

THE TRIBE WEEKLY

PARASHAT SHOFETIM

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A NEW PERSPECTIVE



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Parashat Shofetim discusses the mitzvah to establish cities of refuge. If someone unintentionally kills another person, there is a safe place to which they must flee and remain there until the death of the *Kohen Gadol* (High Priest). These cities existed so there would be places where an inadvertent killer would be protected from the victim's blood relatives.

We can understand the

superficial reason for these cities of refuge. Is there something deeper? And why was the freedom of the killer dependent on the death of the *Kohen Gadol*? This period of time was, obviously, unknown; a person could be there for the majority of their life!

Why would someone need to spend time in a city of refuge for something they did accidentally? One thought is that even if someone kills by accident, there is a level of carelessness and disregard for the life of another. The cities of refuge were places mainly inhabited by Levites, people who devoted themselves to serving God in the *Beit*

Hamikdash (Temple) and they were the teachers of Torah to the rest of the nation.

Someone who was sent to a city of refuge had the opportunity to see up close Jewish lives with the highest values. They were given an opportunity to shift their perspective on life to one that focuses on Torah and mitzvot and the highest regard for the lives of others.

Just like the atmosphere in cities of refuge were intended to help change someone's outlook on life, we can also view our experiences as opportunities to reflect on our values and deepen our appreciation for our lives and the lives of others.

Parasha Wordsearch

Find these words in the grid. The words can go in any direction and can share letters as they cross over each other.

V	U	C	E	P	M	Z	Y	S	R	U	R	A
V	N	R	L	D	J	R	E	F	U	G	E	D
S	F	O	I	M	D	H	F	H	I	W	F	R
J	T	R	I	A	Z	P	Q	B	A	U	I	W
S	A	F	E	T	Y	C	S	X	Z	R	E	O
D	M	E	H	S	A	H	I	V	Z	K	O	A
V	T	E	M	Q	C	I	M	T	C	A	P	T
A	T	O	F	D	V	V	C	Q	Y	Q	I	T
L	L	E	V	I	T	E	S	E	U	R	A	G
U	F	X	H	Z	L	V	K	V	R	V	V	E
E	O	W	Z	D	T	M	C	S	Q	P	W	N
S	N	U	C	I	P	I	P	R	G	T	P	X
Q	Q	Y	N	R	G	A	M	Q	V	D	U	A

LEVITES
REFUGE
TORAH
HASHEM
LIFE
SAFETY
MITZVOT
CITY
VALUES
APPRECIATION

