

A close-up photograph of a branch with several figs. Some figs are green and unripe, while others are dark purple and ripe. The background is filled with large, green, lobed leaves.

JESUS

and

THIS GENERATION

JESUS AND “THIS GENERATION”

Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation (Mt.23:36**)**

Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled (Mt.24:34**)**

Verily I say unto you, that this generation shall not pass, till all these things be done (Mk.13:30**)**

Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled (Lk.21:32**)**

“THIS GENERATION” — DEFINED

τὴν γενεάν
ἡ γενεὰ

1. Fathered, birth
2. That which has been begotten, men of same family
3. Whole multitude of men living at the same time
4. An age or space of time ordinarily occupied by a successive generation

G1074 Occurrences: 42

“generation”, 31

Mt.11:16; 12:39, 41-42 (2); 12:45; 16:4; 17:17; 23:36;
24:34; Mk.8:12 (2); 8:38; 9:19; 13:30; Lk.1:50 (2);
7:31; 9:41; 11:29-32 (4); 11:50-51 (2); 16:8; 17:25;
21:32; Ac.2:40; 8:33; 13:36; Hb.3:10

“generations”, 6

Mt.1:17 (4); Lk.1:48; Cl.1:26

“ages”, 2

Ep.3:5; 3:21

“nation”, 1

Ph.2:15

“time”, 1

Ac.15:21

“times”, 1

Ac.14:16

ORIGINAL

“Multitude of contemporaries”

LITERALLY

**“Circle of time”, “a race”,
“sameness of stock”**

DERIVATIVE

**From (G1075); “from beginning
(birth) of his life”**

PART OF SPEECH

Noun feminine

The age of grace has continued for a long time. But the generation that sees these events take place, will see them occur quickly, and within their normally expected lifetime.

“THIS GENERATION” — CONTEXT

1

The disciples asked about the end of the world. Jesus does refer to a near history event that occurred in 70AD. However, in context, Jesus refers to so many things that were not fulfilled in 70AD, and will occur in the last days. A few samples of events that did not occur in 70AD was (1) many coming saying “I am Christ” (Mt.24:5), and (2) many false prophets arising (Mt.24:11), (3) the gospel of the kingdom preached in all the world (Mt.24:14), etc. The CONTEXT must be determined to see the proper distinction between past and future events.

2

Jesus used the phrase mostly to refer to Israel as an unbelieving generation (Mt.11:16; 12:41-42; Mk.8:12; Lk.7:31; 11:30-32, 50-51; 17:25). Likewise the future unbelieving generation of Israel that sees these prophetic events take place, will see them happen quickly. All these events will take place in a short period of time.

3

In Luke 21:31 Jesus spoke of the coming of the kingdom of God. And in Matthew 24:34 Jesus' words do refer to the generation living at the time of the cosmological events that precede Christ's Second Coming. Therefore that generation that sees the future cosmological events will also see the founding of the kingdom of God. Every generation of Israel has longed for the coming of the Messianic kingdom.

“THIS GENERATION” — WHAT IT IS NOT

When taken out of context the term “this generation” is given a numeric value based on various historical conditions. There is no point in converting generations to years. Scripture uses years when it means years. Some use “generation” as a number like 40 or 70 years. When it is turned into a number the tendency is to use the number as a way to predict the return of Christ. We are told we cannot know this date (Mt.24:42,44).

- 1** The Bible does not give a direct answer in regards to the length of a generation. The length of a generation varies depending on the historical period.
- 2** A generation is the age of parents at the time of the birth of their children. The birth begins a new generation. Thus, a generation is not a person’s total lifespan.

The New Testament opens with the genealogy from Abraham to Christ. It provides three divisions of fourteen generations (Mt.1:17). Though they are each fourteen generations, the three groups varied in length of years.

Abraham to David	14 Generations	= Avg. 64 Years
David to Exile	14 Generations	= Avg. 38 Years
Exile to Christ	14 Generations	= Avg. 38 Years

So-Called Biblical Generation

$$1948 + 40 = 1988$$

$$1948 + 70 = 2018$$

“THIS GENERATION” — SUMMARY

- 1 The Bible does not give a direct answer in regards to the length of a generation.**
- 2 If the term “this generation” is given a numeric value for prophetic purposes, it has been taken out of context.**
- 3 Jesus used the phrase mostly to refer to Israel as an unbelieving generation (Mt.11:16; 12:41-42; Mk.8:12; Lk.7:31; 11:30-32, 50-51; 17:25).**
- 4 The generation that sees these events take place, will see them occur quickly, and within their normally expected lifetime.**
- 5 The first-century generation experienced God's judgment (70AD). But the future generation that sees the cosmological events will experience the coming of God's kingdom (cf. Mt.24:14,45).**