

~PESTILENCE (617)

[Hebrew, *de'ver*]

- Brought By Abandonment Of God's Law
- Israel Affected
- At The Conclusion Of The System Of Things
- Yehowah's Protection

- Any rapidly spreading infectious disease capable of attaining epidemic proportions and of causing death. The Hebrew word for **pestilence**, *de'ver*, comes from a root meaning, **destroy**.
- As regards Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah, she saw that her son had died. So she rose up and destroyed all the royal offspring of the house of Judah. (**2 Chronicles 22:10**)
- In numerous texts **pestilence** is related to the execution of divine judgment, as regards both God's name people and their opposers.
- For by now I could have thrust my hand out that I might strike you and your people with **pestilence** and that you might be effaced from the earth. (**Exodus 9:15**)
- Let me strike them with **pestilence** and drive them away, and let me make you a nation greater and mightier than they are. (**Numbers 14:12**)
- Son of man, set your face against Gog of the land of Magog, the head chieftain of Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him. (**Ezekiel 38:2**)
- Therefore prophesy, O son of man, and you must say to Gog; This is what the Sovereign Lord Yehowah has said; Will it not be in that day when my people Israel are dwelling in security that you will know it (**Ezekiel 38:14**)
- And you will certainly come from your place, from the remotest parts of the north, you and many peoples with you, all of them riding on horses, a great congregation, even a numerous military force. (**Ezekiel 38:15**)
- And you will be bound to come up against my people Israel, like clouds to cover the land. In the final part of the days it will

occur, and I shall certainly bring you against my land, for the purpose that the nations may know me when I sanctify myself in you before their eyes, O Gog. (**Ezekiel 38:16**)

- And I will bring myself into judgment with him, with **pestilence** and with blood, and a flooding downpour and hailstones, fire and sulphur I shall rain down upon him and upon his bands and upon the many peoples that will be with him. (**Ezekiel 38:22**)
- And I shall certainly magnify myself and sanctify myself and make myself known before the eyes of many nations, and they will have to know that I am Yehowah. (**Ezekiel 38:23**)
- I sent among you people a **pestilence** in the nature of that of Egypt. With the sword I killed your young men, along with the taking captive of your horses. And I kept making the stink of your camps ascend even into your nostrils, but you did not come back to me, is the utterance of Yehowah. (**Amos 4:10**)

See Also PLAGUE

.. Brought By Abandonment Of God's Law

- The nation of Israel was warned that refusal to keep God's covenant with them would result in his sending **pestilence** into their midst.
- However, if you will not listen to me nor do all these commandments. (**Leviticus 26:14**)
- And if you will reject my statutes, and if your souls will abhor my judicial decisions so as not to do all my commandments, to the extent of your violating my covenant. (**Leviticus 26:15**)
- Then I, for my part, shall do the following to you, and in punishment I shall certainly bring upon you disturbance with tuberculosis and burning fever, causing the eyes to fail and making the soul pine away. And you will simply sow your seed for nothing, as your enemies will certainly eat it up. (**Leviticus 26:16**)
- Nevertheless, if with these things you do not let yourselves be corrected by me and you just have to walk in opposition to me. (**Leviticus 26:23**)

- I, yes, I, shall then have to walk in opposition to you, and I, even I, shall have to strike you seven times for your sins. (**Leviticus 26:24**)
- And I shall certainly bring upon you a sword wreaking vengeance for the covenant, and you will indeed gather yourselves into your cities, and I shall certainly send **pestilence** into the midst of you, and you must be given into the hand of an enemy. (**Leviticus 26:25**)
- And it must occur that if you will not listen to the voice of Yehowah your God by taking care to do all his commandments and his statutes that I am commanding you today, all these maledictions must also come upon you and overtake you. (**Deuteronomy 28:15**)
- Yehowah will cause the **pestilence** to cling to you until he has exterminated you from off the ground to which you are going to take possession of it. (**Deuteronomy 28:21**)
- Yehowah will strike you with tuberculosis and burning fever and inflammation and feverish heat and the sword and scorching and mildew, and they will certainly pursue you until you have perished. (**Deuteronomy 28:22**)
- Throughout the Scriptures, health, either in a physical or in a spiritual sense, is associated with God's blessing
- And it must occur that, because you continue listening to these judicial decisions and you do keep them and do carry them out, Yehowah your God must keep toward you the covenant and the loving-kindness about which he swore to your forefathers. (**Deuteronomy 7:12**)
- And Yehowah will certainly remove from you every sickness, and as for all the evil diseases of Egypt that you have known, he will not place them upon you, and he will indeed put them upon all those who hate you. (**Deuteronomy 7:15**)
- Bless Yehowah, O my soul, even everything within me, his holy name. (**Psalms 103:1**)
- Bless Yehowah, O my soul, and do not forget all his doings.

