

Elder Vernon Johnson

Numbers

Five

The Depraved Nature of Man Dead in Trespasses and Sins

The number five is sometimes used in the scriptures to illustrate the depraved nature of man who is dead in trespasses and sins.

After Adam had eaten of the forbidden fruit and had died in trespasses and sins, the Lord accosted him in Genesis Chapter 3. Adam selfishly excused his evil deed by using the word "I" five times: 9 "And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? 10 And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself. 11 And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? 12 And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat." Adam tried to blame first the woman and then God.

The proud self-righteous Pharisee went to the temple to pray and greatly bragged upon himself using the proud selfish "I" five times: Lk. 18:11 "The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. 12 I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess." Pride is a sin of the flesh and one of the worst enemies that all of God's children must war against daily. Pride leads to the condemnation of others as being inferior to ones self and leads us to desire praise and glory for ourselves.

Being dead in trespasses and sins leads those not born of the Spirit to persecute those who are seeking and following the truth. Paul was persecuted for preaching the gospel of Christ and one of the persecutions he suffered was to be beaten with a whip: 2 Cor. 11:24 "Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one." Furthermore, we read in Rev. 6:9 "And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: 10 And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" Depraved man hates the doctrines of salvation by grace and persecutes those who preach it and hold to it. Many who hold to the word of God are slain for their beliefs by those who are dead in trespasses and sins.

