



Daily Verse and Comment

Genesis 2:15-17

(15) And the LORD God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and keep it. (16) And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "You may freely eat of every tree in the garden, (17) But you shall not eat of the tree of *the* knowledge of good and evil, for in the day that you eat of it in dying you shall surely die."

A Faithful Version

[This world](#) is the way it is, not because [God](#) hid the reality of His existence and instruction from mankind (see [Romans 1:20](#)), but because mankind has chosen to ignore God's reality and the [wisdom](#) He has made available to humanity from the beginning. Adam and Eve, representing all mankind, are the case in point. As they did, so we all have done in our days.

Virtually everyone who has ever lived eventually asks, "Why is life such a struggle?" Why does life so frequently seem hopelessly mired in what is base and frustratingly difficult? The answer appears in Genesis 2-3. No other section of the Bible so clearly depicts the stark contrast between the idyllic beauty, innocence, and potential for happiness in life in Eden and the shocking judgments God hands down just a few chapters later. The lesson is clear, but mankind still ignores the reality that, as God warned, [sin](#) destroys.

It does not matter whether any other human sees the sin nor what we think about the sin. What matters is what the Creator says. Nothing can change that because what He says is reality—truth. The early portions of Genesis teach us that, when God turned mankind loose following their sins in the Garden, people used their liberty to commit sin even more freely. Almost no one took to heart the lessons contained within the first sins. Humanity continued doing what *seems* right rather than what *is* right. As [Proverbs 14:12](#) says, "There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death."

In Genesis 4, God records the first murder. In this case, it was not one of just any man but of a humble, righteous, believing man—by his flesh-and-blood brother! In addition, God banishes the murderer from continuing any kind of relationship with Him. Fear rises in Cain's murderous heart, making life even more burdensome for him following his choice that seemed right to him.

God then gives us a brief glimpse into the life of Cain's grandson, Lamech, who, not only has multiple wives, but also boasts of having killed a man. He then warns—following the worst example of his day, his own grandfather—that should any future harm befall him, he will be even more menacing. We see humanity's problems compounding as the number of ways that seemed right increases. Through these examples, we see that mankind's arrogance, combined with his poor choices contrary to God's instruction, grew rapidly.

If a thinking and believing person ever needs a reminder that everything in life matters, the results of Adam's and Eve's sins should do the trick. Neither of them ever considered the long-range and long-lasting effects of what they were about to do. God is showing us broadly that there is no such thing as committing a sin in a corner, one that affects nobody else, because everyone and everything are part of the operation God has created. As its sovereign Governor, He actively rules what He has made. Planet Earth almost seems alive at times because everything is so interconnected.

We must avoid thinking of God's creation as being a mere machine. In addition to its amazing resilience and recuperative powers, creation also contains living, thinking, decision-making beings, either helping to maintain it properly or destroying it. Though people of no consequence in seemingly insignificant circumstances commit sins, their sins always create effects beyond the time, the place, and the people against whom they are committed. It is no wonder that Scripture likens sin to leaven. A major lesson here is that none of us lives in a vacuum. If nothing else, earth's Creator is always overseeing it and judging. Though extremely [merciful](#), He is also just.

The lesson of [Proverbs 14:12](#) is this: Only too late do deluded persons who ignore the reality of God and His Word discover that they are on the crowded highway to death. What God presents in His Word is not that sinners were tricked, but that they relied too heavily on their own wisdom

rather than turning in humility to the God who offers to mankind a way of clear choices—His way.

— John W. Ritenbaugh

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