(Psalms 103:2)

- **Him who is forgiving all your error, who is healing all your maladies. (Psalms 103:3)**
- **My son, my Law do not forget, and my commandments may your heart observe. (Proverbs 3:1)**
- **Because length of days and years of life and peace will be added to you. (Proverbs 3:2)**
- **Do not become wise in your own eyes. Fear Yehowah and turn away from bad. (Proverbs 3:7)**
- **May it become a healing to your navel and a refreshment to your bones. (Proverbs 3:8)**
- **May they not get away from your eyes. Keep them in the midst of your heart. (Proverbs 4:21)**
- **For they are life to those finding them and health to all their flesh. (Proverbs 4:22)**
- **And I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the former heaven and the former earth had passed away, and the sea is no more. (Revelation 21:1)**
- **I saw also the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God and prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. (Revelation 21:2)**
- **With that I heard a loud voice from the throne say; Look! The tent of God is with mankind, and he will reside with them, and they will be his peoples. And God himself will be with them. (Revelation 21:3)**
- **And he will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore. The former things have passed away. (Revelation 21:4)**
- **Whereas disease is associated with sin and imperfection.**
- **And he went on to say; If you will strictly listen to the voice of Yehowah your God and will do what is right in his eyes and will**

indeed give ear to his commandments and keep all his regulations, I shall put none of the maladies upon you that I put upon the Egyptians, because I am Yehowah who is healing you. (**Exodus 15:26**)

- If you will not take care to carry out all the words of this Law that are written in this book so as to fear this glorious and fear-inspiring name, even Yehowah, your God. (**Deuteronomy 28:58**)
- Yehowah also will certainly make your plagues and the plagues of your offspring especially severe, great and long-lasting plagues, and malignant and long-lasting sicknesses. (**Deuteronomy 28:59**)
- And he will indeed bring back upon you all the diseases of Egypt before which you got scared, and they will certainly hang onto you. (**Deuteronomy 28:60**)
- Also, any sickness and any plague that is not written in the book of this Law, Yehowah will bring them upon you until you have been annihilated. (**Deuteronomy 28:61**)
- Truly our sicknesses were what he himself carried, and as for our pains, he bore them. But we ourselves accounted him as plagued, stricken by God and afflicted. (**Isaiah 53:4**)
- But he was being pierced for our transgression, he was being crushed for our errors. The chastisement meant for our peace was upon him, and because of his wounds there has been a healing for us. (**Isaiah 53:5**)
- And, look! They were bringing him a paralyzed man lying on a bed. On seeing their faith Jesus said to the paralytic; Take courage, child, your sins are forgiven. (**Matthew 9:2**)
- And, look! Certain of the scribes said to themselves; This fellow is blaspheming. (**Matthew 9:3**)
- And Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said; Why are you thinking wicked things in your hearts? (**Matthew 9:4**)
- For instance, which is easier, to say; Your sins are forgiven, or to say; Get up and walk? (**Matthew 9:5**)

