

A Covenant Answer: Did You “Steal” From Your Son When you took something from him that you forbide him to have?

What the Tanakh Declares About Parental Authority, the Child, and Harmful Possession

The short answer is: No. Absolutely not. What you did was not theft — it was covenant duty. Here is why the Tanakh establishes this clearly, on multiple grounds.

GROUND ONE: The Child Does Not Own Himself

The foundational premise of your son's claim — *"it's mine, you stole it"* — rests on a modern Western concept of individual autonomy that the Tanakh does not recognize for a minor child. In covenant law, a 15-year-old son is still under the **reshut** (authority/jurisdiction) of his father.

Bemidbar (Numbers) 30:3–5 establishes the governing principle plainly:

"If a woman makes a vow to Yahweh, and binds herself by an obligation in her father's house in her youth, and her father hears her vow and her obligation by which she has bound herself, and her father says nothing to her, then all her vows shall stand... But if her father overrules her on the day he hears it, none of her vows or her obligations by which she has bound herself shall stand; and Yahweh will forgive her because her father overruled her."

This passage establishes the governing covenant principle: a minor child under the father's roof does not have autonomous legal standing to make binding agreements or hold independent possessions against the will of the father. The father's authority **overrules** the child's self-directed acts. If **Yahweh** Himself ratifies the father's right to annul his child's sworn vow — something far more serious than a possession — then a 15-year-old's claim of ownership over a prohibited item cannot stand.

GROUND TWO: You Are the Steward — Not Just a Parent

Devarim (Deuteronomy) 6:6–7 commands:

"And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up."

Yahweh did not give you a child to simply house and feed. He gave you a *stewardship* — a covenant assignment to guard, shape, and protect that child's body, mind, and path. You are accountable to **Yahweh** for how that child is raised. A parent who stands by while a minor child destroys his body with a harmful substance has violated covenant duty, not upheld it. The vape pen was not merely a "thing." It was an instrument of harm in the hands of someone you are covenantally responsible for.

GROUND THREE: The Body Belongs to Yahweh First

Bereishit (Genesis) 1:26–27 declares that man is made *b'tzelem Elohim* — **in the image of Elohim**. This means the body is not merely a personal possession to be used however one wishes. It is the vessel of the divine image.

Vayikra (Leviticus) 19:28 and the broader holiness code of Vayikra establish repeatedly that **Yahweh** places protective boundaries around the body. The principle throughout Torah is *kedushah* — holiness, set-apartness — applied to the physical body. Introducing an addictive, nicotine-and-chemical-laden substance into a 15-year-old developing body violates that principle directly.

Your son does not own his body in the ultimate sense — **Yahweh** does. And you, as his covenant guardian, are the earthly steward of that body until he reaches the age of covenantal accountability.

GROUND FOUR: Parental Discipline Is Commanded, Not Optional

Mishlei (Proverbs) 13:24 — written by Shlomo (Solomon), the wisest king:

"He who spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him disciplines him promptly."

Mishlei (Proverbs) 22:15:

"Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; the rod of correction will drive it far from him."

Mishlei (Proverbs) 29:17:

"Correct your son, and he will give you rest; yes, he will give delight to your soul."

The Tanakh does not present discipline as cruelty — it presents the *failure* to discipline as a form of hatred. When you took that vape pen, you were not acting as a thief. You were acting as a covenant father who *loves* his son enough to remove something harmful from his hands.

GROUND FIVE: "Theft" Requires a Rightful Owner — He Had No Rightful Claim

Shemot (Exodus) 20:15 — the eighth commandment: "***You shall not steal.***"

For theft to occur under covenant law, the item taken must have been *rightfully possessed* by the owner. Your son, at 15, obtained a vape pen that:

1. He was legally prohibited from purchasing (age 21 minimum by civil law — and civil law in this case aligns with the Torah principle of protecting the young)
2. He was covenantally prohibited from using under your household authority
3. He was explicitly told not to use — he violated a direct parental instruction

An item obtained in violation of both civil law and covenantal household authority was not *rightfully his* in the first place. You cannot steal what a person never had a rightful claim to. The Tanakh is clear that **Yahweh** does not honor possession that flows from transgression.

GROUND SIX: Honor Your Father and Mother — The Fifth Word

Shemot (Exodus) 20:12:

"Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which Yahweh your Elohim is giving you."

This is the **fifth of the Ten Words** — and it is the only one attached to a *promise*. The Hebrew word is **kabed** (כָּבֵד) — H3513 — meaning to give weight, to treat as heavy and significant, to honor with deference. The opposite of **kabed** is treating the parent as weightless — dismissible — as your son did when he acquired something he was told not to have, and then turned around and accused you of wrongdoing for removing it.

He inverted the covenant order. He placed his claim above your authority. The Tanakh does not uphold that inversion.

THE COVENANT SUMMARY

Your son's argument — *"you stole from me"* — is a modern individualism argument dressed in rights language. It has no standing in Tanakh covenant law because:

- A minor child under his father's roof has no autonomous legal standing against the father's household authority
- You are not just a parent — you are a **covenant steward** accountable to **Yahweh** for that child's welfare
- The body is **Yahweh's vessel**, not a personal toy to be filled with nicotine and chemicals
- The item was obtained unlawfully and in defiance of your direct instruction — it had no rightful claim attached to it
- Removing it was not theft — it was **discipline**, which **Yahweh** commands
- Your son's response — accusing you — violated the Fifth Word: **kabed** your father

You did not steal from your son. You protected your son from himself — which is exactly what Yahweh assigned you to do.

And when he is older, if you have done this work faithfully, **Mishlei (Proverbs) 22:6** promises the fruit:

"Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it."

Peace and Blessings,

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