



The Joy of Torah - For Life

Parshas Titzaveh

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The Pasuk in Mishlei (3,16) says “Orech Yamim bimino b’smole osher v’kavod”. The גר”א says that the “right hand” referenced in the pasuk refers to people who learn Torah “lishma - for all the right reasons - “for what is Olam Habba”- he will in turn be rewarded with a long life in Olam Habba. The “left hand” refers to people who learn for the wrong reason like money or honor, therefore they are still rewarded but only with wealth and honor.

This seems like a difficult גר”א, why should a person who does not learn lishma only get the reward of wealth and honor? This Pasuk is supposed to be a blessing not a punishment, and if so, why doesn’t he also get a long life in Olam Habba? It also appears that the גר”א holds that it’s proper and makes sense, almost like it should be self understood for the non-lishma learner to only get wealth and honor. Why should that be? HaShem doesn’t hold back any reward at all that one is entitled to!? Another question that one can ask is why is it that when the explains learning lishma he says learning for “for what is Olam Habah”, and he doesn’t say “for the the purpose of attaining Olam Habba”, like in the contrast case in regard to shelo lishma, where the גר”א writes that he learns in order to receive wealth and honor.

To answer the above question it seems that the reward of Torah study is based on how much one appreciates Torah! That is why the גר”א says in regard to learning lishma that one is learning for “what Olam Habba is,” meaning learning for ניצחיות - for the true greatness of Torah, and then one is in fact deserving of long נצחיות in Olam Habba. On the other hand, if one learns for wealth and honor then that is telling that he only values Torah as something of the physical realm, and not the spiritual awesome celestial heights, so then he is only entitled to just that - wealth and honor. **What we value Torah as, that’s what is given to us!**