

Buddhist Festivals:

Loy Krathong

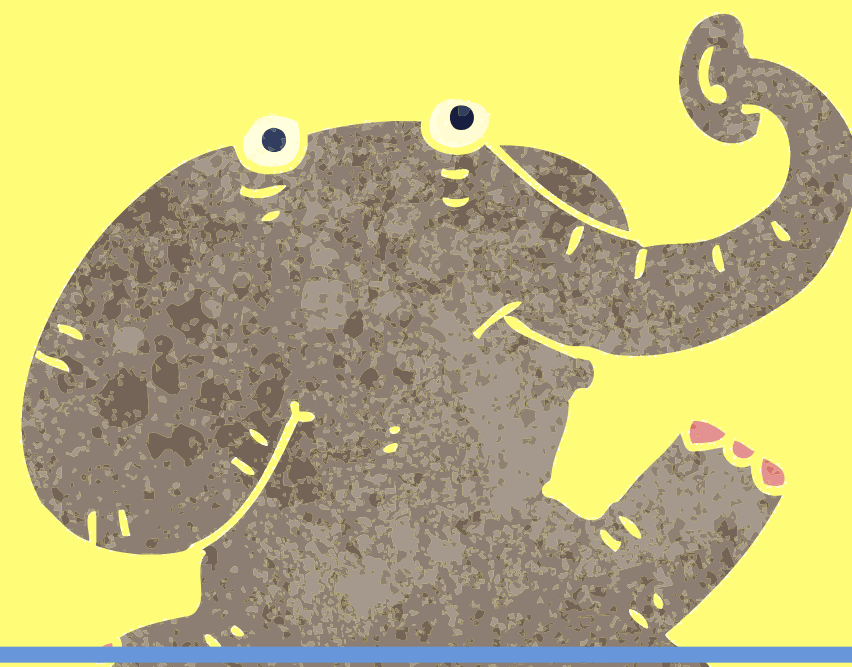
Learning Objective:

To understand how and why Buddhists pay respect to the Buddha.

