

## CHAPTER 2

Is a Jew permitted by Halacha Jewish law to attend a Catholic University when every class starts with a prayer ?

Response

Yes.

## ANALYSIS

Judaism respects all religions. Jews are permitted to have business dealings with non Jews . At many points in their business the non Jew will give an oath invoking his deity. The fact that non Jews believe that God is a unit of the Father the Son and Holy Ghost is perfectly permitted for non Jews. Jews are mandated to believe in a pure monotheism. Therefore if non Jews swear in the name of God mentioning the the trinity is fine . Ramo Orech Chaim 156:1 Shach Yoreh Dayoh 151:7

Attending a University where every class begins with a prayer and Jesus is invoked is fine for non Jews. The Jewish student stands up alongside the non Jewish student as a sign of respect. Non

Catholic students who do not subscribe to Catholicism, likewise stand as a sign of respect.

To do otherwise would not only be rude ;but stupid. It can invoke anti Semitism. Preventing Anti Semitism is in the category of saving lives . Anti Semitism killed 6 million Jews in the Holocaust. Today in Europe a quarter to half the population are anti-Semitic. One can violate all the Torah to save a human life

In addition a Jew in order to be in violation of participation in the rites of another religion must wilfully and consciously think that he/she is

participating. Otherwise, there exists no violation. Here in our case the student has no intention to participate in the prayers. They are standing as a sign of respect for another religion.

The requirement of wilfulness is a critical concept in the observance or violation of all the Mitzvot and Lavim -positive and negative commandments. Rambam Laws Yesodei Hatorah 5:4 ; Laws Avodo Zoro3:1 : Aruch Hashulchon Orech Chaim 242: 28,31;60:5,6,7 ;589:13,14 Ramo Yoreh Dayoh 142:15

This principle was tempered by the fear of inter marriage with spouses of an other religion. Love is the great equalizer. Once one falls in love one is tempted to change religion and adopt the faith of your beloved.

The Rabbis legislated restrictions to the first mentioned principle. Even if one has no intention of prescribing to an other faith they never theless are

not permitted to enter the house of worship of an other religion. One is forbidden to drink wine manufactured by a non Jew. In that manner the Rabbis intended to minimize socializing that could lead to inter marriage.

In order to prevent hardship exceptions were made. One exception is the restrictions were dropped in the case of business as we mentioned. Another was in the case of attending a Catholic university and prayers are recited before each class. Another is the case of attending the wedding or funeral of a non Jewish business associate client or friend.. .

Rav Piekarski the Halachic advisor to the late Lubavitzer rebbi advised me not to attend the religious service at a the funeral of a client. The same advice would prevail at a wedding

With the alarming rate of intermarriage- 25-50 % of all marriages - it is forbidden for Jews to attend Christmas and New Year parties or attend non Jewish social parties where one can meet members

of the other sex. .One must keep socializing at business to the barest minimum.

However, all these measures are meaningless unless jews have an education and commitment toward Judaism. Otherwise , there exists little difference between the level of observance of Judaism of the Jew and non Jew. Why then should the Jew not inter marry?

A student attending university is receiving training to enable him to make a living. He can graduate as an accountant attorney or physician . Of course he will attend graduate school . But attending the college is a beginning.

This is especially true when the Catholic University permits the Jewish student if he holds a Rabbinical degree to attend graduate school. They recognize the training for a Rabbinical degree the equivalent of a bachelors degree. They do the same for their Seminary students who study for the priesthood. .

60 years ago Georgetown University a Catholic School in Washington , D.C. agreed to admit a Rabbinical student to medical school providing he took 60 credits in science required as apre requisite. .

Both Rav Ruderman founder of Ner Yisroel Yeshiva in Baltimore and Rav Yaakov Kaminetzki Rosh yeshiva of Torah Vodaath approved.

Rav Moshe Feinstein likewise was in favor of having universities grant credit for a Rabbinical degree to count as credit toward a full bachelors degree . or partial credit .

Columbia University 60 years ago credited the Rabbinical degree equivalent of 70 credits. John Hopkins in Baltimore credits a Rabbinical degree as the equivalent of a Bachelors degree. One can enter graduate school based on the credit awarded. for a Rabbinical degree.



Today in 2013 many Rabbinical schools are accredited to offer a Bachelors Masters and PHD in Talmudic law.

Prominent universities recognize the bachelors degree offered by the Yeshivot to permit its graduates to enter graduate school for accounting law dental and medical school. Columbia Harvard Long Island University are some of the universities who will permit one having a bachelors degree to enter their graduate school.

The following Yeshivot offer a bachelors degree in Talmud. Yeshiva Gevoah of Lakewood, Ner Yisroel in Baltimore Chofetz Chaim in Queens , N.Y. .

## chapter 3

### **Sculpture and Art**

Are Jews permitted to paint figures of humans animals plants landscape ?

Are Jews permitted to make a sculpture of a human animals plants ?