



THE YOM KIPPUR VIDUY

Viduy

7th edition

INCLUDES:

Preface to Teshuvah

The Four Incentives to Teshuvah

The Laws Pertaining to Asking Pardon

The Laws Pertaining to Viduy Recitation

A Shortcut to Teshuvah

The Essence of Teshuvah

Educational Questionnaire

VIDUY PUBLISHING COMPANY

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הסכמה ממו"ר הה"ג מרדכי גיפטער שליט"א

ראש הישיבה דישיבת טלז, ווויקליף, אהויאו

ק"ג

אני לא אפליא טראנישע און נישט אריין מיט אמי יקרני, און געניץ היסטה
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 און זייערע זאך הרבי'ס זאל זיין אזוי אז וועט די אומשטעלע
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 הרבי'ס זענען זיינע.

י"ג אדר אהונת ה' ז' זענען זיינע זאך און זיינע זענען
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ד"ר אריאל געטע זאנער
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בע"ה

אמינא לפעלא טבא יישר, תרי אחי יקירי, נ"י, תלמידי הישיבה הקדושה אשר מצעירותם ידעתים ליראי ה' ולחושבי שמו ועתה באו לזכות את הרבים שלא יבינו אלא את השפה האנגלית שידעו פירוש וביאור הוידי, למען יקיימו בזה מצות התשובה.

יזכו בהם תמיד להימנות בין מזכי הרבים אשר זכות הרבים תלוי בהם.

הכותב וחותם לכבוד התורה ולומדי

מרדכי גיפטער

הערות והארות למהדורה הרביעית
 מאת הה"ג מרדכי גיפטער שליט"א

א) ב"על חטא שחטאנו לפניך בהרהור הלב". עצם ענין של הרהור עבירה שמהרהור לעשות עבירה... (Page 34, footnote 3)

ב) ב"על חטא שחטאנו לפניך ביצר הרע". גם היצר ביסודו מלאך קדוש שהרי הוא עולה למעלה ומקטרג — כמו שביאר הגר"ח מוולאזין זצוק"ל — ולכן כל תכליתו רק להעמיד האדם בנסיון למען ישתמש בכח הבחירה לטוב. אבל החוטא עצמו משתמש ביצר שלא לתכליתו האמיתית ובוזה, חטא ביצר עצמו. (Page 36, footnote 5)

ג) בביאור השם הראשון של י"ג מדות הרחמים. בחטא של אדם הראשון היתה מדת הזין נותנת להחזיר העולם לתוהו והוא ברחמיו מקיים וזהו מדת שלפני החטא שלנו. (Page 53, footnote 2)

מזכרת נצח

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לרפואה שלמה במהרה בתוך שאר חולי ישראל

<p>חוקידו פרץ בן טובע מרדכי בן מטלא ישעיהו בן יטע זיה אטטא רייזא בת לאה בשה בת זענה רייזל בת גיטל אפרים פישל בן שרה אלנה יעקפקה יהודית בת אסתר</p>	<p>אייל מכלה בת מרים רחל רישא בת שרה ליבא בת רייזל שרה צביה בת רבקה צירל שלמה בן מרים שמואל יחזקאל בן חרדה רבקה פראויל כרמית נחמה לאה בת רליה</p>	<p>אליעזר מנחם מן בן בת שבע שיינדל בת חיה יחיאל בן חיה רייזל פרומעט שרה בת מרים רחל חנה בת חוה רבורה יוטא רפאל ישראל יעקב בן חרדה רבקה פראויל שירה ציפורה בת טובה חיה חדד בן ישראל מאיר ע"ה</p>
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שמטר נפשו לחלק 17,000 עותקים של ידדי במשך השנים. יזכה לרפואת הנפש ולרפואת הגוף ולאריכות ימים ושנים טובים מתוך בריאות והרחבת הדעת.

ואלו יעמדו על הברכה

אימ' דאנשה הצנעה בתיה שתנז"י בת ר' יוסף ע"ה
ד"ר אלחנן שליטיא בן ר' פרץ ע"ה
ואשתו הצנעה אסתר שתח"י בת ר' שלום ע"ה
יראו חב נחת מכל ימצא חלציהם. עד יובן בשיבה ושנים ורעננים יהיו

ישעיהו בן רחל

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Important Observation:
At least 194 times on Yom Kippur
we shall confess our sinning through speech.

Introduction to 7th Edition

VIDUY – ORAL CONFESSION – is one of the 613 commandments of the Torah, as it says, “*V’hisvadu es chatosam asher assu*”.¹ Alone, however, it is only one-third of the requirements needed for having accomplished complete *teshuvah* (repentance).² The remaining two parts are regret for having committed the sin and resolve never to repeat it. Followed by *Viduy*, they compose the ultimate goal of every penitent – *teshuvah*, the repentance which eradicates the sins of the past and allows fresh progress.

These three components suffice for sins between man and Hashem. For sins between man and his fellow man, there is a fourth requisite: Obtaining the pardon of the person offended or harmed. Our fellow man’s forgiveness opens the way to Hashem’s forgiveness. Then, after regret for the past and resolve for the future, a person may recite his *viduy* – his confession of disloyalty to his Master.³

True for all prayers, and all the more so for *Viduy*, special precaution should be taken in reciting it not merely by rote, but with great humility and concentration. [It is noteworthy that when *Viduy* is recited during the year, it must also be said with humility and concentration.] This is clearly illustrated to us in the Seforno’s⁴ definition of the word *teshuvah*: שׁוּבָה וְנֹחַת [in a] “settled and calm” [frame of mind].

When saying *Viduy* with the congregation during the repeating of the *Shemoneh Esreh*, one must make an extra effort to concentrate

1. Bemidbar 5:7.

2. See Supplement.

3. *Chinuch* 364, *Chayei Adam* 143.

4. *Devarim* 30:8.

on what one is saying in order to compensate for the [usually] rapid pace.

Most of our *Viduy* prayers are in first person plural, for even though Hashem makes it easier at certain times for each individual to repent, a congregation as a unit always has this opportunity.

The *Viduy* prayers in our *machzorim* include all categories of our disloyalty to our Master. Even so, we are permitted to add our own personal, additional specifications of the same, and it is even preferable to do so.

To derive the most benefit from this booklet, it is suggested to study the material before praying in order not to disturb or interrupt your praying. Since many words are seemingly synonymous, especially those referring to sin, we have tried to be as accurate as possible in differentiation. This accuracy is also referred to in our questionnaire at the end of the booklet.

This booklet has been arranged to avoid the distraction of shuffling pages when praying on Yom Kippur. It permits undisturbed praying from the beginning of the *Viduy* until the end of the *Shemoneh Esreh*.

The major source for the explanations given is *Siddur Otzar ha-Tefillos*. Where other sources are used, they are usually specified.

Paraphrase in a few instances was utilized to facilitate a more precise understanding of the Hebrew text.

In the section "The Laws Pertaining to *Viduy* Recitation" (See p. 19), special notice should be taken of number (ii), concerning leaning during the *Viduy* recitation.

Suggestions: Worthwhile thought should be given to the "Important Observation" on p. vi and also to the final sentence of the introduction to *Ashamnu* and *Al Chet* (pp. 26 and 31) respectively, which describe the most appropriate manner in which one should visualize oneself during *Viduy* recitation.

For six years prior to the initial publication of the *Viduy* booklet, most of its contents had been disseminated in mimeographed form

throughout *Yeshivos Gedolos*. The need for such a booklet had become widely recognized as it spread throughout the world in its first two editions. It has proven to be very beneficial for the layman and for the *ben Torah* as well.

This need has been instrumental in bringing about the third comprehensive edition, highlighted by the following addendum:

1. “A Preface to *Teshuvah*,” taken from the opening paragraph of the *Sefer Sha’arei Teshuvah (Gates of Repentance)*, a work much quoted throughout this booklet. It is then followed by:
2. “The Four Incentives to *Teshuvah*,” taken from the *Sefer Chovos ha-Levavos, Sha’ar ha-Teshuvah*, chapter 6.
3. A broader elucidation of the *Ashamnu*, including many examples from everyday life.
4. In saying *Viduy*, a person should not only understand and appreciate what he is saying but, in addition, he should say it in the correct manner. Without knowing the appropriate *halachos* (laws), this is impossible. Therefore, the *Laws Pertaining to Viduy Recitation* have been included. Their basic source is the *Shulchan Aruch* and *Mishneh Berurah* 606, “Asking Pardon from One’s Fellow Man Prior to Yom Kippur,” and chapter 607, “The Laws Pertaining to *Viduy* Recitation.” For those who wish to consult the original source, take note that generally the order of the *Mishnah Berurah* has been followed.
5. An educational questionnaire. Due to the fact that in past years most Orthodox high schools and seminaries nationally have used the *Viduy* booklet as a text during the Elul season, the need for this supplement has been obvious. Therefore, a quiz of over 50 questions has been compiled, based exclusively on the information contained in this booklet. Questions may be chosen by teachers according to the level

of the students. The answers appear in reference form immediately after each question. For the individual as well, the quiz will be helpful in testing the thoroughness of his knowledge.

The fourth edition was enhanced with choice comments from HaRav HaGaon Rav Mordechai Gifter, *shlita*, which were incorporated into the text and/or into the footnotes. Other worthwhile notations were included as well.

For the fifth edition, in addition to minor revisions and technical changes accompanying the re-typesetting of the complete *Viduy* booklet, a most vital section was added: Rabbi Dessler's "A Shortcut to *Teshuvah*," a most practical and highly-used essay. It has been accompanied in this edition by Rabbi Dessler's "*Viduy* by the *Alef-Beis*."

Preceded by our appreciation to all who have been instrumental in bringing the *Viduy* booklet to the accomplishments it has achieved in the past 25 years, is our greatest and foremost gratitude to Hashem *Yisborach* for granting us the opportunity to compile such a needed booklet for the rapidly-growing, English-speaking Jewish populace of today.

We sincerely thank Yehoshua Leiman, editor of *Light* magazine, for editing the first edition of this booklet, and Mrs. Ahuva Cohen, Mr. Shmuel Gorr, and Rabbi Leonard Oschry for their suggestions and assistance in the second, third, and fourth editions, respectively.

Very special acknowledgment is extended to HaRav HaGaon Rav Mordechai Gifter, *shlita*, Rosh Hayeshivah of Telshe Yeshivah of Cleveland, Ohio, for devoting his precious time and effort in reviewing and commenting on some of our previous editions. No doubt that the Rosh Yeshivah's affiliation with the *Viduy* booklet has attributed much to its widespread circulation.

Much appreciation is expressed to Rabbi Aryeh Carmell for his personal translation of the two precious sections from his rebbe, Rabbi E. E. Dessler's *zt"l*, works highlighting our fifth edition.

It is our sincere hope that the information contained in this booklet will continue to make a positive contribution in the year-round life of prayer of its readers. Already there is hardly an Orthodox synagogue in the English-speaking world where it is not used on Yom Kippur as an aid to prayer by some, or even by the majority of the congregants and their families (with the father, the mother, and each of the teenage children having their own copy).

With ever-increasing “talk in the street” of the imminent arrival of *Mashiach*, may this booklet play its part in assisting us to be properly prepared for him.

Great is repentance, for it brings the Redemption nearer, as Yeshayahu says,⁵ “A redeemer will come to *Tzion* and to those of Jewry who repent from transgression, says Hashem.”⁶

The Publishers
Elul 5760

5. *Yeshayahu* 59:20.

6. *Yoma* 86.

