The Sztokfisz Edition

ערוך השולחן

לרבינו הגאון

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אורח חיים

הלכות יום הכיפורים

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Aruch HaShulchan

by Rabbi Yechiel Michel HaLevi Epstein

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from the Mishnah Berurah, Shulchan Aruch HaRav, and today's poskim.
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A NOTE ON METHODOLOGY

The Nature of this Work

This volume presents an original English elucidation and commentary, prepared through a combination of advanced language and translation technology and human editorial oversight. The methods employed were carefully configured to adhere to Orthodox Jewish *hashkafa* and to preserve fidelity to the original Hebrew text. Even so, this edition does not carry the authority of a translation prepared and certified by a full team of rabbinic scholars.

Usage and Limitations

This translation is intended as a tool to help advanced learners access the depth of the original work. It is **not** intended to replace the original Hebrew source, nor to serve as a substitute for study under a qualified teacher.

Because the nuance of Torah study often transcends any single method of preparation, we ask the reader to keep two things in mind:

1. **Verification:** Any novel insight, ruling, or conclusion drawn from this translation should be checked against the original Hebrew.
2. **Consultation:** All practical questions or derived lessons should be discussed with and verified by a qualified rabbinic authority before being relied upon.

The goal of this edition is to make these teachings accessible to a wider audience, but the responsibility for accurate understanding and practical application remains with the reader.

לזכות

ילדינו היקרים שיחיו

אורי זלמן
דויד בערל
גולדה יוכבד
אהרן יעקוב

יהי רצון שזכות הדפסת ספר זה תעמוד להם,
שיזכו לגדול לתורה לחופה ולמעשים טובים,
להמשיך במסורת אבותיהם,
ושיהיו דברי התורה תמיד מתוקים וערבים בפיהם.

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אברהם כתריאל בן יטקע בעילה
חיקע לאה בת פעסי
שטוקפיש

ס. פאולו, ברזיל

§2 (תָּנוּ רַבָּנַן: וְכָךְ שָׁנִינוּ בַּבָּרַיְיתָא שָׁם: מִצְוַת וִידּוּי – עֶרֶב יוֹם הַכִּיפּוּרִים עִם חֲשֵׁיכָה. — (The Rabbis taught: The mitzvah of vidui is on Erev Yom Kippur at nightfall. אֲבָל אָמְרוּ חֲכָמִים: יִתְוַודֶּה קוֹדֶם שֶׁיֹּאכַל וכו'. — But the Sages said: He should confess before he eats, etc. – ואף על פי שהתוודה קודם וכו' מתוודה לאחר שיאכל וישתה, שמא אירע חטא בסעודה. — And even though he confessed before, etc. — he confesses after he eats and drinks, lest a sin occurred during the meal. וְאַף עַל פִּי שֶׁהִתְוַודָּה עַרְבִית – יִתְוַודֶּה שַׁחֲרִית וכו', מוּסָף וכו', מִנְחָה וכו', נְעִילָה.) — And even though he confessed during the Evening Service — he should confess during the Morning Service, etc., Mussaf, etc., Mincha, etc., Neilah.) See there for the full text. **עַיֵּין וּלְהַרְבֵּה מִן הַמְפָרְשִׁים, זֶה שֶׁאָמְרוּ דְּמִצְוַת וִידּוּי עִם חֲשֵׁיכָה, וּמִתְוַודֶּה שָׁם. — See there. לְאַחַר שֶׁיֹּאכַל – עַל עַרְבִית קָאֵי. — And according to many of the commentators, that which they said that the mitzvah of vidui is at nightfall, and that one confesses after eating — refers to the Evening Service.** That is, the confession after the meal is the vidui of Maariv. **אֲבָל הָרַמְב"ן פֵּירֵשׁ דְּזֶהוּ וִידּוּי בִּפְנֵי עַצְמוֹ קוֹדֶם חֲשֵׁיכָה, קוֹדֶם עַרְבִית, — But the Ramban explained that this is a vidui unto itself before nightfall, before the Evening Service, כְּדֵי שֶׁיִּכָּנֵס בְּיוֹם הַכִּיפּוּרִים בִּתְחִלַּת הַיּוֹם כְּשֶׁכְּבָר הִתְוַודָּה. — in order that one enter Yom Kippur at the beginning of the day having already confessed. וְעַל פִּי זֶה נָהֲגוּ רַבִּים וְכֵן שְׁלֵימִים, בְּבוֹאָם לְבֵית הַכְּנֶסֶת, וְהַזְּמַן קָרוֹב לְהַשְׁקִיעָה – מִתְוַודִּין. — And based on this, many people and likewise upright individuals have the custom, when they come to the synagogue and the time is close to sunset — they confess.**

Halachic Divergences & Insights

Confessing before twilight

Shulchan Aruch HaRav (Section 2): **SAH:** The *Shulchan Aruch HaRav* writes that every person should also follow the Ramban's stringent opinion. Therefore, as twilight approaches, one should stand and confess. This accords with the practice that the *Aruch HaShulchan* attributes to many people and upright individuals.

Halachic Divergences & Insights

Using Tefillah Zakkah for the pre-nightfall confession

Mikra'ei Kodesh siman 46; Teshuvos VeHanhagos 2:300; Luach Davar Yom BeYomo: Many upright people follow the Ramban by confessing again after the final meal and before nightfall. Today, this is commonly fulfilled by reciting Tefillah Zakkah in shul before Kol Nidrei. *Mikra'ei Kodesh* siman 46 rules that it must be said standing because vidui requires standing.

