

*Admit One*

*Excerpted and adapted from a shiur by HaRav Chaim Weg*

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*They shall confess [v'hisvadu] the sin that they committed...*

Bemidbar 5:7

The Torah here refers to one who steals from a convert who then dies without heirs (see Rashi to 5:6). If this thief denies stealing and then confesses, he brings a *korban* and compensates the *kohanim* in place of the deceased convert. The Rambam (Sefer HaMitzvos, Asei 73) writes (based upon the Sifri Zuta) that the word “*v'hisvadu*” indicates that there is a mitzvah of *vidui* (confession) for every *aveirah* that a person does if he wishes to do *teshuvah* for it.

The Rambam in Hilchos Teshuvah (1:1) elaborates that one must verbalize the *vidui* by specifying the sin committed, expressing his shame, and committing never to transgress that *aveirah* again. In addition, the Rambam in Sefer HaMitzvos cites the Sifri Zuta that the mitzvah of *vidui* applies even in *chutz la'aretz*. Perhaps the reason that this statement is necessary is because *vidui*, as the Rambam writes (*koseres* to *Hilchos Teshuvah*), must be before Hashem. Since Hashem's presence is more immanent in Eretz Yisrael, it is necessary to spell out that *vidui* applies in *chutz la'aretz* as well.

R' Meir Stern explained the reason that *vidui* must be before Hashem based upon an idea of the Maharal. The Maharal says the word *vidui* comes from *hoda'ah*, meaning admission or acknowledgement. When a person gives *hoda'ah* to Hashem, he acknowledges that Hashem is the source of everything he has, and he is entirely dependent upon Him. When a person recites *vidui*, he is essentially admitting that he has sinned and has no excuses, so he is entirely at Hashem's mercy. For such a *vidui* to achieve the desired effect, it must be delivered when a person is standing before Hashem and can experience those feelings of complete dependence to trigger Hashem's compassion and forgiveness.