

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

The eldest son of a deceased is the one upon whom the responsibility falls being the karma kartaa (the main performer of the rites). However there are many situations in where 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 stated by the Lord Himself.

The under mentioned are authorised to perform the final funeral 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 Ramaphosa will have the 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 the final funeral rituals but Lord Vishnu does state in Garuda Purana chapter 8 verse 3 that "if both families are male-less then 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 information on this. The reason for this is that the son in law is not the Kul (family lineage) of the in laws that is the main reason why. The Kul males have the first rights to perform the rites and subsequent prayers.

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 the son in law performing the final rites as well as the subsequent prayers. 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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