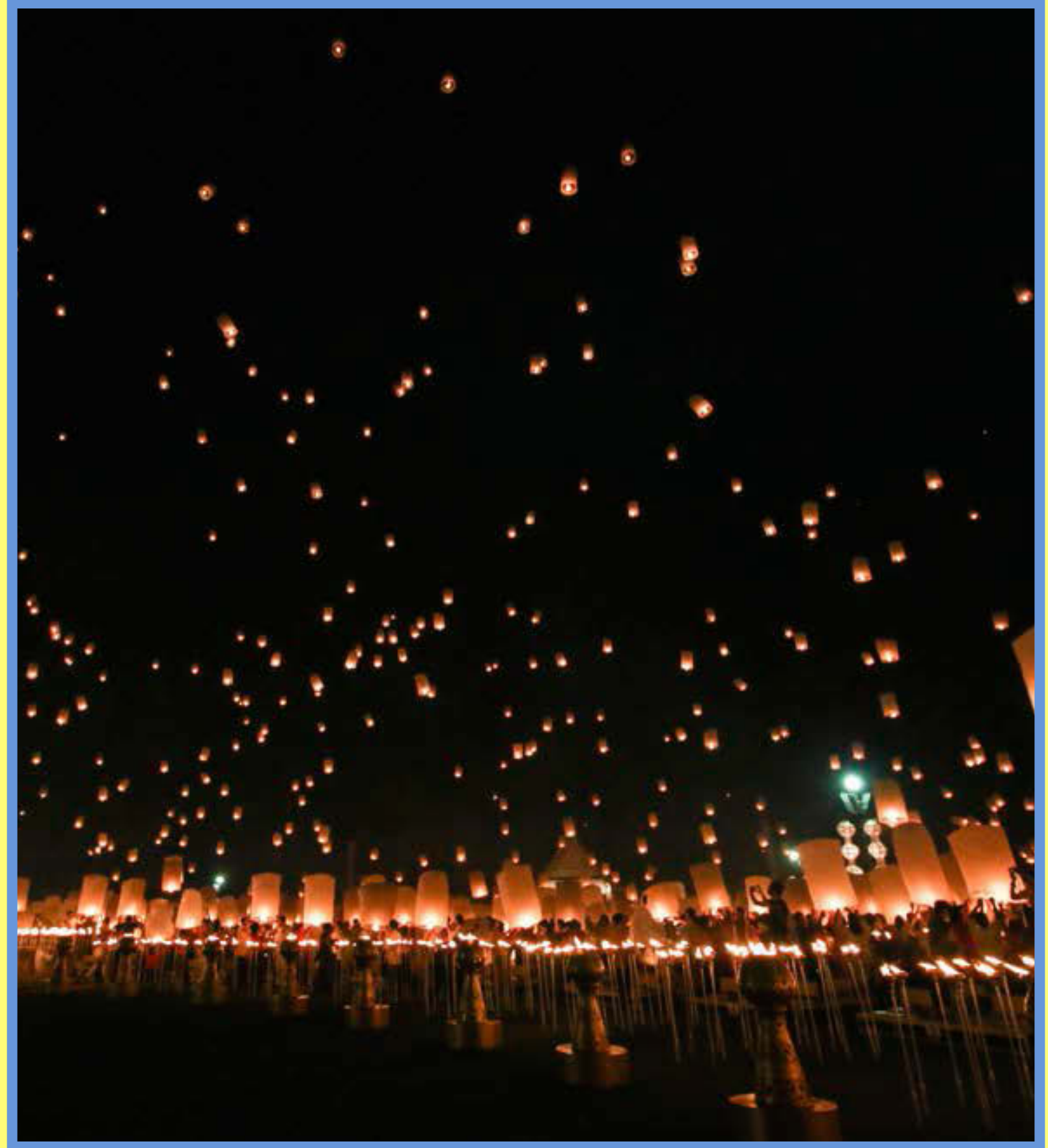


What's happening in these pictures? Discuss your ideas.

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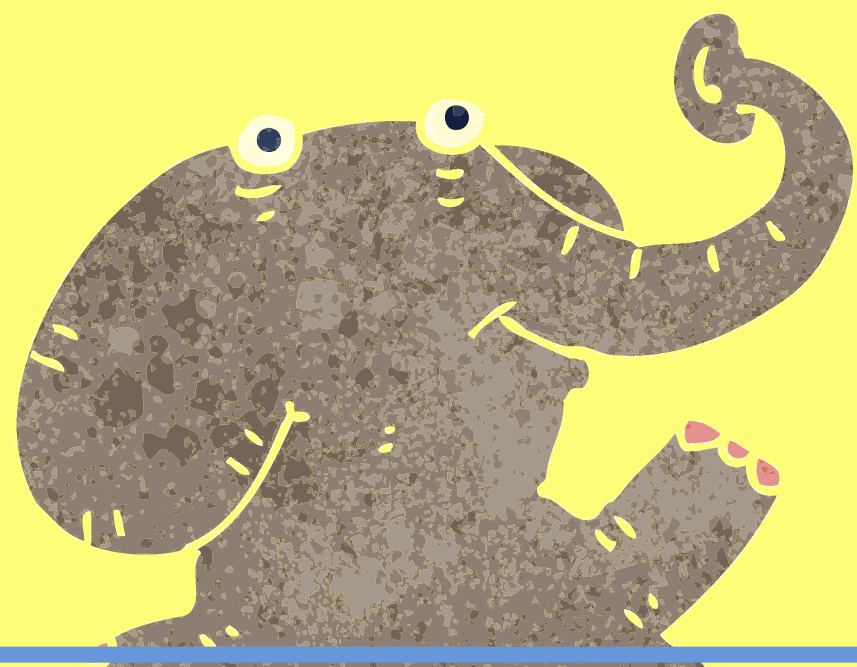