One who reaches shul too close to sunset to finish Tefillah Zakkah should instead say: 'Ana Hashem, chatasi b'shogeg, avisi b'meizid, pashati b'mered uv'ma'al.' *Lu-*

ach Davar Yom BeYomo records that in Belz this formula is also translated into the vernacular and said in both singular and plural forms.

Halachic Divergences & Insights

Reciting the pre-nightfall vidui aloud

Matteh Efraim 619:8; Nimukei Orach Chaim: *Matteh Efraim* 619:8 rules that the vidui said close to nightfall should be recited privately and quietly. The Munkatcher Rav disagrees in *Nimukei Orach Chaim*. He holds that this vidui is an independent obligation before nightfall and may therefore be recited aloud by the congregation. He followed this practice as a tradition from his forebears.

Accordingly, some congregations recite the vidui together immediately upon arriving in shul, before the Torah scrolls are taken out. They begin with 'Elokeinu v'Elokei Avoseinu, tavo lefanecha tefilaseinu' and continue with Ashamnu bagadnu. Each congregation should follow its received custom.

Halachic Divergences & Insights

Adjusting the wording of Tefillah Zakkah

Minchas Yitzchak 6:58; Mo'adim uZmanim 8:54: A sick person who is permitted to eat on Yom Kippur may recite the passage accepting the prohibitions of work and of eating and drinking a shiur if he will eat less than a shiur at a time. If he will eat more than the shiurim, he should omit those words. His exact practice should be settled with a rav in advance.

The printed text excludes from forgiveness someone who sinned against the speaker while intending to rely on being forgiven. *Mo'adim uZmanim* 8:54 holds that one should instead say that even such a person is completely forgiven.

§3 וְהֵיכָן אוֹמֵר הַוִּידּוּי? יָחִיד אוֹמְרָהּ אַחַר הַתְּפִילָּה, קוֹדֶם שֶׁעָקַר רַגְלָיו. — **And where does one say the vidui? An individual says it after the prayer, before he steps back.** That is, before taking the three steps back at the conclusion of Shemoneh Esreh. **וּשְׁלִיחַ צִיבּוּר אוֹמְרָהּ בְּתוֹךְ הַתְּפִילָּה קוֹדֶם "מְחוֹל לַעֲוֹנֹתֵינוּ".** — **And the Shaliach Tzibbur says it within the prayer, before "Mechal la'avonoseinu" ("Forgive our iniquities").** i.e., within the middle blessing of Shemoneh Esreh on Yom Kippur. **וְיֵרָאֶה לִי דְּהַיָּחִיד אַחַר בִּרְכַּת הַשָּׁלוֹם אוֹמֵר "יִהְיוּ לְרָצוֹן",** — **And it appears to me that the individual, after the blessing of Shalom, says**

