



"Five Smooth Stones"

(A Study of 1 Samuel 16–17)

INTRODUCTION & RECAP

- **Where We've Been:**
 - We're journeying through **1 Samuel**, discovering the **character and nature of God** through the life of **Israel's most celebrated king—David**.
 - Like any great hero, David has a powerful **origin story**, rich historical context, and divine narrative significance.
- **Two Primary Characters We've Seen:**
 - **Samuel** – The faithful prophet and priest.
 - **Saul** – Israel's first king, chosen by the people but driven by insecurity and fear.
- **The Purpose of Our Study:**
 - **Primary Goal:** To draw out the **character and nature of God**—*To Know Him*.
 - **Secondary Goal:** To see the contrast clearly between two kings—Saul (fear-driven) and David (faith-driven). To see why we can look to David as an illustration of Faith,

KEY TERMS (TOOLS FOR BIBLICAL STUDY)

- **Exegesis:**
 - **Definition:** Carefully drawing **out** of Scripture what God intended to communicate, honoring context, culture, and authorial intent.
- **Eisegesis:**
 - **Definition:** Reading our **own ideas into** Scripture, shaping the text to say what we want, rather than listening to what God intended.

Why is this important?

Because we want the Word to shape **us**, not the other way around.

TONIGHT'S FOCUS: "Five Smooth Stones"

- **Key Passage:** 1 Samuel 16
(*The Anointing of David*)
- We'll briefly touch on 1 Samuel 17 (David and Goliath), but our main focus is **David's formative years**—the foundation for his legendary victory.

1. The Scene: Forgotten and Obscure (v. 6-11)

Obscurity means being **unknown, hidden, or not easily seen, understood, or recognized.**

- Samuel is sent to anoint a new king from Jesse's sons.
- Jesse presents his seven older sons, each outwardly impressive.
- **David isn't even invited to the selection.**
He's obscure, overlooked, forgotten in the field.

1 Sam 16:11 – *“Are all your sons here?” And Jesse said, “There remains yet the youngest, but behold, he is keeping the sheep.”*

2. The Principle: God Looks at the Heart (v. 7)

- **Key Scripture:**
- **1 Samuel 16:7** – *“But the LORD said to Samuel, ‘Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature... For the LORD sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart.’”*
- This verse reveals the core reason why David matters to us:
 - God values the **heart condition** more than outward appearance.
 - David's heart qualified him, not his stature, age, or appearance.

3. The Question: What Did God See in David?

- **He was anointed and set apart by God.** But why?
- What was David doing in obscurity that caught God's attention?
- Scripture doesn't say much, but it does provide crucial insights:
 1. **Faithfulness in Obscurity (16:11)**
 - He served faithfully even when no one noticed.
 2. **Skillful Preparation (16:18)**
 - David was known as skilled, brave, wise, and most importantly, **“the LORD is with him.”**
 3. **Private Victories (17:34-37)**
 - David fought lions and bears, not publicly, but privately—learning firsthand God's dependability and strength.
- **Principle:** *What you do in hiddenness will shape what you become publicly.*

4. Five Smooth Stones: Clarifying the Truth

You may have heard it taught that David picked up five smooth stones because Goliath had four giant brothers—making five giants total. While this speculative thought is intriguing and a creative theory can certainly be made, the fact is:

The Bible does not explicitly say why David chose five stones but the word is clear, preparation precedes activation. ¹³ Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed David in the presence of his brothers; and the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon David from that day forward.

This point highlights an important lesson for us as students of the Word:

Our measuring line must always be the Word of God itself. (2 Timothy 3:16–17)

- Scripture alone should anchor our understanding. Speculation can distract or distort if we aren't careful.

Why Five Stones, Then? (A Thoughtful Reflection)

Could it be that David simply didn't know the exact outcome of the battle?

- He knew the character of God.
- He knew the power of God.
- He had bold faith that the battle belonged to the Lord. (1 Samuel 17:47)
But perhaps David also understood that faith doesn't eliminate wisdom or preparedness.
- ¹⁷ So Saul told his servants, "Find me a man who plays well and bring him to me." ¹⁸ One of the young men said, "Behold, I have seen a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite who is a skillful musician, a brave *and* competent man, a warrior, discerning (prudent, eloquent) in speech, and a handsome man; and the Lord is with him."

