

# Numbers 5:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then shall the man bring his wife unto the priest, and he shall bring her offering for her, the tenth part of an ephah of barley meal; he shall pour no oil upon it, nor put frankincense thereon; for it is an offering of jealousy, an offering of memorial, bringing iniquity to remembrance.

## Analysis

The jealousy offering's requirement that it contain no oil or frankincense (unlike other grain offerings) symbolized the bitter nature of the investigation. Oil represented joy and frankincense represented prayer; their absence indicated this was not a celebratory offering but a solemn trial before God. The meal of barley (rather than wheat) suggested humility or even poverty. This offering 'bringing iniquity to remembrance' shows that sin cannot remain hidden but must be brought to light before God, the righteous Judge.

## Historical Context

This unusual trial by ordeal appears unique in Scripture, divinely instituted to address accusations of adultery when witnesses were unavailable. Ancient Near Eastern laws (like the Code of Hammurabi) included various trial by ordeal procedures, but Israel's was distinctively God-centered—relying on divine judgment rather than superstitious rituals. The bitter water's supernatural operation demonstrated God's active involvement in revealing truth and executing justice.

## Related Passages

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**Psalm 19:1** — Heavens declare God's glory

**Genesis 1:1** — Creation of heavens and earth

## Study Questions

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1. How does this trial procedure demonstrate that God sees all secret sins and will bring them to light?
2. What does the absence of oil and frankincense teach about the seriousness of sin before God?

## Interlinear Text

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וְיַבְּרֵךְ יְהִי אָשָׁר	בְּאָשָׁר	אֶת	אֲלֹהִים	בְּפָנָיו
and he shall bring	Then shall the man	H853	his wife	H413
H935	H376	H802	H3548	unto the priest
וְיַבְּרֵךְ יְהִי אָשָׁר	קָרְבָּנָה	עַל יְדֵי	עַשְׂרִים	בְּאֵיפָה
and he shall bring	her offering	H5921	for her the tenth	part of an ephah
H935	H7133	H6224	H374	H3808
לֹא שָׁעֵר יְמֵינוֹ	בְּקָרְבָּנָה	עַל יְדֵי	וְלֹא שָׁעֵר יְמֵינוֹ	וְלֹא שָׁעֵר יְמֵינוֹ
meal of barley	he shall pour	H5921	no oil	upon it nor put
H7058	H3808	H3332	H8081	H5414
לְבָנָה עַל	מִנְמָר תְּהִלָּת	מִנְמָר תְּהִלָּת	מִנְמָר תְּהִלָּת	מִנְמָר תְּהִלָּת
frankincense	an offering	H4503	of jealousy	an offering
H3828	H3588	H7068	H1931	H4503
מִזְבֵּחַ זְכָרְיוֹן	מִזְבֵּחַ זְכָרְיוֹן	מִזְבֵּחַ זְכָרְיוֹן	מִזְבֵּחַ זְכָרְיוֹן	מִזְבֵּחַ זְכָרְיוֹן
of memorial	bringing	H5771	iniquity	
H2146	H2142			

## Additional Cross-References

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**Ezekiel 29:16** (Sin): And it shall be no more the confidence of the house of Israel, which bringeth their iniquity to remembrance, when they shall look after them: but they shall know that I am the Lord GOD.

**1 Kings 17:18** (Sin): And she said unto Elijah, What have I to do with thee, O thou man of God? art thou come unto me to call my sin to remembrance, and to slay my son?

**Leviticus 5:11** (Sin): But if he be not able to bring two turtledoves, or two young pigeons, then he that sinned shall bring for his offering the tenth part of an ephah of fine flour for a sin offering; he shall put no oil upon it, neither shall he put any frankincense thereon: for it is a sin offering.

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