*A Preface to Teshuvah*¹
followed by
*The Four Incentives to Teshuvah*²

“**A**MONG THE FAVORS which Hashem bestowed upon humanity was to prepare for them a way to rise out of the depths of their evil deeds, and to flee the trap of their transgressions – thus sparing their souls from *Gehinnom* and turning back His wrath from them...

“And even if they have sinned and rebelled much, and with the treason of traitors have they betrayed Him, He has not closed the doors of repentance on them.

“We have been alerted to repentance in many places in the Torah. There it has been made clear that repentance is accepted even if the sinner repents because of his tribulations; how much more so if he repents out of his fear and love of Hashem.

“It is explained in the Torah that Hashem helps penitents when their natural capabilities fail them, and renews within them a pure spirit through which to attain the attribute of loving Him.

“The *Nevi'im* (Prophets) and the *Kesuvim* (Holy Writings) spoke of repentance continuously to such an extent that all the principles of repentance are elucidated in their words.”

These words should give the most drifting soul a new ray of hope – for in them we see that as distant as a person's deeds may have carried him from the dictates of the Torah, Hashem is always ready to assist him to return. But the lovingkindness of Hashem does not end with His mere readiness to help. He gives us continuous

1. *Sha'arei Teshuvah*, paragraph 1.

2. *Sha'ar ha-Teshuvah*, chapter 6.

reminders to repent. The *Sefer Chovos ha-Levavos* groups these as the Four Incentives to *Teshuvah*:

1. The best incentive is WHEN A PERSON ON HIS OWN RECOGNIZES HASHEM BY REFLECTING ON THE CONTINUOUS FAVORS WHICH HASHEM BESTOWS UPON HIM. This can be compared to a servant who has fled from his master, but through consideration of the goodness his master has bestowed upon him, he willingly returns to him and requests pardon for his rebelliousness.
2. Next best is repentance aroused by REBUKE from a teacher of Hashem's service or WHEN STUDYING REBUKE of the Torah. It is comparable to a disloyal servant, who upon fleeing from his master, encounters a loyal servant who rebukes him for his rebellious ways and advises him to return to his master. The "teacher" reminds him of the abundant kindness which the master has bestowed upon him and assures him that the master will pardon him; and he succeeds in bringing back the humble, wayward servant.
3. Third best is when a person is stirred to repentance BY OBSERVING THE CALAMITIES WHICH HAVE BEFALLEN THOSE WHO HAVE TRANSGRESSED THE WILL OF HASHEM. This is similar to a servant who, upon being informed of the punishment of his comrades for their disloyal behavior, realizes that the same is in store for him, and he therefore returns to his master, pleading for forgiveness.
4. Least, but still acceptable, is when a person is shaken from his spiritual stupor BY HIS OWN SUFFERING. He is like a rebellious servant, who upon being overtaken and beaten by his master's flogger, hastens back in penitence to his master and seeks his pardon.

The Laws Pertaining to Asking Pardon from One's Fellow Man prior to Yom Kippur¹

Introduction

“**O** NYOM KIPPUR, the Satan (Prosecuting Angel) saw that no sin was to be found among the Jewish People, and in turn said: ‘God, You possess one nation which is compared to angels (in that just as angels are clean of all iniquity, so too, are the Jewish People clean of all iniquity); and just as angels have peace among themselves, so too have the Jewish People on Yom Kippur.’”

1. The Necessity to Appease the Offended

Sins between a man and his fellow are not atoned for on Yom Kippur until the sinner has appeased the offended. Even anguish that was caused through mere words needs pardon from the offended, because the Torah considers it sinful to cause a person anguish in any manner.

The well-known quote from the *Chayei Adam* (chapter 143) clearly depicts the stringency of this *halachah*:

Even if one fasts for a hundred years, brings all the fat rams (as sacrifices), and confesses his sins to Hashem a hundred times daily, his sins are still not atoned for, as will be explained... This is because when one sins against another person, he sins twofold – once against man, and once against Hashem by transgressing His command [not to sin against another person]. Therefore, until the offender

1. Main source: *Mishneh Berurah* 606.

appeases the one he sinned against, how can he confess his sins to Hashem, seeing that the very basis of *Viduy* is both the severing of oneself from one's past sins and the simultaneous regret of ever having committed them. Hence, as long as one has not properly received forgiveness from the one he offended, the *halachah* considers him] as still carrying his sins in his hands [because he has as yet not fulfilled either of these two fundamental requirements].

Yom Kippur is not the only time of the year for appeasing one's fellow man. It is, however, the last opportunity before the Day of Judgment. One must be prepared by then to accept the purification Hashem wants to grant him. Without cleansing oneself from sins towards one's fellow man, one is not adequately prepared to receive this Divine purification.

All the more so, by Yom Kippur one must resolve all monetary disputes and obligations, because these are the greatest prosecutors of man on the Day of Judgment. Wise is he who does not postpone this until Yom Kippur, but constantly settles his monetary matters throughout the year.

Especially pertaining to monetary matters, it is worthwhile to mention that one should always consult competent Orthodox rabbinical authorities, and not rely upon one's own judgment, since one's personal motives easily deflect him from the truth.

2. The Approach

THE OFFENDER

- a. *With seriousness*: The approach for pardoning should be made with all due seriousness. Where possible, the offense committed should be mentioned. Where circumstances make the personal request difficult, a messenger may be used.
- b. *Even 3 more times*: If the offended does not pardon the offense when first properly requested, one is obligated to request as much as

3 *more*² times. With each of the three additional attempts, one should be accompanied by three different people, and each time the manner of approach should be different.

c. *Absolution*: If after the above-mentioned 4 requests the offended has still not forgiven the offender, the offender should then announce in the presence of ten people that he has fulfilled his obligation of requesting forgiveness.

d. *To one's Torah teacher*: If the offense has been committed against one's Torah teacher, and all the more so, if he is or was one's main Torah teacher, one must request forgiveness as many times as needed until the teacher forgives him.

THE OFFENDED

a. *Be forgiving*: The victim of the offense should not act cruelly by refraining from pardoning, because Hashem treats all people as they treat others. Therefore, if one pardons and overlooks even intentional and spiteful acts done to him, Hashem will, in turn, pardon that person's intentional and rebellious acts *previously*³ committed against Him. If, on the other hand, the offended is hard-hearted and unforgiving, then Heaven will guide events so that others will also act towards this stubborn, offended man in a similar manner, and all the more so will Hashem be unpardoning toward him.

b. *Eradicate hatred*: If the offended delays his granting of forgiveness for a certain permissible constructive reason, he (the offended) must totally eradicate from his heart all hatred and ill-feelings, since the offender has already requested forgiveness.

2. *Biur Halachah*.

3. But, "If one says, 'I'll sin and I'll repent; I'll sin and I'll repent,' (i.e., he commits the same sin twice with the premeditated intention each time of repenting afterwards, the opportunity to do repentance for these sins will be removed from him" (Yoma 85b, 87a).

3. The Approach Where Motzi Shem Ra (False Accusation against Another Person) Is Involved

In this instance, the offended is not obligated to grant forgiveness, because not all who heard the false accusation heard the retraction, and therefore the “bad name” given the victim will remain with the people who heard the false accusation. Nevertheless, it is a mark of the humble to be forgiving even in such instances. (He may rest assured that Hashem will well reward him for such meritorious behavior. See p. 16, “*Be Forgiving.*”)

4. If the Offended One Is No Longer Living

a. *Visit the offended one’s grave:* The offender must take ten people to the grave of the offended one, remove his shoes, and say, “I have sinned against Hashem and the Jewish People and against (here the name of the offended is inserted) in ... manner.”

b. *Where distance is involved:* If he lives at a distance of more than (approximately) 3 hours *traveling time*, he may send a messenger on his behalf to visit the grave. The messenger in turn must take ten people and say, “I am the messenger of (insert the name of the offender) and I publicly declare that he has sent me to say that he has sinned against Hashem of the Jewish People and against (insert the name of the offended) having ... (insert the offense).”

c. *If one offended by cursing:* If one has cursed a person after he died, one need not come to the graveside, but it suffices to request forgiveness in the place in which one shamed him.

d. *The role of the bystander:* In all of these cases dealing with a deceased person, after the offender has made his declaration, the accompanying bystanders should say three times: “You are forgiven.”

e. *If one has been motzi shem ra (made false accusations):* Since our Sages have ruled that it is also forbidden to make false accusations against dead people, and they have punished such

actions even with excommunication, therefore, if one has sinned in this manner, it too requires repentance.

f. *When to request*: It is customary, where needed, to request forgiveness from the dead (in the above manner) on the day before Yom Kippur (*Rema*).

The *Shulchan Aruch* (Code of Jewish Law) has annexed the following laws to this chapter. Even though they have no direct connection with our subject matter, we have also included these laws because many people are unfamiliar with them.

5. *Tevilah on Erev Yom Kippur*

a. *When*: It is a mitzvah to immerse oneself in a *mikveh* (ritualarium) some time during the day before Yom Kippur, even if one did so on the day before Rosh Hashanah. It is preferable to immerse oneself before Minchah, although some are accustomed to fulfill this mitzvah specifically before *seudas ha-mafsekes* (the last meal before Yom Kippur).

b. *How many times*: The custom is to immerse the entire body 3 times. If, however, one immersed oneself only once, it is sufficient.

c. *During shivah*: A person observing *shivah* (the first 7 days of mourning) may immerse himself in the late afternoon, from as early as two hours before sunset.

The Laws Pertaining to Viduy Recitation¹

1. Time of Recital

EREV YOM KIPPUR – BEFORE AND AFTER THE FINAL MEAL

a. *During Minchah: Erev Yom Kippur*, the *Viduy* is inserted in the *Minchah Shemoneh Esreh* immediately before אלהי נצור. On this day, *Minchah* is recited before eating *seudas ha-mafsekes* (the final meal before Yom Kippur).

b. *Tefillah Zakah*

- (i) *When*: There are important Halachic authorities who differ with the above ruling as to when *Viduy* is said on *erev Yom Kippur*, and they maintain that the major confession (*Viduy*) should be recited after the final meal, but before nightfall. Therefore, the accepted custom is to arrive early at the synagogue and to say *Tefillah Zakah* (lit. “A prayer of purity.” This title has been chosen because its contents do just that: purify the heart of its reader.). It is printed in most *machzorim*.
- (ii) *The most important phrase of Tefillah Zakah*: If one arrives late and does not have enough time to recite the complete *Tefillah Zakah*, he should at least say: אָנָּא ה', חַטָּאתִי, עוֹיְתִי, וּפְשַׁעֲתִי לִפְנֵיךְ (“O, Hashem, I have sinned unintentionally; I have sinned intentionally by succumbing to my materialistic drives; and I have sinned out of rebelliousness, before You.”). With this sentence, one will also have fulfilled the Torah obligation of confession (in its minimum form). See also (iii) following:

1. Main source: *Mishneh Berurah* 607.

- (iii) *Insufficient time*: In cases of insufficient time for the recital of the whole *Tefillah Zakah*, one should turn to its conclusion and say at least from the words *והנני מוחל*, etc., until the end of the paragraph. This, in essence, is a declaration of one's forgiveness to all who have offended him for everything they may have done to him. It also includes a request from Hashem that all the people against whom he may have sinned be inspired to forgive him.

ON YOM KIPPUR

Viduy is said in the order as printed in all *machzorim*. Those *davening* from this *Viduy* booklet need not use the *machzor* from the beginning of *Viduy* through the end of *Shemoneh Esreh* because it is all here according to the proper order (See 4.c. on p. 22.). Note: In *Ne'ilah*, *על חטא* and *ועל חטאים* are omitted.

