

Our old testament text tells of the pronouncement by Moses of the Great Shema in the sixth chapter of Deuteronomy. These words by Moses tell us that there was the giving of a covenant from God to Moses and the people of Israel on Mount Horeb (Mount Sinai). We hear about that meeting and covenant in Deuteronomy chapter 5 beginning at the first verse.

And Moses called all Israel, and said to them: “Hear, O Israel, the statutes and judgments which I speak in your hearing today, that you may learn them and be careful to observe them.

² The LORD our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. ³ The LORD did not make this covenant with our fathers, but with us, those who are here today, all of us who are alive. ⁴ The LORD talked with you face to face on the mountain from the midst of the fire. ⁵ I stood between the LORD and you at that time, to declare to you the word of the LORD; for you were afraid because of the fire, and you did not go up the mountain. He said: ⁶ ‘I am the LORD your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

Then comes the giving of the Ten Commandments to the people by Moses as he read them from the two tablets. After the giving of the Ten Commandments in verses 7 thru 22 comes the following beginning with verse 23: ²³ *“So it was, when you heard the voice from the midst of the darkness, while the mountain was burning with fire, that you came near to me, all the heads of your tribes and your elders. ²⁴ And you said: ‘Surely the LORD our God has shown us His glory and His greatness, and we have heard His voice from the midst of the fire. We have seen this day that God speaks with man; yet he still lives. ²⁵ Now therefore, why should we die? For this great fire will consume us; if we hear the voice of the LORD our God anymore, then we shall die. ²⁶ For who is there of all flesh who has heard the voice of the living God speaking from the midst of the fire, as we have, and lived? ²⁷ **You** go near and hear all that the LORD our God may say, and tell us all that the LORD our God says to you, and we will hear and do it.’*

²⁸ *“Then the LORD heard the voice of your words when you spoke to me, and the LORD said to me: ‘I have heard the voice of the words of this people which they have spoken to you. They are right in all that they have spoken. ²⁹ Oh, that they had such a heart in them that they would fear Me and always keep all My commandments, that it might be well with them and with their children forever! ³⁰ Go and say to them, “Return to your tents.” ³¹ But as for you, stand here by Me, and I will speak to you all the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments which you shall teach them, that they may observe them in the land which I am giving them to possess.’*

³² *“Therefore you shall be careful to do as the LORD your God has commanded you; you shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left. ³³ You shall walk in all the ways which the LORD your God has commanded you, that you may live and that it may be well with you, and that you may prolong your days in the land which you shall possess.*

Then in Deuteronomy 6 we hear our text today in verses 4-7 – and in particular verse 4 - *“Hear, O Israel: The Lord Our God, the Lord is one!”* The words were given to Moses by God. They are called the Great Shema – the great hearing. Moses spoke them to the nation of Israel. Faith comes by hearing - hearing the Word of God. The Great Shema is the Great Hearing – and faith begins with the Great Hearing of the Word that the Triune God is One God. And the occasion

of Moses speaking these words came after God had given the Ten Commandments to Moses for the second time on Mount Sinai. Remember that Moses broke the first two tablets as he returned from Mount Sinai after forty days and saw his people committing open sin - even worshipping a false god – a golden calf made by his brother Aaron the priest. After the second giving of the commandments, Moses called all the people together to give **them** the Ten Commandments. This was the first time that they had heard them. God gave them the Ten Commandments and the other statutes such as sacrifices and worship rituals and cleanliness rituals. He intended that they keep all of His commandments and statutes. To break even one of them would render them unclean. Like us, they couldn't and they didn't keep the Ten Commandments. God eventually abandoned the Holy of Holies in the Temple because of their sin and idolatry. God did not dwell with His people for several hundred years.

Until Jesus came into the flesh. Since Man could not and can not keep his side of God's covenant, it would require a God-Man to keep both sides of the covenant – both the God side and the Man side – both the law side and the Gospel side. The God-Man Jesus Christ would suffer and die to live perfectly and fulfill the law side – to pay for all of man's sin and guilt before God . Jesus would rise from the dead to show that God's redemption of mankind was complete – to fulfill the law and deliver the Gospel.

Jesus' presence as a man was easy to see. He walked and wept, loved and laughed, honored his parents. So that we could see and believe that He is also God, He shows us His power as God as he has power over storms and nature, heals the sick and maimed, raises dead people to new life, and teaches. “The Lord our God is One.” And Jesus, our God, who was before Creation – and was at Creation – teaches us about God as we hear Him in our text today from Matthew 6. You can't serve the God of Creation and money. Serve God only. Don't worry about what you eat or drink or wear. God provides all things for you. God knows your needs and even your wants. No need to worry about tomorrow. Today has enough trouble of its own to worry about. “*Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.*” Seek forgiveness of sins from the Triune God. Life and salvation will be added to you. Come to His Holy Table – He feeds you the bread of life from heaven – He feeds you His Son's body and drinks you with His blood. Hear these things. They are today's great shema – today's great hearing. Faith comes by hearing. Hear and believe. Your sins are forgiven. Amen.