"Yihyu l'ratzon" ("May the words of my mouth be acceptable"), וְאַחַר כָּךְ אוֹמֵר הַוִּידּוּי, וְאַחַר הַוִּידּוּי אוֹמֵר "אֱלֹקַי נְצוֹר" וכו', "יִהְיוּ לְרָצוֹן" וכו', — and afterward says the vidui, and after the vidui says "Elokai netzor" etc., "Yihyu l'ratzon" etc., – דִּכְיוָן שֶׁגָּמַר הַתְּפִילָּה בְּהֶכְרֵחַ לוֹמַר "יִהְיוּ לְרָצוֹן", שֶׁזֶּהוּ גַּם כֵּן כְּמַהֲתְּפִילָּה. — because since he finished the prayer — he must say "Yihyu l'ratzon," for this is also like part of the prayer. וְאַחֲרֵי הַוִּידּוּי, פְּשִׁיטָא שֶׁצָּרִיךְ לוֹמַר "יִהְיוּ לְרָצוֹן אִמְרֵי פִי", שֶׁתִּתְקַבֵּל וִידּוּיוֹ. — And after the vidui, it is obvious that he must say "Yihyu l'ratzon imrei fi" ("May the words of my mouth be acceptable"), so that his vidui should be accepted. – וּבְמִנְחָה שֶׁל עֶרֶב יוֹם הַכִּיפּוּרִים אֵין שְׁלִיחַ הַצִּיבּוּר חוֹזֵר הַוִּידּוּי, — And in the Mincha service of Erev Yom Kippur — the Shaliach Tzibbur does not repeat the vidui, אֶלָּא מִתְפַּלֵּל שְׁמוֹנֶה עֶשְׂרֵה כְּשְׁאָר יְמוֹת כֵּיוָן שֶׁהַוִּידּוּי הַשְּׁנָה, — rather, he prays the Shemoneh Esreh as on other days of the year, הַזֶּה הוּא רַק מִשּׁוּם חֲשָׁשָׁא בְּעָלְמָא, כְּמוֹ שֶׁכָּתַבְתִּי. — since this vidui is only due to a mere concern, as I wrote. That is, it is only a precaution lest something happen during the meal. וְלֹא יָדַעְתִּי לְכַוֵּין דִּבְרֵי רַבֵּינוּ הַבַּיִת יוֹסֵף בְּסָעִיף ה, שֶׁכָּתַב: — And I do not know how to reconcile the words of our master the Beis Yosef in Seif 5, who wrote: בִּתְפִלַּת מִנְחַת עֶרֶב יוֹם הַכִּיפּוּרִים – אֵינוֹ חוֹתֵם בַּוִּידּוּי שֶׁאַחֲרֶיהָ; עַד כָּאן לְשׁוֹנוֹ. — "In the Mincha prayer of Erev Yom Kippur — one does not conclude with a blessing after the vidui"; end quote. וּתְמֵהַּ: אֵיזֶה חֲתִימָה יֵשׁ בִּתְפִלַּת יָחִיד אַחַר הַוִּידּוּי? — And this is puzzling: what concluding blessing is there in an individual's prayer after the vidui? הָא אוֹמְרָהּ אַחַר הַתְּפִילָּה! — For he says it after the prayer! And therefore it is not part of a blessing that would require a conclusion. וּמֵהַלְבּוּשׁ מַשְׁמַע שֶׁכַּוָּנָתוֹ לְאוֹ דַּוְקָא אַעֶרֶב יוֹם הַכִּיפּוּרִים, אֶלָּא גַּם אַיּוֹם הַכִּיפּוּרִים עַצְמוֹ (וְכֵן כָּתַב הַגר"ז). — And from the Levush it is implied that his intention is not specifically regarding Erev Yom Kippur, but also regarding Yom Kippur itself (and so wrote the Graz). וְאֵינוֹ מִתְיַישֵּׁב עַל הַלֵּב. — And this does not sit well in the heart. i.e., this interpretation is not satisfying. וְנִרְאֶה לִי דְּהָכִי פֵּירוּשׁוֹ: דְּבִשְׁלָמָא בְּיוֹם הַכִּיפּוּרִים עַצְמוֹ – אֵינוֹ צָרִיךְ חֲתִימָה עַל הַוִּידּוּי, שֶׁהֲרֵי כְּבָר אָמַר "מֶלֶךְ מוֹחֵל וְסוֹלֵחַ" וכו'. — And it appears to me that this is its explanation: for granted, on Yom Kippur itself — one does not need a concluding blessing on the vidui, for he has already said "Melech mochel v'sole'ach" ("King Who forgives and pardons"), etc. This blessing at the end of the middle blessing serves as the conclusion for the vidui. אֲבָל בְּעֶרֶב יוֹם הַכִּיפּוּרִים, שֶׁהִתְפַּלֵּל תְּפִילַּת חוֹל – הָיִיתִי אוֹמֵר שֶׁיַּחְתּוֹם. — But on Erev Yom Kippur, when he prayed a weekday prayer — I would have said he should conclude with a blessing. קָא מַשְׁמַע לַן דְּלָא. — He teaches us that he does not. וְאֵין נוֹפְלִין עַל פְּנֵיהֶם בְּמִנְחָה, וְאֵין אוֹמְרִים "אָבִינוּ מַלְכֵּנוּ". — And we do not fall on our faces at Mincha, and we do not say "Avinu Malkeinu." (וְיוֹתֵר נִרְאֶה לִי בְּכַוָּונַת הַבַּיִת יוֹסֵף, מִשּׁוּם דְּלִרְשׁ"י ז"ל יָכוֹל לַחְתּוֹם בְּוִידּוּי דְּיוֹם הַכִּיפּוּרִים, כְּמוֹ שֶׁכָּתַב הַטּוּר, עַיֵּין שָׁם. — (And it seems more likely to me regarding the intent of the Beis Yosef, because according to Rashi z"l one may conclude the vidui of Yom Kippur with a blessing, as the Tur wrote; see there. לָזֶה קָא מַשְׁמַע לַן דִּבְמִנְחַת עֶרֶב יוֹם הַכִּיפּוּרִים – אֲפִילּוּ לְרש"י לֹא יַחְתּוֹם.) — Therefore he teaches us that at the Mincha of Erev Yom Kippur — even according to Rashi one should not conclude with a blessing.)

Halachic Divergences & Insights

Where vidui is placed in the prayer

Shulchan Aruch HaRav (Section 10) / Mishnah Berurah (Sk. 2): **SAH:** Vidui does not end with the wording of a blessing. This applies both at Mincha on erev Yom Kippur and to each vidui said privately at the end of Shemoneh Esreh. Vidui is followed by Elokai Netzor.

MB: The individual says vidui after completing his prayer but before Elokai Netzor. In sk. 16, the *Mishnah Berurah* places Yihyu L'ratzon before vidui, which is also the *Aruch HaShulchan*'s order. The Vilna Gaon's view is that vidui precedes Yihyu L'ratzon.

Halachic Divergences & Insights

Whether Yihyu L'ratzon precedes vidui

Ma'aseh Rav HeChadash, citing Imrei Noam to Berachos 3b in the name of the Vilna Gaon; Mishnah Berurah sk 16; Orchos Rabbeinu; Matteh Efraim 607:6: The *Aruch HaShulchan*'s order is Yihyu L'ratzon after the blessing of Shalom, followed by vidui, Elokai Netzor, and Yihyu L'ratzon again. The *Mishnah Berurah* follows this order, as do the common machzorim. *Orchos Rabbeinu* reports that **R' Yaakov Yisrael Kanievsky** also followed it.

The **Vilna Gaon** places vidui before Yihyu L'ratzon. Since the Sages instituted vidui as part of the prayer, Yihyu L'ratzon should come afterward and mark the prayer's completion.

One who follows the Vilna Gaon's order and hears kaddish or kedushah during vidui should immediately say Yihyu L'ratzon at his current place and answer with the congregation.

