

Eddie's Chronicles

THE BLACK DEATH

By Joey Sanfilippo

What is the Black Death?

The Black Death was a plague that devastated the entire world. The plague killed around 100 million people from 1347 to 1351. This harmful disease originated in Central Asia. Known as the bubonic plague due to buboes that form on the body.

There are 3 different variations of the plague: Bubonic plague - large buboes forms on your body, Pneumonic plague - goes onto affects the respiratory system, and Septicemic plague - which affects your circulatory system and causes the buboes to explode blood and black liquids out.

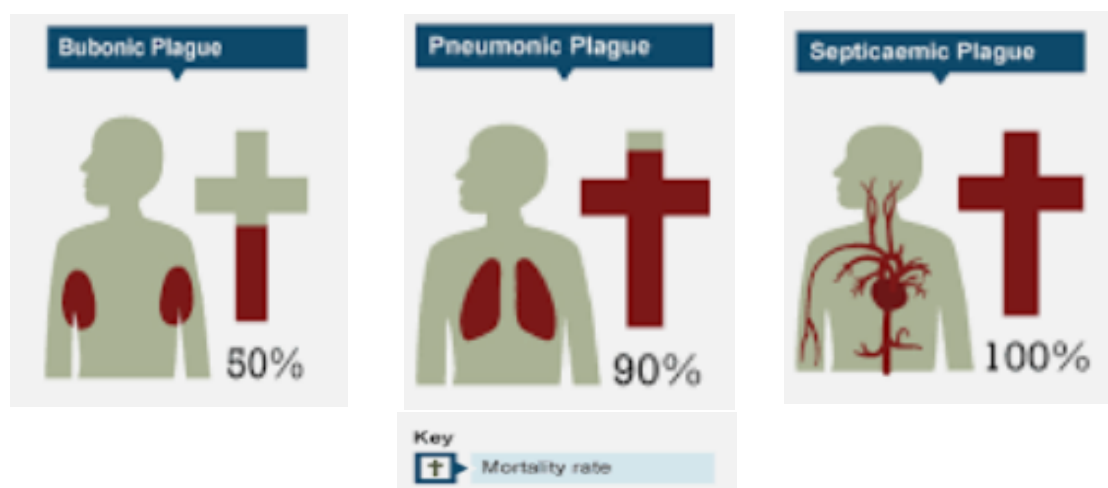
What were the causes?

There were many theories formed throughout the plague. Some examples are: God was warning and punishing them or 3 planets collided creating polluted air. The real cause which we've found years after the plague is fleas! Fleas were unaffected by the disease. They spread it by travelling on small rodents and then transmitting it to humans.



How did the plague spread?

The Black Death spread extremely fast; it could be spread by simply touching someone's clothes. It is much more extreme in comparison to Covid. Quarantine was an effective way to stop the disease. We still apply this method today with Covid. The plague could also spread through the air; sneezing or coughing sends particles into the air for others to inhale.



What are the Symptoms?

- Symptoms include
- Fevers,
 - Rashes,
 - Vomiting blood,
 - Aching limbs,
 - Fatigue,
 - Enlarged lymph nodes around the groin, neck and armpits,
 - Walnut-sized bumps called buboes on your skin that can grow to the size of a tennis ball. They turn black and painfully explode with pus, black liquid and blood,
 - People died in around 4-7 days after contracting the virus.



Treatment Methods

There were many forms of treatment to help cure the black death. Treatments included:

- Bloodletting – Getting rid of the disease through the blood by cutting near the buboes with a knife or sucking with a leech.
 - Lancing – Cutting open the boils so the pus could ooze out.
 - Scientists believed you could sweat out the disease; they gave patients medicine that raised their temperature.
 - Treacle aged for 10 years was given to patients; believed to grow bacteria to kill the plague over-time.
 - People bathed or drank urine, thinking it had healing powers.
 - Rich people crushed jewels (emeralds/pearls) and drank them.
 - People covered themselves in poo and wrapped their boils to keep the poop on them.
- People used chicken butts to wipe the buboes.
 - Flagellation – Practice of beating because God was punishing people with the plague.
 - Quarantine – We recently experienced quarantine; it's a very effective way to stop plagues and viruses.

What were the effects on Society?

The Black Death had a large impact worldwide.

Many people stopped believing in God or their religion, even priests quit their job. Most monks were wiped out by the plague.

Workers died or quit their jobs, meaning communities lacked food and the resources they needed to survive, creating malnutrition, and making the plague worse.

The grim reaper which represented death became involved in art/culture, it became a popular way to represent death and is incorporated in nearly all artworks during that time-period.

Groups like lepers, Jews and peasants were blamed for causing the plague, this meant they were gruesomely murdered or put in jail.



Primary Source

This primary source made in the 1340s depicts how the Jews were blamed for causing the plague. They were cruelly punished and burnt. This source teaches us that many people sought to blaming the Jews and other groups because they were desperate to find the cause of the black death. Really, we know that the plague was caused by fleas.

<https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2017/08/18/542435991/those-iconic-images-of-the-plague-thats-not-the-plague>

Secondary Source

This is a secondary source, made in the 15th century communicating monks/doctors trying to care/cure the victims of the plague. This source teaches us that they did everything they could to care for the victims. Notice that there are few carers compared to the patients, maybe they didn't have enough doctors throughout the plague, society today experienced doctor shortage during Covid.



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