

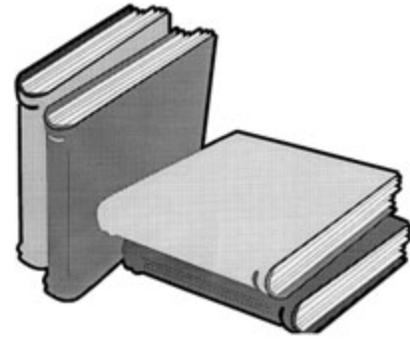
The Rock and Pit

*Look unto the rock whence ye are hewn,
and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged.*

Isa 51:1

Selections from the Christian's heritage in print,

collected by Dean Brown



Issue 1014

Adam's Happiness: Above or Alongside?

Adam had perfect tranquility and calm in his own breast in paradise. His conscience had nothing to do, and the happy pair [Adam and Eve] lived in perfect unity. They were liable to no disease or pain, and had a life of pure delight and unmixed pleasure. Wisdom and knowledge was pleasant to their souls. They knew the knowledge of God, enjoyed communion with him, and saw the delights of his glory.

The forbidden fruit in this paradise of Eden was a gracious provision to protect Adam from falling. God made man lord of the world, but Adam needed to know by a particular visible sign that *God* had sovereign dominion over all. It was for man's safety, and an act of infinite wisdom and grace, to keep him from one single tree as a visible testimony that he must *yield all* to his Creator, so that while he saw himself as lord of creation, he might not forget that he was still God's subject.

This tree was a memorial from heaven to warn him of his danger and cause him to be aware of his *changeable* state. Man was created with a free will to do good, of which the tree of life was an evidence, but *also* free to do evil, and the forbidden tree was to remind him of this grave danger. It was a continual reminder to Adam against evil. It was a beacon set up before him to bid him beware of dashing himself to pieces on the rocks of sin.

God created man to stand upright, that he might look up to God and *find happiness* above, and not on the earth. This fair tree taught him this lesson.

His happiness was not to be found in the enjoyment of creation, for there was a lack even in paradise. The forbidden tree was, in effect, the representative of all creation. It pointed man away from himself, and to God for happiness. It was a sign reading 'Emptiness,' hung over the door of creation.

Thomas Boston (1676-1732), *Human Nature in its Fourfold State*, 1720,
Banner of Truth, 1964, 1997. Italics added. Suggested by a reader.