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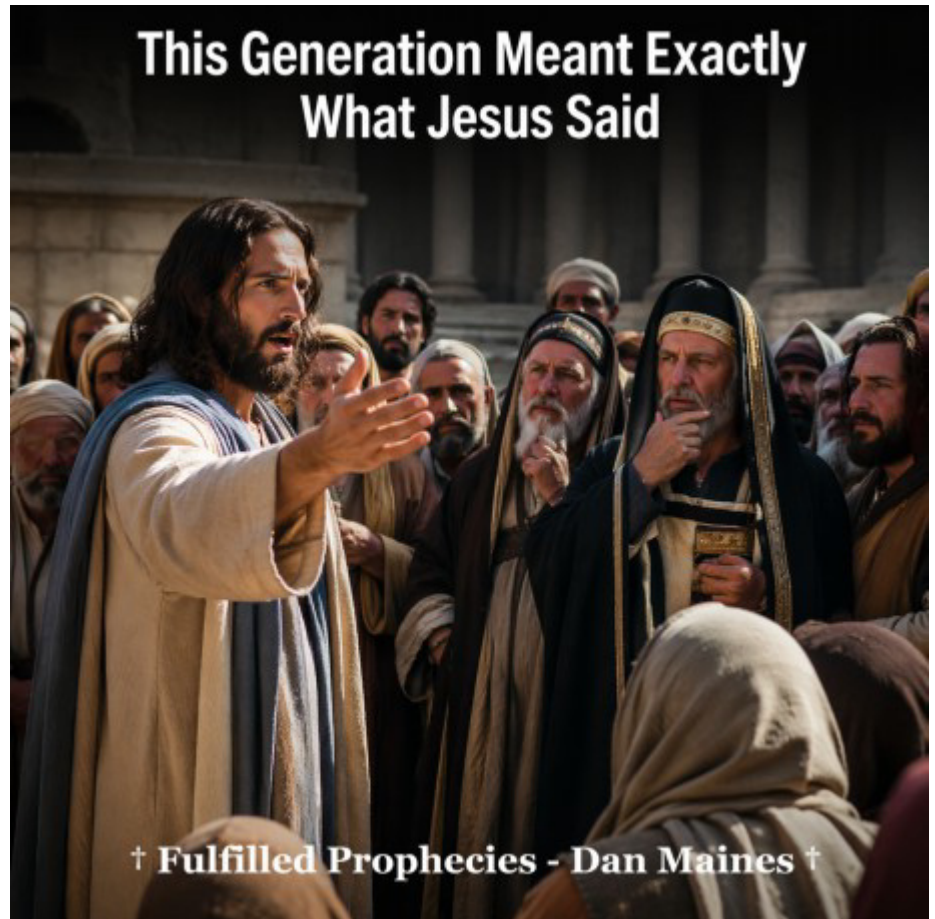
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Generation - This Generation Meant Exactly What Jesus Said



By Dan Maines

This Generation Meant Exactly What Jesus Said

Introduction

† The entire debate comes down to one word, generation. If we let Jesus define His own words, the argument ends. If we redefine it into thousands of years, we're no longer reading the text, we're forcing it.

† Jesus spoke plainly to real people standing in front of Him. He didn't speak in hidden timelines, He spoke in terms they

understood in their lifetime (Matthew 23:36).

† We're going to let Scripture define Scripture, and we're going to stay consistent with every use of generation in the Gospels (Matthew 24:34).

Matthew 23:36

Truly I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation.

† Jesus is speaking to the scribes and Pharisees standing right in front of Him, not a future group thousands of years later (Matthew 23:29-35).

† All the righteous blood from Abel to Zechariah was going to come upon that generation, meaning the covenant judgment was about to fall on first-century Israel (Matthew 23:35-36).

† This is the same audience He continues speaking to in the very next chapter, there's no break, no audience change, no time jump (Matthew 24:1-3).

† Jesus never changed the subject between chapters, the judgment on that generation in Matthew 23 flows directly into the events described in Matthew 24 (Matthew 23:38; Matthew 24:1-2).

Matthew 24:34

Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place.

† The same generation from Matthew 23 is still in view, Jesus never changed subjects, He's still addressing His disciples about what was coming upon their generation (Matthew 24:33-

34).

† All these things includes the destruction of the temple, the tribulation, and His coming in judgment, all tied directly to that generation (Matthew 24:2, 29-30, 34).

† Jesus places a time limit, that generation would not pass until everything He just described was fulfilled, not thousands of years later (Matthew 24:34).

† Jesus said all things written would be fulfilled in that time period, not left for thousands of years later (Luke 21:22).

Matthew 11:16

But to what shall I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the market places, who call out to the other children,

† Jesus is clearly speaking about the people living at that time, not a future age thousands of years away (Matthew 11:18-19).

† The comparison only makes sense if generation means the current audience He's addressing (Matthew 11:16).

† There is no hint anywhere that generation suddenly means something different later (Matthew 24:34).

Matthew 12:41

The men of Nineveh will stand up with this generation at the judgment, and will condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and behold, something greater than Jonah is here.

† This generation is contrasted with Nineveh, showing a real-time comparison between past and present, not a distant future

group (Matthew 12:41-42).

† The judgment is against the people rejecting Him in that moment (Matthew 12:41).

† Again, generation means those alive at that time (Matthew 23:36).

Matthew 12:45

Then it goes and brings along with it seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there; and the last state of that man becomes worse than the first. That is the way it will also be with this evil generation.

† Jesus directly calls His contemporaries a wicked generation, that's immediate and present (Matthew 12:45).

† The warning is directed at those hearing Him, not people thousands of years later (Matthew 12:45).

† The language is consistent with every other use (Matthew 24:34).