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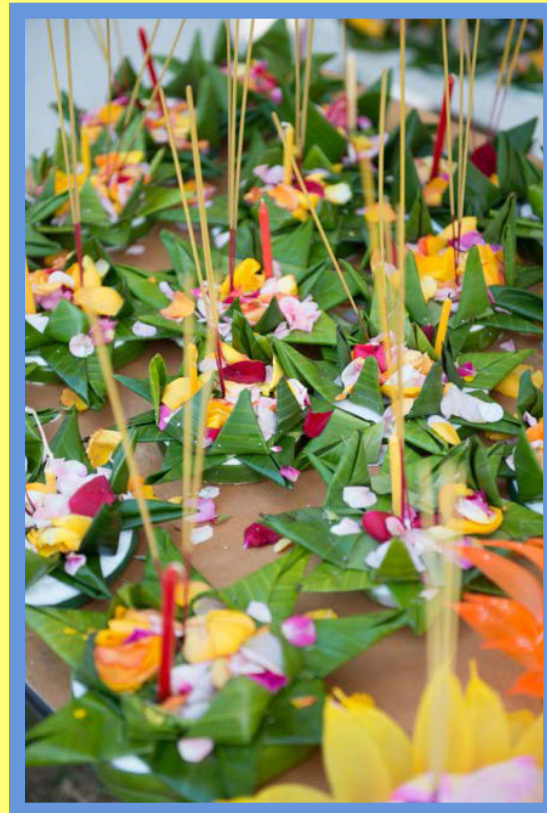
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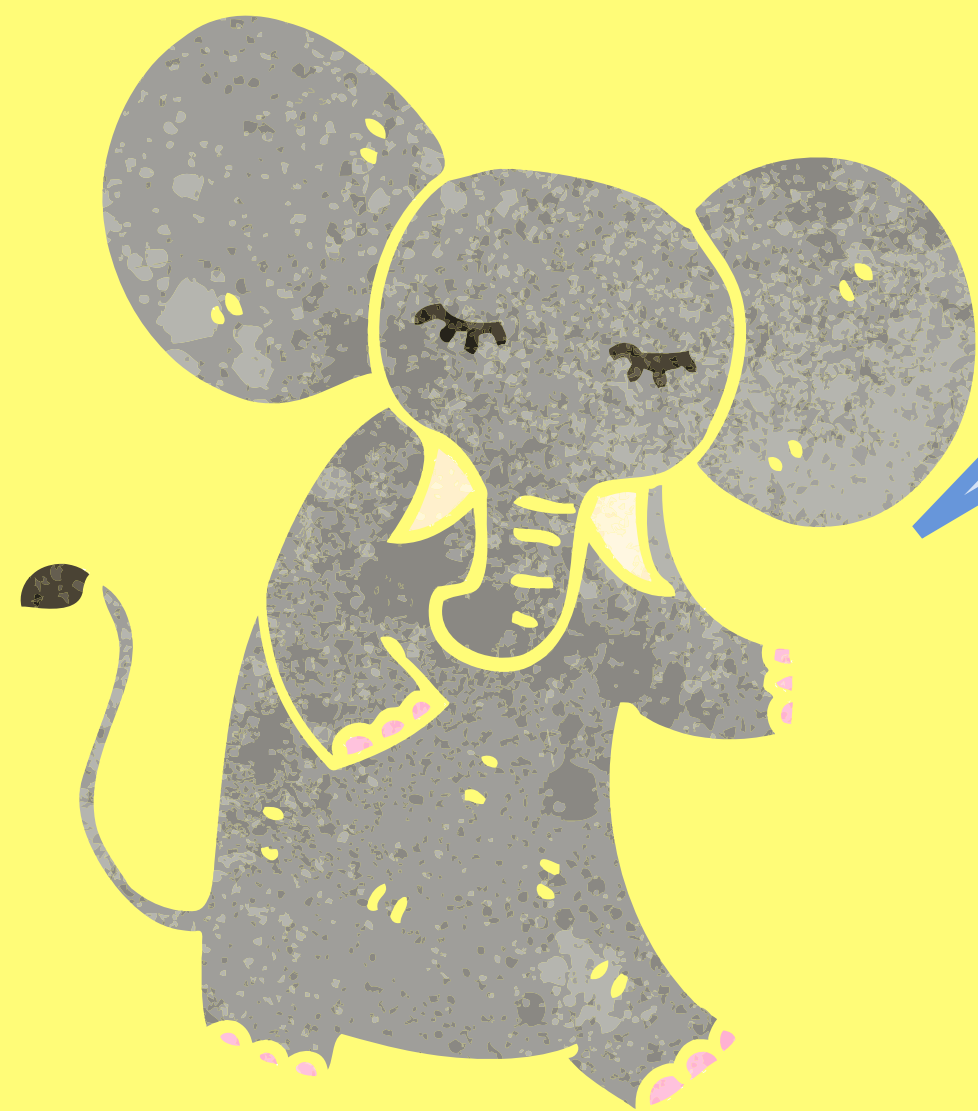


