

00-06-18a

If you'll turn with me for our scripture reading this morning to Psalm 15. We're actually going to have two psalms for our scripture reading, Psalm 15 and Psalm 16. You will remember that not long ago when we began our memory verse efforts, we memorized the first several verses of Psalm 91.

And you might see how well your memory is holding up. He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress.

My God, in Him I will trust. That psalm goes on to say many wonderful things about the blessings that come to those who make God their refuge, who dwell in the secret place of the Most High. The great thing about the psalm that we have for our scripture reading this morning is it tells us how to make God our dwelling place in Psalm 15.

And then in Psalm 16 we have results of that. So in Psalm 15, David asks the question, Lord, who may abide in your tabernacle? Who may dwell in your holy hill? He who walks uprightly and works righteousness and speaks the truth in his heart. He who does not backbite with his tongue, nor does evil to his neighbor, nor does he take up a reproach against his friend in whose eyes a vile person is despised.

But he honors those who fear the Lord. He who swears to his own hurt and does not change. He who does not put out his money at usury, nor does he take a bribe against the innocent.

We see that it takes more than a desire, it takes more than a decision to dwell in the secret place of the Most High. It takes more than good intentions to abide in the shadow of the Almighty. If we are going to dwell in the tabernacle of the Lord, our faith has to work itself out in love.

You see here in Old Testament terms a great description of loving one's neighbor as one's self. We have to not only know righteousness and study righteousness, but we have to walk uprightly. We have to practice righteousness and speak the truth in our hearts.

We can't speak the truth if it doesn't abide in our hearts. And that has to be a living presence, not just an academic knowledge. And it's going to work itself out in minimizing the areas of sin that can so easily beset us.

This includes sins of the tongue, backbiting with the tongue, overt sins, doing evil to our neighbors, taking up reproach against a friend. And this is being quick to find fault. We have a friend and things go well, but at the first wrinkle in the relationship, at the first surprise that things didn't go the way we expected, someone has done something or said

something or failed to do something or failed to say something, at the first sign of failure on someone's part, we are quick to reproach.

And when we see a vile person, we despise them. It's one thing to identify someone who is doing vile things or who is practicing things that we know are wrong, but it's something else to despise them, to treat them as despicable. This is the difference between discerning and judging.

And this is a product of wisdom. It doesn't come to us by nature. It doesn't come to us by instinct.

It only comes to us by the transforming power of God's spirit and God's word, to be able to look at someone objectively and recognize their faults, recognize their failures or their flaws, and yet not inflict a penalty, not despise them or judge them. This is a requirement if we're going to dwell in the secret place of the most holy high, if we are going to abide in the shadow of the Almighty. And what this reminds us, as Jesus did in summing up the law and the prophets in the two great commandments, is that our love for God and our relationship with God is inextricably linked to our relationship with one another.

We cannot love God and experience blessing from God and fail to love one another. They are like the two pieces of lumber that made up the cross. There is a vertical piece and a horizontal piece.

And if either one is missing, you don't have the complete picture. He who swears to his own hurt and does not change. Sometimes we make a commitment and we discover that that commitment is going to inconvenience us or is going to involve a greater sacrifice than we at first envisioned.

We may have made a hasty commitment, as did Jephthah in making a commitment to God that he would dedicate or sacrifice the first thing that he laid eyes on when he returned home from battle if God would grant him victory. This was a rash oath to take, but once he took it, he did not go back. We often make commitments to one another, and sometimes those commitments involve sacrifice, maybe a greater sacrifice than we had allowed for or had envisioned.

But if we are going to maintain our place in the shadow of the Almighty, it's important for us not only to honor those obligations, but to do it willingly and from the heart, to do it because we have the love of God in our hearts, shed abroad by the Holy Spirit. He who does not put out his money at usury. We think, well, usury, we're not bankers, we're not making loans and so forth, but what is the principle behind this verse? When you put your money out, when you loan money, if a bank does that, they're helping someone who is in need, but they're getting their cut back.

