

THE BAPTIST HERITAGE

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NOVEMBER 20, 2002

The Plague

On the heels of nearly ten long years of famine, which followed almost seven decades of unprecedented and, to this date, thankfully, unrepeated severely cold weather that seemingly covered the entire northern hemisphere—a prototype of the anti-war pacifist’s famous nuclear winter—[No, that is not the right word; they are not truly pacifists, because they almost universally support abortion—so call them ‘my life at any price’ fear-mongers]—an unidentified visitor, perhaps a sailor, perhaps a traveler, from the Crimea disembarked from an unknown vessel in an uncertain southern port of Europe during the hard winter of 1347-48 and brought ashore with him a virulent guest. No one has ever discovered who this person was, what his purpose might have been, or even if he ever knew what he had done. Within a dozen years, the lethal guest released by this stranger, deliberately or accidentally, had summarily executed between one third and one quarter of the population—a number in excess of twenty-five million

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*a good place to visit
but
a better place to belong*



this and that

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This issue of The Baptist Heritage is written primarily for those of our readers who have not received the LORD Jesus Christ as their Saviour. It is no light matter to us to consider that some of you have an eternal destiny separated from all that is good and holy and confined to the Lake of Fire, where the fire of God's eternal vengeance burns forever. In our frivolous day, many simply do not care to consider the possibility that such a place as Hell or the Lake of Fire exist. Nonetheless, both Hell and the Lake of Fire are real places where the real souls of real people will be forever and forever. As surely as you are alive, you will die. As

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this and that

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certainly as you will die, you will face the God of all the earth. If you die without accepting the LORD Jesus Christ as your Savior, you will not enter Heaven.

Heaven is the House of the Lord and only those who accept His invitation will be permitted inside. Heaven is reserved for those that receive forgiveness of their sins through the atonement of the shed blood of Jesus Christ. With this mailing is a copy of a tract written by Dr. Ford Porter. If after reading this sermon and that tract, you have any questions as to how to be saved and to become a child of God, I would appreciate your letter, e-mail, or collect phone call.

Settle your eternal destiny before you try to sleep tonight. You do not want to close your eyes here and open them in Hell. Salvation is yours in Christ. May God grant that you have a desire to be saved and that you do come to Christ.

—Pastor Manley

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This publication is mailed to you on purpose. Someone who knows you believed that you would profit by receiving and reading it. If you do not agree, we will remove your name from the next possible mailing. We have no desire to intrude or offend.

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spirit within me. Psalm 51:10

If you are a child of God, then you can find help through the Holy Spirit in the warfare with your old nature.

If you have not received the LORD Jesus Christ as your Savior, you are in the possession of a plague-ridden heart that you hold in check solely by the strength of your character. Your culture, your education, your heritage, or your fear may restrain an outbreak of that plague for a time, but not forever. If it does provide some restraint, then the pride that is in your heart will cause you to trust in your own heart and not to seek salvation in Christ. No heart is more dangerous than the heart that is trusted for safety. The heart, JEHOVAH declared, is deceitful and desperately wicked. The wickedness of the heart has no remedy, no help, and no hope other than salvation in Christ Jesus. "Believe on the LORD Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved."

King Solomon also wrote, "Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths. Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil." (Proverbs 3:5-6)

—Pastor Manley

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acknowledgment appreciated.**

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people—on the European continent, which became a virtual land of desolation. A traveler wrote in his journal of passing through a nation with "fields uncultivated, cattle straying without herdsman, buildings unoccupied, and few people seen." The masses named that uninvited, un-welcomed, unwanted guest 'The Black Death,' or just 'The Plague,' because of one of its deadly symptoms. The identity of that deadly pestilence has never been determined, but the symptoms as described by several observers were so horrendous that the mind desires to label them the products of science fiction.

One resident (a man named Boccaccio) of Florence, himself a survivor, recorded the progression of the disease as beginning with "swellings," which sometimes grew as large as "an egg or an apple" in the groin or the armpits. These growths spread over the whole body, changing color into "black or purple blotches," a few large ones or many small, in any part of the body. With these grotesque tumors came raging fevers, spitting of blood, open running ulcers, and severe, unbearable pain. Some writers have suggested Bubonic Plague; but Bubonic Plague spreads to humans from rats by flea-bites. For the plague to reach such wide proportions would require continent-wide massive deaths of rats, which would have forced the fleas to move to humans. No historical record exists of the observation of such deaths of rats—an event that could not have gone unnoticed. 'The Plague' remains, therefore, unidentified and, most mercifully, unrepeatable to this day. Whatever the actual disease might have been, "all who visited the

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sick man," wrote a chronicler in Flanders, "or do business with him, or even carry him to the grave, quickly follow him there." Another would write, "when the graveyards were full, they dug huge trenches, where they laid the corpses hundreds at a time, stowed like merchandise in a ship . . . How many grand houses, once full of gentlefolk, were left empty, even of the lowest servant . . . How many spirited young men and pretty women ate in the morning with their family and friends, and by evening were supping with their forefathers."

