<Japanese Words and Phrases> **<日本のことば>** 一七五三(しちごさん) —Shichi-Go-San (Seven-Five-Three Festival)— ことも まじ せいちょう かんしゃ しょうらい こうふく 子供の無事な成長を感謝し、将来の幸福 Shichi-Go-San is a ceremony in which parents dress their children up in haregi (their best clothes) and take them to jinja (Shinto shrines) to give thanks for the fact that they have grown and to wish じゃ)」などに参拝します。神社は「長寿(ち them a happy future. At the shrines, the children are given *chitose-ame* (thousand-year candies), which are offered to wish them

choju (long lives).

It's normal for boys to be taken to a shrine in the years they turn three and five, and for girls in the years when they turn three and seven. *Shichi-Go-San* is based on a ceremony from the Heian period. In the past, it was normally held on November 15, but these days, parents take their children to shrines when they have time off work, which might be a little before or after the 15<sup>th</sup>.

Shichi-Go-San celebrates the ages of three, five and seven, but of these, the age of seven is considered to be a particularly important turning-point, representing the end of infancy. In the past, when the child mortality rate was high, a child was considered to be "God's child" until he or she reached seven; after the age of seven, the child became a member of the community for the first time. You might say that the purpose of *Shichi-Go-San* is not only to give thanks for the growth of children, but to make the children themselves aware that they are becoming part of the community.

第の子は三歳と五歳、数の子は三歳と七歳の子は三歳と五歳、数の子は三歳と七歳の年に行うのが一般的とされています。七五三は、平安時代頃からの儀式がもとになっており、11月15日に祝うことが多いようですが、現在はこの日にあまりこだわらず、地後の休日などに行われています。

七五三の中でも、七歳の祝いは、幼児期のでも、七歳の祝いは、幼児期のでも、七歳の祝いは、幼児期のできました。 まい後として重要なが目とされてきまいた。 まりまった 帯は は まがいの死亡率が高かった 昔は は まがいの子とされ、七歳になって初めて社会のが神の子とされ、七歳になって初めて社会のが一員として認められたそうです。子供の成をを祝うと同時に、子供自身にもその自覚を与えるための行事であるともいえます。

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