Halachic Divergences & Insights

Omitting vidui and repeating Shemoneh Esreh

R' Shlomo Zalman Auerbach (cited in Machzor HaMefurash, introduction); Shevet HaLevi 6:73; Hagahos Chochmas Shlomo: One who forgot vidui and already stepped back does not repeat Shemoneh Esreh. **R' Shlomo Zalman Auerbach** rules that he should confess when he remembers, even though the vidui is no longer adjacent to his prayer. He may also rely on the vidui in chazaras hashatz. On erev Yom Kippur, he should say vidui properly close to nightfall in accordance with the

Ramban. *Hagahos Chochmas Shlomo* leaves the question in doubt.
One who must repeat Shemoneh Esreh because of an error, such as saying 'HaKel HaKadosh,' need not repeat vidui at the end of the second prayer. Both **R' Shlomo Zalman Auerbach** and *Shevet HaLevi* 6:73 rule this way.

§4 עִיקַר הַוִּידּוּי כְּשֶׁיֹּאמַר "חָטָאתִי". — The essence of vidui is when one says "Chatasi" ("I have sinned"). וְצָרִיךְ לְהִתְוַדּוֹת מְעוּמָד, וּבִכְפִיפַת רֹאשׁ. — And one must confess while standing, and with bowing of the head. וּמִדִּינָא אֵינוֹ צָרִיךְ לְפָרֵט חֲטָאָיו, וְדַי שֶׁיֹּאמַר "חָטָאתִי, עָוִיתִי, פָּשַׁעְתִּי". — And by strict law one does not need to enumerate his sins specifically, and it is sufficient to say "Chatasi, avisi, pashati" ("I have sinned, I have transgressed, I have rebelled"). וּמִכָּל מָקוֹם לְכַתְּחִילָּה נָכוֹן לְפָרֵט אֶת הַחֵטְא, — Nevertheless, ideally it is proper to specify the sin, שֶׁיֹּאמַר בְּלַחַשׁ "עָשִׂיתִי כָּךְ וְכָךְ", — that he should say in a whisper, "I did such-and-such," וְיִתְבַּיֵּשׁ יוֹתֵר מִלִּפְנֵי הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא, — and he will be more embarrassed before the Holy One, blessed be He, and will regret from the depths of his heart. וּמִתְחָרֵט מֵעוֹמֶק לִבּוֹ. אֲבָל אָסוּר לְפָרֵט הַחֲטָאִים בְּקוֹל — But it is forbidden to specify sins aloud in public, וְעַל זֶה נֶאֱמַר (תהלים לב א) "אַשְׁרֵי נְשׂוּי פֶּשַׁע, כְּסוּי חֲטָאָה", — and regarding this it is stated (Tehillim 32:1): "Praiseworthy is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered," כְּמוֹ שֶׁכָּתַבְתִּי בְּסִימָן תרג. — as I wrote in Siman 603. וְזֶהוּ בְּחֵטְא שֶׁאֵינוֹ מְפוֹרְסָם לָרַבִּים. — And this applies to a sin that is not publicly known. אֲבָל חֵטְא הַמְפוֹרְסָם לָרַבִּים – מוּתָּר אֲפִילּוּ בְּקוֹל רָם, וְאֵין חוֹבָה בָּזֶה. — But a sin that is publicly known — it is permitted even aloud, though there is no obligation to do so. וְיָכוֹל לְפָרְטוֹ בְּלַחַשׁ. — And he may specify it in a whisper. וּמַה שֶּׁאוֹמְרִים "עַל חֵטְא" בְּאל"ף בי"ת – לֹא מִקְרֵי פּוֹרֵט חֲטָאָיו, — And that which we say "Al Cheit" in alphabetical order — this is not considered specifying one's sins, כֵּיוָן שֶׁהוּא נוּסְחָא בְּשָׁוֶה לַכֹּל, וְהָוֵי כְּנוֹסַח תְּפִילָּה, וּמוּתָּר לְאוֹמְרוֹ בְּקוֹל רָם. — since it is a text that is uniform for everyone, and it is like the standard prayer formula, and it is permitted to say it aloud.

Halachic Divergences & Insights

Standing, bowing, and beating the chest during vidui
Shulchan Aruch HaRav (Section 7) / Mishnah Berurah (Sk. 10): **SAH:** One must stand during vidui without leaning and should bow as during Modim. While confessing, one should strike his heart with his fist, as if to say, 'You caused me to sin.' Some instead strike the breast for Kabbalistic reasons.
MB: One should likewise stand without leaning and bow as during Modim. It remains unresolved whether one who leaned must repeat vidui. One should remain

standing through 'Al cheit that we are obligated for the four death penalties of Beis Din.'

Halachic Divergences & Insights

Adding a private sin to the printed vidui

Matteh Efraim 607:8; Chayei Adam end of klal 143: The *Aruch HaShulchan* rules that one need not list individual sins. However, it is proper to mention them quietly. The standard alphabetical Al Cheit does not itself count as specifying one's sins because everyone recites the same text.

One who committed a particular sin that is not mentioned in Al Cheit should insert it quietly into the alphabetical order of Ashamnu or Al Cheit. He should confess it with bitterness and tears. *Chayei Adam*, at the end of klal 143, provides an alphabetical list of sins that may be inserted into Ashamnu.