In 1485, a new plague also named for its symptoms, the 'Sweating Sickness,' mysteriously appeared in England. Victims progressed from sudden profuse sweating to complete prostration and death within twenty-four hours. Returning from its hiding place four more times, this plague destroyed its thousands, before finally vanishing in 1551. From 1539 through 1640, England also battled an unidentified plague that would strike suddenly and destroy the populations of entire villages; then, just as abruptly as it arrived, after its hundred years of terror, this plague also disappeared. In 1664, a vastly different plague arrived, perhaps by sea, to invade London and, within three years, one of every five Londoners lay in their graves, victims of this destroyer. Across England, the carnage was the same.

Skipping several centuries, not for any lack of material evidence, but for the sake of space, I move to 1918-1919, when the great influenza pandemic, following on the heels of the slaughter of World War I, struck down uncountable millions—it is estimated that far more in-

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ally.

Every imagination of the heart of each human being is only evil—never good—and that is continually so.

Jeremiah records that JEHOVAH says, "The heart is deceitful and desperately wicked." Your heart will deceive you. Your heart is desperately wicked—that is, your heart has a sickness that is beyond remedy, beyond help or hope, at the very point of death.

The LORD Jesus said, "For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: All these evil things come from within, and defile the man." (Mark 7:21-23)

That is what is in your heart. That describes what lies buried beneath the swamp, the jungle, the ocean of your heart. Who knows when the world from the outside, the flesh—your own flesh—on the inside, or the devil or one of his minions will dare to dig into the depth of our hearts or to stir the waters of our heart. What tidal wave of vile pollution would be unleashed within our very own hearts if it were so provoked or goaded? King David discovered what evil thoughts, what adulteries, what murders, what covetousness, what pride, what theft, what foolishness, what deceit, what lasciviousness, what wickedness, what evil things lay buried in his heart. Hear his broken cry before the Holy God of Heaven:

Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right

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only, knowest the hearts of all the children of men;) 40 That they may fear thee all the days that they live in the land which thou gavest unto our fathers . . . 54 And it was so, that when Solomon had made an end of praying all this prayer and supplication unto the LORD, he arose from before the altar of the LORD, from kneeling on his knees with his hands spread up to heaven.

The King confesses that our hearts themselves are a plague. He was not referencing the pump that moves the blood through our bodies, but the inner person. The plague of our own hearts—what a terrible thought it is that within our beings is a plague worst than “pestilence, blasting, mildew, locust, or . . . caterpillar” or an “. . . enemy [besieging] . . . the land.” Beyond these identified, hideous plagues, the plague of the heart is greater than “whatsoever plague, whatsoever sickness *there be*.” Nothing is worse than the plague of the heart.

The world cries, “Trust your heart” and “Follow your heart.” If you trust your heart and follow its dictates, you will die and spend all eternity in the Lake of Fire. Your heart will lead you to Hell.

The very first time the heart of any person is mentioned is in Genesis when the heart is described in terrible terms.

Genesis 6:5 And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and *that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continu-*

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dividuals died from ‘The Flu’ than in that Great War, the War To End All Wars. The War To Preserve Democracy saw over eight and a half million battlefield deaths and nearly forty million total casualties.

In 1967, medical laboratory workers in Germany and Yugoslavia began to die with symptoms that were strikingly similar in nature, though seemingly at first, unconnected. It was finally recognized that Vervet monkeys, used for medical experimentation, had carried the filovirus from Uganda and the Marburg Virus arrived in Europe.