2. What Has To Be Recited and How

a. *Ashamnu and Al Chet, together with their accompanying paragraphs*: In fulfilling the mitzvah of saying *Viduy* on Yom Kippur, the custom is to say *Ashamnu*, *Al Chet*, and all the adjoining paragraphs, as printed in the *machzor*. The minimum, however, is the humble declaration, *אבל אנחנו חטאנו, עוינו, ופשענו לפניך* ("We have sinned unintentionally; we have sinned intentionally, as in succumbing to our materialistic drives, and we have sinned out of rebelliousness, before You.").

b. *Additional enumeration of personal sins*: There is no obligation to enumerate one's personal sins, other than those printed in the *machzor*. However, it is permissible – and more so, desirable – to do so during the silent *Shemoneh Esreh*. It is proper to enumerate all specific personal sins which one recalls. This is desirable because the measure of atonement is based largely upon the feeling of shame and humiliation the sinner experiences in his prayers. In enumerating one's specific sins, the individual is aroused to a deep

feeling of shame and regret, thus performing a more perfect *teshuvah*.

c. *Not to be overheard*: When enumerating personal transgressions (that are unknown to others), special care must be taken that one is not overheard by others. (It is disrespectful for a subject to publicly proclaim his disobedience of the king's decree – and how much more so does this apply to the decrees of the King of Kings, Hashem!)

3. The Correct Position for Recital

STANDING

a. *When*: One is obligated to stand during the entire recital of *Viduy* until after the words:

ועל חטאים שאנו חייבים עליהם ארבע מיתות בית דין.

b. *During the repetition of Shemoneh Esreh*: It is our custom to repeat the *Viduy* with the *chazan* during his repetition of the *Shemoneh Esreh*. We are obligated to stand at that time also.

c. *The posture*: The posture should be the same as when saying *מוודים*, i.e., bent over.

LEANING

a. *Pertaining to the healthy*: If at the same time he is standing he is also leaning on something (a *shtender*, table, chair, wall, etc.) in such a manner that if the article would be unexpectedly pulled away from him he would fall, the validity of his *Viduy* is questionable. This implies the possibility that the entire *Viduy* may have to be repeated.

b. *Pertaining to the sick or elderly*: A sick or elderly person may lean.²

2. *Kaf ha-Chaim* 607:23.

4. Speaking during Recital

a. *When prohibited:* Speaking is prohibited during the recital of *Ashamnu* and *Al Chet*.

b. *When permitted:* It is permitted to answer to *Kaddish* and *Kedushah* as long as one has already said the sentence יהיו לרצון וגוי. This ruling itself is limited as follows:

(i) *In Kaddish:* One may only answer יהא שמייה וכו' and the דאמירן בעלמא³ of אמן.

(ii) *In Kedushah:* One may only answer:

קדוש קדוש קדוש ה' צבאות מלא כל הארץ כבודו and ברוך כבוד ה' ממקומו.

c. *before יהיו לרצון וגוי:* Those whose custom it is to say in their year-round *Shemoneh Esreh* the *pasuk* יהיו לרצון וגוי before אלהי נצור should also do so on Yom Kippur before starting the *Viduy* prayers. Those not so accustomed must do so before answering to *Kaddish* or *Kedushah*, even if in the middle of אלהי נצור. This applies the entire year. (See *Mishneh Berurah* 66:3:17.)

5. Beating the Chest

Upon mention of each transgression (and in the *Al Chet* and *V'Al Chata'im* by the words חטא and חטאים respectively), a person strikes his chest (over his heart) with his fist, as if to say: "You have enticed me to sin."

6. Annual Reconfession

Sins which were properly confessed on the previous Yom Kippur and had not since been repeated need not be mentioned again. However, although one is not obligated to reconfess them, if he does so, he is highly praised by Hashem. This is so because he therewith fulfills the *pasuk*⁴ which says, "And my sins are ever before me" (due to regret – not repetition!)

3. *Mishneh Berurah* 122:4 (and 66:17).

4. *Tehillim* 51:5.

A Shortcut to Teshuvah¹

IN THESE TERRIBLE times,² when no one knows what the next day will bring, there is no time to work on oneself by a gradual process of self-improvement, as in happier times. We need a “shortcut to *teshuvah*,” something like those who “earned their world in one hour” – a general remedy for our sins, in the nature of “first aid.”

This has four ingredients:

1. *Torah-learning* – to drive away the *yetzer ha-ra*.
2. *Learning mussar* – to acquire the true way of looking at things. (The verse says: “By lovingkindness and *truth* shall sin be atoned.”³)
3. *Self-training in “breaking one’s will.”*
(As Rabbenu Yona wrote in *Yesod ha-Teshuvah*⁴ in the name of Ra’avad, “breaking one’s will” is equivalent to many fasts in one day. This corrects the cause of sin itself [that is, the *yetzer ha-ra*, which is uncontrolled will]. “Turning back to God in repentance must parallel the turning away from God in sin” – Rabbenu Yona, *Sha’arei Teshuvah*.⁵)
4. *Doing many acts of practical lovingkindness.* This serves to counteract sins committed against one’s fellow man. It should include both acts of kindness to individuals and services on behalf of *Klal Yisrael*.

1. Reprinted from *Strive for Truth* Vol. 1, p. 115, by Rabbi E.E. Dessler *zt”l*, by permission of the publishers.

2. This article was written in 1940, when Hitler’s hordes had conquered most of Europe, and were poised to attack the British Isles, where Rabbi Dessler then lived.

3. *Mishlei* 15:6, and see *Sha’arei Teshuvah* 1:47.

4. See also *Sha’arei Teshuvah* 1:30-34.

5. 1:47.

Also chesed in the heart: Changing one's inner attitude concerning other people; cultivating feelings of sympathy and readiness to help, and also praying for others.

(How does this counteract sins against one's fellow man? In three ways: [i] One has increased one's own particularity at other people's expense, consequently one gives back something of one's own particularity to the community at large, which includes the person one has sinned against; [ii] One should intend that the merit of one's good deed should count for one's fellow man. This, too, is a kind of restitution; [iii] In the heavenly accounting nothing is ever lost. A person who has caused a certain effect, even indirectly, has that effect attributed to him. If I do a wrong to my fellow and then sincerely repent it, in a sense, that wrong was the cause of my repentance. The person I wronged has suffered, but his suffering has turned out to be worthwhile because it has led to my repentance. The merit of having caused a good deed such as this is so great that it outweighs the disadvantage of the suffering. Compare Rabbi Akiva's reply to the question of Tyrannus Rufus, "If your God loves the poor so much, why doesn't he look after them?" Rabbi Akiva's answer was: "So that we can gain merit through them"⁶; that is to say, the purpose of poverty is to create opportunities for the exercise of *tzedakah*. It follows that the merit of having caused the revelation of *tzedakah* in the world is so great that on the true scales it will be seen to outweigh the anguish and suffering of poverty.)

6. *Bava Basra* 10a.

Viduy According to the Alef-Beis¹

WHY IS OUR *Viduy* arranged according to the letters of the *Alef-Beis*? Every Jew is like a *sefer Torah*. (Chazal say that anyone who is present when a person's soul leaves his body must rend his clothes; "it is as if he saw a *sefer Torah* being burnt" – *Mo'ed Katan* 25a.)

What are the letters of this *sefer Torah*? The *middos tovos*, (good deeds) and Torah of the person. If one sins, God forbid, the *sefer Torah* is torn and the letters fly off, their place being taken by dirt and filth.

Repentance and bitter tears can wash away the dirt, but how can we replace the holy letters? By *Viduy*! That is because it is based on all the letters of the *Alef-Beis*.

א ש מ נו

ASHAMNU PROCEEDS IN alphabetical order with 24 expressions of *viduy*, one for each letter of the *Alef-Beis* and 3 for the letter *taf*.

The translation and explanation are based on the commentary of the *Chayei Adam*, plus *Siddur Otzar ha-Tefillos*.

When reciting *Viduy*, bear in mind that confessing one's sins without really feeling regret for having committed them or without resolving to earnestly try to correct them is in itself a sin, one which we ask forgiveness for in the words: *שיח שפלותינו וידיי פדה* (numbers 11 and 30). Also bear in mind that we hereby proceed to fulfill the positive commandment of "*V'hisvadu es chatosam asher assu.*"

1. From *Michtav M'Eliyahu* (vol. 4, p. 91) by Rabbi E.E. Dessler, quoted in the name of Rabbi Chaim of Volozhin. Rendered into English by Rabbi Aryeh Carmell and printed by permission of the editors.

When praying, if you visualize yourself as a sinner, the *Viduy* will have more meaning to you.

אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי	Our God, and the God of our
אֲבוֹתֵינוּ,	fathers,
תְּבוֹא לְפָנֶיךָ	Please ² permit our prayer to come
תְּפִלָּתֵנוּ,	before You
וְאַל תִּתְעַלֵּם	and do not ignore
מִתְחַנְּתֵנוּ,	our supplication.
שָׂאִין אָנוּ עֵיזֵי פָּנִים	For we are not so brazen-faced
וְקָשֵׁי עֵרֶף	and stiff-necked as
לוֹמַר לְפָנֶיךָ	to say to You,
יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי	Adonai, our God, and God of our
אֲבוֹתֵינוּ	fathers,
צְדִיקִים אֲנַחְנוּ	“We are righteous
וְלֹא חָטָאנוּ,	and have not sinned.”
אָבֵל	On the contrary,
אֲנַחְנוּ וְאֲבוֹתֵינוּ חָטָאנוּ:	we and our fathers have sinned.

אָשָׁמְנוּ (*Ashamnu*) – We have sinned against God and man. We recognize our guilt, and we are devastated by its enormity.

בָּגַדְנוּ (*Bagadnu*) – We have betrayed the confidence of God and man. We have been so ungrateful for all the good done to us that we have even repaid bad for good. (Compare *Maradnu* and *Pashanu*.)

גָּזַלְנוּ (*Gazalnu*) – We have stolen items that have either monetary or intangible value. [Example: Disturbing someone’s sleep.]

דִּבְרָנוּ דְּפִי (*Dibarnu dofi*) – We have verbally abused God and His Torah by misusing the gift of speech that God gave us to use for Torah and mitzvos. (Compare *Kizavnu*.) NOTE: More than one

2. Yoma 37a.

quarter of our Yom Kippur confession pertains to our abuse of speech!

הֶעְוִינוּ (*He'evinu*) – Through our actions or teachings we have caused others to deviate from what is right. (Compare *Avinu*.)

וְהִרְשָׁעֵנוּ (*V'hirshanu*) – We have caused others to actually do, rather than just think about doing, evil – for which the sinner is called a *rasha* (wicked). This refers to evil acts committed with premeditation, as opposed to those committed as a result of giving in to impulse. (Compare *Rashanu*.)

זָדַנּוּ (*Zadnu*) – We have deliberately sinned due to our inner corruption.

חָמַסְנוּ (*Chamasnu*) – We have forcibly and deceitfully taken other people's possessions, even though we may have paid for them in full.

טָפַלְנוּ שָׂקָר (*Tafalnu sheker*) – We have associated with bad: individuals, groups, gatherings, neighbors, and relatives.

יַעֲצֵנוּ רָע (*Ya'atznu ra*) – We have advised others in ways harmful to them.

כָּזַבְנוּ (*Kizavnu*) – We lied and did not keep our word. (Compare *Dibarnu dofi*.)

לָצַנּוּ (*Latznu*) – We have taken all matters lightly.

מָרַדְנוּ (*Maradnu*) – Our disbelief has at times demonstrated itself in a total rebellion against God and Torah. [Note: In the slightest sin, there is at least some disbelief in God (*Chafetz Chaim*).] (Compare *Bagadnu* and *Pashanu*.)

נִאֲצַנּוּ (*Ni'atznu*) – We have caused God to be angry with us.