§5 **סֵדֶר הַוִּידּוּי ב"עַל חֵטְאִים" — The order of the confession in the 'Al Chata'im' prayer** follows a specific sequence based on the types of offerings and punishments: **עוֹלָה, חַטָּאת, קָרְבַּן עוֹלָה וְיוֹרֵד, אָשָׁם וַדַּאי, וְאָשָׁם תָּלוּי, — burnt-offering, sin-offering, adjustable offering, definite guilt-offering, and conditional guilt-offering,** and the reason for this sequence is **שֶׁכָּךְ סִידְּרָן בְּפָרָשַׁת וַיִּקְרָא. — that this is how they are arranged in Parshas Vayikra.** **וְאַחַר כָּךְ: מַכַּת מַרְדּוּת, מַלְקוֹת אַרְבָּעִים, כְּלוֹמַר: חָסֵר אַחַת. — And after that: lashes for rebelliousness, forty lashes — that is to say: minus one.** meaning thirty-nine lashes, which is the maximum number administered by the court. **וְאַחַר כָּךְ: מִיתָה בִּידֵי שָׁמַיִם, — And after that: death by the hand of Heaven,** **וְאַחַר כָּךְ: כָּרֵת וַעֲרִירִי, — and after that: excision and childlessness,** **וְאַחַר כָּךְ: אַרְבַּע מִיתוֹת בֵּית דִּין. — and after that: the four forms of capital punishment administered by the court.** The reason for this order is **כִּי כֵן צָרִיךְ תְּחִילָה לְבַקֵּשׁ עַל הַקַּל, וְאַחַר כָּךְ עַל הֶחָמוּר, כְּמוֹ שֶׁכָּתַבְתִּי בְּסִימָן תקפב. — because one must first request forgiveness for the lighter matters, and afterward for the more severe, as I wrote in Siman 582.**

§6 **וְיֹאמַר לְשׁוֹן "כַּפָּרָה" לַחֲטָאִים, וּ"מְחִילָה" לָעֲוֹנוֹת, וּ"סְלִיחָה" לַפְּשָׁעִים. — And one should say the term 'kaparah' (atonement) for sins (chata'im), 'mechilah' (forgiveness) for iniquities (avonos), and 'selichah' (pardon) for transgressions (pesha'im).** The reason for this correspondence is as follows: **כִּי הַחֵטְא קַל מֵעָוֹן, דְּחֵטְא הוּא בְּשׁוֹגֵג וְעָוֹן הוּא בְּמֵזִיד. — For a cheit is lighter than an avon, since a cheit is an unintentional transgression while an avon is intentional.** **וְעָוֹן קַל מִפֶּשַׁע, דְּפֶשַׁע הוּא מוֹרֵד. — And an avon is lighter than a pesha, for a pesha is an act of rebellion.** Thus there are three levels of transgression corresponding to three levels of forgiveness. **וְ"כַפָּרָה" גְּדוֹלָה מִכֻּלָּם, כִּדְכְתִיב:**

