

+

God came down to Mount Sinai, the Holy Mount, to meet with Moses and to give him the ten commandments. From just the Old Testament lesson appointed for today, we might assume that Moses had a quick meeting with God, received the ten commandments, and then went back down to the Israelites and started traveling on to the Promised Land. But this is far from the truth! When God came down to meet Moses, the mountain was covered in cloud and fire, there was the sound of trumpets and the earth shook! Likewise, we hear today in the Epistle that St. John the Apostle is caught up in the Spirit and given a vision of the courts of Heaven, even of the very throne of God! He writes that God who sat upon the throne *was to look upon like a jasper and sardine stone*, which means that God Almighty shone a warm, golden colored light. Around His throne was a great and shining rainbow, and the twenty-four elders: the twelve Patriarchs and the twelve Apostles continually praising God. We hear of fantastic and even unusual angels that fly back and forth, not the nice little “precious moments” angels found on Hallmark Cards, but the kinds of creatures that we cannot imagine, covered with wings, eyes, and multiple faces. And amidst all this, there is lightning and thunder, earthquakes and voices issuing forth from the throne of God. And all those around about the throne sing *Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, which was and is to come*.

Isaiah the prophet also had a vision of Heaven, and he says only, *I saw the Lord, and He was high and lifted up and His train, [the hem of His robe], filled the temple*. We also hear that during that encounter with God, God’s voice is so great that it shook the door posts! Ezekiel the prophet also had a vision of God, of God sitting on His throne, and in the vision, God was hard to behold and look upon because of the many dazzling colors that shone from Him who was surrounded by angels in the form of wheels full of wings and multiple eyes. Perhaps we begin to get an idea of what they saw. Yet, we know only too well how hard it is to imagine such a vision or picture as it is presented by the book of Exodus, St. John, and the prophets. One thing is clear, this is a God who is greater than all that we can imagine, who cannot be put in a box, and whose nature far exceeds even what our mind’s eye can behold and try to interpret. Words and imaginations fail to describe God, even the description of the visions of God as recorded in the Scriptures cannot do Him justice. The visions themselves were so overwhelming for

these prophets that their lives were forever changed, and they went throughout Israel proclaiming the Word of God.

Like these visions from the prophets, we fail to fully comprehend the Athanasian Creed, which, in turn, itself struggles to adequately describe the God whom we worship. Yet, St. Athanasius makes a valiant effort at describing God when he tells us that *God the Holy Trinity is incomprehensible, limitless without limitation, incomparable, in perfect love and perfect unity*. Simply put, the God who we worship can never be fully described nor understood. No human mind can grasp this. It is important, though, that we *keep* the teaching of the Church on the Holy Trinity, fully acknowledging that we are unable to understand, or comprehend the deeper meaning of what our words struggle to articulate. And while we cannot fully understand the Trinity, yet we are called to worship Him, singing *Holy, Holy, Holy*, with all the angels, archangels, prophets, patriarchs, and saints of heaven. We worship the God, the Holy Trinity, Who is infinitely greater and more complex than any of our problems or burdens. God is greater and more powerful and complex than we can ever imagine and yet He tells Moses He is *merciful and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in mercy and faithfulness, keeping merciful love for thousands upon thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin*. God is infinitely great and powerful, infinitely loving, and He is infinitely just and, thus, requires obedience to His laws and commandments.

With all of this in mind, it is amazing that God has spent so much energy and effort on saving us mortals. All of history, from Creation to this very morning, God has spent calling us to Himself, seeking to bring us into union with Him. He brings us into union with Himself through Jesus Christ, the Second person of the Holy Trinity, in full unity with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit, Himself very God and very man. We come to the Holy Trinity through Jesus Christ, who lived and died for us, who rose again from the dead, and has ascended into heaven, all so that we may join Him in the Heavenly Kingdom of the Holy Trinity. We cannot save ourselves; God is too incomprehensible and limitless for us to have union with Him through our own merits. We could not possibly go up to God, and so God has come down to us, in our flesh and blood through Jesus Christ, and now lives inside of us through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. God has come near, in all of His transcendent and immanent power and glory, greater and nearer than we ever can imagine.

The Holy Trinity has wrought our Salvation, and through the waters of Baptism we are born through the Spirit. And if we are born through the Spirit then we must keep God's commandments and allow our lives to be shaped by the Holy

Spirit through this Trinity Season. Baptism is the beginning of the gracious life of the Trinity in us, and it is that Life which will take us to the Kingdom of Heaven. As we await our entrance into the Heavenly Kingdom, we draw near to God's Altar to receive the heavenly bread and heavenly drink, and so by God the Holy Spirit we are through the Sacrament of Holy Communion incorporated into God the Son, so to be acceptable to God the Father. Amen.