

8 Death Ceremonies in Bali

When someone dies in Bali, their family and friends are not usually sad. For them, death is the beginning of a new life because the dead person will come back into the world in another form. However, before this happens, something has to be done with the body. There are many different ceremonies or events when someone dies. In some countries the body is put into the ground. In other countries, and in some places in Bali, the body is put on top of the ground or in a tree where it is eaten by animals or birds. Usually in Bali the dead body is burned because after it is burned, the dead person can easily come back to live in this world. The form the person comes back in depends on their last life. If a person has been bad they will come back as a dog or a snake, while a good person will have a better life than their life before.

When a person dies, friends and family visit the house, bringing presents of food. The body cannot be burned on just any day. The family prays to the Gods to find out which is the right day, and usually the body is put in the ground for forty-two days before it is burned. Before the body is put in the ground the family washes it. Flowers are put in the nose, iron is put on the teeth and arms, and glass is put on the eyes so that when the dead person comes back to earth for the next life, they will have strong arms and teeth, good eyes and will smell nice. After the family takes the body out of the ground, they bring it back to the house. When all this has been done, the body is ready for burning.

The body is put on the top of a beautiful wooden tower. The family and their friends then walk in a line to the burning place. Some people walk in front followed by the men carrying the tower. They do not walk in a straight line but run from one side of the road to the other and turn around quickly. This keeps bad things away from the body. People in the dead man's family walk in front of the tower and hold on to a long rope hanging from it. All the time the noise of the music and the people is very loud. At the burning place the family look at the body for the last time and then the body is put on the burning place. After the burning some pieces of the bones are taken to the sea or to a river and they are thrown into the water. The people wash in the water and then they go home.

A long time ago, when a rich man was burned, his wives were burned with him on the fire. This was also done in India many years ago.

The burning of the body is expensive so people have to save money for this while they are still alive. Because burning a body is expensive, sometimes people burn several bodies at the same time. This is cheaper because not so many towers are needed. These burnings are very noisy and smoky.

Write the time and then answer the questions.