וְכִפֶּר עַל הַנֶּפֶשׁ הַשּׁוֹגֶגֶת", — And 'kaparah' is the greatest of them all, as it is written: 'And he shall atone for the soul that sinned unintentionally,' דְּהוּא קִינּוּחַ וַהֲדָחָה, כְּמוֹ **"כְּפוּרֵי זָהָב", — for it means wiping clean and washing away, like 'golden bowls' (kafurei zahav),** which are vessels used for cleansing, **וְלָכֵן נִקְרָא "יוֹם כִּיפּוּר", — and therefore it is called 'Yom Kippur,'** the Day of Atonement, signifying complete cleansing, **וְלָכֵן שָׁייְכָה לַחֲטָאִים. — and therefore it is associated with sins (chata'im).** Since kaparah is the most complete form of forgiveness, it is paired with the lightest category of transgression. **וּ"מְחִילָה" וְשֵׁם "מְחִילָה" לֹא מָצִינוּ גְּדוֹלָה מִ"סְלִיחָה". — And 'mechilah' is greater than 'selichah.'** **בַּתנ"ך, וְגַם הַשּׁוֹרֶשׁ לֹא יָדַעְנוּ, — The term 'mechilah' we do not find in Tanach, and we also do not know its root,** רַק בִּלְשׁוֹן הַמִּשְׁנָה הוּא לְעִנְיַין תְּבִיעַת מָמוֹן, שֶׁמּוֹחֵל וְאֵינוֹ תּוֹבֵעַ, וְשַׁייָךְ לְעָוֹן. **— only in the language of the Mishnah does it appear regarding monetary claims, where one forgives and does not demand payment, and it is associated with avon.** וּ"סְלִיחָה" קְטַנָּה מִכֻּלָּם, שֶׁהוּא רַק סוֹלֵחַ וְאֵינוֹ מוֹחֵל לְגַמְרֵי, וְלָכֵן שַׁייָךְ לַמּוֹרֵד. **— And 'selichah' is the least of them all, for it means only pardoning without completely forgiving, and therefore it is associated with the rebellious transgressor.** Now, the *Aruch HaShulchan* addresses apparent contradictions to this system in Scripture: **מֵיהוּ בַּתּוֹרָה מָצִינוּ "סְלִיחָה" לְעָוֹן: "סְלַח נָא לַעֲוֹן הָעָם הַזֶּה" (במדבר יד יט). — However, in the Torah we find 'selichah' used for avon: 'Please pardon the iniquity of this people' (Bamidbar 14:19).** **וּבַתנ"ך מָצִינוּ "כַּפָּרָה" לְעָוֹן: "וְהוּא רַחוּם יְכַפֵּר עָוֹן" (תהלים עח לח), — And in Tanach we find 'kaparah' for avon: 'And He, being merciful, atones for iniquity' (Tehillim 78:38),** **"בְּזֹאת יְכֻפַּר עֲוֹן יַעֲקֹב" (ישעיה כז ט). 'Through this shall the iniquity of Yaakov be atoned' (Yeshayahu 27:9).** **וּבַתּוֹרָה מָצִינוּ "סְלִיחָה" אֵצֶל "כַּפָּרָה": "וְכִפֶּר עָלָיו הַכֹּהֵן... וְנִסְלַח לוֹ" (ויקרא ד כו). — And in the Torah we find 'selichah' together with 'kaparah': 'And the Kohen shall atone for him... and he shall be pardoned' (Vayikra 4:26).** אַךְ הַנּוֹסְחָא שֶׁכָּתַבְנוּ כֵּן, הֵעִידוּ עַל רַבֵּינוּ הָרמ"א שֶׁאָמַר כֵּן (מָגֵן אַבְרָהָם סוֹף סָעִיף קָטָן ג בְּשֵׁם של"ה; וּבְמָגֵן אַבְרָהָם יֵשׁ טָעוּת הַדְּפוּס, עַיֵּין שָׁם). **— However, regarding the version that we wrote, they testified about our teacher the Rema that he said this (Magen Avraham at the end of se'if katan 3 in the name of the Shelah; and in the Magen Avraham there is a printing error, see there).** Further support for this terminology comes from the liturgy: וְכֵן מַשְׁמַע מִנּוּסַח "אֵל מָלֵךְ", שֶׁאוֹמְרִים "מַרְבֶּה מְחִילָה לַחֲטָאִים, וּסְלִיחָה לַפּוֹשְׁעִים" — **And so it is implied from the version of 'Kel Melech,' where we say 'Who abundantly grants forgiveness for sins, and pardon for transgressors'** – חֲרֵי דְּ"סְלִיחָה" הוּא "לַפּוֹשְׁעִים", וּ"מַרְבֶּה מְחִילָה" הָוֵי כְּמוֹ כַּפָּרָה. — **thus 'selichah' is for 'transgressors,' and 'abundant mechilah' is equivalent to kaparah.** וְכֵן מַשְׁמַע מִלְּשׁוֹן "וְעַל כֻּלָּם": "סְלַח לָנוּ, מְחַל לָנוּ, כַּפֵּר לָנוּ", דִּמְבַקֵּשׁ מִקּוֹדֶם דָּבָר קַל וכו'. — **And so it is implied from the wording of 'Ve'al Kulam' in the 'Al Cheit' prayer: 'Pardon us, forgive us, atone for us,' that one requests the lighter matter first, and so on.** However, there is a contrary example: אַךְ מָצָאנוּ בִּתְפִילָה "סְלִיחָה" לְ"חֵטְא" וּ"מְחִילָה" לְ"פֶּשַׁע": "סְלַח לָנוּ אָבִינוּ כִּי חָטָאנוּ, מְחַל לָנוּ מַלְכֵּנוּ כִּי פָשָׁעְנוּ". — **However, we find in prayer 'selichah' for 'cheit' and 'mechilah' for 'pesha': 'Pardon us our Father for we have sinned, forgive us our King for we have transgressed.'**

Halachic Divergences & Insights

Requests for forgiveness within vidui

Shulchan Aruch HaRav (Seif 7) / Siddur HaRav: **SAH:** One should request kaparah for chata'im, mechilah for avonos, and selichah for pesha'im.

Siddur HaRav: The Alter Rebbe's wording is slightly different: 'Forgive us for all our sins, grant us atonement for all our iniquities, and forgive and pardon us for all our transgressions.' This resembles the versions of the Rambam and R. David Avudraham.

