1 Samuel Chapters 5 and 6

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 5

1. Who was Dagon? Why do you think the Philistines put the ark in Dagon's temple?
2. Why did the Philistines leave the ark beside the statue of Dagon after the first time it fell?
3. What did the Philistines blame for the destruction of Ashdod, Gath, and Ekron?
4. What pestilence fell upon the people when the ark moved into a city?
5. Read Deuteronomy 28:27. Does the LORD use disease to punish people?

Chapter 6

1. What did the priests and diviners recommend as a guilt offering to send back to Israel with the ark? What are they admitting to with this offering?
2. What historical events did the Philistine priests and diviners recall when warning against the "hardening of hearts" and not paying honor to Israel's God? How many years had passed since those events occurred?
3. Just to be certain that all of the suffering did not happen by chance, and they weren't prematurely giving up the ark and the gold, what test did they set up to prove God's will?
4. Do you struggle with faith to see ordinary or extraordinary events in your life or answers to prayer as acts of God versus chance? Have you ever asked God for a clear sign to provide proof of His existence, power, or will for you?
5. How does God react to being tested or challenged by man? Can you think of biblical examples of God requiring man to set up impossible situations so that He could prove Himself?
6. What was special about Beth Shemesh? Joshua 21:15
7. The people of Beth Shemesh went from rejoicing to mourning and sent the Ark of the LORD away after what happened? Should these particular inhabitants have known better? (Read Exodus 19: 21-22 and Numbers 4: 15, 20.)

8. Wat did the people of Beth Shemesh blame for their misfortune? Is sending God away the best response to His righteous judgement?

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.