



Death rituals differ depending on the culture and religion of the group. In India (*top left*), this body is being cremated next to the holy Ganges River to release the soul from earthly existence. The closest relative lights the funeral pyre. The top right photo shows the Muslim tradition of washing and wrapping the dead before burial in Najaf, Iraq. At the bottom left, a U.S. Honor Guard carries a casket with the remains of U.S. Air Force personnel at Arlington National Cemetery. A celestial burial master (*bottom right*) feeds the body of a dead Tibetan to the vultures in northwest China's Qinghai province. In Tibetan regions, the practice is known as jhator, which literally means "giving alms to the birds," as people believe in rebirth and there is no need to preserve the body.