§7 וּבִירוּשַׁלְמִי שִׁלְהֵי יוֹמָא אוֹמֵר: כֵּיצַד הוּא מִתְוַודֶּה? — **And in the Yerushalmi at the end of tractate Yoma it says: How does one confess?** ר' בְּרַכְיָה וכו': "חָטָאתִי... יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ שֶׁתְּכַפֵּר לִי עַל כָּל פְּשָׁעַי, וְתִמְחוֹל לִי עַל עֲוֹנוֹתַי, וְתִסְלַח לִי עַל כָּל חַטָּאתַי", עַיֵּין שָׁם. — **R' Berachiah etc.: 'I have sinned... May it be Your will that You atone for me for all my transgressions, and forgive me for my iniquities, and pardon me for all my sins,' see there.** חֲרִי מַמָּשׁ לְהֵיפֶךְ: "כַּפָּרָה" לַפְּשָׁעִים, וּ"מְחִילָה" לָעֲוֹנוֹת, וּ"סְלִיחָה" לַחֲטָאִים. — **Thus it is exactly the opposite: 'kaparah' for transgressions, 'mechilah' for iniquities, and 'selichah' for sins.** The *Aruch HaShulchan* now offers his own perspective on this matter: וּלְעָנְיוּת דַּעְתִּי הָיָה נִרְאֶה דְּלְשׁוֹן "כַּפָּרָה" אֵינוֹ לִתְפִילָה כְּלָל. — **In my humble opinion, it would seem that the term 'kaparah' is not appropriate for prayer at all.** וְזֶהוּ רַק בַּמִּזְבֵּחַ, שֶׁהַקָּרְבָּן מְכַפֵּר, אוֹ עִיצּוּמוֹ שֶׁל יוֹם מְכַפֵּר, כְּיוֹם הַכִּיפּוּרִים. — **This is only at the altar, where the sacrifice atones, or where the essence of the day atones, as on Yom Kippur.** אֲבָל בִּתְפִילָה – לֹא שַׁיָּיךְ רַק לְשׁוֹן "סְלִיחָה". — **But in prayer — only the term 'selichah' is appropriate.** This is demonstrated from the Torah: וְלָכֵן מֹשֶׁה רַבֵּינוּ בַּמְרַגְּלִים בְּקֵשׁ בִּלְשׁוֹן "סְלִיחָה": "סְלַח נָא לַעֲוֹן הָעָם הַזֶּה". — **Therefore Moshe Rabbeinu regarding the spies requested using the term 'selichah': 'Please pardon the iniquity of this people.'** והקדוש ברוך הוא השיבו: "סלחתי כדבריך". — **And the Holy One, blessed be He, answered him: 'I have pardoned according to your word.'** וּלְדִידָן, לְפִי לְשׁוֹן הַמִּשְׁנָה נִתּוֹסַף גַּם לְשׁוֹן "מְחִילָה". — **And for us, according to the language of the Mishnah, the term 'mechilah' was also added.** וְלָכֵן בִּתְפִילָה יֵשׁ "סְלַח לָנוּ אָבִינוּ... מְחַל לָנוּ מַלְכֵּנוּ". — **And therefore in prayer there is 'Pardon us our Father... forgive us our King.'** וְרַק בַּסְּלִיחוֹת וּפִיּוּטִים הִשְׁתַּמְּשׁוּ גַּם בִּלְשׁוֹן "כַּפָּרָה" לִתְפִילָה. — **And only in the Selichos prayers and liturgical poems did they also use the term 'kaparah' in prayer.** וּמָצִינוּ בַּתּוֹרָה "כַּפָּרָה" בָּעֶגְלָה עֲרוּפָה, שֶׁהוּא גַּם כֵּן כְּקָרְבָּן. — **And we find in the Torah 'kaparah' regarding the eglah arufah (the heifer whose neck is broken), which is also like a sacrifice.** וּלְשׁוֹן "כַּפָּרָה" שֶׁבַּנְּבִיאִים, כְּמוֹ "בְּזֹאת יְכֻפַּר עֲוֹן יַעֲקֹב" – אֵינוֹ תְּפִילָה. — **And the term 'kaparah' that appears in the Prophets, such as 'Through this shall the iniquity of Yaakov be atoned' — this is not prayer.** Rather, it is a prophetic statement. וְכֵן בִּתְהִלִּים: "יְכַפֵּר עָוֹן". — **And similarly in Tehillim: 'He atones for iniquity.'** אֲבָל בִּתְפִילָה לֹא שַׁיָּיךְ רַק "סְלִיחָה" וּ"מְחִילָה". — **But in prayer, only 'selichah' and 'mechilah'**

are appropriate. The *Aruch HaShulchan* concludes: **וְאֵין קְפִידָא אֵיךְ שֶׁיֹּאמְרוּ, כֵּיוָן שֶׁמָּצִינוּ הַכֹּל – שְׁמַע מִינָּה דְּאֵין קְפִידָא בַּלָּשׁוֹן (כֵּן נִרְאֶה לַעֲנִיּוּת דַּעְתִּי).** — **And there is no strict requirement regarding how one says it, since we find all variations — we may conclude that there is no strict requirement regarding the wording (so it appears in my humble opinion).**

§8 וְצָרִיךְ לְהִתְוַודּוֹת מְעוּמָד וּבְשֶׁחֲיָיה, כְּמוֹ בְּ"מוֹדִים". — **And one must confess while standing and bowing, like during 'Modim.'** **וְאַל יִסְמוֹךְ עַצְמוֹ עַל הַכּוֹתֶל.** — **And one should not lean himself against the wall.** For then he would not be considered standing properly. **וְגַם בַּוִּידּוּיִים שֶׁאוֹמְרִים עִם שְׁלִיחַ הַצִּיבּוּר – צְרִיכִים לַעֲמוֹד.** — **And also during the confessions that are recited with the prayer leader — one must stand.** **וּבְכָל הַפִּיּוּטִים יָכוֹל לֵישֵׁב.** — **And during all the liturgical poems one may sit.** However, there is an exception: **אַךְ כְּשֶׁמַּגִּיעַ שְׁלִיחַ הַצִּיבּוּר לְ"אֲבָל אֲנַחְנוּ חָטָאנוּ" – צְרִיכִים לַעֲמוֹד (גְּמָרָא סוֹף יוֹמָא).** — **But when the prayer leader reaches 'Aval anachnu chatanu' (Indeed, we have sinned) — one must stand (Gemara at the end of Yoma).** **וְנוֹהֲגִים לְהַכּוֹת עַל הַלֵּב, כְּלוֹמַר: אַתָּה גָּרַמְתָּ לִי עַל יְדֵי הִרְהוּרֵי עֲבֵירָה.** — **And the custom is to beat upon the heart, as if to say: You caused me to sin through sinful thoughts.** **וְיֵשׁ מַכִּין עַל הֶחָזֶה.** — **And some beat upon the chest.**

Halachic Divergences & Insights

Striking the heart or breast during vidui

Shulchan Aruch HaRav (Seif 7): **SAH:** During vidui, one should strike his heart with his fist, as if to say, 'You caused me to sin.' Some instead strike the breast for Kabbalistic reasons explained in the writings of the AriZal.

