

Gone Viral

We interrupt the current series, for this one session. Since the epidemic COVID-19/SARS-Cov-2 has been taking a turn for the worse - we pause to ask, "Why?"

Those who believe in God accept His declaration that, "I am the Lord, who makes all things, Who stretches out the heavens all alone, Who spreads abroad the earth by Myself;...Who turns wise men backward, and makes their knowledge foolishness" - Isaiah 44:24.

But why did God also make viruses? While there are some nasty kinds of bacteria, there are a lot more good ones, chiefly the human microbiome, with a common core of 450 kinds of good bacteria to keep the body healthy. Additional kinds of bacteria have good uses, such as *Alcanivorax borkumensis*, successful at breaking down petroleum which has been spilled into the sea. Other kinds serve in diverse industrial production such as antibiotics, leather, pickles, yogurt, cheese, ethanol and environmentally friendly insecticide.

But viruses do not function away from a host cell - "viruses are quintessential parasites", depending on the host cell for almost all their life-sustaining functions - Enc. Brit. Put another way, "viruses are strictly intracellular pathogens" - agents that cause disease - The Germ Code. The only ones which can be regarded as "good" are the bacteriophages, which can be useful in attacking bad bacteria.

We note that a parasite is an organism which lives in or on another and draws its nourishment directly from it, harming it in the process. The existence of such becomes a reflection of sinful human society. Before Adam sinned he was evidently disease free, and was not in a deteriorating state. But upon rebelling against his Creator, God pronounced, "Cursed is the ground for your sake...dust you are, and to dust you shall return" - Genesis 3:17.

From that time on the dominant character in human nature became fully manifested, until by the time of Noah, "The (people on) earth was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. 12 So God looked upon the earth, and indeed it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted HIS WAY on the earth" - Genesis 6:11. Clearly, God had done right in preventing sinful mankind from living on indefinitely. Part of that process was performed by the viruses, let loose to cut men's life span short.

Then as now, men refused to recognize the facts staring them in the face. Lamech, speaking for the majority humanists of his time, declared "I have killed a man for wounding me, even a young man for hurting me. 24 If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, then Lamech seventy-sevenfold" - Genesis 4:23, thus repudiating any responsibility to the Creator.

Men in this day have organized public demonstrations to deny the reality of COVID-19, and so refuse to do anything about it. Meanwhile, others, such as in China, where most have obeyed the government directive and taken the necessary action, are doing much better for it.

Many of mankind today refuse to recognize God, and to heed His call, "God ...now commands all men everywhere to repent, 31 because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained" - Acts 17:30. Time is short, and there will be no escape from that "second wave" for those who have refused to act on God's directive.