

VIDUY: OWNING OUR MISTAKES

Viduy means admitting the wrong things we've done. It's one of the most important parts of doing teshuvah and of all the tefillos of Yom Kippur! We say *Viduy* ten times throughout Yom Kippur – during each of the five times we recite *Shemoneh Esrei* as well as during the *Chazaras Hashatz* (Chazzan's repetition of *Shemoneh Esrei*). It's written in the order of the *aleph-beis* to make it easier to remember. We stand humbly, slightly bent over, and as we list each sin, we lightly strike our chest with our fist. It's like saying: "It was my impulses—my heart—that led me to mess up." If you remember a specific sin not included in the regular *viduy*, quietly express it here. By speaking honestly and showing regret, we start to clean our slate and return to Hashem.

This Viduy companion is not meant to replace the Viduy itself, but to serve as an additional resource to make it easier to connect more deeply with its age-old words. It can be used as a springboard for reflecting on areas in need of teshuvah.

Ashamnu – We have become guilty, we have damaged our spiritual core

- We've exposed ourselves to things that dull our sensitivity to growth.
- We waste energy looking at others' lives instead of fixing our own.
- We've viewed or shared content that lowers us.
- We neglect the things and people that matter most.

Reflection: *What's one thing holding you back from being your ideal self?*

Bagadnu – We have betrayed

- We ask Hashem for what we lack but forget to thank Him for what we have.
- We project our inner frustration onto others.
- We don't truly listen—we interpret instead.

Reflection: *List 10 things Hashem has given you this past week.*

Gazalnu – We have robbed

- We hide our real selves from others.
- We use work time for personal needs.
- We make decisions for convenience, not integrity.
- We laugh off dishonesty instead of confronting it.

Reflection: *Where can I be more honest and courageous?*

Dibarnu Dofi – We have spoken slander

- We say things about people we wouldn't say to their face.
- We enjoy or spread gossip.
- We dismiss others too quickly.
- Our words of criticism outweigh praise.
- We consume media that mocks or tears others down.

Reflection: *Can I shift my speech toward the positive?*

He'evinu – We have perverted

- We've chosen what's easy over what's right.
- We've influenced others negatively.
- We don't talk about spiritual topics.
- We focus too much on ourselves.
- We encourage others to waste time too.

Reflection: *Think of someone you can uplift—and start now.*

Ve'hirshanu – We have led others to sin

- We encourage people to sin.
- We don't try to make the world a better place.
- We don't speak up when something is wrong.
- We drain others with negativity instead of radiating positivity

Reflection: *How can I help the people around me grow?*

Zadnu – We have sinned intentionally and justified it

- When did I last give something up for Hashem?
- We allow outside influences to shape our values.
- We choose role models who do not help us become better people.
- We avoid making the right decision by claiming it's "complicated"?

Reflection: *Try arguing the other side of a disagreement to honestly assess what is right.*

Chamasnu – We have taken advantage of others

- We look down on others.
- We use people for what they can do for us.
- We favor people based on status.
- We point out others' limits without encouraging their strengths.

Reflection: *What strength does someone else have that I admire?*

Tafalnu Sheker – We have clung to falsehood

- We exaggerate or misrepresent reality.
- We believe other's distorted views.
- We believe and pass along rumors.
- We judge others too fast.

Reflection: *Can I unplug from sources that don't value truth?*

Ya'atznu Ra – We have given bad advice

- We give advice too quickly without thinking.
- We don't take other people's problems seriously.
- We give biased advice that benefit us instead of them.

Reflection: *When someone asks you for advice, first stop and make sure you really understand their situation.*

Kizavnu – We have deceived

- We promise things we don't intend to keep.
- We excuse ourselves by saying people don't expect others to keep their word.
- We mislead with words.
- We follow the crowd over our own values.

Reflection: *Avoid words like "always" or "never" unless they're true.*

Latznu – We have mocked

- We make fun of meaningful things.
- We ridiculed honest and dedicated people.
- We accept a world that steps on others to succeed.
- We sometimes hide our Judaism.

Reflection: *When have I chosen long-term meaning over short-term fun?*

Maradnu – We have rebelled

- We know what Hashem wants, but defy Him.
- We haven't made a plan of how to accomplish what we know Hashem wants.
- We refused to keep a halacha because we don't think it makes sense.
- We treat mitzvos like feel-good customs, not commands.

Reflection: *Speak about Hashem at your next Shabbos or Yom Tov seudah (meal).*

Ni'atznu – We have angered Hashem

- We showed disrespect for Hashem.
- We give more time to our bodies than to our souls.
- We lack reverence for mitzvos.

Reflection: *How much time do I spend focusing on spiritual pursuits?*

Sararnu – We have turned away

- We don't care about mitzvos.
- We've allowed gifts of blessing and prosperity to make us complacent.
- We dodge responsibility and avoid leadership roles.
- We're quick to form opinions without learning.

Reflection: *How often do I miss opportunities for mitzvos?*

Avinu – We have become twisted

- We exchange simple honesty for corrupted reasoning.
- We get drawn into undignified conversations.
- We don't distance ourselves from vulgar content.

Reflection: *How can I identify with my higher self?*

Pashanu – We have denied the validity of mitzvos

- We pick and choose parts of Judaism.
- Our priorities are conflicted.

- We don't think enough about our values.

Reflection: *Which mitzvah can I strengthen this year?*

Tzararnu – We have caused pain

- We hurt others and walk away.
- We ignore others' pain and just focus on our own lives.
- We have made commitments that cause us spiritual harm.

Reflection: *Think of someone you know who is in pain, and focus on experiencing their pain with them.*

Kishinu Oref – We have been stubborn

- We blame Hashem when things go wrong but forget Him when they go right.
- We treat life like a string of coincidences.
- We see difficulties as chance, not a result of our sins.
- We stubbornly resist growth.

Reflection: *How much in my day do I really control?*

Rashanu – We have acted wickedly

- We forget we're here to spread goodness.
- We do things that the Torah categorizes as wicked, like hitting others, stealing and planning to sin.
- We see morals as opinions, not truths.
- We show off our sins.

Reflection: *What's something I did that I'm ashamed of?*

Shichasnu – We have corrupted our character

- We've been arrogant.
- We've gotten extremely angry.
- We are apathetic towards charities.
- We don't care about sins related to immorality.

Reflection: *Before Yom Kippur, Write up a character analysis of yourself and decide which areas you want to improve in.*

Ti'avnu – We have been abominable

- We lost our self-respect.
- We ignore what shapes our character.
- We do things that are disgusting in Hashem's eyes.

Reflection: *What filters can I add to protect my soul?*

Ta'inu – We have gone astray

- We've lost sight of our goals and direction.
- We reject criticism.
- We limit Judaism to specific times or places.

Reflection: *Find a friend to grow with.*

Titanu – We have scorned those who could guide us

- We don't ask Hashem for help with our spirituality.
- We have strayed and brought others along with us.
- We don't seek guidance from those that are moral.
- We don't feel the pain of distancing ourselves from Hashem.

Reflection: *Think of a role model you could ask for guidance from.*

For more info about the Torah Nuggets, please contact curriculum@oorah.org