- **However, in order for you to know that the Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins then he said to the paralytic; Get up, pick up your bed, and go to your home. ([Matthew 9:6](#))**
- **Hearing them, he said; Persons in health do not need a physician, but the ailing do. ([Matthew 9:12](#))**
- **After these things Jesus found him in the temple and said to him; See, you have become sound in health. Do not sin anymore, in order, that something worse does not happen to you. ([John 5:14](#))**
- **So, while it is true that in certain cases Yehowah God directly and instantaneously brought some affliction on persons, such as the leprosy of Miriam, of Uzziah, and of Gehazi.**
- **And the cloud turned away from over the tent, and, look! Miriam was struck with leprosy as white as snow. Then Aaron turned toward Miriam, and, look! She was struck with leprosy. ([Numbers 12:10](#))**
- **However, as soon as he was strong, his heart became haughty even to the point of causing ruin, so that he acted unfaithfully against Yehowah his God and came into the temple of Yehowah to burn incense upon the altar of incense. ([2 Chronicles 26:16](#))**
- **Immediately Azariah the priest and with him priests of Yehowah, eighty valiant men, came in after him. ([2 Chronicles 26:17](#))**
- **Then they stood up against Uzziah the king and said to him; It is not your business, O Uzziah, to burn incense to Yehowah, but it is the business of the priests the sons of Aaron, the ones sanctified, to burn incense. Go out from the sanctuary, for you have acted unfaithfully, and it is not for any glory to you on the part of Yehowah God. ([2 Chronicles 26:18](#))**
- **But Uzziah became enraged while in his hand there was a censer for burning incense, and, during his rage against the priests, leprosy itself flashed up in his forehead before the priests in the house of Yehowah beside the altar of incense. ([2 Chronicles 26:19](#))**
- **When Azariah the chief priest and all the priests turned toward him, why, there he was stricken with leprosy in his forehead! So they excitedly began to remove him from there, and he himself**

also hastened to go out, because Yehowah had smitten him. (**2 Chronicles 26:20**)

- And Uzziah the king continued to be a leper until the day of his death, and he kept dwelling in a house exempt from duties, as a leper, for he had been severed from the house of Yehowah, while Jotham his son was over the king's house, judging the people of the land. (**2 Chronicles 26:21**)
- And he himself came in and then stood by his master. Elisha now said to him; Where did you come from, Gehazi? But he said; Your servant did not go anywhere at all. (**2 Kings 5:25**)
- At that he said to him; Did not my heart itself go along just as the man turned to get down off his chariot to meet you? Is it a time to accept silver or to accept garments or olive groves or vineyards or sheep or cattle or menservants or maidservants? (**2 Kings 5:26**)
- So the leprosy of Naaman will stick to you and your offspring to time indefinite. Immediately he went out from before him, a leper white as snow. (**2 Kings 5:27**)
- It appears that in many cases the diseases and **pestilence** that came were the natural and inexorable results of the sinful course followed by persons or nations. They simply reaped what they had sown, their fleshly bodies suffered the effects of their wrong ways.
- Do not be misled! God is not one to be mocked. For whatever a man is sowing, this he will also reap. (**Galatians 6:7**)
- Because he who is sowing with a view to his flesh will reap corruption from his flesh, but he who is sowing with a view to the spirit will reap everlasting life from the spirit. (**Galatians 6:8**)
- Concerning those who turned to obscene sexual immorality, the apostle says that God gave them up to uncleanness, that their bodies might be dishonored among them receiving in themselves the full recompense, which was due for their error.
- Therefore God, in keeping with the desires of their hearts, gave them up to uncleanness, that their bodies might be dishonored among them. (**Romans 1:24**)

- Even those who exchanged the truth of God for the lie and venerated and rendered sacred service to the creation rather than the One who created, who is blessed forever. Amen. (**Romans 1:25**)
- That is why God gave them up to disgraceful sexual appetites, for both their females changed the natural use of themselves into one contrary to nature. (**Romans 1:26**)
- And likewise even the males left the natural use of the female and became violently inflamed in their lust toward one another, males with males, working what is obscene and receiving in themselves the full recompense, which was due for their error. (**Romans 1:27**)

· Israel Affected

- Thus, God's warning to Israel in effect told them of the many ailments that a course of disobedience to his will would inevitably produce among them.
- His Law given to them served as a deterrent to and a protection against disease, because of its high moral and hygienic standards, also because of its healthful effect on their mental and emotional state.
- The Law of Yehowah is perfect, bringing back the soul. The reminder of Yehowah is trustworthy, making the inexperienced one wise. (**Psalms 19:7**)
- The orders from Yehowah are upright, causing the heart to rejoice, the commandment of Yehowah is clean, making the eyes shine. (**Psalms 19:8**)
- The fear of Yehowah is pure, standing forever. The judicial decisions of Yehowah are true, they have proved altogether righteous. (**Psalms 19:9**)
- They are more to be desired than gold, yes, than much refined gold, and sweeter than honey and the flowing honey of the combs. (**Psalms 19:10**)
- Also, your own servant has been warned by them, in the keeping of them there is a large reward. (**Psalms 19:11**)