You know, you go to the bank to get a loan when you're going to start a business or when you need to rebuild your home or after a disaster or whatever. Normally, when someone takes out a loan, they need something that they don't have. And this verse says, if we see that someone has a need and we go to meet that need, and yet we're reserving something for ourselves, we're keeping something back, this is not unlike what happened with Ananias and Sapphira in Acts, where the church had a need and they had all things in common and they saw that there were people who were selling their goods and donating the proceeds to the church.

And so they went and did likewise, but they held a part back and made out like, well, this was all in the interest of the church and so forth, when in reality, they kept a portion of the proceeds for themselves. Very same principle here. What we do, we have to do willingly, heartily as unto the Lord and not unto men, not looking for approbation, not looking for gratitude, not looking for reward and not holding back for ourselves or taking advantage of someone in need so that we gain in the process of aiding them.

Do not put out money at usury, nor take a bribe against the innocent. This is obviously taking an advantage for oneself at someone else's expense. I was talking to a friend of mine about the things that go on on eBay.

We're all in the electronic age and we have the internet and now the world's largest garage sale is up on eBay. You can go up there and find one of just about anything that has ever been produced, whether it's a record album or a book or an appliance or a piece of memorabilia, everything from real estate to automobiles. If you can think of a material possession, there's probably at least one of them up for auction on eBay.

Sometimes people really, really want something that they see on eBay and it's a timed auction. People have a certain period of time to make their best offer. Some people will wait until the very last few minutes of an auction because they want to win the auction.

So they let everyone else make their bids and it looks like the item has fetched its best price. It's sort of like the auctioneer saying going once, going twice. At the very last minute, someone will slip in a slightly higher bid and take it away from someone who would have bid higher and given the seller an even better price for their item.

But this cheats the seller. It cheats the other people who might want to continue to bid, but it's a way of winning the auction and getting something for oneself. Sometimes people do this even with books that are of a Christian nature.

It's happened to me and I'm going to continue to cry the blues over it. There's a great Civil War book about chaplains and their activities called Christ in the Camp and you can get a reprint, but I wanted the original. I found an original.

It's the only one I've ever seen on eBay and someone snaked it away from me in the last

two minutes of the auction. But the principle there and beyond my personal woes, the principle is if you look to gain something at someone else's expense, if you elbow someone out of the way, if you leave someone else's interests aside as you pursue your own, you are taking a bribe against the innocent. Here's someone that has done you no wrong and yet you're gaining materially in the course of putting them at a disadvantage.

Any of these things will prevent us from abiding in God's tabernacle, from dwelling on His holy hill. We sometimes think, well, all I have to do is confess my sins. That's not sufficient.

Our practice of faith, the outworking of faith and love has to be present in our lives or we are not qualified to dwell in God's holy hill. We're not qualified to dwell in the secret place of the Most High. It has to be not only entering our souls, but also working itself out.

A good metaphor for this has been suggested in terms of respiration, where you breathe in or you inhale the Word of God, the promises and principles and doctrines, and there has to be an exhale. There has to be a product as a response to that. If we can make this our practice, if this becomes our method of life, we have some wonderful promises in Psalm 16, which follows.

David's prayer, this is a miktaam of David in Psalm 16. He says, Preserve me, O God, for in you I put my trust. O my soul, you have said to the Lord, You are my Lord.

Remember what we saw in Psalm 91, I will say of the Lord, He is my God. He is my refuge and my fortress and my God. I will trust in Him.

This is what we're going to say. But David says here, That's what I have done. My soul has said to the Lord, You are my Lord.

My goodness is nothing apart from You. As for the saints who are on the earth, they are the excellent ones in whom is all my delight. Here's the outworking of faith in love toward the saints.

They are the excellent ones. I delight in them. I put their interests ahead of my own.

Their sorrows shall be multiplied who hasten after another God. Their drink offerings of blood I will not offer, nor take up their names on my lips. And again, this suggests the idea that you sacrifice the well-being of others for your own ends.

You worship the God of ambition or the God of materialism and others' blood is spilt on that altar. Oh Lord, You are the portion of my inheritance and my cup. Where am I going to look for my sustenance, for my fulfillment, for my portion? It's going to be in the Lord.

