

What are Buddha's relics? Things to know about Buddha's relics

Buddha's relics have important spiritual significance in Buddhism. Here's what you need to know about Buddha's relics.

What are Buddha relics? The significance of Buddha relics is immense. If you want to know what relics are, please read the article below.



Early Buddhist religion and scriptures had a great impact on historical records. The art, architecture, and sculpture of each historical period provide a snapshot of its rich culture. The relics that remain today are the clearest evidence. In this article, let's learn about **relics** and their great value to Buddhist culture and tradition.

What are Buddha's relics?

The Buddha's relics have an important spiritual significance in Buddhism. They are believed to represent the objects used by Shakyamuni Buddha for pilgrimage and meditation. The preservation and worship of the relics is deeply rooted in one's faith.

The Buddha died in 483 BC and was cremated in Kushinagar. The Brahmin Drona divided the ashes & bone fragments into eight parts and built a stupa to house the relics. This division symbolizes the beginning of the veneration of **the Buddha's relics** . This led to different forms of relics in different places.



Types of Buddha's relics

The **Buddha's relics** are classified into ten parts and are kept at various sacred sites.

1. **Bone Relics** : These include bone fragments, teeth, and even entire remains. The most revered bone relic is the Buddha's collarbone, which is enshrined in many stupas across South Asia.
2. **Footprint Relics** : Carvings of the Buddha's footprints are revered. These footprints have been found at sites visited by the Buddha.
3. **Hair Relics** : Hairs of the Buddha are also considered sacred and are kept at the Shwedagon Pagoda in Myanmar.
4. **Ashes** : The cremated remains of the Buddha are also scattered in many stupas. These ashes symbolize the Buddha's ultimate liberation from the cycle of birth and death.
5. **Blood Relics** : In some traditions, drops of the Buddha's blood are considered relics, although they are rare.
6. **Dharmakaya Relics** : These relics are not tangible objects, but are symbols of the Buddha's teachings and enlightenment.
7. **Relic Stupa** : The actual relics are kept within the stupa itself. The structure of the stupa depicts the body, speech and mind of the Buddha, and is a place for meditation and prayer.
8. **Tooth Relics** : These relics are considered the most precious relics in Buddhism. The Temple of the Tooth, located in Kandy, Sri Lanka, has the most famous tooth relic.
9. **Buddha's Robe** : Pieces of cloth from the Buddha's robes are considered extremely sacred and are kept in monasteries and temples.
10. **Buddha's alms bowls**: They represent his teachings of simplicity and renunciation, and are also part of the Buddha's relics.



Main sites where Buddha's relics are kept

Buddha's relics are scattered in many regions of the world, which are considered sacred sites in Buddhism.

1. **Sanchi Stupa, India:** Sanchi Stupa is one of the oldest stone structures in India. It is believed that these stupas hold the relics of Buddhists, however, others associate them with the relics of Buddha.
2. **Kushinagar, India:** This is where Buddha entered nirvana, where some relics were originally kept.
3. **Buddha Tooth Relic Temple, Sri Lanka:** Buddha Tooth Relic Temple is located in Kandy, Sri Lanka. This temple houses the precious tooth relic of the Buddha. It is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and a popular pilgrimage site.
4. **Shwedagon Pagoda, Myanmar:** This pagoda is one of the most famous and well-known stupas in the world. It is believed that the pagoda enshrines hairs of the Buddha.
5. **Wat Phra That Doi Suthep, Thailand:** This stupa is located in Chiang Mai, Thailand. It is believed to house the shoulder bone of the Buddha.
6. **Famen Temple, China:** This temple is famous for its underground palace, discovered in 1987. That palace holds the Buddha's finger bone relic.

Buddha Relics Ceremony

Buddha's relics are honored through various ceremonies and rituals. All of these demonstrate the Buddhists' devotion to their religion and its teachings. Some of these ceremonies include:

1. **Pilgrimage:** Visiting places of worship is a common Buddhist practice. Pilgrims travel long distances to meditate and pray at sacred sites.
2. **Circumcision:** Walking around a stupa or place of worship is a common ritual to show respect for these sites. It is believed that this act will bring the devotee closer to enlightenment.
3. **Offerings:** Devotees often offer flowers, incense and lamps as offerings to these sites.
4. **Relic Procession :** In some civilizations, relics are carried through the streets in grand festivals, attracting thousands of devotees.

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