

# Buddhism and Nichiren Shoshu Buddhism

(from *Encyclopedia of Cults and New Religions*, Harvest House, 1999)

## Info at a Glance

**Name:** Buddhism (B);

Nichiren Shoshu Buddhism or Nichiren Shoshu of America (NS).

**Purpose:** (B) To eradicate suffering and attain enlightenment; (NS) to receive material benefits and find happiness.

**Founder:** (B) Gautama Siddhartha (ca. 563-483 B.C.); (NS) Nichiren Daishonin (1222-1282 A.D.)

**Source of authority:** (B) The Pali canon and other Buddhist Scripture, personal experience; (NS) The Lotus Sutra and Nichiren Daishonin's writings (Gosho), personal experience.

**Claim:** (B) Through the Buddha's teachings, one can attain true enlightenment and find contentment; (NS) to represent the only true Buddhism.

**Revealed teachings:** (B) No (early Buddhism), Yes (later Buddhism); (NS) Yes

**Theology:** (B) Nontheistic or atheistic (early Buddhism), polytheistic (later Buddhism); (NS) polytheistic.

**Occult dynamics:** (B & NS) Altered states of consciousness, ritual, psychic powers, spiritism.

**Key literature:** (B) The Pali Canon, various other scriptures; (NS) The Lotus Sutra, the writings of Nichiren Daishonin, Daiku Ikeda and principal periodicals: *The Seikyo Times*, *The World Tribune* NSA Quarterly (defunct).

**Attitude toward Christianity:** Rejecting.

**Note:** In America today, there are an estimated 1,000 plus Buddhist centers and millions of practicing Buddhists. "Later," or Mahayana Buddhism, is predominate in the West, and this includes Zen, Tibetan/Tantric and Nichiren schools of Buddhism.

## DOCTRINAL SUMMARY

**God:** Ultimate reality is a condition of "existence" called nirvana; no supreme God exists. In NS, the equivalent is an impersonal life essence "incarnated" in the Lotus Sutra and Ghonzon.

**Jesus:** A wise sage (perhaps enlightened), whose teachings were distorted by Christian myths.

**Salvation:** Through occult meditation and ritual to attain enlightenment or true understanding of and control over "reality."

**Man:** In his true essence and enlightenment, one with the Buddha.

**Sin:** Ignorance.

**Satan:** An impersonal force within Nature, personification of "evil."

**Bible:** Generally, a scripture containing true and false teachings.

**Death:** Reincarnation into nirvana.

**Heaven and Hell:** Temporary states of mind or places.