



# श्री सनातन धर्म सभा – दक्षिण आफ्रिका

**Shree Sanathan Dharma Sabha of South Africa**

Established 1941

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## Funerals in Temple Halls

Temples are houses of worship, and all are centred around a single deity. Within these structures, there is a close connection between the sacred and the secular realm. A statue of the presiding god can be found in a temple's inner shrine. It is the most esteemed part of the structure. This hallowed space is located beneath a magnificent roof called a sikhara. Near the garbhagriha, on each of the Temple's four corners, are usually smaller shrines. Worshippers come through the ardhmandapa, an entrance porch that serves as a portal to the spiritual world.

A temple is a cheerful location. Devotees visit a temple to recharge their energies. In a temple, people go to find relief from the strains and anxieties of their everyday lives. Temples should be happy, calm places with powerful energy flows. According to the Agama Shastras, temples must be built with a focus on mental health, and this is how they should be made. It would not be considered beneficial or necessary to cry, as the Temple is a place for highly positive re-energising, and it is not necessary to place a human corpse at a place where everyone would be visiting (without restriction).

Best friends and family should ideally be able to attend in person, as death is a very private matter. Since it is a private matter, close friends and family who would like to send their condolences should be able to enter the deceased's residence without restriction. In the event that this is not feasible at the residence, crematoriums may be a viable choice. These days, funeral establishments and crematoriums can easily set this up. When someone passes away, it is customary for those who attended the funeral to use turmeric water to wash their bodies at the door. Until they bathe and change into fresh clothes, no one speaks to them.

We feel that every effort should be made to find alternate places (other than Temples) to conduct funerals where this cannot be held at the home of the deceased. Temple organisations may still fulfil their obligation and seva to the community by assisting with funeral arrangements at venues more conducive to mourning.

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