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Q&A#118 Are David's Five Smooth Stones Related to Christ's Five Loaves?

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Brief follow-up to yesterday's video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y5PhDuj10-Q>.

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Transcript

Yesterday I did a video on the subject of David picking up five smooth stones from the brook before defeating Goliath. And here I wanted to do just a couple of follow-up thoughts on that. Someone asked me a question that might tease out a few more details that I intended to but forgot to mention in the video yesterday.

David picks up five stones to defeat the enemy and deliver his people. Jesus uses five loaves in order to feed his people. Is this symbolic of God taking hold of humanity in order to save humanity? Is there a significance to five that perhaps represents patriarchs, etc.? I'm not sure that five represents patriarchs or anything along those lines.

And I don't think that we have that direct connection between the five loaves of Jesus and the five stones of David. Not a direct connection. But I think there is an indirect

connection.

What might that indirect connection be? If you read through the story of David, what is one other occasion where the number five is mentioned and foregrounded in a surprising way? Where we might not expect to have any number at all? In the case of the five smooth stones, we asked why would you mention that? Why would you mention five in particular? It's hardly a detail. If you were recounting the event and it occurred to you, if you were David, you wouldn't even think to tell people you picked up five stones. Just put a handful of stones and the stones from the brook.

You wouldn't even mention maybe that they were smooth. It wouldn't really occur to you perhaps. It wouldn't be that significant.

And so I've suggested that the fact that there's five is surprising. Just as you'd be surprised to count 153 fish or 318 fighting men. This is not a number you expect to find.

It's something that calls for attention, that seems to invite analysis or interpretation. There is one number elsewhere in the story of David that is similar. Another five.

And I'll give you a few seconds to think about it before I tell you. If you go to chapter 21 of the story of David, as he has just fled from Saul's house, encountered Jonathan who has told him that this threat is there and he can't return. Then David goes to the priests at Nob.

David came to Nob to Ahimelech the priest and Ahimelech was afraid when he met David and said to him, why are you alone and no one is with you? So David said to Ahimelech the priest, the king has ordered me on some business and said to me, do not let anyone know anything about the business on which I send you or what I have commanded you. And I have directed my young men to such and such a place. Now, therefore, what have you on hand? Give me five loaves of bread in my hand.

Whatever can be found. Now, it would seem that there is a significant parallel here. Here, David asked for five loaves of bread.

Earlier on, he picked up five stones. Have the stones become bread? There seems to be some interesting detail here. The five loaves and the five stones that might suggest a connection between these two passages.

And I think we should reflect upon that. Is there some way in which the themes of the first passage and the themes of the second passage go together? He picks up five stones just before he heads towards Goliath and slays Goliath. What do we have here? David is leading his men.

And as he leads his men, he asked for five loaves of bread. No longer is he just using the stones to defeat the giant. He's using loaves to feed his people.

He's no longer just the champion going out mano a mano to fight the giant. He's now the leader of a band of men. There's something, a progression here.

And what do we find next? We find another reference to Goliath. And we might not expect a reference to Goliath here. But if you're thinking about the connection between the five stones and the five loaves of bread, then you're not surprised.

It's something that you would expect because you've seen one detail that clues you in on a possible connection. And then there is a further connection to back it up. What happens next? He's given holy bread and there is no bread apart from the showbreads.

He's given this holy bread and then he feeds his people. And in the same way, Jesus, as he goes into the wilderness and feeds the people with the five loaves to fish, there is a progression there. From when he goes into the wilderness and faces Goliath for 40 days, Goliath being Satan.

And Satan stands against him for 40 days, much as Goliath stands against Israel for 40 days, immediately after the anointing of David. So there are common themes here. Christ is anointed and then stands, Goliath or Satan stands against the new David for 40 days.

Here we have the same things as in the story of 1 Samuel and then is defeated. And there are stones in that story, stones in the wilderness. The question is, will you turn these stones into bread? Later on, we see other bread in the wilderness multiplied.

And here we see this movement from Christ alone in the wilderness to Christ leading people out into the wilderness. It's like the movement from Moses going out alone to Moses leading his people. There's a movement from this initial movement to Exodus and deliverance and a great multitude being gathered.

And the story of David, I think, is playing upon similar themes. He's going now into the wilderness and he's no longer just the person who's defeating the giant alone. He's now becoming the giant.