You maintain my lot. The lines have fallen to me in pleasant places. Yes, I have a good

inheritance.

It's a wonderful thing as a believer to be able to reach the place that regardless of our circumstances, we can speak this with David. The lines have fallen to me in pleasant places. I have a good inheritance.

This is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen. I will bless the Lord who has given me counsel. My heart also instructs me in the night seasons.

This is a great test of whether or not we are really digesting the truth of God's Word after we hear it. Does it come back to us in the night seasons? Do we reflect on it and meditate on it? We shouldn't even have to crack open the Bible or refer back to our notebook. If these things are a living reality in our soul, the night season is the time of calm.

You know, the shepherds out on the hillside had to watch constantly by day to make sure that the sheep didn't get into trouble. At night when they would kneel them down in the pastures, you think of the shepherds who were watching during the night of Christ's birth. It's a time of rest and reflection.

You're still awake. You may still be alert, but you have time without distraction to meditate. Can the Word of God return to our thinking in the night watches? Is there enough there to meditate on or is it just simply going past our view when we hear it and maybe going down into our notes, but it's not being incorporated into our thinking.

It's not a part of our active memory. My heart instructs me in the night seasons. I have set the Lord always before me.

Because He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. It's a great old gospel song. It's one of the first songs on one of my statesman tapes and it's one of my girls' favorite.

It says, I shall not be moved, just like a tree that's planted by the waters. Well, how do we reach that place? These things have to be our priority. Therefore, my heart is glad and my glory rejoices.

My flesh also will rest in hope. For you will not leave my soul in Sheol, nor will you allow your Holy One to see corruption. Remember, Jesus said, the one that believes in Him, though he were dead, yet shall he live.

And the one who believes in Christ will never die. And it's something of a conundrum to us. How can we know that we all die, and yet Jesus said if we believe in Him, we never die.

Though we were dead, yet shall we live. And the one who believes in Him will never die. How is that possible? Well, David understood that principle, that even when our body

checks out of this earthly life, which he talks about in terms of Sheol, our soul doesn't go with it.

Our soul goes into the presence of the Lord. You will not allow your Holy One to see corruption. You will show me the path of life and in your presence is fullness of joy, at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

And David understood the principle that when the body dies, the soul goes to be with the Lord. And that is the very same thing that Jesus affirmed in the New Testament. Absent from the body, face to face with the Lord, there are joys at His right hand forevermore.

So we have not only blessings in this life, but wonderful assurance and confidence that there will be blessing and reward in the next life, if we know how to make the right choice in the life of the Lord. It's not enough. It's kind of like getting in shape or losing weight or attaining any other great goal, learning to play an instrument or finishing a degree.

It's not enough just to want it. We have to be committed and take the steps that will bring that goal to pass. And we have to take an active part in our daily salvation so that these promises will be fulfilled and the promises can be ours.

Well, this leads nicely into the study of the life of Joseph, which we now resume back in chapter 47 of Genesis. We saw last time in chapter 46 that Jacob, hearing that Joseph is alive, the brothers come back, and we don't have the details. Did they confess all? Did Jacob ever ask, well, how in the world did Joseph wind up down in Egypt? We don't have a record of any acknowledgment on the part of the brothers, their part in Joseph's enslavement.

But we do have Israel taking his journey at the beginning of chapter 46. We saw last time his sacrifice at Beersheba and the significance of that place. We saw that many places in the Bible have an ongoing significance and a symbolic value.

And you find as far back as Jacob's grandfather Abraham that he calls on the name of the Lord, and when he does so it is always near an altar. And here once again we have Jacob building an altar and offering sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac, and God speaks to him in the visions of the night in the same way that God spoke to him before he left going north. God speaks to him again, the same words of assurance that he will be with him, not to fear.

The promises will be fulfilled. God will go down with him to Egypt in the same way that he went up with him to Haran. He said, I will bring you up again, and Joseph will put his hand on your eyes.

