



SV Temple of NC Final Rites Policy (Antyesthi Samskara – Aparam)

Purpose: SV Temple of NC is committed to the services of the Lord and at the same time helps Hindu Community to perform Karmas as per Sanatana dharma. All the Dasha Pancha (15) Samskaras are done for the Jivatmas according to Shastras and are celebrated joyously. However, the last 16th Karma (Shodashat karma – Aparam, Antyesthi samaskar) is done to the deceased, it is felt a separate policy is required as these rites are not like regular ceremonies and are performed during the mourning period.

What is Antyesthi Samskar: The one who dwells a given live body is called *jiva*. The body of a person becomes “Shava” on his death. The jiva departs from the body for taking a new form. He is “Preta” (one who travels). The vasanas (tendencies) in him owing to the long-time connection with the body kindle intolerable hunger and thirst and feelings of sorrow on severance of relationship with those he leaves behind. His son or Karta gives him water and Pindam (food); he cremates (or buries) the body with mantras, thus taking it back to the five Mahabhutas (Akasa, Vayu, Agni, Jala and Prithvi) and helps in cutting off the jiva’s relation with the body. This is called Aparakriya. The Kartaa removes the Preta state of the jiva, raises him to “Pitru” state and unites him with his Sapinda ancestors, Pitha (father), Pitamaha (grandfather) and Prapitamaha (great-grandfather).

Basic Steps for performing the samskaras:

- Cremation day – Rites to be performed at funeral house
- Next day after cremation- Collect Ashes
- Day 3 to Day 10 – Tarpanams given to get new body and to get liberated from Preta
- Day 11 – Pindams offered in presence of devatas
- Day 12 – Sapindikaranam – Joining with Pitru devatas
- Day 13th – Welcome auspiciousness

Role of Priest in Antyeshti/Cremation rites:

According to the Hindu tradition, the **Kartaa** has the sole responsibility and authority to perform cremation rites. The pandit/purohit/pujari has only an advisory role and guides the **Kartaa**. The pandit/purohit/pujari is not entitled to perform the rites directly.

IMPORTANT: The priest is only assisting the **Kartaa** who is performing antyeshti rites. Therefore, after the priest chants a mantra, the **Kartaa** should repeat the mantra.

Priest Availability: Every possibility will be made to send priest for the Antyesthi samskara. However, there will be some compelling reasons when Priest cannot be freed, like when there is only one priest to take care of nitya puja at temple, during temple events and when the priest cannot attend due to his personal reasons. However, board members will help in locating other freelance priests, if available.

Priest Services offered by Temple:

Priests services are offered on Funeral/ Cremation day. This is one day service when the Priest will come to funeral house and guide the kartaa to perform the rites.

For the next rites, there are various practices followed depending on the region where they come from, family traditions, sampradaya etc. SV Temple offers the below options. Depending on the kartaa's interest of choice, an option can be chosen.

- 1- Strict orthodox procedure
- 2- Orthodox procedure
- 3- Formal procedure.

Strict Orthodox procedure: The Rites will start from day 9. Rites will also be performed on 10th, 11th, 12th & 13th days. The kartaa **must** fetch 2 persons on 10th day to have Bhoktas. The priest invokes the Preta, and Yama in the Bhoktas. On 12th day, 3 persons are required in whom priest invokes Preta, Pitru and Vishnu. Priests will not take nor are eligible for these roles.

Orthodox procedure: The Rites will start from day 9. Rites will also be performed on 10th, 11th, 12th & 13th days. If the kartaa cannot fetch Bhoktas, the Preta, Yama, Pitru and Vishnu will be invoked on Dharbas and the rituals are done. Priests will not take nor are eligible for these roles.

Formal procedure: The Rites are performed on one day only. Depending on the regions/ family traditions, the rites are done on the following days. Depending on the tradition, some offer only Pindapradana to the deceased and ancestors. It is advised for the kartaa to consult his elders and get the procedures followed by them.

Andhra – 11th day or 15th day (some call it as Pedda karma dinam)

Karnataka – 11th day or 13th day or 14th day

TamilNadu – 12th and 13th days. Or any day between 12 to 14.

Suggested Donations for the Temple:

Day of cremation – The services are offered free for members & their immediate family. Non-members, \$500 donation is suggested.

For all other days for performing Rites, each day the suggested donation is \$500 per day both for members & non-members.

Suggested Daanams for the officiating Priests:

There are many daanams listed out in the Shastras. However, all may not be available, nor the priest can take all. The shastras suggest Hiranya (Gold/ money) as substitute. It is recommended to donate to the satisfaction of the Preta and pitru devatas. After all, the preta requires all the help to cross the Vaitarini river (river of sorrow) to reach his ancestors.

Some of them are Vrushabha daanam, GooDaanam, Deepa, Nouka, Saiyya, kambala, Chatra and other dasa daanams.

***grhesvartha nivatante smasane caiva nandahavah
sariram kasthamadatte oaoam punyam sha vrjet***

One's possessions are left behind at home and relatives left behind on the cremation ground. The body is consumed in the funeral pyre; only the deeds accompany the departed one.

The Preta wants to donate whatever he left behind but, Alas he cannot. At least he expects the kartaa to make generous donations on his behalf.