

Sunday, May 18, 2014

From the book **“The Ministry of Salvation” (17)**

Choosing the People of Israel

Many people wonder about the reason why God calls a certain person to be the father of a chosen people for God. They also wonder about the basis on which God chose Abraham to be the father of all fathers. Some people think that when God chose the people of Israel, He had abandoned the rest of the nations, and only limited His interest into His chosen nation whom he is biased towards and favors at the expense of the rest of the nations. We will answer some questions about our subject “Choosing the people of Israel” to clarify that this was one of God’s ways to prepare the redemption of all mankind including all nations, tongues, and races without any discrimination or distinction.

Did man lose God’s love toward him after his fall in disobedience?

Did God manifest his love to man after his fall?

God is the same yesterday, today and forever, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning. God is love, and He created man out of His love, so His love for mankind will remain forever, even after man’s fall in disobedience of God’s commandment as God remains faithful forever.

We can also observe many evidences of God’s love toward man after his fall. At the same time of man’s falling, we find that God is offering him the first promise of salvation in his conversation with the serpent: **“And I will put enmity between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel.”** (Genesis 3:15).

After that, God made garments from animal’s skin, instead of fig leaves, for Adam and Eve to cover their nakedness. Animal skin comes from slaughtering animals, which means that God taught Adam and Eve the ritual of offering sacrifice to cover the nakedness of sin: **“Also for Adam and his wife the LORD God made tunics of skin, and clothed them”** (Genesis 3:21).

When evil increased and Cain killed his brother Abel because of envy, and he lied to God trying to cover up for his murder, we find that God’s love was manifested in His answer to Cain, the killer, who addressed God saying: **“Surely You have driven me out this day from the face of the ground; I shall be hidden from Your face; I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond on the earth, and it will happen that anyone who finds me will kill me.” And the LORD said to him, “Therefore, whoever kills Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold.” And the LORD set a mark on Cain, lest anyone finding him should kill him.”** (Genesis 4:14-15)

Despite Cain’s sin, we find that God’s love is apparent and engulfs man with mercy and compassion. Also, in St. Basil’s liturgy the priest prays: **“Holy, Holy, Holy, truly O Lord, our God, Who formed us, created us and placed us in the paradise of joy. When we disobeyed your commandment by the deception of the serpent, we fell from eternal life, and were exiled from the Paradise of joy. You have not abandoned us to the end.”**

God didn’t leave us separated from him despite our sin and fall **“You have not abandoned us to the end”**.

Therefore, God’s love is steadfast and not changing and it was manifested clearly towards man even after his fall.

Fr. Marcos Daoud

frmorcosdaoud@yahoo.com

St. Mary Coptic Orthodox Church, Palatine, IL