The **Chabad custom** is to strike the breast at each verb in Ashamnu, each phrase beginning 'Al Cheit,' each phrase beginning 'Ve'al Chata'im,' and each of the phrases 'selach lanu, mechal lanu, kaper lanu.'

וְעִיקַּר הַוִּידּוּי הוּא "אֲבָל אֲנַחְנוּ חָטָאנוּ". — **And the essential confession is 'Aval anachnu chatanu' (Indeed, we have sinned).** There are various versions of this phrase: **וְיֵשׁ שֶׁאוֹמְרִים "אֲבָל חָטָאנוּ", וְיֵשׁ שֶׁאוֹמְרִים "אֲבָל אֲנַחְנוּ וַאֲבוֹתֵינוּ חָטָאנוּ".** — **And some say 'Aval chatanu' (Indeed, we have sinned), and some say 'Aval anachnu va'avoseinu chatanu' (Indeed, we and our fathers have sinned).** There is Scriptural precedent for mentioning the sins of one's ancestors: **וְכֵן מָצִינוּ שֶׁאָמַר דָּוִד: "חָטָאנוּ עִם אֲבוֹתֵינוּ";** — **And so we find that David said: 'We have sinned with our fathers';** **וְכֵן דָּנִיֵּאל אָמַר: "כִּי בַחֲטָאֵינוּ וּבַעֲוֹנוֹת אֲבוֹתֵינוּ – יְרוּשָׁלַיִם וְעַמְּךָ לְחֶרְפָּה" וגו'.** — **and similarly Daniel said: 'For because of our sins and the iniquities of our fathers — Jerusalem and Your people have become a disgrace' etc.** **וְאֵין לְדַבֵּר בִּשְׁעַת הַוִּידּוּי (מָגֵן אַבְרָהָם).** — **And one should not speak during the confession (Magen Avraham).** **וַעֲבֵירוֹת שֶׁהִתְוַודָּה עֲלֵיהֶם בְּיוֹם הַכִּיפּוּרִים**

שֶׁעָבַר, וְלֹא שָׁנָה עֲלֵיהֶם – אֲפִילּוּ הָכִי יָכוֹל לַחֲזוֹר וּלְהִתְוַודּוֹת עֲלֵיהֶם. — And sins that one confessed on a previous Yom Kippur, and did not repeat them — even so, he may return and confess them again. **וְאַדְרַבָּא הֲרֵי זֶה מְשֻׁבָּח, דִּכְתִיב "וְחַטָּאתִי נֶגְדִּי תָּמִיד". — And on the contrary, this is praiseworthy, as it is written 'And my sin is always before me.'** **וְזֶהוּ כְּשֶׁפּוֹרֵט כָּל עָוֹן, — And this is when one specifies each sin individually,** but there is a distinction to be made: **אֲבָל בְּנוּסַח "עַל חֵטְא" – לֹא שַׁיָּיךְ זֶה כְּלָל, כֵּיוָן דְּהִיא נוּסְחָא שָׁוָה לַכֹּל, וּבְכָל הַשָּׁנִים לֹא שַׁיָּיךְ לְחַלֵּק בֵּין עָבַר עֲלֵיהֶם לְלֹא עָבַר עֲלֵיהֶם. — but in the standard 'Al Cheit' text — this does not apply at all, since it is a uniform text for everyone, and throughout all the years it is not relevant to distinguish between those sins one committed and those one did not commit.**

Halachic Divergences & Insights

Standing for chazaras hashatz and repeating earlier confessions

Shulchan Aruch HaRav (Seif 8-9): **SAH Seif 8:** When the sheliach tzibbur reaches vidui, one must stand and repeat it even though he already confessed during the silent Shemoneh Esreh. It is enough to say, 'Indeed, we... have sinned.' One may then sit, but may not speak while the sheliach tzibbur continues.

Shaar HaTziyun sk. 12 rejects the view that the rest of vidui may be said sitting. *Piskei Teshuvos* 607:4 explains that the leniency can apply, at most, during chazaras hashatz and only when one listens to the rest from the sheliach tzibbur instead of reciting it himself.

SAH Seif 9: It is praiseworthy to repeat confessions for sins from previous years. By saying, 'My sin is always before me,' one declares that he does not assume that atonement has already been granted; the sin remains as if it were standing before him.

Halachic Divergences & Insights

Leaning during vidui when elderly or weak

Birkei Yosef siman 131; Mikra'ei Kodesh siman 46; Mishnah Berurah sk 10 citing Magen Avraham: The *Aruch HaShulchan* rules that one must stand for vidui without leaning against a wall. This also applies to the confessions said with the sheliach tzibbur. The *Mishnah Berurah* defines prohibited leaning as relying on something so fully that one would fall if it were removed.

Birkei Yosef permits an elderly or weak person to lean. *Mikra'ei Kodesh* limits this permission because it remains unresolved whether one who leaned must repeat vidui. During one's private vidui, even an elderly or weak person should therefore not rely on this leniency. During chazaras hashatz, such a person may lean except while saying 'Aval anachnu va'avoseinu chatanu.' Those words are the essence of vidui and must be