סָרַרְנוּ (*Sararnu*) – We have turned our hearts away from the service of God.

עִוִּינוּ (*Avinu*) – We ourselves deliberately sinned. (Compare *He'evinu*.)

פָּשַׁעְנוּ (*Pashanu*) – Even though we believe in God and the Torah, we rebelled by not performing the *mitzvos*. (Compare *Bagadnu* and *Maradnu*.)

צָרַרְנוּ (*Tzararnu*) – We have caused people anguish.

קִשִּׁינוּ עֵרְף (*Kishinu oref*) – We have continuously ignored the fact that every ounce of suffering,³ no matter in what form it comes, is intended to be a constant reminder to us to repent our multitude of sins. And, despite the fact that we knew we would be punished for this ignoring, we stubbornly kept to our evil ways.

רָשַׁעְנוּ (*Rashanu*) – We have committed those types of sins through which we have acquired the label of *resha'im* – wicked. [Examples: Sinning as a result of premeditation (i.e., planning to do something wrong an hour or day later); hitting someone.] (Compare *u'hirshanu*.)

שָׁחַתְנוּ (*Shichasnu*) – We have acted in a manner that shows a breakdown in our belief in God and in our moral behavior. We have even gone so far as to destroy our naturally good characteristics.⁴

תִּעַבְנוּ (*Ti'avnu*) – We have stooped so low before God as to transgress even those sins that God has labeled an abomination. [Examples: Haughtiness, anger, our moral behavior, idolatry]

תָּעִינוּ (*Ta'inu*) – Generally speaking, we have strayed like sheep from the proper path.

תִּתְּעֵנוּ (*Ti'tanu*) – You allowed us to go astray. Misusing God's blessing of free will, we then chose to go astray as well as to mislead others.

In Summation

סָרְנוּ מִמִּצְוֹתֶיךָ	We have turned away
וּמִמִּשְׁפָּטֶיךָ הַטּוֹבִים	from Your wonderful mitzvos,
וְלֹא שָׂוִה	And now we see
לָנוּ:	that we gained nothing.

3. See "The Four Incentives to Teshuvah," p. 13 of this booklet.

4. Compare Amos 1:11, with commentaries.

וְאַתָּה צַדִּיק	And you are the just One
עַל כָּל	regarding any punishment
הַבָּא עֲלֵינוּ	that befalls us.
כִּי אָמַת עָשִׂיתָ	For Your actions are truthful
וְאִנְחָנוּ הִרְשָׁעָנוּ:	and we have wickedly sinned.

מָה נֹאמַר לְפָנֶיךָ	What can we say before You,
יּוֹשֵׁב מְרוֹם,	Whose seat of judgment is so
	elevated;
וּמָה נֹסְפֵר לְפָנֶיךָ	And what can we tell You,
שׁוֹכֵן שְׁחָקִים,	Who dwells in the heavens.
הֲלֹא כָּל הַנְּסֻתוֹת	For, all that is hidden
וְהַנְּגִלוֹת	and all that is revealed
אַתָּה יוֹדֵעַ:	You know.

(When reciting the last *Shemoneh Esreh* of Yom Kippur [*Ne'ilah*], stop here and continue with ... אתה נותן יד... found in your *machzor*.)

אַתָּה יוֹדֵעַ רֵזִי עוֹלָם,	You know never-revealed secrets,
וְתַעֲלוּמוֹת סְתָרַי כָּל הָי,	and the secrets of every individual.
אַתָּה חוֹפֵשׁ	You search
כָּל חֲדָרַי בְּטֵן ⁵	all the innermost chambers, ⁵
וּבֹחֵן כְּלָיֹת ⁶	and examine the kidneys ⁶
וְלֵב,	and the heart. ⁷
אֵין דְּבַר נֶעְלָם מִמֶּךָ	There is nothing hidden from You,
וְאֵין נִסְתָּר	and there is nothing secret from
מִנְּגַד עֵינֶיךָ:	before Your eyes.

5. Symbolizing all of the physical causes of sin. For example: Although food and drink which enter the stomach are needed for existence and therefore for performance of the mitzvos, they also are major causes which lead us to sin.

6. Which give counsel to the heart.

7. Which carries out its counselor's advice – symbolizing the corruption of the mind.

על חטא

AL CHET FOLLOWS the order of the *Alef-Beis*, with two sentences for each of the 22 letters. Thus, there are 22 pairs of *viduyim* (or 44 single *viduyim*) altogether.¹ The first *viduy* of each pair begins with the word “*al*,” and the second with the word “*u'al*.” The following explanations are based primarily on the booklet *Mitzvas Viduy*.

When reciting *Viduy*, bear in mind that confessing one’s sins without really feeling regret for having committed them or without resolving to earnestly try to correct them is in itself a sin, one which we ask forgiveness for in the words: *שיח שפתותינו וידוי פה* (numbers 11 and 30). Also bear in mind that we hereby proceed to fulfill the positive commandment of “*V’hisvadu es chatosam asher assu.*”

When praying, if you visualize yourself as a sinner, the *Viduy* will have more meaning for you.

וּבְכֵן	And so,
יְהִי רְצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ	let it be Your will
יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ	<i>Adonai</i> , our God,
וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ	and God of our fathers,
שְׁתַּכַּפֵּר-לָנוּ	that You cleanse ² us
עַל כָּל חַטֹּאתֵינוּ,	of all our unintended sins,
וְתִסְלַח לָנוּ	and You forgive us
עַל כָּל עֲוֹנוֹתֵינוּ,	of all our intended sins
וְתִמְחַל לָנוּ	and You pardon us
עַל כָּל פְּשָׁעֵינוּ:	of all our rebellious sins.

1. There are primarily two different arrangements of the pairs of *viduyim*. We have selected the one that seems to be used more often.

2. *חטא, עון, סליחה, מחילה, כפרה* – are matched – in different texts – with any of the words *עון, חטא, שוגג*. We have therefore chosen the text that seems most in use. See *Tosafos Shabbos 55a*: *העונות הם הזדונות והפשעים הם* Also *Sha'arei Teshuvah 4:22*: *עון = מזיד, חטא = שוגג* המורדים.

עַל WE ARE AWARE OF 3 POINTS ABOUT OUR SINS:

- חַטָּא • the sin itself with all the evil inherent in it;
- שְׁחָטָאנוּ • that we, unworthy creatures, dared violate;
- לְפָנֶיךָ • before You, God.

WITH THESE 3 POINTS IN MIND, WE PROCEED TO PLEAD:

עַל חַטָּא שְׁחָטָאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ .1 EVEN A SIN committed through sheer
 בְּאִנּוּס וּבְרָצוֹן: ACCIDENTALLY AND WILLINGLY
 accident needs to be forgiven, because if we had been worthy, Hashem would have protected us even from such a sin. (Compare number 8, דַּעַת וּמְרָמָה; number 13, יוֹדְעִים וְלֹא יוֹדְעִים; number 20, זֶדֶן וְשִׁגְגָה.)

וְעַל חַטָּא שְׁחָטָאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ .2 THIS REFERS TO being strict when one
 בְּאִמּוּץ הַלֵּב: HARD-HEARTEDNESS
 should be more lenient, and for refraining from seeking out good influences when given the opportunity. Also included is not having given *zedakah* to a fellow Jew when he was in need, or general failure to perform any of the various types of *chesed*.

עַל חַטָּא שְׁחָטָאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ .3 THIS REFERS TO our failure to apply
 בְּבִלֵי דַעַת: NOT USING OUR INTELLECTUAL CAPABILITIES
 our minds to learning Torah and to seeking to know the ways of Hashem. This is the underlying cause of all sin.

4. **וְעַל חֵטָא שְׁחָטָאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ
בְּבִטּוּי שְׁפָתַיִם:
VERBAL EXPRESSION** THIS REFERS TO making (and certainly to making and not keeping) vows and oaths; to insulting our fellow man (see number 10, הוֹנֵאת רַע); to complaining against the ways of Hashem; and to speaking without purpose.
5. **עַל חֵטָא שְׁחָטָאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ
בְּגִלּוּי וּבִסְתֵּר:
OVERTLY AND COVERTLY** A SIN COMMITTED openly may lead to *chillul Hashem* – desecrating or disgracing of Hashem (number 16). A sin committed privately shows that the sinner fears people, but not Hashem. Some aspect of *chillul Hashem* is thus present in every sin.
6. **וְעַל חֵטָא שְׁחָטָאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ
בְּגִלּוּי עֲרִיּוֹת:
ILLICIT RELATIONSHIPS** THIS INCLUDES ALL acts that arouse desire for these matters, such as seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, talking, and thinking. (See *Mesillas Yescharim*, chapter 11.)
7. **עַל חֵטָא שְׁחָטָאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ
בְּדַבּוּר פֶּה:
SPEECH** THIS REFERS TO the misuse of our power of speech, which is one of Hashem's most precious gifts to us.
8. **וְעַל חֵטָא שְׁחָטָאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ
בְּדַעַת וּבְמִרְמָה:
KNOWLEDGEABLY AND
DECEITFULLY** THERE ARE DEEDS whose sinfulness we were aware of when we did them. There are other sins about which we permitted ourselves to be deceived by the *yetzer ha-ra* into thinking that they were mitzvos. (Compare number 1, אֹנֶס וּרְצוֹן; number 13, זֶדֶן יוֹדְעִים וְלֹא יוֹדְעִים, number 20, וּשְׂגָגָה.)

9. **עַל חֵטָא שְׁחָטָאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ
בְּהִרְהוּר הַלֵּב:
THOUGHT** FIRSTLY, THIS REFERS to the premeditated thought³ process that takes place before committing a sin. Also included are idle thoughts, heretical thoughts, prideful thoughts, and unclean thoughts, as well as Torah thoughts in an unclean place, or during *davening*.
10. **וְעַל חֵטָא שְׁחָטָאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ
בְּהוֹנָאת רֵעַ:
INJUSTICE TO A FELLOW JEW** DEALING UNJUSTLY IN business and causing anguish to others through speech. (See number 4, *ביטוי שפתיים*.)
11. **עַל חֵטָא שְׁחָטָאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ
בְּדוּוֹי פֶּה:
MERE ORAL CONFESSION** CONFESSING OUR SINS without really feeling regret for having committed them or without resolving to earnestly try to correct them. (Compare number 30, *שיח שפתותינו*.)
12. **וְעַל חֵטָא שְׁחָטָאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ
בְּוַעֲדַת זָנוּת:
A GATHERING WHERE MEN
AND WOMEN MINGLE** PARTICIPATING IN ANY gathering for the purpose of levity, where men and women mingle.
13. **עַל חֵטָא שְׁחָטָאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ
בְּזָדוֹן וּבְשִׁגְגָה:
INTENTIONALLY AND
UNINTENTIONALLY** BY SEEKING FORGIVENESS even for unintentional sins, we realize that lack of knowledge is not a valid excuse, and that we are required to learn the laws of all the mitzvos. (Compare number 1, *אונס ורצון*; number 8, *דעת ומרמה*; number 20, *יודעים ולא יודעים*.)

