

# Numbers 5:18

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the priest shall set the woman before the LORD, and uncover the woman's head, and put the offering of memorial in her hands, which is the jealousy offering: and the priest shall have in his hand the bitter water that causeth the curse:

## Analysis

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The uncovering of the woman's head and the placing of the memorial offering in her hands creates a posture of vulnerability and exposure before God. The uncovered head removes customary coverings that provide dignity and privacy, symbolizing that nothing can be hidden from God's sight. The memorial offering in her hands constantly reminds her that this is a sacred matter, not merely a civil procedure. She must physically hold the evidence of the accusation while standing before the Lord.

## Historical Context

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Women in ancient Israel typically covered their heads, especially in public and certainly in sacred contexts. The removal of this covering marked the gravity of the situation and the woman's exposed position before divine judgment. The memorial offering, made of barley meal without oil or frankincense, was austere compared to typical grain offerings.

## Related Passages

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**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

**1 Corinthians 13:4** — Characteristics of love

**John 15:13** — Greatest form of love

## Study Questions

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1. What does the removal of customary coverings teach about standing naked before God in judgment?
2. How should the inevitability of exposure before God affect our response to accusation?
3. In what ways does holding the memorial offering symbolize bearing responsibility for our actions?

## Interlinear Text

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|--------------------|----------------|-----------------------|----------------|------------------------|--------------|-------------|
| וְשָׁאַלְתָּהּ     | בְּפֶתַח       | אֶת                   | בַּאֲשֶׁר      | לִפְנֵי                | יְהוָה       | וּפְרֹעַ    |
| shall set          | And the priest | H853                  | the woman      | before                 | the LORD     | and uncover |
| H5975              | H3548          |                       | H802           | H6440                  | H3068        | H6544       |
| רְאֵשׁ אֶת         | בַּאֲשֶׁר      | וְנִתְתַּן            | עַל            | כְּפָרְתָה             | מִנְחָת      | מִנְחָת     |
| H853               | head           | the woman             | and put        | H5921                  | in her hands | H853        |
| H7218              | H802           | H5414                 |                | H3709                  |              | H4503       |
| מִנְחָת הַזְּכָרָה | תְּהִנֵּא      | תְּהִנֵּא             | תְּהִנֵּא      | תְּהִנֵּא              | תְּהִנֵּא    | תְּהִנֵּא   |
| of memorial        | offering       | which is the jealousy | H1931          | shall have in his hand |              |             |
| H2146              | H4503          | H7068                 |                | H3027                  |              |             |
| בְּפֶתַח           | מִי יְהִי      | בְּפֶתַח              | בְּמִאָבָרִים: |                        |              |             |
| And the priest     | H1961          | water                 | the bitter     | that causeth the curse |              |             |
| H3548              |                | H4325                 | H4751          | H779                   |              |             |