In 1998, a group of gold miners in Durba, Democratic Republic of the Congo, developed symptoms, somewhat influenza-like: bad headaches, aching joints, and a fever. Within hours, however, it became obvious that a terrifying, unidentified, infectious agent was loose that was attacking all the internal organs of these victims, causing them to bleed uncontrollably. In days, the limp bodies of these workers were covered with blotches and oozing blood, which continued even after death. Among the effects on the extremely few survivors was complete insanity. There was (and still is) no cure for this never identified plague; only two destinies awaited those who contracted it: death, a hideous, tortured dying, or survival with insanity. Then, as mysteriously and as quickly as it had appeared, this unknown virus vanished, disappearing back into its subterranean lair or its jungle haunts—but no one knows how it came or how it left. What is certain is that somewhere in the remote expanse of Africa, is a refuge for an incurable virus.

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There are some rather interesting 'coincidences' in the events that I have mentioned thus far. The timing of that 'Sweating Sickness,' which appeared five times between 1485 and 1551, has been linked, by competent research, to what we would identify today as 'deforestation.' The timing and spread of the outbreak is directly connected by historical records with known times of rapid, mass destruction of woodland in Shropshire, on the western borders of England to create new farmland. A similar sequence took place in Argentina after the Second World War; vast areas of the Pampas, cleared with the use of herbicides to make way for new farms to use the rich ground to make Argentina the breadbasket of South America, became fields of death. In the process of this quick land conversion, the balance between a particular species of field mouse and its natural predators was disturbed. With the 'mouse-controllers' eradicated or driven away, the mice thrived. The new farmland also drew hundreds of migrant laborers to do the fieldwork. By the early 1950s, great numbers of those workers began to fall prey to fevers, vomiting and headache. Some suffered massive hemorrhaging, and died hideous deaths. The cause was eventually traced to a previously unknown virus, named Junin, carried by the field mice. The same pattern repeated itself in Bolivia, where farmers rapidly removed vast stretches of jungle near the Machupo River. It was not long before the reports of strange, horrible deaths among farm-workers mounted. When this outbreak was traced to its source, researchers found another hemorrhagic virus, named Machupo, once more, carried by

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thy people Israel be smitten down before the enemy, because they have sinned against thee, and shall turn again to thee, and confess thy name, and pray, and make supplication unto thee in this house: 34 Then hear thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of thy people Israel, and bring them again unto the land which thou gavest unto their fathers. 35 When heaven is shut up, and there is no rain, because they have sinned against thee; if they pray toward this place, and confess thy name, and turn from their sin, when thou afflictest them: 36 Then hear thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of thy servants, and of thy people Israel, that thou teach them the good way wherein they should walk, and give rain upon thy land, which thou hast given to thy people for an inheritance.

Solomon now comes to the Plague of all plagues.

37 If there be in the land famine, if there be pestilence, blasting, mildew, locust, or if there be caterpillar; if their enemy besiege them in the land of their cities; whatsoever plague, whatsoever sickness there be; 38 What prayer and supplication soever be made by any man, or by all thy people Israel, which shall know every man the plague of his own heart, and spread forth his hands toward this house: 39 Then hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place, and forgive, and do, and give to every man according to his ways, whose heart thou knowest; (for thou, even thou

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LORD God of Israel, keep with thy servant David my father that thou promisedst him, saying, There shall not fail thee a man in my sight to sit on the throne of Israel; so that thy children take heed to their way, that they walk before me as thou hast walked before me. 26 And now, O God of Israel, let thy word, I pray thee, be verified, which thou spakest unto thy servant David my father. 27 But will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded? 28 Yet have thou respect unto the prayer of thy servant, and to his supplication, O LORD my God, to hearken unto the cry and to the prayer, which thy servant prayeth before thee to day: 29 That thine eyes may be open toward this house night and day, *even* toward the place of which thou hast said, My name shall be there: that thou mayest hearken unto the prayer which thy servant shall make toward this place. 30 And hearken thou to the supplication of thy servant, and of thy people Israel, when they shall pray toward this place: and hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place: and when thou hearest, forgive. 31 If any man trespass against his neighbour, and an oath be laid upon him to cause him to swear, and the oath come before thine altar in this house: 32 Then hear thou in heaven, and do, and judge thy servants, condemning the wicked, to bring his way upon his head; and justifying the righteous, to give him according to his righteousness. 33 When

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field mice.

Then, there is Ebola, which also was introduced from the rainforests of Africa. Ebola hemorrhagic fever (EHF) is transmitted human to human in all the ways that HIV is spread; EHF is often characterized by the sudden onset of fever (101 degrees), weakness, muscle pain, headache, and sore throat. This is followed by vomiting, diarrhea, rash, limited kidney and liver functions, both internal and external bleeding, and nearly always death (50-90% of all clinically diagnosed cases). There is no cure; one either lives or dies. While the disease seems to be transmitted directly to humanity through contact with primates, the disease is likely sourced in rodents (bats especially) and passed along to the primates through fleas or mosquitoes.