3. We must remember: "What brought us to actual sinning was the *premeditated thought!*" Therefore, it is incumbent upon us "to repent from this sin of *premeditated thought.*" This is true fundamental repentance: To leave his ways and his improper thoughts. (*Pirkei Emunah* by HaRav HaGaon Rav Mordechai Gifter, *shlita*, vol. 1, p. 50)

14. וְעַל הַטָּא שְׁחָטְאֵנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ
בְּזָלוּל הוֹרִים וּמוֹרִים:
INSUFFICIENT RESPECT TO
PARENTS AND TEACHERS
- SHOWING INSUFFICIENT RESPECT to them, whether in their presence or not.
15. עַל הַטָּא שְׁחָטְאֵנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ
בְּחֹזֶק יָד:
COMPULSION
- USING ONE'S POWER or influence (physical, political, or other) to harm others. (If the purpose is not constructive, the mere lording over another human being is in itself a sin, for all human beings are created in the image of God.)
16. וְעַל הַטָּא שְׁחָטְאֵנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ
בְּחִלּוּל הַשֵּׁם:
DESECRATING HASHEM
- CHILLUL HASHEM HAS 3 categories: (a) Not sacrificing one's life for God in a situation that requires it; (b) violating Torah law for neither pleasure nor gain; (c) performing any act (even if permitted according to Jewish law) which lowers the dignity of the Torah and consequently the honor of Hashem.
- This third category, which also applies to everyone, applies even more stringently to Torah scholars and other respected Jews (rabbis, yeshivah students, etc.). People daily find themselves in situations that test their concern for Hashem's honor.⁴ (See and compare number 5, גְּלוּי וּבִסְתֵר.)
17. עַל הַטָּא שְׁחָטְאֵנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ
בְּטַפְּשׁוֹת פֶּה:
FOOLISHNESS OF THE MOUTH
- MAKING FORBIDDEN STATEMENTS for no reason. For example: Speaking *lashon ha-ra* about someone merely because one had nothing else to do. (See number 23, לְשׁוֹן הָרַע.)

4. See Rambam, *Hilchos Yesodei ha-Torah* 5:11.

18. וְעַל הַטָּא שְׁחָטָאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ
בְּטִמְאַת שְׁפָתַיִם:
IMPURITY OF THE LIPS
SPEAKING UNCLEAN LANGUAGE OR
profanity.
19. עַל הַטָּא שְׁחָטָאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ
בְּיִצְרַר הָרָע:
WITH THE EVIL INCLINATION
THIS REFERS TO deliberately stimulat-
ing one's desire for sin.⁵ Example:
Reading unclean literature.
20. וְעַל הַטָּא שְׁחָטָאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ
בְּיֹדְעִים וּבְלֹא יוֹדְעִים:
KNOWINGLY AND
UNKNOWINGLY
WE ASK FORGIVENESS for sins we are
not even aware that we committed;
also for sins against our fellow man
where we caused damage, but were
not aware of the extent of the damage. (Compare number 1, אונס;
אונס; number 8, דעת ומרמה; number 13, זרון ושגגה.)

וְעַל כָּל אֵלֶּה
אֱלֹהֵי סְלִיחוֹת,
סְלַח לָנוּ,
מַחֵל לָנוּ,
כַּפֵּר לָנוּ:
And for all of these,
God of forgiveness,
forgive us,
pardon us,
cleanse us.

21. עַל הַטָּא שְׁחָטָאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ
בְּכַפַּת שָׂחָד:
1. COMPELLING THROUGH
BRIBERY
2. YIELDING TO THE
PRESSURE IMPOSED
BY A BRIBE
BY GIVING A bribe, one "forces" the
receiver to be blinded in favor of the
giver. By accepting a bribe, one
"forces" himself to favor the giver. A
bribe need not be money or a gift; it
may also be flattery or a favor.

5. The *yetzer ha-ra* was given to a person in order to test his faithfulness to Hashem by not giving in to temptations. By giving in, we have used the *yetzer ha-ra* for sin, which is in itself sinful because we have thereby used it beyond its purpose. (Harav Gifter, *shlita*)

22. וְעַל חֵטָא שְׁחָטְאָנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ
בְּכַחַשׁ וּבְכַזָּב:
FALSE DENIAL AND
FALSE PROMISE
- KACHASH MEANS DENYING (falsely) that something took place in the past, and *kazav* means breaking a previous promise or promising with the intention of not keeping your word.
23. עַל חֵטָא שְׁחָטְאָנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ
בְּלִשׁוֹן הָרָע:
"EVIL TONGUE" = SLANDER
- TELLING SOMEONE SOMETHING derogatory about another Jew, whether causing the latter physical, monetary, or social harm, or even causing no harm at all. Whether the information is true or false, or whether it is spoken in the presence of that person or behind his back makes no difference. (Compare number 40, רכילות.)
24. וְעַל חֵטָא שְׁחָטְאָנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ
בְּלִצּוֹן:
SCOFFING
- RIDICULING A PERSON, a mitzvah, or anything undeserving of such ridicule, or wasting time when Torah can be studied.
25. עַל חֵטָא שְׁחָטְאָנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ
בְּמִשְׁאֵל וּבְמִתָּן:
BUSINESS
- THIS INCLUDES ANY transgression committed in business. Some of the more common ones are robbery, theft, usury, withholding wages or other payments, false weights and measures, and overcharging.
26. וְעַל חֵטָא שְׁחָטְאָנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ
בְּמֵאֲכָל וּבְמִשְׁתֵּה:
FOOD AND DRINK
- ANY TRANSGRESSION COMMITTED in connection with eating or drinking: eating forbidden food, not saying the proper *berachah*, not saying any *berachah*, overeating, eating before *Kiddush*, eating before *davener*, etc.

27. על חטא שחטאנו לפניה
בנשך ובמרבית:
ALL TYPES OF USURY
- THIS EXTENDS TO doing favors that you would not otherwise do for someone who lent you money or for someone you want to lend you money.
28. ועל חטא שחטאנו לפניה
בנטית גרון:
"OUTSTRETCHED THROAT" =
TO ACT HAUGHTILY
- ONE WHO TRIES to attract attention with showy clothing, mannerisms, or by praising himself. (Compare number 31, עינים רמות.)
29. על חטא שחטאנו לפניה
בשקור עין:
"GAZING OF THE EYES" =
MISUSE OF THE EYES
- MISUSING ONE'S EYES by winking or staring at the opposite sex, or in other ways. Also included is looking with envy at another's possessions or wishing someone harm as a result of envy (*ayin ha-ra*). (Compare number 36, צרות עין.)
30. ועל חטא שחטאנו לפניה
בשיח שפתותינו:
LIP SERVICE
- DAVENING, SAYING *BERACHOS*, or learning Torah without proper concentration. (Compare number 11, וירדי פה.)
31. על חטא שחטאנו לפניה
בעינים רמות:
LOFTY EYES = PRIDE
- FEELING SUPERIOR TO others – "looking down" at them. (Compare number 28, נטית גרון.)
32. ועל חטא שחטאנו לפניה
בעזות מצח:
BRAZEN FACE
- CHAZAL SAY THAT one who is an *az panim* is headed for *Gehinnom* (Hell), because an *az panim* feels no embarrassment or inhibitions while he is engaged in questionable acts in the presence of others, no matter who they are.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>וְעַל כָּלֵם
אֱלֹהֵי סְלִיחוֹת,
סַלַּח לָנוּ,
מַחַל לָנוּ,
כַּפֵּר לָנוּ:</p> | <p>And for all of these,
God of forgiveness,
forgive us,
pardon us,
cleans us.</p> |
| <p>33. עַל חֲטָא שְׁחָטָאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ
בְּפְרִיקַת עַל:
INSUBORDINATION</p> | <p>REJECTING ONE'S OBLIGATION to fulfill even a single mitzvah. Also included is shirking a duty, which then falls on someone else's shoulders.</p> |
| <p>34. וְעַל חֲטָא שְׁחָטָאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ
בְּפִלְלוֹת:
COURT MATTERS</p> | <p>THIS IS PRIMARILY for <i>dayanim</i> and others who must render correct decisions for litigants. Also included, however, is not giving someone the benefit of the doubt.</p> |
| <p>35. עַל חֲטָא שְׁחָטָאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ
בְּצַדִּית רַע:
STALKING A FELLOW JEW</p> | <p>USING HIDDEN METHODS to harm a fellow Jew. Even if no harm was actually done, forgiveness is needed for the attempt itself.</p> |
| <p>36. וְעַל חֲטָא שְׁחָטָאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ
בְּצָרוּת עֵינַי:
SMALL-MINDEDNESS</p> | <p>FEELING BAD ABOUT someone else's success (Compare number 29, שִׁיקוֹר, עֵינַי), miserliness, and not dealing with people in a friendly manner.</p> |
| <p>37. עַל חֲטָא שְׁחָטָאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ
בְּקִלּוֹת רֵאשׁ:
LIGHT-MINDEDNESS</p> | <p>FRIVOLITY AND FLIPPANCY come from a lack of earnestness and are conducive to immorality. Sinful in themselves, they lead to many other sins.</p> |

38. וְעַל חֵטְא שְׁחָטָאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ
בְּקִשְׁיוֹת עֲרָף:
STUBBORNNESS REJECTING REPROOF AND failing to learn from punishment: brushing aside sickness, pain, financial loss, and shame as mere “coincidences.”
39. עַל חֵטְא שְׁחָטָאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ
בְּרִיצַת רַגְלִים לְהִרְעֵ:
RUNNING TO DO EVIL THE PLEASURABLE FEELING of “going to sin.” For example, the Torah states, “Do not go to bear tales” – the going is in itself sinful (*Chafetz Chaim*).
40. וְעַל חֵטְא שְׁחָטָאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ
בְּרִכְלוֹת:
TALEBEARING SPEAKING *LASHON HA-RA* (number 23) means saying something derogatory or harmful about someone. But tale-bearing is more than this. It means any statement that may cause hatred or ill feeling between the listener and the individual spoken about (e.g., telling Reuven that his teacher gave the principal a bad report about him. The teacher may have done so for constructive purposes, but Reuven, upon hearing this, will feel anger or hatred toward his teacher [*Chafetz Chaim*]).
41. עַל חֵטְא שְׁחָטָאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ
בְּשְׂבוּעַת שָׁוְא:
WASTED OATH ANY OF THE 4 kinds of oaths: (a) An oath to affirm the obvious – that a chair is a chair; (b) An oath to deny the obvious – that a chair is a lamp; (c) An oath not to perform a mitzvah; (d) An oath to do something that is impossible.
42. וְעַל חֵטְא שְׁחָטָאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ
בְּשִׁנְאָת חֲנָם:
UNJUSTIFIED HATRED HATING SOMEONE WHO did you no harm, merely because you are jealous of him or *don't like his behavior*.⁶ However, it is a mitzvah to hate wicked DEEDS.

6. The Vilna Gaon explains this to mean that since everything that happens to us is decreed in Heaven, it would be hating in vain to hate the person who offended you, since he was only Hashem's messenger.

43. עַל חֵטְא שֶׁחֶטְאוּנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ
בְּתַשׁוּמַת יָד:
"PLACEMENT [OF MONEY]
IN THE HAND" = MONETARY
ABUSE
- THIS REFERS TO sins committed in partnerships and in loans.⁷
44. וְעַל חֵטְא שֶׁחֶטְאוּנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ
בְּתַמְהוֹן לֵבָב:
WONDERING
- WONDERING ABOUT WHY we have problems and worries, and thinking that we have not done anything bad enough to deserve such punishment.
- Also included is sinning while in a state of confusion.

וְעַל כָּלֵם	And for all of these,
אֱלֹהֵי סְלִיחוֹת,	God of forgiveness,
סַלַּח לָנוּ,	forgive us,
מַחַל לָנוּ,	pardon us,
כַּפֵּר לָנוּ:	cleans us.

7. See Rashi to Vayikra 5:21.

וְעַל חַטָּאִים

IN THE DAYS of the *Beis ha-Mikdash* (Holy Temple), when a Jew sinned, the category of the transgression determined the means of rectification that was required. Whether a *korban* (sacrificial offering to God) on the *mizbe'ach* (altar), the death penalty, or some other means – repentance was the main requirement in order to receive God's forgiveness for any sin. Since at present we are temporarily without the *Beis ha-Mikdash*, the Talmud tells us that mentioning the *korbanos* (offerings) in prayer and study is the equivalent of actually offering the proper sacrifice for the atonement of each sin.