In verse 4 there it is particularly significant because we think of this primarily in terms of national significance that the offspring of Jacob, the seed of Jacob will be brought up

again, but individually this is a promise of resurrection, isn't it? Because he basically tells Jacob that he is going to die in the land of Egypt and Joseph will lay his hands on his eyes at the point of death, and yet he says, I will bring you up again. And so Jacob himself at a future point is going to once again dwell in the land of promise. So then Jacob arose from there.

The sons of Israel carried their father Jacob, their little ones and their wives in the carts which Pharaoh had sent to carry him. They took their livestock and their goods in verse 6 which they had acquired in the land of Canaan. Remember Pharaoh said, don't even bother to bring your goods because all of the best of the land of Egypt is available to you.

But they brought it anyway. And they went to Egypt, Jacob and all his descendants with him, his sons and his sons' sons, his daughters and his sons' daughters, and all his descendants he brought with him to Egypt. Then beginning in verse 8, we have a listing of all of the people who came down to Egypt with Jacob.

And this is going to total, when we get to verse 27, the sons of Joseph were born to him in Egypt, two persons, all the persons of the house of Jacob who went to Egypt were 70. And yet we have a little bit of trouble if we actually count up the names of all the people, we wind up having to do some gyrations to end up with exactly 70. And this has been variously explained as you'll notice for example in verse 7 where it says his sons and his sons' sons and then it says his daughters.

How many daughters of Jacob are we familiar with? Just the one, Dinah. But this is daughters in the plural so did he have another daughter subsequently that's not named anywhere in scripture? That's one way of adding in a missing person depending on whether or not you count Jacob in this total and so forth. But the point here is that the number 70 is the one that we arrive at and this is a highly significant number in scripture.

There's a lot that we could do at this point if we wanted to slow down and take the time. There are similar listings of these individuals when you go to 1 Chronicles chapter 4, if you go to Numbers chapter 26 and the lists do not always match. The sons of Benjamin are different for example.

When you go down through this listing here and you arrive in verse 19, the sons of Rachel, Joseph and Benjamin. Joseph it talks about Ephraim and Manasseh. And then the sons of Benjamin in verse 21 are given as Bila, Bikur, Ashbel, Ghira, Naaman, Ehi, Rosh, Mupim, Hupim and Ard.

And yet when you go over to Numbers chapter 26 you don't have this same listing. Well, if you were a religious person and you were with us for our study of 1 and 2 Samuel, you know that there are many things that can happen to the Hebrew text in the course of

transmission. And where God has not preserved for us an accurate text, He has preserved for us the evidence to reconstruct it.

And if it was of sufficient importance and if we had sufficient time, we could go back and actually do a pretty fair job of reconstructing the actual situation. There are a couple of places here where in one place individuals are said to be sons of Issachar or Zebulun for example, when later on they are listed as grandsons. But you can get mired down in detail and miss the larger point.

Why is it that the author of Genesis here, the Holy Spirit directing Moses, I believe, to complete this listing, why is it that we have this careful breakdown by maternal ancestor? We have the sons of Leah, the sons of Bilhah and Silpah and Rachel given. They are totaled up. And when we get to verse 26, all the persons who went with Jacob to Egypt who came from his body besides Jacob's sons' wives were 66 persons.

When you add Joseph and his sons and Jacob, you wind up with 70. And I will just tell you that if you go down into the murky details of this and work it out, it all comes out fine. There is not a problem with inspiration or with head count except in the transmission of the text.

And by the evidence that God has left us in Numbers and Chronicles, this can be satisfactorily reconstructed. But our goal is to step back for a moment and take a look at the significance of some biblical numbers. Because the author is at some pains here to demonstrate for us that there are 70 persons who come with Jacob to Egypt.

And there is a nice summary in one of my trusty resources here, which is the International Standard Bible Encyclopedia for the uses of various Bible numbers. There are many more that I could add to their list here. But the primary significance of 70 is that it is a multiple of 7. And 7 is a very significant number in Scripture.

7 and its multiples, occur over 600 times in Scripture. Going back to the beginning of creation where God organized time based on a 7 day week and created the universe in 6 days and rested on the 7th. God assigned significance to the number 7. So part of our understanding of the number 70 is going to be related to understanding the number 7. Of course going back to creation week we could say this is an arbitrary number.