Dengue Fever is an infectious disease caused by an arbovirus transmitted by mosquitoes, and characterized by high fever, rash, headache, and severe muscle and joint pain. Currently, news reports of an outbreak in Hawaii make frightening reading.

Early in 1999, evidence emerged that appears to link extensive campaigns of deforestation to the rise of the nightmare plague of today: AIDS. The natural host for HIV-1, the lethal virus that now infects more than thirty-three millions of people worldwide, is a species of chimpanzee. The timber companies hired hunters to kill the chimpanzees, at first for their meat for the workers and then to remove them because they created a nuisance. Through these chimpanzees, butchered by the

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thousands (much as the buffalo in our own 'old West') in conditions that were ripe for the transmission of viruses, the disease was carried into cities by the infected meat sent to restaurants and, of course, by the hunters and workers themselves. The research indicates that from its jungle source, HIV-1 has spread throughout the world. More than seventeen million people have died from this plague, eighty per cent in sub-Saharan Africa—2.2 million in 2001. More than fifty million worldwide have been infected with HIV; five and a half million more will be infected this year and the rate of increase only expands.

While intravenous drug-users and morally perverse individuals are the more susceptible among the population, AIDS is not the exclusive disease of degenerates. While the majority of cases are indeed traceable to a source (contaminated needles used by addicts, promiscuity, mother to innocent baby, or tainted blood used in transfusions to a guiltless victim), a sizeable percentage cannot be definitively linked to any source. The possibility of transmission by blood-sucking insect bite (mosquitoes, fleas, ticks, lice) is not ruled out by any serious student of the disease and, in view of the proven record of mosquitoes, fleas, ticks, and lice in spreading plagues, the probability is undeniable. One noted researcher apparently considers that it is a possibility for the disease to be transmitted by such mundane things as doorknobs and handrails. As researchers have concluded that it will never be known how the one hospital worker came into contact with the anthrax that killed

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forth my people Israel out of Egypt, I chose no city out of all the tribes of Israel to build an house, that my name might be therein; but I chose David to be over my people Israel. 17 And it was in the heart of David my father to build an house for the name of the LORD God of Israel. 18 And the LORD said unto David my father, Whereas it was in thine heart to build an house unto my name, thou didst well that it was in thine heart. 19 Nevertheless thou shalt not build the house; but thy son that shall come forth out of thy loins, he shall build the house unto my name. 20 And the LORD hath performed his word that he spake, and I am risen up in the room of David my father, and sit on the throne of Israel, as the LORD promised, and have built an house for the name of the LORD God of Israel. 21 And I have set there a place for the ark, wherein is the covenant of the LORD, which he made with our fathers, when he brought them out of the land of Egypt. 22 And Solomon stood before the altar of the LORD in the presence of all the congregation of Israel, and spread forth his hands toward heaven: 23 And he said, LORD God of Israel, *there is no God like thee, in heaven above, or on earth beneath, who keepest covenant and mercy with thy servants that walk before thee with all their heart: 24 Who hast kept with thy servant David my father that thou promisedst him: thou spakest also with thy mouth, and hast fulfilled it with thine hand, as it is this day. 25 Therefore now,*

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above. 8 And they drew out the staves, that the ends of the staves were seen out in the holy place before the oracle, and they were not seen without: and there they are unto this day. 9 There was nothing in the ark save the two tables of stone, which Moses put there at Horeb, when the LORD made a covenant with the children of Israel, when they came out of the land of Egypt.

The emphasis in the passage turns to the holiness of JEHOVAH.

10 And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy place, that the cloud filled the house of the LORD, 11 So that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud: for the glory of the LORD had filled the house of the LORD.

King Solomon describes JEHOVAH as the faithful God Who keeps His word and Who is separated from man by man's sinfulness. The King enumerates a solemn record of man's sin.

12 Then spake Solomon, The LORD said that he would dwell in the thick darkness. 13 I have surely built thee an house to dwell in, a settled place for thee to abide in for ever. 14 And the king turned his face about, and blessed all the congregation of Israel: (and all the congregation of Israel stood;) 15 And he said, Blessed be the LORD God of Israel, which spake with his mouth unto David my father, and hath with his hand fulfilled it, saying, 16 Since the day that I brought

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her (2001), so there are some cases of HIV and AIDS that develop in ways undeterminable. It is a plague in every sense of the word.