In the following section of *Viduy*, we categorize our transgressions¹ according to the sacrifices or punishments necessary for their atonement.

וְעַל חַטָּאִים שְׂאָנוּ חַיְבִים
עֲלֵיהֶם עוֹלָה:
AN OLAH-OFFERING

1. FOR SINS FOR which we owe an *olah*-offering: For sinful thoughts or for failure to fulfill any positive commandment. Examples: non-kosher *tefillin* or *mezuzos*, which are equivalent to not fulfilling the *mitzvah* at all; not respecting parents.

וְעַל חַטָּאִים שְׂאָנוּ חַיְבִים
עֲלֵיהֶם חֲטָאֵת:
A CHATTAS-OFFERING

2. FOR SINS FOR which we owe a *chattas*-offering: For the unintentional transgression of any of 43 specific negative commandments² that, if intentionally

1. In this section, reference is regularly made to *Rabbenu Yonah* of Gerona's *Sha'arei Teshuvah* (*Gates of Repentance*). There you will find elaboration on most of the topics discussed here.

2. Rambam, *Shegagos* 1.

committed, carry the penalty of *kares*. (See number 8.) Examples: Having relations with a *niddah*³ (a menstrual woman or a post-menstrual woman who has not immersed herself in a kosher *mikveh*-ritualarium) – one’s own wife included; desecrating Shabbos⁴ (not knowing the laws of Shabbos does not free one from his obligation not to desecrate it).

וְעַל הַטָּאִים שְׂאֵנוּ חֵיבִים
עֲלֵיהֶם קָרְבַּן עוֹלָה יוֹרֵד:
AN OLEH V'YORED OFFERING

3. THE OLEH V'YORED – “fluctuating” offering – varies in value according to the individual’s financial status, and is only brought for 6 specific sins.⁵ The

2 most common today are swearing falsely, whether intentionally or not, in order to deny knowledge of having witnessed something, and unintentionally swearing falsely concerning something one did or did not do, or plans or does not plan to do.

וְעַל הַטָּאִים שְׂאֵנוּ חֵיבִים
עֲלֵיהֶם אָשָׁם וְדַאי וְתַלּוּי:
AN ASHAM (VADAI OR TALUY)
OFFERING

4. ASHAM VADAI IS brought for the definite transgression of any of 5 specific sins. The 1 most prevalent today is denying under oath one’s obligation to pay or denying one’s possession of someone else’s money

or property. *Asham taluy*, on the other hand, is brought for the unintentional violation of any one of the 43 prohibitions mentioned in number 2 (*chattas*), or where one is uncertain whether or not he violated the prohibition. For example: Two pieces of fat were on the table before him, one permissible (*shuman* = from a kind of animal that may be brought for a sacrifice) and the other not permissible (*chelev*), and he ate one of them and does not know which one he ate. In such a case, an *asham taluy* is brought. (If he later discovers that he ate the prohibited one, he then brings a *chattas*, number 2.)

3. There are 2 types of *niddah*: Here we are only referring to the one classified under Torah law and not by Rabbinical command.

4. This only refers to those prohibitions classified specifically in the category of *chattas*.

5. Rambam, *Shegagos* 10:1.

5. וְעַל הַחֲטָאִים שְׂאָנוּ חַיְבִים
עֲלֵיהֶם מַכַּת מִרְדּוּת:
RABBINICAL LASHING
- LASHINGS⁶ DETERMINED BY the court to force an unwilling person to fulfill a positive commandment from the Torah (e.g., for not wanting to don *tefillin*). They also could use lashes to prevent any breach the court felt necessary to protect (e.g., for transgressing the rabbinical injunction against telling a gentile to do work for a Jew on Shabbos).
6. וְעַל הַחֲטָאִים שְׂאָנוּ חַיְבִים
עֲלֵיהֶם מַלְקוֹת אַרְבָּעִים:
TORAH LASHES
- SINS PUNISHABLE BY Torah lashes⁷ include the intentional active transgression of any one of 207 specific negative commandments,⁸ providing such transgression was preceded by proper warning. Example: A man's shaving off his beard or his sideburns with a razor; eating pig or insects; wearing a garment that contains a combination of linen and wool (*sha'atnez*).
7. וְעַל הַחֲטָאִים שְׂאָנוּ חַיְבִים
עֲלֵיהֶם מִיתָה בִּידֵי
שָׁמַיִם:
DEATH BY HEAVENLY
ADMINISTRATION
- FOR SINS⁹ FOR which we would be put to death by heavenly administration. There are 3 variations.¹⁰ The first is *מִיתָה בִּידֵי שָׁמַיִם*. Examples: For transgression of rabbinical commandments¹¹; for rendering an authoritative opinion in Jewish law while in the presence of one's teacher.¹²

6. For elaboration, see *Gates of Repentance* 3:4-8.

7. For elaboration, see *Gates of Repentance* 3:76-106.

8. Enumerated in Rambam (*Yad ha-Chazakah*) *Hilchos Sanhedrin* 18:1-19.

9. Rambam in *Hilchos Sanhedrin* (19:2-3) enumerates 21 specific commandments whose transgression is subject to this punishment. (For elaboration, see *Gates of Repentance* 3:107-118.) All 21 do not presently apply, since we are temporarily without the *Beis ha-Mikdash* (Holy Temple). The Sages of the Talmud stated that other offenses bear this penalty even today. The above examples are taken from those offenses.

10. See Tosefos on *Yevamos* 2a for elaboration and differentiation, because there is a basic dispute on the matter.

11. *Berachos* 4b; *Eruvin* 21b.

12. For elaboration and specification, see *Shulchan Aruch, Yoreh De'ah* 242.

Rabbenu Yona (*Gates of Repentance* 3:107) explains that the difference between כרת and מיתה בידי שמים is that מיתה בידי שמים is only for the sinner; כרת is for both the sinner and his children.

8. וְעַל הַחֲטָאִים שְׂאֲנוּ חַיִּבִּים
עֲלֵיהֶם כָּרַת וְעִרְרִי:
KAREIS AND CHILDLESSNESS

THE OTHER VARIATIONS of death by Heavenly administration are כרת וערירי.¹³ Examples: For deliberate relations with a *niddah*¹⁴ (a menstrual woman, or a post-menstrual woman who has not immersed herself in a kosher *mikveh*-ritualarium) – one’s own wife included (the punishment here can take the form of childlessness – the third variation); shaming of the Torah by degrading Torah scholars and people devoted to the ways of God. (This also causes the loss of one’s portion in the World to Come.)

9. וְעַל הַחֲטָאִים שְׂאֲנוּ חַיִּבִּים
עֲלֵיהֶם אַרְבַּע מִיתוֹת
בֵּית דִּין:
CAPITAL OFFENSES

FOR CAPITAL OFFENSES for which we would be put to death in one of 4 ways by the rabbinical court¹⁵:

- סְקִילָה by “stoning” (example: desecrating Shabbos¹⁶);
- שְׂרִיפָה by “burning” (example: certain forbidden marital relationships);
- הָרַג by the “sword” = beheading (example: murder);
- וְחָנֵק and by strangulation (example: adultery).

13. Rambam, *Shegagos* 1:2-4. See *Gates of Repentance* 3:119-125. For other causes of loss of one’s portion in the World to Come, see *Gates of Repentance* 3:143-231.

14. There are 2 types of *niddah*. Here we are only referring to the one classified under Torah law and not the one that is rabbinical.

15. The Talmud tells us that even though the *Sanhedrin* is no longer active, the 4 death penalties still continue today through Heavenly administration. Those who deserve to be stoned are smashed or broken in some way; burning takes place literally or through poison; those who deserve “the sword” are killed by a weapon; and strangulation takes place through drowning or a physical obstruction in the throat. For more elaboration, see Rambam, *Hilchos Sanhedrin* 15:10-13; *Gates of Repentance* 3:126-135.

16. This only refers to those prohibitions classified specifically under the title of *chattas*.

10. על מצוות עשה
POSITIVE COMMANDMENTS

10. For failure to fulfill any positive commandment.¹⁸

11. ועל מצוות לא תעשה,
בין שיש בה קום עשה
A PROHIBITION WHICH
CAN BE CORRECTED

And for transgressing any prohibition,¹⁹ whether this transgression can be corrected by a specific commanded action (returning stolen money or goods)²⁰

ובין שאין בה קום עשה,
A PROHIBITION WHICH
CANNOT BE CORRECTED

or whether it cannot be corrected (as in most prohibitions),²¹

את הגלויים לנו
ואת שאינם גלויים לנו,
את הגלויים לנו
בכר אמרנום
לפניך
והודינו לך
עליהם,
ואת שאינם גלויים לנו
לפניך הם גלויים
וידועים,
בדבר שנאמר
הנסתרת
ליהוה אלהינו

the (sins) revealed to us
and those unrevealed to us.
The (sins) revealed to us,
we have already enumerated
before You
and confessed to You
concerning them.
And, those (sins) unrevealed to us,
before You, they are revealed
and clearly known;
As it is written,
“The Hidden is (only revealed)
to God, our God

18. See number 1 above – this section, *korban olah*. For more elaboration see *Gates of Repentance* 3:9-23.

19. For more elaboration see *Gates of Repentance* 3:24-106.

20. For more elaboration see *Gates of Repentance* 3:24-25.

21. Some explain the first of the last 2 phrases to mean any prohibition transgressed through an action, and the following phrase to mean a prohibition violated inactively. (Compare *Siddur HaGra* with *Siddur Otzar ha-Tefillos*.) For more elaboration see *Gates of Repentance* 3:26-75.

וְהִנָּגַלְתָּ
 לָנוּ וּלְבָנֵינוּ עַד עוֹלָם
 לְעֲשׂוֹת אֶת כָּל דְּבָרֵי הַתּוֹרָה
 הַזֹּאת:

כִּי אַתָּה
 סֶלְחָן לְיִשְׂרָאֵל
 וּמְחַלֵּן
 לְשִׁבְטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
 בְּכָל דּוֹר וָדוֹר,
 וּמִבְּלַעֲדֶיךָ
 אֵין לָנוּ מֶלֶךְ,
 מִוֹחֵל וְסוֹלֵחַ אֶלָּא אַתָּה:

אֱלֹהֵי, עַד שֶׁלֹּא נִוצַרְתִּי
 אֵינִי כְדָאִי,
 וְעַכְשָׁיו שֶׁנִּוצַרְתִּי
 כְּאִלּוּ לֹא נִוצַרְתִּי,
 עָפָר אֲנִי בְּחַיִּי
 קָל וְחֹמֶר בְּמִיתָתִי,
 הֵרִי אֲנִי לְפָנֶיךָ
 כְּכֵלִי
 מְלֵא בּוֹשָׁה וּכְלֵמָה:
 יִהְיֶה רְצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ
 יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי
 וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתַי
 שֶׁלֹּא אֶחָטָא עוֹד,

and the revealed (are revealed)
 to us and our children forever
 to fulfill this complete Torah.”

For You are
 the Forgiver of the Jewish People
 and the Pardoner
 of the Tribes of Yeshurun
 in every generation,
 and, besides You,
 we possess no other King,
 Pardoner or Forgiver, only You.