God could just as well have chosen 6 or 5 or 8 or 9. He just picked 7 and His choice is what makes it significant. But it is a number that has some intrinsic significance as well. And to understand 7 we have to back up even further and understand the numbers 3 and 4. Before the morning is over we will have examined primarily, although there are many numbers and multiples of numbers, we are going to look at 3, 4, 5, 7, 10 and the combinations thereof.

3 is of course the number of the Trinity, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. We don't

have an immediate revelation of the Trinity in the book of Genesis. It is not the first thing that comes to our mind.

But you will remember that in creation week the 6 days of creation were broken into 2 groups of 3. 3 at its fundamental level is a number of completeness because you have a beginning, a middle and an ending. It is easy when you have 3, especially in terms of time. 3 days occurs quite often.

The sign of Jonah, the time that the Lord spent in the heart of the earth is the number 3. And any time you have units of time measured in 3 you have a first, a middle and a last. And this concept at its root logical level is going to be at the forefront of the foundation of a lot of human thinking. First, middle and last is an organizing principle that suggests to us everything.

Whatever you have to accomplish it can be accomplished when you have the first, the middle and the last. God followed this pattern in the days of creation. We saw the correspondence between the first and the fourth days, the second and the fifth days, the third and the sixth days where God put the raw material out there and the fundamental organization in the first 3 days and then went back and refined and expanded and completed things in the second set of 3 days and then rested on the seventh.

This bears directly on our number 7 because 7 is 2 3s plus 1. There is no better illustration of that than Creation Week itself. The second number we want to look at just briefly is the number 4. 4 is also a fundamental number and this rather than being a time-based completeness is a space-based completeness. Ever since the earliest times recorded in history we've had the four points of the compass, north, east, south and west.

The stars that God placed in the heavens, the movement of the planets and the moon and sun and so forth all conspire together to give us an organizing principle for direction or for space of four directions. The number 4 comes into play a lot in terms of organizing space. Dwelling on the four things to this day are some permutation of four sides.

A standard house, especially in the earlier days in this country, this four sided dwelling places as far back as they can excavate them have had four sides. Why didn't people build triangular houses? Why didn't they build like Eskimos, circular houses? These things have occasionally been done but four sides, four facing directions is a fundamental organizing principle. So the combination of threes for time and fours for space, 3 plus 4 is 7. And 7 as a number of completeness may have its root in this idea that this is everything you need in terms of time, it's everything you need in terms of space.

So not only the organizing principle of 6 plus 1 but also 3 plus 4 is bound up in the number 7. Well, I also mentioned that we would talk about the number 5. We've seen the

number 5 here in Genesis. It has come up most recently with Joseph's treatment of Benjamin where during the period of his incognito mode with his brothers, he gave Benjamin at the feast at his house 5 times the amount of food that the other brothers received. After he had revealed himself, he gave his brother Benjamin 5 changes of clothes where he gave all of his other brothers 1. And 5 is a fascinating number.

If you look this up, the articles and studies, people don't seem really to know what to do with 5. They say, well, 5 is used a lot but it doesn't seem to have any particular significance. Well, I think that it does and I would like to invite you to follow along with me to help figure this out because there aren't a lot of suggestions for the number 5 in the references. But 5 is an organizing principle for a lot of what God has done by way of communication.

The first thing that comes to mind is the 5 books of the law, the 5 books of Moses. The Psalms, the hymnal of Israel is divided and has been from earliest times into 5 books. So 5 books of the law, 5 books of the Psalms.

The Megalote or the stories, the scrolls of Israel as a part of the writings. You have the law, the prophets and the writings. And in the writings you have the wisdom literature such as Job and Proverbs.

And you also have the 5 Megalote, they are called, M-E-G-I-L-L-O-T-H. And these include Ruth, Esther, Canticles, actually I forget the other two. But this is not in the category of wisdom literature.

It's sort of difficult to classify. And there are 5 of those. Jesus teaching in Matthew is found in 5 sections or 5 parts.

