

Ibn Al-Wardi, "On the Advance of the Plague," 1348

Oh, What a visitor: it has been it has been current for fifteen years. China was not preserved from it nor could the strongest fortress hinder it. The plague afflicted the Indians in India. It weighed upon the Sind. It seized with its hand and ensnared even the lands of the Uzbeks. How many backs did it break in what is Transoxiana! The plague increased and spread further. It attacked the Persians, extended its steps toward the land of the Khitai, and gnawed away at the Crimea. It pelted Rum with live coals and let the outrage to Cyprus and islands.

... it directed the shooting of its arrows to Damascus. There the plague sat like a king on a throne and swayed with power, killing daily one thousand or more and decimating the population. It destroyed mankind with its pustules. May God the Most High spare Damascusto pursue its own path and extinguish the plague's fires so that they do not come close to her fragrant orchards. Oh God, restore Demascus and protect her from insult. Its morale has been lowered that people in the city sell themselves for a gain

Then, the plague sought Aleppo, but it did not succeed. by God's mercy the plague was the lighted oppressions. I would not say that plants must grow from their seeds. The pestilence had triumphed and appeared in Aleppo. The said: it has made on mankind an attack. I called it a pestilence. How amazingly does it pursue the people of each house! One of them spits blood, and everyone in the household is certain of death. It brings the entire family to their graves after two or three nights. I asked the Creator on mankind to dispel the plague when it struck. Whoever tated his own blood was sure to die. Oh God, it is acting by Your command. Lift this from us. It happens where You wish; keep the plague from us. Who will defend us against this horror other than You the Almighty? God is greater then the plague which has captured and entered like an army among the peaceful, even as a madman. Its spearheads are sharpened for every city, and I was amazed at the hated thing [i.e., the plague] which lies on the sharpened points. How many places has the plague entered? It searched them out with a lamp. the pestilence caused the people of Aleppo the same disturbance. It sent out its snake and crept along.

Source: Joseph Patrick Byrne, *Daily Life During the Black Death* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 2006), pp. 260-261.