God, before I was formed
 I was unworthy to be created.
 Now that I have been formed,
 it is as if I had not been formed²²
 I am like dust²³ while I live,
 all the more so when I am dead.
 Here I am before You
 like a utensil
 filled with shame.
 May it be Your will,
 Adonai, my God,
 and the God of my fathers,
 [to assist me] that I should sin no
 more,

22. For I have not accomplished my mission in life, namely, to accumulate more merits than sins.

23. Worthless, insignificant.

וַיְמַחְשְׁאֵתִי לְפָנֶיךָ	and what I have already sinned
	before You,
מִחֹק בְּרַחֲמֶיךָ הַרְבִּים,	expunge through Your bountiful
	mercy,
אַבֵּל לֹא עַל יְדֵי	but not through
יְסוּרִים וְחִלְיִים רָעִים:	suffering and harsh ailments.

אֱלֹהִי, נָצַר לְשׁוֹנֵי מִרְעַ וּשְׁפָתַי מִדְּבַר מְרָמָה, וְלִמְקַלְלֵי נַפְשֵׁי תוֹדִים
וְנַפְשֵׁי כְּעֹפָר לְכֹל תַּהֲיֶה. פָּתַח לִבִּי בְּתוֹרָתְךָ, וּבְמִצְוֹתֶיךָ תִּרְדֹּף נַפְשִׁי,
וְכֹל הַחַוְשָׁבִים עָלַי רָעָה, מִהֲרָה הֲפֵר עֲצָתְךָ וְקִלְקַל מַחְשַׁבְתְּךָ.

יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ, יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתַי, שְׁלֹא תַעֲלֶה קִנְאָת אָדָם עָלַי וְלֹא
קִנְאָתִי עַל אֲחֵרִים, וְשְׁלֹא אֶכְעֹס הַיּוֹם וְלֹא אֶכְעִיֶסָה, וְתַצִּילֵנִי מִיֶּצֶר הָרַע וְתֵן בְּלִבִּי
הַכְנָעָה וְעִנּוּה. מִלִּפְנֵי וְאֱלֹהֵינוּ יַחַד שְׂמָךְ בְּעוֹלָמְךָ, בְּנֵה עִירָה יְסֹד בֵּיתְךָ וְשִׁכְלֵל
הַיְכָלְךָ וְקַבֵּץ קְבוּצַת גְּלוּיֹת, וּפְדֵה צֹאנֶךָ וְשִׂמַח עַדְתְּךָ.

עֲשֵׂה לְמַעַן שְׂמָךְ, עֲשֵׂה לְמַעַן יְמִינְךָ, עֲשֵׂה לְמַעַן קִדְשָׁתְךָ, עֲשֵׂה לְמַעַן
תּוֹרָתְךָ, לְמַעַן יִחַלְצוֹן יְדִידֶיךָ הוֹשִׁיעָה יְמִינְךָ וְעִנּוּנִי: יְהִיו לְרָצוֹן אִמְרֵי
פִּי וְהִגִּיוֹן לִבִּי לְפָנֶיךָ, יְהוָה צוּרֵי וְגוֹאֲלֵי: עֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם בְּמְרוֹמָיו, הוּא
יַעֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן:

יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ, יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ, שְׂיִבְנֶה בַּיִת הַמְּקֻדָּשׁ
בְּמַהֲרָה בְּיָמֵינוּ, וְתֵן חֶלְקֵנוּ בְּתוֹרָתְךָ, וְשֵׁם נַעֲבֹדָה בְּיִרְאָה פִּימֵי עוֹלָם
וּבְשָׁנִים קְדָמוֹנִיּוֹת. וְעַרְבָה לִיהוָה מְנַחַת יְהוּדָה וִירוּשָׁלָּיִם, בְּיָמֵי עוֹלָם
וּבְשָׁנִים קְדָמוֹנִיּוֹת:

אל ארך אפים

(This is said prior to the Thirteen Attributes of God's Mercy:)

אל ארך אפים אתה	God, You are the All-powerful One Who [compassionately] post- pones punishment;
ובעל הרחמים נקראת ודרך תשובה הורית,	You are called the Master of Mercy, And You have taught the path of repentance.
גדלת רחמיה וחסדיה	The greatness of Your mercy and generosity
תזכר היום ובכל יום לזרע ידידיה:	Remember today and every day for [the benefit of] the descendants of Your beloved ones (Avraham, Yitzchak, and Ya'akov).
תפן אלינו ברחמים, כי אתה הוא בעל הרחמים, בתחנון ובתפלה פניה נקדם,	Turn to us with mercy For you are the Master of mercy. We approach You with supplication and prayer
בהודעת לענו מקדם:	As you long ago made [it] known to the humble one (Moshe Rabbenu).
מחרון אפה שוב, כמו בתורתך פתוב: ובצל בנפיה נחסה ונתלונן,	Turn away from Your anger As is written in Your Torah. And in Your shadow we will be protected and dwell

בְּיוֹם וַיֵּרֵד יְהוָה בְּעָנָן,

As on the day “God descended in a cloud” (and protected Moshe while teaching him the Thirteen Attributes).

תַּעֲבֹר עַל פְּשַׁע וְתִמְחָה
אָשָׁם,

Cast away rebellious sins and dissolve unintentional sin

בְּיוֹם וַיִּתְּצֵב עִמּוֹ שָׁם,

As on the day [You]¹ stood with him (Moshe) there (on Mount Sinai) [and forgave the sin of the golden calf].

תִּשְׁמַע וְתִשְׁמַע וְתִשְׁמַע
מֵאָמַר,

Hear our cries, and heed our utterances

בְּיוֹם וַיִּקְרָא בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה,

As on the day He² called out the name *Adonai* – יְהוָה – (proclaiming God as the Source of mercy).

וַיֵּשֶׁב נֹאמַר:

And there it was said:

וַיַּעֲבֹר יְהוָה עַל-פְּנֵיו וַיִּקְרָא:

And God passed before him and He³ proclaimed:

(Continue on p. 53, the Thirteen Attributes of God's Mercy.)

1. See Ramban to *Shemos* 34:5.

2. See Ibn Ezra and Seforno to *Shemos* 34:5,6.

3. Ibid.

אל מלך יושב

(This is said prior to the Thirteen Attributes of God's Mercy:)

אל מלך יושב על כסא רחמים מתנהג בהסידות	All-powerful God, King, Who sits on the throne of mercy ¹ ; Who deals generously, beyond the limitations of justice;
מוחל עונות עמו מעביר ראשון ראשון	Who forgives the sins of His people; Who casts away [the sins] one by one ² ;
מרבה מחילה לחטאים וסליחה לפושעים	Who increasingly pardons uninten- tional sins and forgives rebellious ones;
עשה צדקות עם כל בשר ורוח לא כרעתם תגמול	Who performs charities ³ with each living being; Do not punish them according to their evil [deeds].
אל הורית לנו לומר שלש עשרה	All-powerful God: You have taught us to recite the Thirteen (Attri- butes of Mercy), ⁴

1. When in the course of His daily judgment, He finds the world liable, God moves from the throne of *din* (justice) and sits upon the throne of *rachamim* (mercy), awaiting repentance from mankind.

2. If one's sins and merits are balanced, He removes the first sin so as to tip the scale in man's favor. See number 7 – רב חסד – in the section of the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy.

3. See *Tehillim* 103:6; *Yeshayahu* 45:23,24; and Rashi to 23.

4. See *Rosh Hashanah* 17b. When the Jews recite the Thirteen Attributes, God guarantees them at least a partial answer.

וְזָכַר לָנוּ הַיּוֹם בְּרִית שְׁלֹשׁ עָשָׂרָה	So, recall for our benefit on this day the Covenant of the Thirteen (Attributes of Mercy), ⁵
כְּמוֹ שֶׁהוֹדַעְתָּ לְעַנְיֵנוּ מִקְדָּם	As You long ago made known to the humble one (Moshe Rabbenu),
כְּמוֹ שֶׁכָּתוּב וַיֵּרַד יְהוָה בְּעָנָן וַיִּתְיַצֵּב עִמּוֹ שָׁם וַיִּקְרָא בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה וַיַּעֲבֵר יְהוָה עַל-פָּנָיו וַיִּקְרָא:	As it is written: And God descended in a cloud (on Mount Sinai) And stood with him (Moshe) there. And He ⁵ proclaimed: <i>Adonai</i> , as God's name. And God passed by before him and proclaimed:

(Continue on p. 53: the Thirteen Attributes of God's Mercy.)

5. See אל ארך אפים p. 50, footnote 2.

י"ג מדות של רחמים

The Thirteen Attributes (Middos) of God's Mercy

THE TALMUD TEACHES: God promised Moshe that whenever 10 or more Jews in unison would beseech Him for mercy by reciting the Thirteen Attributes, He would always answer their prayers at least partially.¹

The following, primarily based on the commentary *Mattei Levi*, lists the underlying thought for each attribute.

יהוה .1 The name of God written in this form refers to the attribute of mercy bestowed upon His creatures, even before a sin is committed. Even though God knows the sin will be committed, He still sustains the potential sinner.²

יהוה .2 The repetition of the Name of God written in this form refers to the bestowal of mercy after the sin is committed, making it possible for the sinner's repentance to be accepted by God. (Compare number 13, ונקח.)

אל .3 This name of God denotes the only power capable of sustaining all creatures.

רחום .4 God is merciful: Even while punishing the sinner, He does not annihilate him.

1. *Rosh Hashanah* 17b.

2. See comment of HaRav Gifter, *shlita*, p. iii, number ג.

- וְחַנוּן .5 God is gracious (free-giving): He gives good even to those who are undeserving of it.
- אָרְךָ אַפִּים .6 God is “long to anger”: He waits for repentance before exacting punishment.
- וְרַב-חֶסֶד .7 God is generous and kind. If one’s sins and mitzvos are balanced, He removes the first of the sins to tip the scale to a favorable verdict.
- וְאַמֶּת .8 God brings His words to actuality. He gives rewards even to sinners for their good deeds.
- נִצֵּר חֶסֶד
לְאֵלֵפוּיִם .9 God guards a person’s merits for as long as 2,000 generations. He will use their merits to aid the person’s descendants, as He promised.
- וְנִשָּׂא עֵוֹן .10 God sustains³ and endures the evil produced by
וְפָשַׁע .11 sins committed not only in a conscious manner, but
וְחִטָּאתָה .12 even those committed with rebellious intent, and all the more so those committed unintentionally. (Compare number 1.)
- וְנִקְיָה .13 God entirely cleanses those who repent to be just like they had never⁴ sinned, but He does not cleanse those who do not repent.

3. For example: If one turns on a light on Shabbos, God does not extinguish this light, but allows it to exist and, at the same time, God endures the evil created by this act. He does all this despite the audacity of the sinner in disobeying His will.

4. This differs from number 2 above, since that attribute only refers to the removal of the necessity for punishment, but the scar of the sin remains. *V’nakkeh* makes it as if the sin was never committed (see Rashi and Sifsei Chachamim to *Shemos* 34:7). If one’s repentance came as a result of his fear of punishment from God for his sins, his intentional sins are reckoned as unintentional sins. If one’s repentance came through love for God and His commandments, his sins are reckoned as merits (see Seforno to *Shemos* 34:7). See *Gates of Repentance* 1:9 for the method of retroactive cleansing, as if one never sinned.

Hence, since You possess these attributes:

וְסָלַחְתָּ לְעוֹנֵינוּ וְלַחַטָּאתֵנוּ וַנִּחַלְתָּנוּ:	Forgive our intentional sins, as well as our unintentional sins, and take us unto Yourself as Your special ⁵ inheritance.
סָלַח לָנוּ אֲבִינוּ כִּי חָטָאנוּ, מָחַל לָנוּ מֶלֶכְנוּ כִּי פָשַׁעְנוּ: כִּי אַתָּה אֲדֹנָי טוֹב וְסָלַח וְרַב חֶסֶד לְכֹל קוֹרְאֶיךָ:	Forgive us, our Father, for we have sinned unintentionally. Pardon us, our King, for we have sinned rebelliously. For You, <i>Adonai</i> , are good and forgiving, and are generously kind to all who call upon You.

