

Is It Permitted to Enter a Conservative Temple

Rav Yosef Kushner

Question: We said that it is forbidden to enter a house of *avodah zara*.

What about a house of "*meenus*", heresy, such as a Conservative temple?

Answer: The word "*meenus*" is used to refer to a place that does not worship an entity other than Hashem but does promote heretical views that run contrary to the fundamental beliefs of Yiddishkeit.

The Gemara clearly say that it is forbidden to walk within 4 *amos* of a house of *meenus*. This would include a Conservative temple.

Rav Moshe Feinstein writes very stringently about this and says that it is forbidden to walk into a Conservative synagogue under any circumstance.

He speaks about an instance where an Orthodox community was growing and the shrinking Conservative congregation offered them classroom space in the building that housed their temple. He rules that it is 100% forbidden to enter that building for any reason.

Interestingly, it would be permitted to enter an Islamic mosque. In fact, there are some *kivrei tzadikim* in Eretz Yisroel located inside mosques, and Jews often go there to daven. The reason it is permitted is, as we stated previously, Islam does not have the status of *avodah zara* because the G-d they worship is technically Hashem. Although they believe in a *navi sheker*, their religion is not considered the type of *meenus* that would make it forbidden to enter their house of worship. I believe that this is because non-Jews are not required to believe in the fundamental beliefs of Yiddishkeit. They only are required to believe in Hashem and not to worship false gods. Since Muslims do not worship any false gods, even though they have heretical views according to the beliefs of Judaism, they are not classified as *meenus* and it is permitted to enter their house of worship.