

Numbers 5:11-31 **Law of Jealousy**

11 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 12 "Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'If any man's wife goes astray and behaves unfaithfully toward him, 13 and a man lies with her carnally, and it is hidden from the eyes of her husband, and it is concealed that she has defiled herself, and there was no witness against her, nor was she caught-- 14 if the spirit of jealousy comes upon him and he becomes jealous of his wife, who has defiled herself; or if the spirit of jealousy comes upon him and he becomes jealous of his wife, although she has not defiled herself-- 15 then the man shall bring his wife to the priest. He shall bring the offering required for her, one-tenth of an ephah of barley meal; he shall pour no oil on it and put no frankincense on it, because it is a grain offering of jealousy, an offering for remembering, for bringing iniquity to remembrance.

16 'And the priest shall bring her near, and set her before the LORD. 17 The priest shall take holy water in an earthen vessel, and take some of the dust that is on the floor of the tabernacle and put it into the water. 18 Then the priest shall stand the woman before the LORD, uncover the woman's head, and put the offering for remembering in her hands, which is the grain offering of jealousy. And the priest shall have in his hand the bitter water that brings a curse. 19 And the priest shall put her under oath, and say to the woman, "If no man has lain with you, and if you have not gone astray to uncleanness while under your husband's authority, be free from this bitter water that brings a curse. 20 But if you have gone astray while under your husband's authority, and if you have defiled yourself and some man other than your husband has lain with you"-- 21 then the priest shall put the woman under the oath of the curse, and he shall say to the woman-- "the LORD make you a curse and an oath among your people, when the LORD makes your thigh rot and your belly swell; 22 and may this water that causes the curse go into your stomach, and make your belly swell and your thigh rot." Then the woman shall say, "Amen, so be it."

23 'Then the priest shall write these curses in a book, and he shall scrape them off into the bitter water. 24 And he shall make the woman drink the bitter water that brings a curse, and the water that brings the curse shall enter her to become bitter. 25 Then the priest shall take the grain offering of jealousy from the woman's hand, shall wave the offering before the LORD, and bring it to the altar; 26 and the priest shall take a handful of the offering, as its memorial portion, burn it on the altar, and afterward make the woman drink the water.

27 When he has made her drink the water, then it shall be, if she has defiled herself and behaved unfaithfully toward her husband, that the water that brings a curse will enter her and become bitter, and her belly will swell, her thigh will rot, and the woman will become a curse among her people. 28 But if the woman has not defiled herself, and is clean, then she shall be free and may conceive children.

29 'This is the law of jealousy, when a wife, while under her husband's authority, goes astray and defiles herself, 30 or when the spirit of jealousy comes upon a man, and he becomes jealous of his wife; then he shall stand the woman before the LORD, and the priest shall execute all this law upon her. 31 Then the man shall be free from iniquity, but that woman shall bear her guilt.' " NKJV

Facts Revealed:

- ✧ God understands Jealousy because He Himself is a Jealous God, and will not share affection or worship by His people with any other substitute or so called god. [Exodus 20:1-17, 34:10-17, Deuteronomy 4:24, 5:8-9, 6:14-15, 29:14-28, 32:15-22]

- ✧ Since the man does not know the truth, and God does know, God established a test whereby God may reveal to the man the guilt or innocence of his wife.
- ✧ It is a repulsive and degrading test and the man needs to consider the possible retaliation from his wife if she is innocent.
- ✧ However the repulsiveness of the test should also act as a deterrent to encourage the wife to remain faithful rather than take a chance on receiving such a public humiliation.
- ✧ The end result is that the man is freed from the iniquity of suspicion against his wife.
- ✧ The wife if guilty bears her guilt, and if innocent is proven innocent.
- ✧ The priest and the people know the truth.
- ✧ A married woman is under the authority of her husband.
- ✧ Though the husband has authority over his wife, with that authority comes the responsibility for their relationship, which he may destroy by careless suspicion and charges against her.
- ✧ A wise man will be careful in his exercise of this law of jealousy.