“Harsh” Commandments

From the book “Take Hold” by Ariel, and D’vorah Berkowitz

Some may ask the question: If we are supposed to follow the Torah, what about the commandments that seem unreasonably harsh, e.g., capital punishment for less than capital sins?

First of all, we need to watch our use of the label “unreasonably harsh”. How can any of God’s teachings be labeled “unreasonably harsh”? You are correct in placing the word “seem” before it. It is we humans who label such teachings as harsh because we either fail to understand God’s mind or do not trust in His wisdom.

The Torah was given to be followed by the community which lived in the land of Israel. We would like to emphasize that it was supposed to be followed by the entire community. We now find ourselves living in an entirely different situation. We are not a theocratic community living in the Land of Israel. Therefore, we will find that some of the commandments are impossible (and even unlawful) to perform. It goes without saying that the situation will be completely rectified when Messiah returns.