Lesson 21. World Health Officials Warn: Pandemic Inevitable

From New Urban City, this is the Morning Show with Maria Ventura.

Maria: Good morning from New Urban City. This is Maria Ventura welcoming you to the Morning Show. With us today in the studio is Jerry Michaels, just back from a major conference of world health officials. Jerry, we understand that these officials representing organizations in both hemispheres have declared that a pandemic is imminent. Can you clarify that for us?

Jerry: Certainly, Maria. There have been many pandemics in human history, and it seems that with our shrinking world, epidemics can become pandemic very quickly.

Maria: Jerry, what is the difference between epidemic and pandemic?

Jerry: Maria, as you know, “pan” means, essentially, “all,” whereas “epi” indicates a center. In other words an epidemic is somewhat restricted to one area, but a pandemic is worldwide.

Maria: I see, and just who are these world health officials?

Jerry: Well, they’re biologists, pathologists, epidemiologists, and even zoologists.

Maria: Why are zoologists involved?

Jerry: Because a pandemic may actually be a disease transmitted from animals to humans, like the Asian Bird Flu we’re hearing about.

Maria: Should we be worried, Jerry?

Jerry: Absolutely, Maria. A pandemic can be disastrous, affecting every aspect of human life, even our biosphere, all life forms on planet Earth.

Maria: Is there any good news, Jerry?

Jerry: Yes, certainly. Our scientists say we have the ability to develop a sophisticated international pandemic plan, and at this time there is no need to panic.

Maria: Thank you, Jerry. That’s all for the Morning Show. Stay tuned to WPLA. We’ll hear from Daniel Goodwell with his weekly commentary on the News at Noon.