We find the number 5 throughout Genesis. Sometimes it is in combination with other numbers. But Shem lived 500 years after he begot his son Arphaxad.

And Shem lived a total of 600 years. He turned 100 two years after the flood. And that's when Arphaxad was born.

So when Shem was 100 years old, Arphaxad was born and then he lived 500 years after that for a total of 600 years. And Shem has great significance in the Bible for a number of reasons. And it's interesting to me that his life span is broken up into 5 plus 1. It is as though he had the 600 corresponding to the 6,000 years of human history that precede the 7,000 which is the great Sabbath of history, the Millennial reign of Christ.

Noah was 500 years old himself when he begot Shem, Ham and Japheth. You find that out in Genesis 5.32. Interestingly when you go to Genesis 18, you'll remember Abraham thinking about his nephew Lot living down in Sodom and God visits. You have the 3 individuals who visit Abraham and partake of a meal.

And as God is walking along with Abraham, he says, I'm not going to hide from you what I'm about to do. I'm going to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah for their wickedness. And Abraham begins to bargain and say, well, what if there were some righteous people in the city? Would you spare it? Do you remember the number that he begins with? He says, well, if there were 50 righteous people in Sodom, of course this is the multiple of 5 times 10.

If there were 50 righteous, would you spare the city? And God says, yes. Then when Abraham begins to negotiate down, the first thing he does is subtract 5. And he says, well, if there were 50 minus 5. And we find out from this that 5 is also used sometimes to suggest a few. The clearest passage for this is Leviticus 26 and verse 8. And this is in a passage that contains something of a promise.

You can look at it as a promise. 26.8. When God is promising blessing to the Israelites, if they walk in God's statutes and keep His commandments and perform them, this is 26.3 of Leviticus, then I will give you rain in its season. Your threshing will last till the time of vintage.

I will give peace in the land. You will lie down, and none shall make you afraid. I will rid the land of evil beasts.

You will chase your enemies, and they shall fall by the sword before you. And in 26.8 of Leviticus, God says, five of you shall chase a hundred, and a hundred of you shall put 10,000 to flight. Your enemies shall fall by the sword before you.

So the idea is that five Israelites can put to flight a hundred, and five suggests a few. So when Abraham begins to subtract from the 50, he starts out by saying, well, what if there were a few less? What if there were five less? And then he works his way all the way down to 10. And of course that's found in Genesis 18.28 and following.

There are some significances, and I will confess to you that I do not fully comprehend what God is doing with a lot of the numbers in Genesis, especially in the genealogy lists where people's ages are given. And I encourage you to direct your time and attention to figuring that out. And if you crack the code, why, let me know.

But it is significant, for example, if you look at Abraham in Genesis chapter 12. Remember, Genesis 12 is really the beginning of the career of Abraham. And it tells us in Genesis 12, verse 4, that after God had spoken to him and said, get thee up from your kindred and people, I will make of you a great nation.

All the families of the earth will be blessed in you. Verse 4 says, Abram departed as the Lord had spoken to him, and a lot went with him. Abram was 75 years old when he departed from Haran.

Seventy plus five. You have the number 70 and the number five. In Hebrew it says 70

and five.

And so you have those two numbers connected at the very beginning of the inception of the nation of Israel in the person of Abraham. Seventy plus five. And isn't it interesting that we have that same combination here in the latter part of Genesis where we had Joseph present five of his brothers to Pharaoh.

If you count Joseph, that makes six. Six of the twelve are presented to Pharaoh, but Joseph introduces five brothers to Pharaoh. And 70 is the total individuals who belong to Jacob who begin life in the land.

Tirah, in Genesis 11, verse 32, backing up a little bit, it tells us that the days of Tirah were 205 years, and he died in Haran. You also have many other examples of where you have an even number of years followed by five. We won't go into all of those, but a good concordance.

If you have a complete concordance, just look under the number five and you'll see all of the different places where five turns up in combination with other significant numbers. We already noted that Benjamin receives five times the food and five times the clothing of his brothers. Joseph has already told Jacob that five years of famine remain.

