

Sunday, March 9, 2014

From the book “The Ministry of Salvation” (10)

## The Stages of falling in sin

Was the fall of Adam and Eve sudden or was it gradual? If it was gradual, what are the stages of falling?

Referring to the dialogue that took place between the serpent and Eve which we quoted in the previous article, we can say falling in sin happens in multiple stages as follows:

### A. Dialogue with Satan:

The first step of Adam and Eve falling in sin was entering into a dialogue with the serpent.

### B. Weakening Faith:

Satan is a liar and a deceiver who tries to cast doubts on the truthfulness of God’s word. Therefore, the second stage of falling in sin is when man starts to accept Satan’s lies as a result of a weak faith and lack of confidence in God’s commandments and promises.



### Distorted vision of reality:

When man starts losing faith in the truthfulness of God’s commandment as a result of Satan’s lies and deceit, he starts to see the truth in a distorted form, shaped by Satan’s lies. Exactly like what happened to Eve after her conversation with the serpent, according to Scripture: *“So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable”*.

Notice that when God created the trees and the plants, they were all created pleasant to the eyes, and good for food, as it was said in Genesis: *“And out of the ground the LORD God made every tree grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil”*. (Genesis 2:9)

All of the trees were pleasant to the eyes and good for food because they are God’s creation. However, the sin of pride, that Adam and Eve fell into, distorted their vision of the tree being good for food and pleasant to the eyes as it was created by God. Instead, they lusted after the fruit of the tree because of Satan’s deception.

### C. The act of sin:

When man starts to perceive things around him from the perspective of evil desires, his vision becomes distorted, and the result is falling in sin like Eve. After she saw that the tree *was* good for food, that it *was* pleasant to the eyes *“she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.”*

Thus we ought to deal with Satan’s deception by complete rejection of his lies, and complete obedience to God’s living word, according to the Lord Jesus himself: *“He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me...”* (John 14:21)

### Summary of the topic of the commandment and disobedience

1. God created man in incorruption, with freedom and authority for he was created in God’s image.
2. God, out of His love, gave man the commandment, and the freedom to choose to obey as reciprocation to His love, “God secured this grace that He had given by making it conditional from the beginning upon two things—namely, a law and a place. (St Athanasius).
3. Death entered into the world by Satan’s envy, as he was one of the cherubs but disobeyed God because of his pride. So Satan envied man because of God’s love for him.
4. Satan approach with man is always through casting doubts on the truthfulness of God’s word.
5. The stages of man’s fall: pondering upon the sin, weakness of faith, a new and distorted vision, and the act of sin.

*Fr. Marcos Daoud*

frmarcosdaoud@yahoo.com

St. Mary Coptic Orthodox Church, Palatine, IL