

You shall not steal, you shall not deny falsely, and you shall not lie to one another. (19:11)

Horav Chaim Soloveitchik, zl, once said, "It is conceivable that specifically because an individual's father would "run" to perform *mitzvos*, the son would break down doors in order to steal merchandise from which he could profit. While this statement seems incredible at first, *Rav Chaim* substantiates it with the following explanation: A child inherits the nature and personality of his parent, concerning innate traits. Behavior and mannerisms will not necessarily transfer to the offspring. When one pursues *mitzvos* as a result of an innate love for the Almighty and His *mitzvos*, purely for the sake of Heaven, this activity integrates into his natural character. It will, therefore, be transmitted to his son. If, however, this desire is not natural, but rather the product of the anticipated rewards in *Olam Habah*, the striving for *mitzvos* remains nothing more than a vehicle through which he can profit.

The only aspect of this pursuit that is endemic to the father's nature is the pursuit of profit, not the pursuit of *mitzvos*. This natural tendency to seek compensation will be handed down to the child. There is one difference: The father understands the value of *mitzvah*, its spiritual compensation, and the manner in which it morally refines a person; the son does not. The son has inherited a natural trait from his father: The pursuit of benefaction, which translates itself into obsessive materialism, regardless of the necessary objective. Is it any wonder that the son is prepared to "break down doors" in his determination to acquire material wealth?