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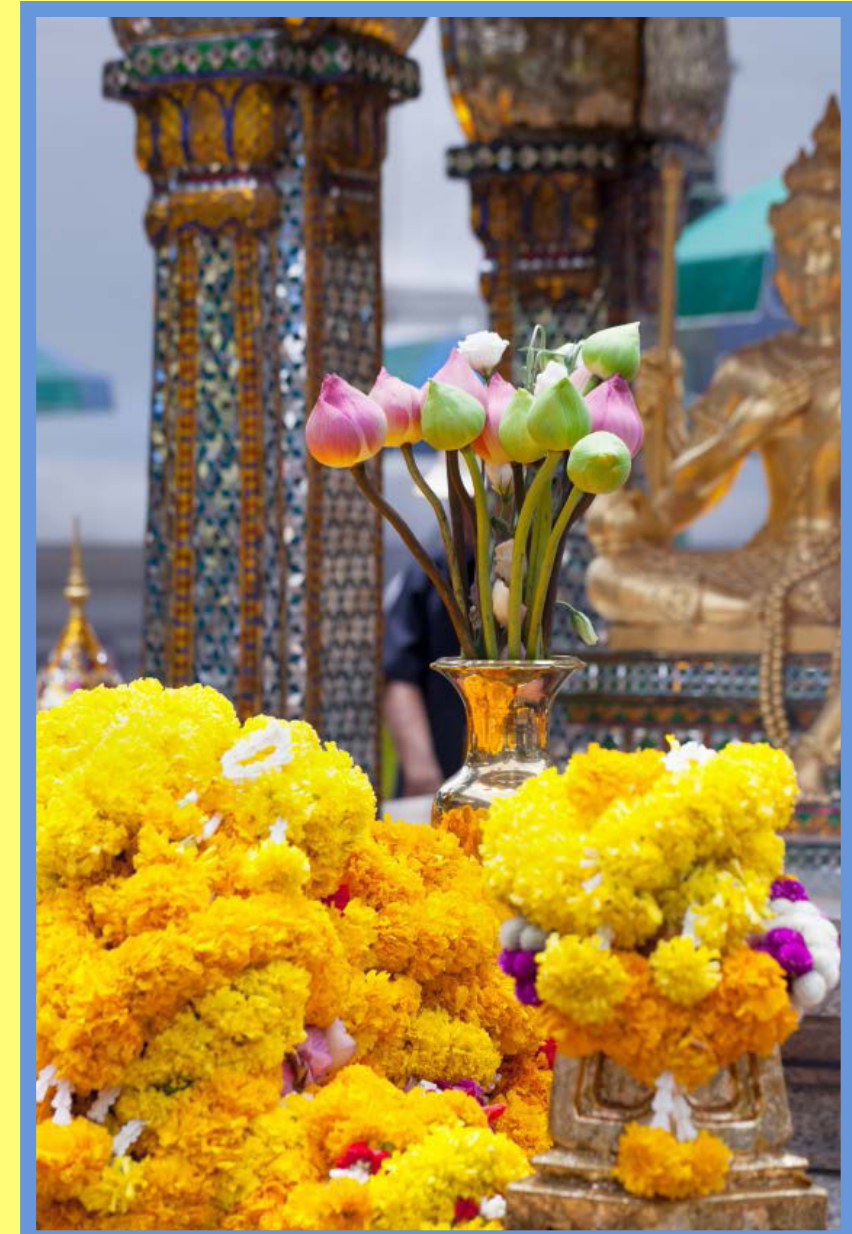
These photographs show celebrations during the Buddhist festival of **Loy Krathong**. 'Loy' means water and 'Krathong' means basket.