- From your judicial decisions I have not turned aside, for you yourself have instructed me. (**Psalms 119:102**)
- How smooth to my palate your sayings have been, more so than honey to my mouth! (**Psalms 119:103**)
- I have taken your reminders as a possession to time indefinite, for they are the exultation of my heart. (**Psalms 119:111**)
- I have inclined my heart to do your regulations to time indefinite, down to the last. (**Psalms 119:112**)
- Abundant peace belongs to those loving your Law, and for them there is no stumbling block. (**Psalms 119:165**)
- Not an occasional infraction of that Law but outright abandonment and rejection of its standards is what;
- However, if you will not listen to me nor do all these commandments. (**Leviticus 26:14**)
- And if you will reject my statutes, and if your souls will abhor my judicial decisions so as not to do all my commandments, to the extent of your violating my covenant. (**Leviticus 26:15**)
- Then I, for my part, shall do the following to you, and in punishment I shall certainly bring upon you disturbance with tuberculosis and burning fever, causing the eyes to fail and making the soul pine away. And you will simply sow your seed for nothing, as your enemies will certainly eat it up. (**Leviticus 26:16**)
- Describes, and this would certainly make the nation vulnerable to all manner of disease and contagion. History, both past and present, bears testimony to the truthfulness of this.

See Also DISEASES AND TREATMENT (Accuracy of Scriptural)

- The nation of Israel fell into gross apostasy, and Ezekiel's prophecy shows the people speaking of themselves as rotting away because of their revolts and sins.
- Now as regards you, O son of man, say to the house of Israel, Thus you people have said; Because our revolts and our sins are

upon us and in them we are rotting away, how, then, shall we keep living? (**Ezekiel 33:10**)

- Say to them, As I am alive, is the utterance of the Sovereign Lord Yehowah, I take delight, not in the death of the wicked one, but in that someone wicked turns back from his way and actually keeps living. Turn back, turn back from your bad ways, for why is it that you should die, O house of Israel? (**Ezekiel 33:11**)
- And your headdress will be on your heads, and your sandals be upon your feet. You will not beat yourselves nor will you weep, and you will have to rot away in your errors, and you will actually groan over one another. (**Ezekiel 24:23**)
- As foretold, the nation experienced the sword and the famine and the **pestilence**, this reaching a climax at the time of the Babylonian invasion.
- Look! With siege ramparts men have come to the city to capture it, and the very city will certainly be given into the hand of the Chaldeans who are fighting against it, because of the sword and the famine and the **pestilence**, and what you have said has happened, and here you are seeing it. (**Jeremiah 32:24**)
- The frequent association of **pestilence** with sword and famine.
- The one sitting still in this city will die by the sword and by the famine and by the **pestilence**, but the one who is going out and who actually falls away to the Chaldeans who are laying siege against you will keep living, and his soul will certainly come to be his as a spoil. (**Jeremiah 21:9**)
- Why should you yourself and your people die by the sword, by the famine and by the **pestilence** according to what Yehowah has spoken to the nation that does not serve the king of Babylon? (**Jeremiah 27:13**)
- The sword is outside, and the **pestilence** and the famine are inside. Whoever is in the field, by the sword he will die, and whoever are in the city, famine and pestilence themselves will devour them. (**Ezekiel 7:15**)
- Is in harmony with known facts. **Pestilence** usually accompanies or follows in the wake of war and its associated food shortages. When

an enemy force invades a land, agricultural activities are curtailed, crops are often confiscated or burned.

- **Cities under siege are cut off from outside resources, and famine develops among the populace forced to live amid overcrowded and unsanitary conditions. Under such circumstances, resistance to disease drops and the way is open for the deadly assault of pestilence.**

· At The Conclusion Of The System Of Things

- **Jesus, when foretelling Jerusalem's destruction and the conclusion of the system of things, showed that **pestilence** would be a notable feature among the generation within whose lifetime the great tribulation would come.**

- **While he was sitting upon the Mount of Olives, the disciples approached him privately, saying, Tell us, When will these things be, and what will be the sign of your presence and of the conclusion of the system of things? ([Matthew 24:3](#))**

- **For then there will be great tribulation such as has not occurred since the world's beginning until now, no, nor will occur again. ([Matthew 24:21](#))**

- **Then he went on to say to them; Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. ([Luke 21:10](#))**

- **And there will be great earthquakes, and in one place after another **pestilences** and food shortages, and there will be fearful sights, and from heaven great signs. ([Luke 21:11](#))**

