



נעימות החיים
Ne'imas HaChaim Project
In memory of Naama Markovits A"H
לע"נ נעמה חנה ע"ה ב"ר יהודה איסר נ"י



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שבת פרשת כי תצא י"א אלול תש"ע

Lesson #2: Taking Turns

(Prepared by Rabbi Azriel Bodner)

“Why can’t you be more patient, Shmully?” exclaimed Mrs. Klein in frustration, “why do you have to be first?” The Kleins were on a family trip, traveling down a three lane expressway that had been reduced to just one lane. The merging traffic had already delayed them for an hour. The Klein children were occupying themselves with games, books, and music and overall the family was handling the delay very well. Except for Shmully, that is Mr. Klein, who was driving and who firmly believed that if he honked enough and did not allow any car to merge ahead of him that they would arrive at their destination significantly quicker.

Taking turns really has two aspects: (1) waiting for your chance and (2) giving someone else theirs. In other words, to have patience and to be giving. And while each aspect can be treated independently, the synthesis of the two brings about a more harmonious lifestyle. We are all aware of what happened to the moon when she complained to Hashem about the need to take equal turns with the sun as the light of the world.

Road rage is not limited to the secular world. The Mishna in Yoma describes how the process of allotting jobs in the daily service in the Bais Hamikdash evolved. It was the result of a deliberate injury and a murder on the altar following the vying of the Kohanim to earn the opportunity to serve Hashem.

There is no shortage of situations that benefit from proper turn taking. Doing some of the chores or errands that are normally done by one’s spouse is an example of giving up a turn to be off. Not exhibiting frustration when the cashier or the person ahead on line is too slow requires a person to be patient and wait their turn. Putting away Seforim for the next person, or returning the portable phone to its cradle improves the lives of others.

Hashem appeased the moon by providing the stars to work with her. We too can find the silver lining and the hidden benefit of taking turns properly: It can improve the lives of those around us as well as our own lives.