- Floating baskets, often made of bread or wood from palm trees, are decorated with leaves, flowers, incense and candles.
- In Thailand, thousands of floating lanterns were released into the night sky, although this is no longer allowed.

Candles and flowers are often used in Buddhist rituals. They are placed as offerings in shrines. They represent important ideas from the Buddha's teachings.

Why are candles and flowers important offerings?
What ideas might they represent?
Discuss your ideas.





Candles represent **enlightenment**. Just as candles give light, allowing you to see more, meditation and studying the teachings of the Buddha can help Buddhists attain enlightenment and better understand things.

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Flowers remind Buddhists that life is beautiful. They are left to wither and die before being removed from shrines.

This reminds Buddhists that life is always changing, and nothing is permanent.





Credit: flickr.com/photos/emustod/

Let's find out
why Buddhists pay
respect to the
Buddha...

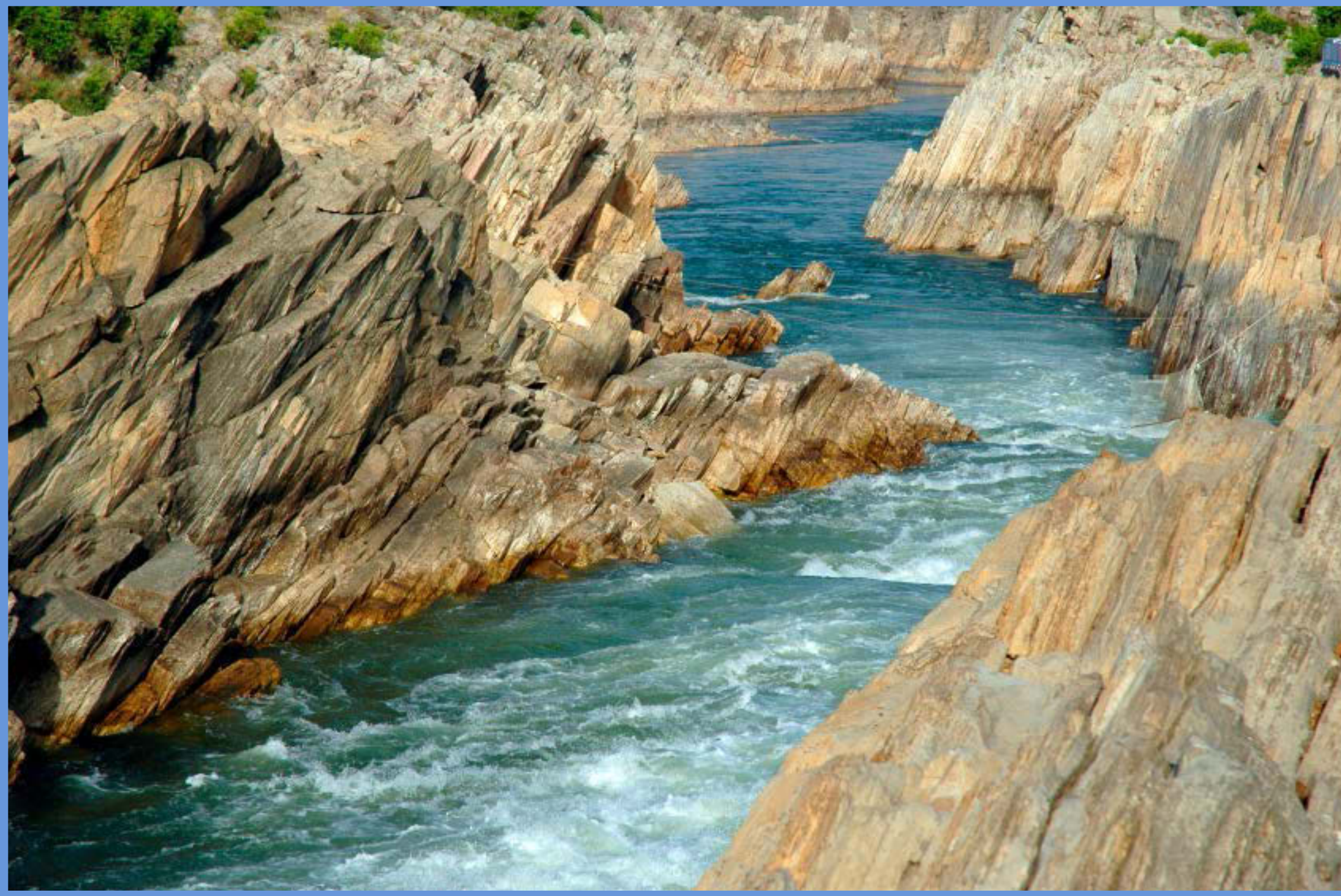


Taking part in activities such as making floating **krathongs** or placing offerings are ways for Buddhists to pay respect to the Buddha and remember his teachings.

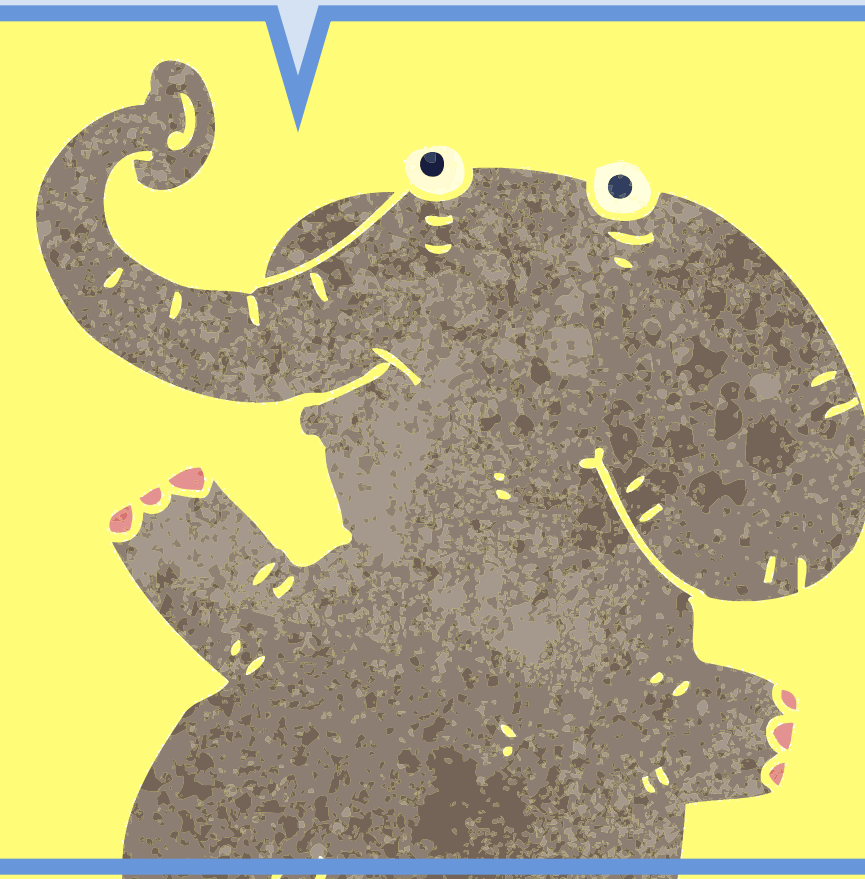
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Why do Buddhists celebrate **Loy Krathong**?




