

FOR CLASS #4

VIDUY

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Translation:

“How does one confess? [He or she] says: 'Please God! I have intentionally sinned, I have sinned out of lust and emotion, and I have sinned unintentionally. I have done [such-and-such] and I regret it, and I am ashamed of my deeds, and I shall never return to such a deed.' That is the essence of confession, and all who are frequent in confessing and take great value in this matter, indeed is praiseworthy.” (Mishneh Torah: Hil. Teshuvah Chapter 1, Law 2).

The returning of one's soul to G-d at the end of its journey in this world is probably the most profound moment in a person's life. It is for this purpose that our sages prepared a special set of prayers called *Viduy*, "Confession," to be recited before one departs from this world. These prayers evoke G-d's mercy, and bring great atonement upon the person.

Viduy reminds us that what really matters is our relationship with G-d and with our fellows, and not material possessions or accomplishments. It is a truly powerful message for everyone.

Preparing for the Viduy

One should not delay reciting Viduy out of fear that it may be a bad omen. Many people have recited the Viduy and gone on to live many long years. In fact, saying the Viduy is helpful for one's recovery, as sincere repentance brings merit to the person and can nullify a severe decree from Heaven.

It is best for Viduy to be recited with a clear mind. Therefore, one should say it before one becomes too weak. If one cannot speak, he/she may say the Viduy in his/her heart.