The epicenter of Yom Kippur is the **vidui**, the confession. While **vidui** is not recited even once on Rosh Hashanah, the full version of **vidui** is recited nine times over the course of the Yom Kippur services: after the Mincha Amidah just before Yom Kippur, twice during each of the following services – Ma’ariv of Yom Kippur night, and Shacharit, Mussaf and Mincha of Yom Kippur day – once at the end of the silent Amidah, and once during the chazzan’s repetition. There is an additional shorter version of the **vidui** – just the **Ashamnu**, Bagadnu… recited in the silent Amidah of Neilah.

The **vidui** includes the **Ashamnu**, an alphabetical acrostic of different sins we have committed. It is said in the first-person plural, because while each individual may not have committed these specific sins, as a community we surely have, and our fates are intertwined on this day.

The prescribed list of **Ashamnu** can seem unfamiliar or remote. Below is a translation¹ and elucidation² that may be helpful to you in your prayers and help make your Yom Kippur more meaningful.

1 Based on the Koren Yom Kippur Mahzor. 2 Based on Rabbi Daniel Fine’s “A Relatable Translation of the Viduy Confession.”

**Ashamnu** – We have been guilty.  
- We have exposed ourselves to things that ruin our sensitivities to spiritual growth.  
- We struggle to find time for the people and things that matter most in life, yet we freely waste time on meaningless things.

**Bagadnu** – We have acted treacherously.  
- We fail to notice the good in others. Instead, we reflect our inner frustrations on them.  
- We do not listen to people properly. Instead, we impose our interpretations of what the other person means.

**Gazalnu** – We have robbed.  
- We make organizational decisions based on our own personal conveniences.  
- We brush off others’ deceitful actions as funny instead of confronting them.

**Dibarnu Dofi** – We have spoken slander.  
- We say things about people we would never say to their faces.  
- Our children hear ‘no’ or words of negativity and criticism from us far more than they hear ‘yes’ or words of encouragement and praise.

**He’evinu** – We have acted perversely.  
- We have prioritized short-term wants and current values over Divine wisdom and mitzvot.  
- We think and talk about ourselves far too much.  
- We encourage others to spend time doing meaningless things.

**Ve’hirshanu** – We have acted wickedly.  
- We prefer not to get involved rather than to stand up for what is right.  
- Do we emit positive energy and optimism or negative energy and pessimism?

**Zadnu** – We have acted presumptuously.  
- We begin projects that are exciting at first, but we do not have the commitment to complete them – then we rationalize and justify abandoning them.  
- We have shied away from making difficult and courageous moral decisions by claiming there are grey areas.

**Chamasnu** – We have been violent.  
- We have used other people for our projects or favors without properly appreciating them or paying them back.  
- We make more of an effort with certain people because of
their social status. • We point out to others what we feel they are incapable of achieving, without building them up to achieve in areas in which they can excel.

**Tafalnu Sheker** – We have framed lies. • We have exaggerated, misrepresented or lied about events. • We have believed others’ distorted views of the world. • We have accepted rumors or gossip too quickly and passed them on to others. • We have judged people too quickly without trying to understand them.

**Ya’atznu Ra** – We have given bad advice. • We have been too quick to give advice without thinking it through properly. • We do not offer impartial advice, especially when we have a conflict of interest. • We have put others in a position where they cannot say ‘no’ to our requests.

**Kizavnu** – We have deceived. • We have promised things just to appease others. • We have used words that are misleading. • We have followed the crowd, irrespective of whether what they are doing is right for us.

**Latznu** – We have scorned. • We have made fun of meaningful things in order to shy away from them. • We have thoughtlessly put others down. • We have tolerated a society in which trampling over others is the way to get ahead.

**Maradnu** – We have rebelled. • We have viewed mitzvot as cultural feel-good activities instead of Divine commands to get close to G-d. • We have been flippant with our relationship with G-d.

**Niatznu** – We have provoked. • We have devoted lots of time to our bodies but not enough to our souls. • We have not taken up opportunities to study Torah.

**Sararnu** – We have turned away. • We have tried to wriggle out of responsibilities in life. • We have been cliquey and kept to our own social circle instead of branching out and reaching out to others.

**Avinu** – We have committed iniquity. • We assume that our way of thinking is right. • We do not disassociate ourselves with people who post, discuss or share vulgar things.

**Pashanu** – We have transgressed. • We have cherry-picked bits of Judaism, we have half-observed parts of Judaism we fancy. • We do not think long enough about our values.

**Tzararnu** – We have persecuted. • We don’t feel each other’s pain enough, preferring to focus on our own lives. • We have not spent enough time pondering the repercussions of decisions we make and their knock-on effects on others.

**Kishinu Oref** – We have been obstinate. • We have seen daily life as a series of coincidences instead of seeing G-d’s hand. • We remain in our comfort zone, deflecting attempts to grow beyond.

**Rashanu** – We have acted wickedly. • We do not see ourselves as having a mission to spread goodness in the world. • We have brushed off our mistakes instead of learning from them.

**Shichatnu** – We have corrupted. • We have been arrogant at times. • We have let our idealism slip away. • We have not self-analyzed.

**Tiaivnu** – We have acted abominably. • We got angry when things didn’t go our way. • We have not realized what impacts our characters.

**Tainu** – We have strayed. • We lost sight of our goals and we do not accept when we are criticized. • We limit religion to particular days and places.

**Titanu** – We have led others astray. • We do not call out to G-d for spiritual help. • We do not feel lacking when we ignore our relationship with G-d.