One thing is certain, through an arrogant disregard for common sense practices in conservation and the ignorant manipulation of the complexities of the environment through ceaseless human encroachment in formerly uninhabitable places, godless humanity can unleash a terrible new threat of killer diseases carried by microbes that have long lain undisturbed. Beneath the rotting floor of jungles, under the layers of ooze in swamps, below the floor of the rivers, lakes, seas, and oceans, and in the tunnels and mines in naturally inaccessible places are microbes, genes, viruses, bacteria, germs, microorganisms, and pestilences that have lain undisturbed for millennia—until enterprising or ignorant humanity blunders in. The threat of disturbing new deadly pathogens springing from the earth itself must be taken seriously.

Intrusive practices are not the only way to produce these epidemics. The environmental movement is a serious contributor to the introduction of new plagues. For the benefit of my readers, I need to define my use of this term: environmentalist. My father, a strong conservationist, raised me to be a conservationist. He believed in preserving woodlands, protecting the waterways, rotating crops, and planting trees. Dad was always planting trees. He despised clear cutting and railed against farmers who 'over-farmed.' Dad was also a hunter. He believed in conservation because it was sensible and

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beneficial. He also believed it was scriptural. An environmentalist is not a conservationist. The (true) environmentalist worships the earth. To the environmentalist the earth itself is the source of life. Read the material they produce before you launch an argument with me. Environmentalists are followers of a religion. Sadly, many conservationists have been deceived into using the term to describe themselves, without reading the material that the 'faithful' among the environmentalists produce.

For example, extensive popular attempts at reforestation (the removal of 'intrusive' 'over farming') in the Northeast led to the emergence of Lyme Disease, a potentially fatal bacterial infection affecting the joints, heart, and brain. Humans 'receive' Lyme Disease through the bite of a tick, whose natural host is deer. In response to the desire to turn back civilization's encroachment on nature, local governments launched well-intended 'preservation' and 'reforestation' programs. Doing so created beautiful landscapes that attract humans, deer, and *Ixodes scapularis*, the deer borne tick that carries *Borrelia burgdorferi*, the bacterium responsible for Lyme Disease. Creating a refuge for the deer, without restoring the natural predators or permitting balanced hunting in the newly formed 'ecosystem,' the deer obviously flourished—until their numbers are staggering and their presence is annoying. Over population combined with under thinning and produced weak, sickly deer, which became abundant hosts for the ticks. The sheer number of deer guaranteed increasing crossed-paths with humans, who are

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A plague to which you and I give very little, if any, thought. We live our lives in the possession of this plague and disregard its presence and its deadlines. The eighth chapter of First Kings, where we find the record of King Solomon assembling the nation to dedicate the Temple, describes this plague of all plagues.

1 Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel, and all the heads of the tribes, the chief of the fathers of the children of Israel, unto king Solomon in Jerusalem, that they might bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD out of the city of David, which is Zion. 2 And all the men of Israel assembled themselves unto king Solomon at the feast in the month Ethanim, which is the seventh month. 3 And all the elders of Israel came, and the priests took up the ark. 4 And they brought up the ark of the LORD, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and all the holy vessels that were in the tabernacle, even those did the priests and the Levites bring up. 5 And king Solomon, and all the congregation of Israel, that were assembled unto him, were with him before the ark, sacrificing sheep and oxen, that could not be told nor numbered for multitude. 6 And the priests brought in the ark of the covenant of the LORD unto his place, into the oracle of the house, to the most holy place, even under the wings of the cherubims. 7 For the cherubims spread forth their two wings over the place of the ark, and the cherubims covered the ark and the staves thereof

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Forget the possibility of the alleged global warming effecting health—the supposed arrival of its consequences are still decades away. The oceans pose a more immediate, insidious threat to health stemming from man's use of the world's oceans as gigantic sewers. At least thirty per cent of humanity has no other waste disposal system than streams, rivers, and the sea. Polio and hepatitis viruses now reside in coastal shellfish, while vast toxic colonies of simple, pathogen-packed organisms thrive on the waste-derived-nutrients increasingly found along coastlines. The sea is a gigantic storage container for potentially deadly microbes like rotavirus, responsible for severe diarrhea, and poliovirus. Sometimes, these diseases return from the sea to cause havoc on the mainland. In December 1992, thousands of people in Bangladesh fell victim to cholera, following a tidal wave of bacteria-laden ocean water off the southern coast.