What happens? He is given the sword of Goliath. And so in the past, he was offered the garment, he was offered the armor and robe of Saul. He did not accept it at that point.

It wasn't right for him. He defeats the giant and dressed in shepherd garments. Later on here, we see him progressing even further.

No longer is he just gathering stones to defeat the giant. He's now gathering bread to feed an army of people surrounding him. Then he goes and he takes the sword of Goliath.

There's no other sword like it, as he says. This is a singular sword. This is a sword that

belongs to the giant of Israel.

And now he's risen to that stature. So there's a progression here. And I think we see similar things in the story of Christ.

This movement from being alone in the wilderness and defeating the giant to then being, as it were, the giant leading his people out into the wilderness and giving them bread. I suspect that's part of what's going on here. What does David do then? Where on earth would you expect David to go? Where would you, where would be the last place you'd expect him to go? Well, maybe he's just taken the sword of Goliath.

He goes to Goliath's hometown. He goes to Hebron and goes to Achish, the king of Gath. Goliath of Gath, and he goes to Gath.

He goes to the, as it were, the lair of the serpent himself. And so he's taken the sword of the serpent, and now he goes to the lair of the serpent. We've seen him cut off the head of the serpent.

And I think what we're having here is a similar thing to Christ defeating the serpent and then Christ despoiling the, or going to the lair of the serpent, outwitting the serpent. There's deception and trickery, feigned madness, and it seems all crazy, but Christ outwits Satan. I wonder whether that's something that's going on here.

Anyway, it's playing upon similar themes. Whether or not it's a one-to-one match, I'm not sure it is a one-to-one match, but there are similar themes. And David's story and Christ's story are often compared.

So, for instance, crossing the Brook Kidron, going up the Mount of Olives, being ministered to there, events occurring at a stone's throw, and the right-hand man wanting to attack people who are causing trouble, who are assaulting the king, false or bad counsel being given to the wicked enemy, and that counsellor being overthrown and ending up hanging themselves. All these themes are played out in the story of John's Gospel, for instance, or Matthew. These are using these themes in relationship to Christ going to Gethsemane, wrestling there, the weeping, and all these themes that we see within David fleeing from Absalom.

What we see within this story of David now, I think, is something similar. David's stories are progressing. He's becoming more mature at each stage.

So the first time he takes stones and he defeats the giant. The second time he's not alone. He's now leading a company of men, and he's feeding this company of men, no longer with stones but with bread.

And now he's giving bread in the wilderness, like Moses gave manna in the wilderness, and he's someone who takes on the characteristics of the giant. He's now the giant

before Israel. He's the one who's able to wield Goliath's sword.

And no longer is he just defending Israel from the giant that has trespassed upon their borders. He's going into the lair of the giant, of the serpent. And it's important to remember that Goliath is a serpent.

He's dressed in bronze, which plays on the word for serpent. He's someone who has scaly armour, again associated with the serpent. Forty days he stands, just as Satan stands against Christ after his anointing.

And Goliath stands against David after his anointing. And earlier on we'll see Nahash the Ammonite. Nahash against serpent, and Saul defeats him shortly after his being set apart as king.

So in these stories we see serpent figures being defeated, and then the one who has become greater than the serpent. The one who's able to take the sword of the serpent, who's able to grow into the full serpent-like character, and exercise the trickery and deception and wilyness of the serpent, which we immediately see as he goes into the lair of the serpent and outwits the person who's the king there. I think this is one of the things that we see in the story of David, this maturation into incorporating all these aspects that need to be incorporated in his character for him to rise to full stature.

He incorporates the characteristics of Esau. He incorporates the characteristics of the serpent. And then as he's incorporated that, he can be the true giant, the true person who will lead.

Jacob is associated with serpent themes, and he later on takes on more themes of Esau. He's the one who clutches the heel. He's the one who's the supplant.

He's the one who's the trickster. He's the one who's the deceiver. And he's wily like the serpent, but then he needs to grow and mature into the full stature of a man.

And this is what David is doing, and I think it's also what we see in the story of Christ. So I think there is an indirect connection between the five stones of David and the five loaves of Christ. But that connection occurs through the five loaves of David, the five loaves that he requests from the priest at Nob.

Thank you very much for listening. Hope this helped to address the question and to fill out a bit more some of the themes that are going on within 1 Samuel. God bless.