

What Do We Do with Perfection?

In this week's *Torah* portion *Chukas* we learn the laws of the *Parah Adumah* (the red heifer). One essential part of the details is finding a perfectly red cow. This cow is then totally burned, and its ashes are used to purify those that became impure by being in contact with a dead body. It's interesting to note that those involved in the purification process of those who are impure become impure as well. This is one of the *chukim* (law without reason) in the *Torah* that we can't fully comprehend.

Rabbi Michel Twerski shared an insight a few months ago about this *mitzvah* that contains a deep and profound lesson in how we live our lives. There must be some significance in taking a perfectly red cow and burning it. What could it be? He suggested the following. In life many of us get caught up with the pursuit of perfection. Everything has to be just right. Sometimes that dream of perfection sets us back as we become so focused on the perfect outcome we lose so much in the process itself. Much anxiety and suffering occur because of that elusive pursuit. Sometimes, it actually cripples us to the point where we can't do anything at all because we think the end result will not be perfect.

The *Torah*, through the laws of the *Parah Adumah*, sends us a strong message about how we need to live life. **BURN PERFECTION.** Obsessing on perfection is not the way on how to live. No human being is supposed to be perfect. That is for angels, not for people.

We all want the best for ourselves and our children. We need to make sure we don't set up the future generations for failure. False expectations and pursuit of perfection are not healthy options. We need to teach our children a strong work ethic and how to set goals, along with the understanding that failures will come along the way as well. That is how we succeed and grow in life - as human beings who are just fine working hard and building character every day.