The festival is said to originated in India. The King invited the Buddha to visit the Narmada river. He left footprints in the rocks at the mouth of the river.




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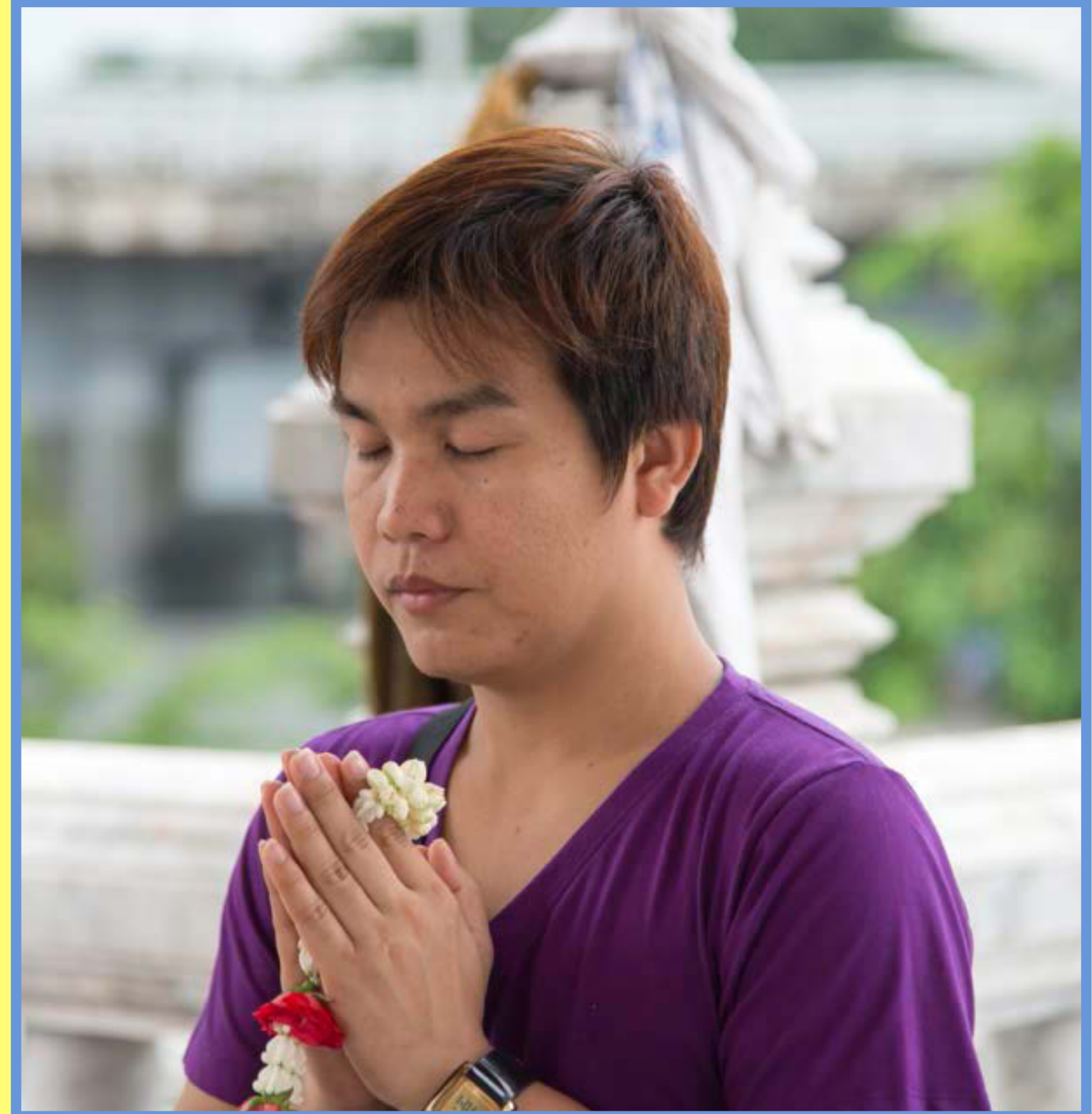
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The Buddha is not a **supreme deity**. This means that he is not an all-powerful god who created the world. He was a man who became enlightened. Buddhists believe that through meditation and study of the Buddha's teachings it is possible to achieve the same enlightenment he did.