These truths make us want to mark the entire earth, land, and sea: Deadly pathogens—do not disturb. Some scientists, however, have suggested that what lies ahead will make the past seem harmless. The Book of the Revelation affirms this to be so.

But, I speak of a greater plague than all of these that I have described and all those that potentially lie ahead. *A plague that has the seeds of death is lying dormant within you and me right now—seeds that are about to burst into rapid unchecked growth or that have already begun to produce a harvest. A plague that is present in me as I write and in you as you read.*

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also drawn to the area, entranced by its renewed "natural" beauty. By the mid-1970s, the first cases of the tick-borne disease developed among the inhabitants of Old Lyme, Connecticut and this new plague, as many others, received its geographical name. The same pattern is reported in Europe, Asia, and Australia, with tens of thousands of cases of Lyme Disease now reported worldwide each year.

The return of a number of old killer diseases once thought forever vanquished also serves to warn of the dangers of meddling with God's natural order. Tuberculosis, all but eliminated in the West following the availability of improved sanitation and powerful drugs, has dramatically revived its presence since the mid-1980s. Many experts blame sloppy use of antibiotics by Western doctors, which allowed mutant TB bacteria to survive as resistant strains. The AIDS plague, which has left millions with no disease-fighting immune system, caused the number of TB cases to triple by the early 1990s. Over three million now die each year worldwide from a disease that was statistically eradicated. Outbreaks of diphtheria, (another bacterial disease of the lungs) that especially targets young children, were virtually unknown in the last days of the former Soviet Union, but are serious in those lands today with over 40,000 cases yearly in Russia alone.

Globalization of commerce has, it seems, given us all too ready access to rather more than just exotic produce from faraway lands. The name "Asian Flu" is not a politically incorrect racial slur. In the early 1990s, cholera returned to haunt the Americas after a century of

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absence. Experts believe that this deadly bacterial disease arrived from Asia (understand China) in the water flushed into our bays and harbors from the ballast tanks of commercial ships. At the turn of the twentieth century, virtually no cases of cholera were known in Americas; today, in the twenty-first century, over 60,000 cases are documented each year.

Polio is making a comeback after being eradicated in the 1960's. There is a concern about measles and other diseases once thought conquered. A world that less than ten years ago was debating whether to destroy the last remaining samples of the smallpox virus, finds itself frantically producing vaccine in anticipation of the unthinkable use of disease as a weapon of war. Of course, the arrival of West Nile Virus on American soil is an unexplained phenomenon. While some dismiss West Nile as a minor event, it is worthy of note that an Iraqi research defector after the Gulf War included that specific disease in a published list of biological agents that the Butcher of Baghdad was hopeful of distributing in America. From its beginning invasion in New York, by a means and in a manner no one knows, West Nile has spread into every section of the nation. The culprit is not the infected birds, but the tiny mosquito. While biological weapons are on the mind of every sensible person in these terrorist-laden times, the greatest weapon of mass destruction may be the simple mosquito or the common flea.

Yet, of all the resurgent diseases, malaria provides the most poignant example of where ecological misdeeds have shattered the dream of complete eradication. The original optimism stemmed from the introduction of

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DDT into developing nations, to kill off the mosquitoes that carry the parasite responsible for malaria. Within ten years of its introduction after the Second World War, DDT had saved an estimated 5 million lives. In many countries, the impact was astonishing. In 1948, Sri Lanka reported 2.8 million cases of malaria; by 1963, following the introduction of DDT, the number had fallen to a mere 17.

However, by the late 1950s, claims that DDT's persistence in the soil and ability to creep up the food chain was having a deadly effect on some forms of wildlife. No study ever proved this and although some experts disputed the assertion then and others continue to dispute the allegation now (especially as to any relevance to the Third World) DDT is under a worldwide ban. The mosquitoes recognize no such ban and have gone from strength to strength. In Sri Lanka, the number of malaria cases rose from that wonderful 17 back to a staggering 2.5 million within just five years of abandoning DDT. Worldwide, an astounding, and unnecessary, 400 million cases are reported each year, along with almost two million deaths—ninety per cent of which take place in Africa. In March 1999, Dr. G. Harlem Brundtland, the Director-General of the World Health Organization, sounded an alarm that malaria is reported in locations at higher altitudes than ever before, such as the mountain plateaus of Kenya. Whether the cause is climatic changes or hardier mosquitoes, every case of malaria is directly linked to the refusal to permit the use of DDT—a failure attributable only to the speculation of an influential portion of the scientific community.

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