1 Samuel Chapters 3 and 4

Please pray before beginning to read and study your bible. Repent of any sin or attitude that would prevent you from hearing the Holy Spirit and ask him to guide your heart and mind as you read. Read through the entire chapter first before going back to read and answer questions. Take notes when God reveals Himself to you.

Chapter 3

1. Why was the word of the LORD rare in the days of Eli, Hophni, and Phinehas?
2. 1 Samuel 1: 28, 2: 11, 2:21, 2: 26, and 3: 1 speak of how Samuel grew up in the presence of the LORD, ministering to Him and worshipping Him in Shiloh. However, Samuel did not yet know the LORD according to verse 7 of chapter 3. How did he come to know the LORD? How can you tell that not knowing the LORD made it difficult for Samuel to recognize God's voice/calling?
3. Can anyone know the LORD without knowing His word?
4. Who is the Word of God according to John 1: 1, 2, and 14?
5. How does verse 10 indicate that this was a pre-incarnate appearance of Jesus to Samuel?
6. The LORD confirmed His judgement against the house of Eli, which he had already revealed to Eli in chapter 2. Why does God swear that the guilt of Eli's sons will never be atoned for by sacrifice or offering? (Hint: the Masoretic Hebrew text in v. 13 is translated "…for his sons blasphemed God." Read Matthew 12: 31)
7. Did Samuel's fear of Eli's response prevent him from accomplishing God's task for him?
8. To whom did Eli have Samuel redirect his fear? V. 12
9. What did Jesus say in Matthew 10: 27-33 about fear? What does He promise to those who speak up and to those who do not?
10. What does verse 19 mean by "he let none of His words fall to the ground." Do you ever let God's words to you fall to the ground out of fear?
11. Read the KJV of verse 21. Why did the LORD return to Shiloh? How did the LORD reveal himself to Samuel? Who besides Samuel benefited from his relationship with the God?

Chapter 4

1. What did Israel rally around to get out from under the yoke of the Philistines? (vs. 3, 4, and 9)

2. Who did the priests, Hophni and Phinehas, rely upon for guidance?
3. Do you see a problem with today's pastors and priests taking direction from elders rather than from God's word?
4. Did Eli have confidence in this plan? (v. 13)
5. Where did the elders of Israel go wrong? After all, the LORD was present, enthroned between the cherubim (V. 4).
6. Will a rally cry around America's Christian heritage and the constitution save our country from our enemies that seek to enslave us?
7. Will talk of God and increased church attendance save us? Read Isaiah chapter 58.
8. Compare the number of Israelite men who were killed in the first vs. the second battle with the Philistines. What might this indicate?
9. The decimation of their army, the death of their religious leaders, and the departure of the Ark of the Covenant made it crystal clear to the remaining Israelites that the "glory" – God Himself – had departed from Israel (v. 21). How did the people react to the news? Is this behavior appropriate for a people who realize they have lost God's favor?
10. If not for their massive failure to defend themselves, do you think they would have otherwise recognized and repented of their sin?
11. Having heard the distressing news about the Israeli defeat and his sons' deaths, what news does the bible say tipped Eli over the edge, literally? Why?
12. Was there any reason for Eli's daughter-in-law to be comforted that she had given birth to an heir of the Levitical priesthood since the Ark was captured?
13. Why did she name him Ichabod and what does "Ichabod's" future hold, considering the accuracy of God's prophetic message to Eli? (Go back to 1 Samuel 2: 30-36.)

Read Exodus 34: 6-7 and list the ways in which the LORD's character, as defined by Himself, is proven true in this biblical account.

Thank God for His faithfulness in being who he says he is. Ask Him to reveal Himself to you even more and through every circumstance in your life. Ask Him to grow your faith, hope, and love and to give you a passion for His Word.