There have been two years of famine and five remain, a total of seven. Five occurs frequently in connection with the construction of the tabernacle. Later on, after Moses and the law and the building of the tabernacle and even the temple in Solomon's day, just as a brief example, if you want to look at Exodus chapter 26, there are three chapters in Exodus that really contain a lot of references to the number five, and that's Exodus 26, Exodus 36, and Exodus 38.

All of these are connected with the worship life of Israel, specifically the tabernacle and the altar or the temple and the altar or the implements of worship that are connected therewith. You find out, for example, in Exodus chapter 36 that the curtain that compose the tabernacle are five to a side. In verse 8 of chapter 36, the gifted artisans who work on the tabernacle made ten curtains.

This is 36 of Exodus, fulfilling the instructions that were given in 26. Ten curtains woven of five linen, fine linen, blue, purple, and scarlet, artistic designs of cherubim they made them. The length of each curtain was 28 cubits and the width of each curtain 4 cubits.

Curtains were all the same size. He coupled five curtains to one another and the other five curtains he coupled to one another. So you have five on one side, five on the other side, and there are 50 clasps that hold these all together.

There are 50 loops on the edge in verse 12, 50 loops on the edge of the other curtain, and then there are 50 clasps in verse 13. The two sets of curtains are coupled together with the clasps so that it's all one tabernacle. Then the outer tent made of goat's hair

has a similar construction, five plus five plus one.

It has an end piece to enclose. It is also held together with 50 loops. You can also see right at the end of the chapter that with the veil that's woven of blue, purple, and scarlet, fine woven linen with the cherubim interwoven, there are four pillars of acacia wood overlaid with gold, hooks of gold, four sockets of silver for them, and then there is a screen for the tabernacle door of blue, purple, and scarlet, and fine woven linen made by a weaver.

Then in verse 38 of Exodus 36, it's five pillars with their hooks. Their capitals are overlaid and their rings are overlaid with gold. Their five sockets are bronze.

So the doorway of the tabernacle also has this symbolic value, the number five. The temple, if you go over to 1 Kings 6 and 7, you'll find numerous references to something having these dimensions or these numbers. Without going into all that detail, I'll leave you to look those up.

Exodus 26, Exodus 36, particularly Exodus 38. If you're still in 36, you can turn over a page. The altar of burnt offering, what are its dimensions? Five cubits long, five cubits wide.

It's square and its height is three cubits. So what is the vertical dimension, if you will, pointing up toward God? Three cubits. Three suggesting the Trinity.

What is the horizontal dimension, no matter which way you face it? It's five cubits. What I'd like to suggest to you, and I don't know if anybody else has drawn this conclusion or not, I haven't seen it anywhere, but I would like to suggest to you that five is the number of mankind. Five is the number of mankind.

Every place that I have encountered this number, it seems to suggest the human race. Salvation is of the Jews, we are told. And even when we find five in connection with Israel, such as the five books of the law, the five books of the Psalms, the five books of the Megilloth and so forth, five in connection with the tabernacle, the temple and the altar, this is the contact point between God and man.

Israel is the contact point between God and man. And it wasn't God's purpose so much to exclude the rest of the human race as to provide a special people and a special place where God could be found that would be a light to the entire world. And when you find, because really twelve is the number of Israel, that's what symbolizes them as God's peculiar people.

Twelve tribes, the number twelve is probably second only to the number seventy in terms of its frequency in scripture. And what is the point? That's Israel in their uniqueness. But Israel and the things of God, the worship that was designated for Israel is designed to be a contact point for mankind.

And that's why you have fives occurring frequently at the... We'll look in greater detail and continue our study of this number five after the break. We're going to pause here and take our break. But one thing to remember in the light of all of this is that God does have a design and a plan in human history.

He weaves these things into the fabric of the record of scripture for a purpose. And it's not just fanciful interpretation to see the significance of these numbers. It's a reminder that there is a design there is a plan.

God has made provision for the human race. It is a specific kind of provision. There is only one way of salvation.

There is none other name given among men whereby we can be saved. And it's the Lord Jesus Christ. And all of these things ultimately lead to Him.

And we'll trace out those paths further when we return.