

DOCTRINE

(Excerpted from a Treatise)

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THE DOCTRINE of Nichiren Shoshu was laid down in its present form by the second founder of this faith, the second high priest, Byakuren Ajari Nikko Shonin. To describe it briefly, the doctrine is based on the teaching that the Buddhism of Nichiren Daishonin transcends that of Shakyamuni Buddha. This superiority of the faith of Nichiren Daishonin is confirmed in Shakyamuni's Lotus Sutra, which defines the Eternal Buddha as being a prophet of this text. Following the passing of Shakyamuni, there has been no Buddhist sage apart from the Daishonin whose practice of the faith has been exactly as laid down in the Lotus Sutra. Therefore he is regarded as the true prophet of this scripture. As it was the true prophet of the Lotus Sutra who was the Eternal Buddha, it may be said that Nichiren Daishonin, in grasping the infinite Law of Buddhism, transcended Shakyamuni and revealed the honorific state of Eternal Buddhahood. Also, this sect teaches that it is through observation of the Buddhist precepts expounded by Nichiren Daishonin that the true meaning of human existence is revealed.

However, Nichiren Shoshu is also a sect which abides strictly by the doctrine of the refutation of heretics and heresy in any form. This is the belief that any religion apart from the Buddhism of Nichiren Daishonin must be disregarded as a true faith; it is also the apprehension that other religions may defile and obstruct the course of true Buddhism and stain the purity of this faith. Just as a drop of poison polluting a stream of pure water is to be dreaded, so the participation in other religions and the confusion of faiths is to be abhorred. Although the precepts laid down by Nichiren Shoshu are few, it is the common sense of believers which cause them to reject heresies which ignore the

doctrines of causation and reason. Of course, it does not teach that the humanity of believers in other religions should be denied, nor does it teach that they should be hated. But it does stipulate that those doctrines are intolerable which do not recognize these concepts of causation and reason.