, the following should be done for an hour each evening, up to the 10<sup>th</sup> day:

Saḥsang: - Bhājans and Kirtans, Ramayan Katha, Bhagvat Gita, Garuda Purana

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Compiled for the upliftment of Sanatan Dharma

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