



Violating Torah for Torah's Sake

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Psalms 119:126

<p>It is a time to act for the LORD, for they have violated Your teaching.</p>	<p>עַתָּה לַעֲשׂוֹת לַיהוָה הִפְּרוּ תוֹרֹתֶיךָ:</p>
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Berakhot 54a

<p>The Sages also instituted that one should greet another in the name of God, i.e., one should mention God's name in his greeting, as it is stated: "And presently Boaz came from Bethlehem and said to the harvesters, The Lord is with you, and they said to him, May the Lord bless you" (Ruth 2:4). And it says: "And the angel of God appeared to him and said to him, God is with you, mighty man of valor" (Judges 6:12). And it says: "And despise not your mother when she is old" (Proverbs 23:22), i.e., one must not neglect customs which he inherits. And lest you say that mentioning God's name is prohibited, it says: "It is time to work for the Lord; they have made void Your Torah" (Psalms 119:126), i.e., it is occasionally necessary to negate biblical precepts in order to perform God's will, and greeting another is certainly God's will. Rabbi Natan says another interpretation of the verse: "Make void Your Torah"</p>	<p>והתקינו שיהא אדם שואל את שלום חברו בשם שנאמר (רות ב, ד) והנה בעז בא מבית לחם ויאמר לקוצרים ה' עמכם ויאמרו לו יברכה ה' ואומר (שופטים ו, יב) וַיֵּרָא אֵלָיו מִלֶּאךָ יְהוָה וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו יְהוָה עִמָּךְ גְּבוּר הַחַיִּל וְאָמַר (משלי כג, כב) שִׁמְעֵ לְאָבִיךָ זֶה יִלְדֶךָ וְאַל־תִּבְזֶז כִּי־זָקְנָה אִמְךָ וְאָמַר (תהלים קיט, קכז) עַתָּה לַעֲשׂוֹת לַיהוָה הִפְּרוּ תוֹרֹתֶיךָ. ר' נטן אומר הפרו תורתך משום עת לעשות לה':</p>
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because “it is the time to work for the Lord,” i.e., occasionally it is necessary to negate biblical precepts in order to bolster the Torah.

Rashi:

שיהא אדם שואל לשלום חברו בשם – בשמו של הקב"ה ולא אמרינן מזלזל הוא בכבודו של מקום בשביל כבוד הבריות להוציא שם שמים עליו

A person may ask how a friend is doing using God’s name: in the name of the Holy One and we don’t say that the person is degrading the glory of God for the sake of the glory of human beings in saying God’s name for the friend’s sake.

ואומר עת לעשות לה' הפרו תורתך – **פעמים שמבטלים דברי תורה כדי לעשות לה'** אף זה המתכוין לשאול לשלום חברו זהו רצונו של מקום שנאמ' בקש שלום ורדפהו **מותר להפר תורה ולעשות דבר הנראה אסור**
 And he says, a time to do God’s Torah, they violate Your Torah: Sometimes we act against the words of Torah in order to fulfill God’s Torah. So too in the case of one who intends to ask after the welfare of a friend, this is the will of God, as it says, seek peace and pursue it (Psalms 34:15). It is permissible to violate God’s Torah and to do something that seems forbidden.

Massekhet Temurah 14b

<p>Before resolving the difficulty, the Gemara further discusses the prohibition of writing down the Torah: Rabbi Yehuda bar Nahmani, the disseminator for Reish Lakish, expounded as follows: One verse says: “Write you these words,” and one verse says, i.e., it states later in that same verse: “For by the mouth of these words” (Exodus 34:27). These phrases serve to say to you: Words that were taught orally you may not recite in writing, and words that are written you may not recite orally, i.e., by heart.</p> <p>And furthermore, the school of Rabbi Yishmael taught: The word “these” in the command “write you these words” serves to emphasize that these words, i.e., those</p>	<p>דרש ר' יהודה בר נחמני מתורגמניה דר"ל כתוב אחד אומר (שמות לד, כז) כתוב לך את הדברים האלה וכתוב אחד אומר (שמות לד, כז) כי על פי הדברים האלה לומר לך דברים שעל פי אי אתה רשאי לאומרן בכתב ושבתב אי אתה רשאי לאומרן על פי</p> <p>ותנא דבי רבי ישמעאל כתוב לך את הדברים האלה</p>
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recorded in the Written Law, **you may write, but you may not write *halakhot***, i.e., the *mishnayot* and the rest of the Oral Law.

They said in response to the question of how Rav Dimi could propose writing down the *halakha* in a letter: **Perhaps** with regard to **a new matter it is different**, i.e., it might be permitted to write down new material so that it not be forgotten. One proof for this suggestion is **that Rabbi Yoḥanan and Reish Lakish would read from a scroll of *aggada***, containing the words of the Sages, **on Shabbat. And** they did so because **they taught as follows:** Since one cannot remember the Oral Law without writing it down, it is permitted to violate the *halakha*, as derived from the verse: **“It is time to work for the Lord; they have made void your Torah”** (Psalms 119:126). **They said it is better to uproot** a single *halakha* of the **Torah**, i.e., the prohibition of writing down the Oral Torah, **and** thereby ensure **that the Torah is not forgotten from the Jewish people** entirely.

אלה אתה כותב אבל אין אתה כותב הלכות

אמרי דלמא מילתא חדתא שאני דהא רבי יוחנן ור"ל מעייני בסיפרא דאגדתא בשבתא ודרשי הכי (תהלים קיט, קכו) עת לעשות לה' הפרו תורתך אמרי מוטב תיעקר תורה ואל תשתכח תורה מישראל