- **In this way you also, when you see these things occurring, know that the kingdom of God is near. ([Luke 21:31](#))**

- **Truly I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away until all things occur. ([Luke 21:32](#))**

- **Written after Jerusalem's destruction, which was accompanied by grave famine and disease.**

- **And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures say with a voice as of thunder; Come! ([Revelation 6:1](#))**

- **And I saw, and, look! A white horse, and the one seated upon it had a bow, and a crown was given him, and he went forth conquering and to complete his conquest. (Revelation 6:2)**
- **And when he opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature say; Come! (Revelation 6:3)**
- **And another came forth, a fiery-colored horse, and to the one seated upon it there was granted to take peace away from the earth so that they should slaughter one another, and a great sword was given him. (Revelation 6:4)**
- **And when he opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say; Come! And I saw, and, look! A black horse, and the one seated upon it had a pair of scales in his hand. (Revelation 6:5)**
- **And I heard a voice as if in the midst of the four living creatures say; A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius, and do not harm the olive oil and the wine. (Revelation 6:6)**
- **And when he opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature say; Come! (Revelation 6:7)**
- **And I saw, and, look! A pale horse, and the one seated upon it had the name Death. And Hades was closely following him. And authority was given them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with a long sword and with food shortage and with deadly plague and by the wild beasts of the earth. (Revelation 6:8)**
- **Pointed to a future time of sword, famine, and deadly plague. These would follow the appearance of the crowned rider on a white horse who goes forth to conquer, a figure precisely paralleling the one of**
- **And I saw the heaven opened, and, look! A white horse. And the one seated upon it is called Faithful and True, and he judges and carries on war in righteousness. (Revelation 19:11)**
- **His eyes are a fiery flame, and upon his head are many diadems. He has a name written that no one knows but he himself. (Revelation 19:12)**

- And he is arrayed with an outer garment sprinkled with blood, and the name he is called is The Word of God. (**Revelation 19:13**)
- Also, the armies that were in heaven were following him on white horses, and they were clothed in white, clean, fine linen. (**Revelation 19:14**)
- And out of his mouth there protrudes a sharp long sword, that he may strike the nations with it, and he will shepherd them with a rod of iron. He treads too the winepress of the anger of the wrath of God the Almighty. (**Revelation 19:15**)
- And upon his outer garment, even upon his thigh, he has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords. (**Revelation 19:16**)
- Which clearly applies to the reigning Christ Jesus.

.. Yehowah's Protection

- King Solomon prayed that, when menaced by **pestilence**, Yehowah's people might pray to Him for relief, spreading out their palms toward the temple, and receive favorable hearing.
- In case a famine occurs in the land, in case a **pestilence** occurs, in case scorching, mildew, locusts, cockroaches occur, in case their enemy besieges them in the land of their gates, any sort of plague, any sort of malady. (**1 Kings 8:37**)
- Whatever prayer, whatever request for favor there may occur on the part of any man or of all your people Israel, because they know each one the plague of his own heart, and they actually spread out their palms to this house. (**1 Kings 8:38**)
- Then may you yourself hear from the heavens, your established place of dwelling, and you must forgive and act and give to each one according to all his ways, because you know his heart, for you yourself alone well know the heart of all the sons of mankind. (**1 Kings 8:39**)
- To the end that they may fear you all the days that they are alive upon the surface of the ground that you gave to our forefathers. (**1 Kings 8:40**)
- In case a famine occurs in the land, in case a **pestilence** occurs, in

case scorching and mildew, locusts and cockroaches occur, in case their enemies besiege them in the land of their gates, any sort of plague and any sort of malady. (2 Chronicles 6:28)

- Whatever prayer, whatever request for favor there may occur on the part of any man or of all your people Israel, because they know each one his own **plague** and his own pain, when he actually spreads out his palms toward this house. (2 Chronicles 6:29)
- Then may you yourself hear from the heavens, the place of your dwelling, and you must forgive and give to each one according to all his ways, because you know his heart for you yourself alone well know the heart of the sons of mankind. (2 Chronicles 6:30)
- To the end that they may fear you by walking in your ways all the days that they are alive upon the surface of the ground that you gave to our forefathers. (2 Chronicles 6:31)
- Yehowah's ability to protect his faithful servant also against spiritual harm, including that of the moral and spiritual **pestilence** that walks in the gloom, is comfortingly expressed in. (Psalms Chapter 91).