The Key: David's Faith was Rooted in Intimacy with God

David's courageous faith was not naive or reckless. It was **built upon his personal, intimate experience with God's deliverance.**

David himself explained:

"The LORD who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine."

—1 Samuel 17:37

David's prior experience—facing lions and bears in obscurity—gave him a clear-eyed confidence that God was dependable, faithful, and powerful enough to sustain him in every battle.

- **Faith isn't blind optimism; it is informed trust.**
- **David didn't know exactly how God would bring victory, but he knew God would bring victory.**

His preparation—the five stones—reflects **wise readiness** rather than doubt or uncertainty in God's ability.

What does this mean for us? (Application)

- Our confidence in facing our “giants” doesn’t come from speculation or guesswork.
- It comes from having a track record of seeing God move powerfully and faithfully in our lives and in His Word.
- **It comes from intimacy:** Knowing God personally, not just theoretically. (*Psalms 9:10; Psalm 27:4*)
- This kind of faith isn’t shaken by unknown outcomes. It is secured by a known God.

Remember this truth clearly:

Faith prepares intentionally, acts courageously, and trusts God completely.

Scriptures Reinforcing This Point:

- **2 Timothy 3:16-17** – Scripture is our ultimate measure.¹⁶ All Scripture is God-breathed [given by divine inspiration] and is profitable for instruction, for conviction [of sin], for correction [of error and restoration to obedience], for training in righteousness [learning to live in conformity to God’s will, both publicly and privately—behaving honorably with personal integrity and moral courage]; ¹⁷so that the [a] man of God may be complete *and* proficient, outfitted *and* thoroughly equipped for every good work.
- **1 Samuel 17:37, 47** – David’s faith was anchored in God’s past deliverances.
- **Psalms 9:10** – Trust comes from intimately knowing God’s character. And those who know Your name [who have experienced Your precious mercy] will put their confident trust in You,
For You, O Lord, have not abandoned those who seek You.
- **Psalms 27:4** – Intimacy with God sustains confidence in battle. One thing I have asked of the Lord, and that I will seek:
That I may dwell in the house of the Lord [in His presence] all the days of my life,
To gaze upon the beauty [the delightful loveliness and majestic grandeur] of the Lord
And to meditate in His temple.

APPLICATION: Where We Are Now (HY)

- Right now, we as a youth group (HY) find ourselves in a similar **season of obscurity**.
 - Maybe you sense something big on the horizon—God calling you deeper.
 - Now is the time we practice—**faithfulness, skillfulness, intimacy with God**.
- **What we do now matters greatly:**
 - Faithful with **our sheep** (daily responsibilities, friendships, family).
 - Practicing spiritual disciplines—knowing Him intimately.
 - Cultivating a heart that will one day boldly declare:
 - **“Who is this uncircumcised Philistine?”**
Not from pride, but from deep intimacy and trust in God’s power.

CONCLUSION: Christ—Our Ultimate Victory

- David points forward to Christ—Jesus is our ultimate champion, the true and greater David.

- **Goliath (death, sin, fear)** still taunts, still intimidates. But Christ has already defeated him. **Our victory is certain** (1 Cor 15:57).
- May we boldly run toward the battles God calls us to—because Christ is **in us** and **with us**.

Closing Challenge:

May we become a generation of Davids:

Intimate, faithful, bold, running confidently into battle, knowing our victory is Christ Himself.

A Note for a Generation

You have been hidden in obscurity, but there is purpose in it. The Spirit of God is still at work—and He is still working in the hearts of the young. He empowers those who would know Him, those who do know Him.

Young people, there is a battle. There is a war. We know that Christ has already won the ultimate victory, but the enemy still rages. He still taunts. He still speaks. His voice still causes fear. Though he has been totally defeated, his voice still resounds.

It is time for you to rise.

By the power of the Spirit—firm in your identity, rooted in understanding—

You are a son of the House.

This is a convergence—an activation of all that has been prepared in secret—that now gives rise to zealous, genuine faith. Faith that slays.

Who is this uncircumcised Philistine?