



Wesak



Remembering the birth, death and enlightenment of Buddha.



For Preview

Remembering Buddha

Wesak is when Theravada Buddhists remember the birth, Enlightenment and death of the Buddha. It is celebrated on the day of the full moon in May and is a very joyful festival. People visit the temple and decorate their homes with lanterns and flowers. They also send Wesak cards to their friends.



During Wesak, Buddhists celebrate the life of the Buddha and his teachings. Wesak is celebrated with great joy and vivid colours. Homes are cleaned and decorated in preparation. Celebrations begin before dawn, when devotees throng the temples early in the morning to meditate .





Celebrations vary from one country to another. 'The Bathing of the Buddha' often takes place. Water is poured over the shoulders of statues of the Buddha as a reminder of the need to purify the heart and mind. Offerings are made to the monks and the temples, and may be laid on the altar as a sign of respect for the Buddha and his teachings.



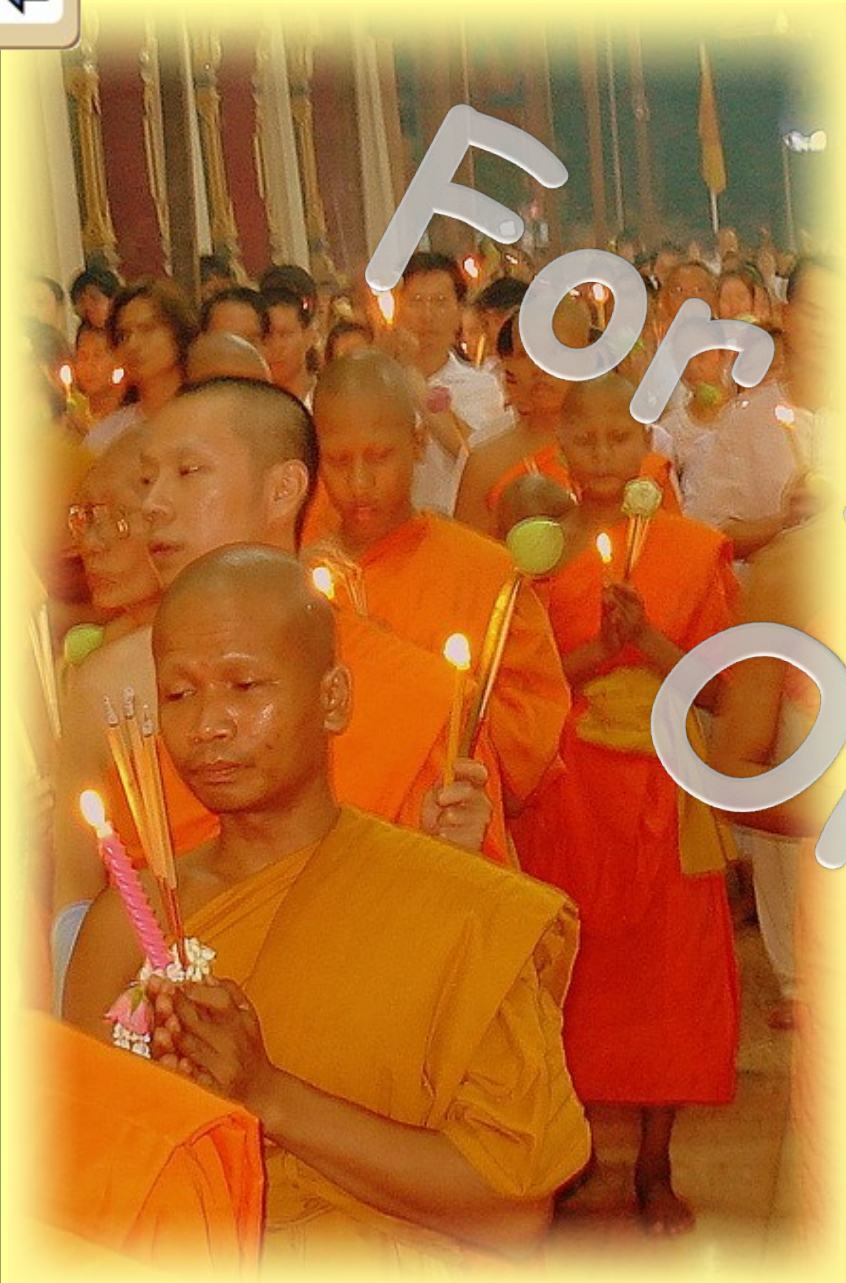


In China, traditional elements from Chinese culture, such as dancing dragons, are incorporated into celebrations.



In Indonesia, Wesak lanterns are made from paper and wood. Another popular custom is the release of caged birds. This shows the 'letting go of troubles' and wishing that all beings be well and happy.





Many Buddhist temples serve vegetarian food. Special lectures on the teachings of the Buddha are given, and candle lit processions take place through the streets. Observers are made welcome, both in processions and at temples.