Matthew 16:4

An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign; and a sign will not be given to it, except the sign of Jonah. And He left them and went away.

† The people asking for a sign were standing right in front of Him (Matthew 16:1-4).

† He calls them that generation, not a future one (Matthew 16:4).

† There is no shifting definition, it's always the current audience (Matthew 23:36).

Matthew 17:17

And Jesus answered and said, 'You unbelieving and perverted generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring him here to Me.'

† Jesus connects generation with how long He would be with them, meaning their lifetime (Matthew 17:17).

† That alone destroys the idea of a 2000-year generation (Matthew 24:34).

† He's speaking to those physically present (Matthew 17:17).

Mark 8:12

Sighing deeply in His spirit, He said, 'Why does this generation seek for a sign? Truly I say to you, no sign will be given to this generation.'

† Same exact usage, same meaning, same audience (Mark 8:12).

† There's zero evidence anywhere that generation means thousands of years (Mark 8:12).

† Every single use is consistent (Matthew 23:36).

Luke 11:50-51

so that the blood of all the prophets, shed since the foundation of the world, may be charged against this generation, from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah, who was killed between the altar and the house of God; yes, I tell you, it shall be

charged against this generation.

† This is the same statement as Matthew 23, confirming the timing and the audience (Luke 11:50-51; Matthew 23:36).

† The judgment for all covenant blood was about to fall on them (Luke 11:50-51).

† That happened in AD 70, exactly within that generation (Matthew 24:34).

† Scripture defines a generation as a normal human lifespan, not thousands of years (Psalm 95:10).

† The word generation (genea) always refers to a group of people living at the same time, never a future race spanning thousands of years (Matthew 23:36; Matthew 24:34).

Historical References

† Josephus records the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70, describing it as a judgment unlike anything before it, matching Jesus' words about great tribulation (Josephus, Wars of the Jews, Book 5-6; Matthew 24:21).

† Eusebius records that the Christians fled Jerusalem before its destruction, exactly as Jesus warned His disciples to do (Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History, Book 3; Luke 21:20-21).

† Tacitus confirms the catastrophic destruction of Jerusalem under Titus, aligning with the timeframe of that generation (Tacitus, Histories 5.13; Matthew 24:34).

How It Applies To Us Today

† We don't need to reinterpret Jesus' words to fit a future timeline, He already told us when these things would happen

(Matthew 24:34).

† This strengthens our confidence in Scripture, everything He said came to pass exactly when He said it would (Luke 21:22).

† It frees us from fear-based futurism and brings us into the reality that Christ's kingdom has already been established (Luke 17:20-21).

Q & A Appendix

Q: Did generation ever mean thousands of years anywhere in the Bible?

A: No. Every use of generation in the Gospels refers to the people living at that time, never a distant future group (Matthew 11:16; Matthew 16:4; Mark 8:12).

Q: Could Jesus have meant a future generation that sees the signs?

A: No, because He already defined which generation He was talking about in Matthew 23:36, and then carried that same audience into Matthew 24 (Matthew 23:36; Matthew 24:34).

Q: Did all these things really happen in that generation?

A: Yes, the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 fulfills His prophecy exactly within that timeframe (Luke 21:20-22; Matthew 24:34).

Q: Why do people say generation means something else?

A: Because if they accept its normal meaning, it destroys the idea of a future fulfillment (Matthew 24:34).

Q: Does the word generation ever mean race in the Gospels?

A: No. Every time Jesus uses generation, He's addressing the people living at that time, often calling them wicked or adulterous, which would make no sense if He meant an entire race across thousands of years (Matthew 12:39; Matthew

23:36).

Q: Could generation mean an age or long period of time?

A: No. Jesus ties generation to the people He was physically speaking to and even connects it to how long He would be with them, showing it's a limited timeframe (Matthew 17:17; Matthew 24:34).

Q: Why would Jesus warn His disciples if it wasn't for their lifetime?

A: Because they were the ones who would see it. He told them when you see these things, not people thousands of years later (Matthew 24:15, 33-34).

Q: Did the apostles expect these events in their lifetime?

A: Yes. The New Testament repeatedly says the time was near, at hand, and about to happen (James 5:8-9; 1 Peter 4:7; Revelation 1:1-3).

Q: What does shall not pass mean?

A: It means that specific generation would still be alive when all those things happened, setting a clear time limit (Matthew 24:34).

Q: If generation means thousands of years, what happens to Jesus' time statement?

A: It becomes meaningless. A time limit that stretches thousands of years is no time limit at all (Matthew 24:34).

Q: Did Jesus ever use generation to mean anything other than His contemporaries?

A: No. Every single use in the Gospels refers to the people He was speaking to at that time (Matthew 11:16; Mark 8:12; Luke 11:50-51).

Q: How do we know the fulfillment wasn't meant for our future?

A: Because Jesus said all these things would happen before

that generation passed, and He tied it directly to the destruction of the temple, which happened in AD 70 (Matthew 24:2, 34; Luke 21:22).

Q: Why do people try to redefine generation?

A: Because the plain meaning places fulfillment in the first century, which contradicts futurist expectations (Matthew 24:34).

Q: Does this affect the reliability of Jesus' words?

A: Yes. If generation doesn't mean what it always means, then His clear time statement would appear false, but when understood correctly, it proves He spoke with perfect accuracy (Matthew 24:34).

† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †

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Source Index

† Matthew 23:36; Matthew 24:34; Matthew 11:16; Matthew 12:41, 45; Matthew 16:4; Matthew 17:17; Mark 8:12; Luke 11:50-51; Luke 21:20-22; Luke 17:20-21; Psalm 95:10; James 5:8-9; 1 Peter 4:7; Revelation 1:1-3

† Josephus, Wars of the Jews, Book 5-6; Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History, Book 3; Tacitus, Histories 5.13

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