How does this differ from the way God or Allah are viewed in Christianity or Islam, for example? Discuss your ideas.



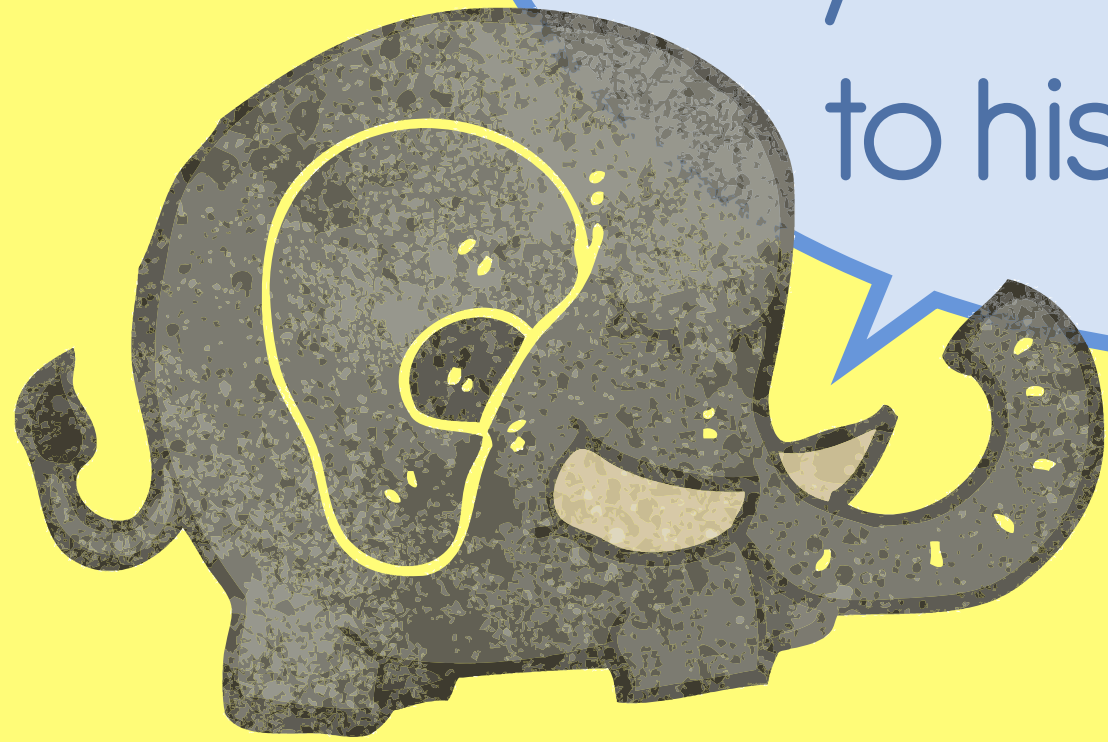
Because he is not a god, Buddhists do not pray to Buddha for forgiveness or to ask for help as Christians and Muslims may do when praying to God or Allah. Instead, they pay respect by meditating, remembering some of the great things he did, chanting verses from holy books and thanking Buddha for his teachings.

Today we will be
learning more about ways in
which Buddhists celebrate the
life of the Buddha and pay
respect to him.



Plenary

Did you know
that the Buddha is so
special for Buddhists that
they even pay respect
to his footprints?



The festival of Loy Krathong is said to have first been celebrated by the Narmada River in India, at a place where the Buddha's footprints were found in the rocks. These stone 'footprints' remind Buddhists that the Buddha was a real, living man who walked on the Earth.

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