5. Rashi to *Shemos* 34:9.

Supplement:

יסוד התשובה

The Essence of Teshuvah

GOD TAUGHT US the way to proper repentance through His prophets:

Turn yourselves and others away from all of your iniquities so that they will no longer ensnare you. Cast off from yourselves all your sins and develop within yourselves freshness of mind and freshness of spirit.¹

If you have sinned and seek to repent, allow me to guide you:

The first thing you must do is cast off your sins. Consider yourself newly born, possessing neither merit nor guilt. Today your life begins anew! Today you will direct your life so as to avoid any deviation from the way God calls good. This will lead you to true penitence. By casting off the burden of the sins of your past, you will not be hampered by feelings of shame or guilt.

You might think, "How dare I think I can repent when I have committed so many sins?! Can I approach God hypocritically, like a thief trying to save face upon being discovered?" Do not feel that way. Such thoughts stem only from the baser side of our nature, which constantly tries to make us feel that we cannot attain decency. Realize, rather, that it is God's will to receive all who repent, no matter how far they may have strayed. So cast off your past, freshen your mind, and express your faith in God:

Oh, my God, I have been sinning in various ways (specify the sins) all my life. Now I desire to truly return to You with my mind, my soul, and all that I possess. I acknowledge my past and wish to abandon it. I wish to develop within myself a freshness of mind

1. *Yechezkel* 18:30-31.

and of outlook in order to be diligent and punctilious in Your service. Therefore, Hashem, my God, Who receives and assists those who wish to repent, accept my penitence and help me to stay in Your service. Help me withstand any adversary, physical or spiritual, who may try to weaken my determination or keep me from penitence. Subdue my rebellious nature and grant me a submissive one instead, that I may continue to go in Your ways. Hashem, my God, accept your servant's prayer and plea. Even if I do not deserve to be accepted because of my many sins, I beseech You: Accept my penitence anyhow. Do not spurn me.

Make this prayer a habit. Accustom yourself to avoiding any kind of sin. When you rise in the morning, remind yourself of your determination to repent, not to make a single misstep. For you will later review the day's actions. Eager and resolved to carry out the will of your Father in Heaven, you will guard yourself even from sins that seem insignificant at the time, for you will carefully judge every deed before you do it. King David said,² "Why do I fear the day of retribution? Because the 'sins of my heel' will surround me!" He was referring to the sins a man commits by "stepping" on God's commandments when he considers them too unimportant to observe.

Before eating, review the hours since rising to see if you committed any sins, and quietly confess those you find. This confession will help keep the sin from recurring, for it is tempts you again, you will say to yourself, "How can I commit this sin after having just confessed? If I give in, I will be a hypocrite. I certainly possess sufficient willpower to restrain myself from giving in to impulse for so short a time!" If you find no sins, praise and thank the Creator for assisting you in overcoming temptation,³ and for granting you a moment of penitence in this world.⁴

Begin every meal of the day with the same kind of accounting. (You many find it useful to use the prayer mentioned above as a framework for your accounting.) Continue in this manner from the first day of your

2. *Tehillim* 49:6.

3. The Talmud (*Sukkah* 52b) states that without the Holy One's assistance, we could not overpower our impulses.

4. The Mishnah (*Avos* 4:17) teaches that this is, in one respect, greater than all of the bliss experienced in the World of Reward.

repentance for at least a month, or even for a year, until you are firm in your service of God, and have abandoned all your improper ways.

Once you have come so far from your past transgressions that you can avoid committing them even when opportunities to sin present themselves, you need no longer fear them, for Heaven will assist you. (This is a sign of complete repentance); your past sins will eventually be regarded as merits. As to the transgressions you feel you will not be able to avoid should you be tempted by them, be constantly remorseful and regretful of them. Beseech the Almighty (perhaps in your daily accounting) to forgive you; and torment yourself in some way to help atone for them. **If you are too weak to endure prolonged mortification or fasts, the best thing to do is to refrain from completely satisfying your everyday pleasures, such as eating and drinking. This is the opinion of Rabbenu Avraham ben David (Ra'avad zt"l), one of the world's saintliest men, who said that the best way to achieve holiness is to refrain from food as follows: Do not completely abandon the eating of meat or the drinking of wine, for what the Torah has forbidden you is sufficient. But in the course of your meal, when you would still like to eat more, refrain from fully satisfying your desire. Leave over some of that food in honor of your Creator. This will do more to remind you to love God and to prevent you from sinning than fasting once a week. For each day, with every meal or snack, you exercise self-control in honor of God.**

Apply yourself to Torah study. If you have a regular study session, intensify your study and devote more time to it. For the study of Torah leads to its observance – the fulfillment of God's mitzvos and the improvement of your self. The torment you suffer when subduing your inclinations and desires in order to advance in Torah study is reckoned as the torment of penance, but it is really the torment of love – love of God.

Adapted by M.B. Yanowitz from Rabbenu Yona of Gerona's *Yesod ha-Teshuvah*.
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מבחן

Educational Questionnaire

When using the *Viduy* booklet as a text:

- Teachers: Here are suggested questions to use when testing your students.
- Individuals: Test yourselves.

Answers appear directly after each question – in the form of references to where they are located throughout the booklet.

IMPORTANT OBSERVATION

1. If one mentions no sins in his *viduy*, other than those printed in the standard *machzor*, how many times during Yom Kippur will he confess to sinning through speech? (Answer located on p. vi)

INTRODUCTION

2. How many components are required for a complete *teshuvah*? What are they? (Page 7, paragraphs 1 and 2)
3. Concerning the components for a complete *teshuvah*, what is the difference between a sin of בין אדם לחברו and a sin of בין אדם למקום? (Page 7, paragraphs 1 and 2)

A PREFACE TO *TESHUVAH*

4. Is Hashem interested in repentance aroused through suffering? Explain briefly. (Page 12)

THE FOUR INCENTIVES TO *TESHUVAH*

5. Briefly state the 4 general incentives to *teshuvah*. (Page 13)

THE LAWS PERTAINING TO ASKING PARDON FROM ONE'S FELLOW MAN PRIOR TO YOM KIPPUR

6. What basically must an offender do in order to appease those whom he has offended? (Pages 14-15, number 1)
7. List the 4 specific points involved in the offender's approach to appeasing the offended. (Pages 15-16, number 2)
8. Concerning pardoning, state the 2 acceptable reactions of one who has been falsely accused (*motzi shem ra*). (Page 17, number 3)
9. List the 5 points discussed regarding one requesting forgiveness from one who is no longer alive. (Pages 17-18, number 4)
10. What 3 points pertain to immersing oneself in a *mikveh* the day before Yom Kippur? (Page 18, number 5)

THE LAWS PERTAINING TO *VIDUY* RECITATION

11. What is the *Tefillah Zakah* and why do we say it? (Page 19, number 1.b.i)
12. How should one conduct himself concerning the enumeration of additional sins not listed in the *machzor*? (Page 20, number 2b.)
13. List the 5 points pertaining to the proper position to maintain while reciting *Viduy*. (Page 21, number 3)
14. Even though it is prohibited to speak during the recital of *Viduy*, when and what is permissible? (Page 22, number 4)

15. Does one say the *pasuk* of יהיו לרצון וגו' before saying *Viduy*? (Page 22, number 4b and c)
16. Why do we beat our chest while saying *Viduy*? (Page 22, number 5)
17. Is one obligated on a following Yom Kippur to reconfess a sin which he has not repeated since his confession on the previous Yom Kippur? (Page 22, number 6)

A SHORTCUT TO TESHUVAH

18. List the 4 minimum ingredients needed for a shortcut to *teshuvah*. (Page 23)
19. Explain the first 2 briefly. (Page 23)
20. Explain the second 2 briefly. (Page 23)

VIDUY BY THE ALEF-BEIS

21. Explain briefly 1 reason for saying *Viduy* according to the order of the *Alef-Beis*. (Page 25)

אשמונו

22. What are the similarities and differences between *פשענו* and *אשמונו, בגדנו, מרדנו*? (Pages 26 and 27)
23. What is the similarity and difference between *העוינו* and *עוינו*? (Page 27)
24. What is the similarity and difference between *והרשענו* and *רשענו*? (Pages 27 and 28)
25. What is the similarity and difference between *דברנו דופי* and *כזבנו*? (Pages 26 and 27)

על חטא

26. What are the 3 underlying points that one should be aware of before confessing each sin? (Page 32 in the box)
27. Why must we confess a sin we committed through אונס (accidentally)? (Page 32, number 1)
28. What common factor is inherent in all sins, whether committed בגלוי (openly) or בסתר (secretly)? (Page 33, number 5)
29. Sins which are committed by permitting oneself to be deceived by the יצר הרע belong to which category? (Page 33, number 8)
30. Does וידוי פה refer to our saying Viduy on Yom Kippur? Explain. (Page 34, number 11)
31. In what way could one have avoided sinning unintentionally? (Page 34, number 13)
32. What are the 3 categories of חילול שם ה'? (Page 35, number 16)
33. Since the יצר הרע is involved in every חטא, what is added in the על חטא שחטאנו לפניך ביצר הרע? (Page 36, number 19)
34. What does בכפת שחר refer to? (Page 36, number 21)
35. Must לשון הרע harm the offended in order to be considered a sin, or is such talk – in and of itself – sufficient to be prohibited? (Page 37, number 23)
36. Name at least 4 transgressions one could commit while eating and drinking. (Page 37, number 26)
37. What is the difference between שיה שפתותינו and וידוי פה? (Page 38, number 30)

38. What punishment is incurred by an עזו פנים? (Page 38, number 32)
39. State briefly: When is קשיות עורף considered a good attribute, and when is it considered a sin? How does it affect people today? (Page 40, number 38)
40. What is the difference between לשון הרע and רכילות? (Page 37, number 23; and page 40, number 40.) Take note of the important correction in לשון הרע from the first edition of the Viduy booklet.
41. Give an example of what causes unjustified hatred. (Page 40, number 42)
42. Explain תמהון לבב. (Page 41, number 44)

ועל חטאים

43. Why is the *korban* called עולה ויורד? (Page 43, number 3)
44. What is the difference between מכת מרדות and מלקות? (Page 44, numbers 5 and 6)
45. Name the 3 types of death penalties inflicted by Heavenly administration. (Pages 44-45, numbers 7 and 8)
46. List the 4 מתות בית דין. (Page 45, number 9)

אל ארך אפים

47. In the *pasuk* ויעבר ה' על פניו ויקרא, who proclaimed the attributes of Hashem – Hashem or Moshe? (Page 50, last line)

אל מלך יושב

48. What did Hashem guarantee the Jewish People for their recital of the Thirteen Attributes of God's Mercy? (Page 51, footnote 4)

THE THIRTEEN ATTRIBUTES (*MIDDOS*) OF GOD'S MERCY

49. What is the difference between the first and second שם?
(Page 53, numbers 1 and 2)
50. Through the attribute of גוצר חסד לאלפים, what benefit do we derive from our ancestors' merits? (Page 54, number 9)
51. What is the dual meaning of נושא? (Page 54, numbers 10-12)
52. What is the difference between the second שם and ונקה?
(Page 54, footnote 4)

THE ESSENCE OF *TESHUVAH*

53. Suggest some ways to avoid sinning. (Page 57)
54. What is the sign that a penitent has truly reached complete repentance? (Page 58, paragraph 1)

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