

IT'S NOT FAIR! WHY IS HE GETTING FOOD AND NOT ME!

PARSHAS KI TETZEI

You are forbidden to harness an ox and a donkey (or any two different types of animals) together to plow a field.

❖ **The Ibn Ezra** gives one explanation. An ox is stronger than a donkey. Perhaps, this would enable the ox to go at a faster pace than the donkey and cause the donkey discomfort. Hashem is merciful to all of His creatures and therefore, He would not allow this.

*"You shall not plow with an ox and a donkey together."
(Devarim 22:10)*

All three explanations show the Torah's sensitivity to the donkey. If we think for a moment about the explanation of the Da'as Zekainim, we can get an even deeper understanding of the Torah's sensitivity to the donkey.

❖ **The Sefer HaChinuch** gives another explanation. Animals are more comfortable working with their own species. Therefore, the Torah says that two different species should not be placed together in the same yoke.

❖ **The Da'as Zekainim** gives a third explanation. An ox chews its cud and a donkey does not. If they would work side-by-side, the donkey would hear the ox "eating". The donkey would feel jealous of the ox. "Why is the ox getting food while I am not?" The donkey will feel bad. To prevent the donkey's pain, the Torah forbids putting an ox together with a donkey to work the field.

The ox really does not get any more food than the donkey. The ox merely rechews the food it already swallowed. **Yet the donkey mistakenly thinks that the ox did get extra.** Even though the donkey is mistaken and has no actual basis for his envy and pain, the Torah still says to BE SENSITIVE to his feelings. The Torah expects us to learn from here the depth of compassion and sensitivity we certainly must have for other **people** who are created in the image of Hashem.

❖ **Rabbi Chayim Shmuelevitz** points out that this is also a lesson in how sensitive we must be in order not to make others feel jealous or envious of us. The way we act, or dress could cause another person to feel jealous. The type of car we drive or the type of house we live in may also cause jealousy.

We always must be aware of others and be sensitive to their feelings.