

Powers of Supreme Sanhedrin in Adding or Detracting from Mitzvot

Ref: *Sefer Shoftim, Hilchot Mamrim, Chapter 2*



Not to add to the Torah, neither to the *mitzvot of Torah Shebiktav* (Written Law) nor to their explanation in the Oral Tradition (*Mipi Hashmuah*)³

Not to detract from the *mitzvot*⁴.

Supreme <i>Sanhedrin</i>	Allowed	
Detracts from a previous ruling	✓	
Detracts from a ruling which has already been accepted by whole of Jewish People	✓	Unless there are very special circumstances
Detracts from a ruling set up as a safeguard (<i>syag Latorah</i>) which was accepted by whole Jewish People	×	Even if current court was of greater stature than the previous
Temporary suspension of <i>syag Latorah</i> accepted by whole Jewish People	✓	
Temporarily to nullify a positive or negative command	✓	
Institute a decree which will be accepted by majority of people	✓	
Decree issued and it was then found that majority of community did not accept it.	×	Decree becomes nullified

In summation, adding and subtracting *mitzvot* refers to an eternal change to Scriptural Law (Written and Oral), and is not allowed.