

THIS GENERATION

“And he spake to them a parable; Behold the fig tree, and all the trees; When they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand. So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.” Luke 21:29-33

Is this the generation which will see the return of Jesus Christ? Consider for yourself the amazing prophecies of Jesus as He tells his disciples about the coming destruction of the temple and the city of Jerusalem. They ask him when these things would be, and Jesus gave them many signs that would be fulfilled before the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in 70 A.D. The first 23 verses of this chapter are signs Jesus gave concerning the destruction of Jerusalem. Then in verse 24 Jesus said, **“And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.”** Only forty years later, Jerusalem and the Temple were completely destroyed by the Roman armies. Every sign Jesus gave was fulfilled to perfection, and Jerusalem fell under control of the Gentiles for 1897 years, until June 6, 1967.

On June 6, 1967, during what is now called “the six-day war,” the nation of Israel took control of Jerusalem for the first time since 70 A.D. This is the event which is commonly called *“the budding of the fig tree.”* According to the words of Jesus, this marked the end of the times of the Gentiles, and the beginning of the generation which He said **“... shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled.”**

The first sign Jesus gave of this generation was... **“And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars...”** Luke 21:25. This generation was only two years old when a man walked on the moon for the first time. Unmanned space exploration in the years since that time has reached the planets, and even beyond our own solar system.

“... and upon earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring; Men’s hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken” Luke 21:25-26.

I’m sure that you can easily fill in the blanks concerning these signs which we have repeatedly seen during this generation: the incredible instability of the nations, the strange weather patterns, and the fears of so many things to come, from a nuclear holocaust, to bacterial warfare, financial disaster, and more recently the incredible fear of the Covid 19 virus, which has infected millions of people. Over 500,000 Americans have lost their lives in the first year of this plague. Politically, it feels like the spirit of antichrist has seized control of our nation. As I write this, the entire nation has been paralyzed by an ice storm.

Many years ago I dedicated most of my ministry to warning of these things on our *“Awake to Righteousness”* radio broadcast. We continually cried out against the sins of this generation, and

warned of the soon coming of Jesus. As time passed, however, I began to wonder if 1967 really did mark the beginning of the last generation. Had I misunderstood the prophecy? Were the times of the Gentiles really fulfilled, and was the clock really ticking the countdown to the return of Jesus? Time was moving so fast, and the implications of these things were overwhelming to me. Then I discovered something in the Bible that I need to tell you about.

I was preaching a message I called *“Are We Better than They,”* taken from Romans 3:9. Paul was talking about the advantage the Jews had over the Gentiles. The main advantage was that God had revealed Himself to the nation of Israel as to no other. God had chosen the Jew in Abraham, set His great love upon them, spoke to them audibly from Mount Horeb, and manifest Himself to them through great signs and wonders. Now, in Paul’s day, almost 1500 years after Moses, with all the advantages of the Law and the Prophets, the question is asked *“Are we better than they”* Romans 3:9. Sadly, the answer was *“No, in no wise.”* God’s chosen people were just as sinful as the heathen nations around them. It was proven that both Jew and Gentile were under sin, which is the reason Christ came and died to *“take away our sin”* John 1:29. As I was researching the advantage of the Jew, my mind went all the way back to Abraham, and I wondered how many years had passed from Abraham until Calvary. I found that Abraham was circumcised in the year 1900 B.C. (plus or minus 2 years). Circumcision was the “token” of the covenant with God, and every Jew entered the covenant when he was eight days old through circumcision. When Abraham was circumcised, the covenant was confirmed, and the Jew was chosen in Abraham. The times of the Jew had begun. From that time until Calvary was 1930 years. I noticed that Abraham’s life was almost as many years before Calvary as we are after Calvary. Then, I recalled a most incredibly accurate prophecy which the angel Gabriel brought to the prophet Daniel.

“Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy” Daniel 9:24

For the sake of simplicity, we will change the seventy-weeks, which are actually seventy weeks of years, into 490 years. Gabriel was telling Daniel there were 490 years remaining for the Jewish people, and before those years were finished there would be made an end of sins, reconciliation for iniquity, and everlasting righteousness would be brought in. Each of these were fulfilled at Calvary in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ just 3½ years before the end of the 490 years, or in the middle of the seventieth week of the prophecy. Gabriel told Daniel the exact time the 490 years would begin. A decree would be given to restore and build Jerusalem, which was given by King Artaxerxes in the year 457 B.C. According to the promise, one called *“The Messiah, the Prince”* would appear exactly 483 years later, which would mark the beginning of the 70th week of the prophecy.

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This "seventieth week (seven years)" began when Jesus of Nazareth was baptized by John the Baptist, and confirmed as "The Messiah (the Christ)" when the Holy Ghost came upon Him as a dove, and the Father spoke audibly from heaven, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" Matthew 3:16-17. Three and one half years later, in the middle of the 70th week of prophecy, Jesus "the Christ" was crucified, thus fulfilling every promise of redemption. The 70th week continued another 3½ years as God "poured out His Spirit" Joel 2:28 in Jerusalem and the regions of Judea. This marked the end of the 490 years determined upon the Jew, and the gospel began to go to the Gentiles. The year was 33½ A.D.: The prophetic time of the Jew was fulfilled, and the times of the Gentiles were just beginning.

Understand the significance of what I say now. From the time circumcision was instituted by God with Abraham until the end of the seventy weeks prophecy to the Jews was 1933½ years. From that time until June 1967, the end of the times of the Gentiles, was exactly 1933½ years. **God gave equal time to both the Jew and the Gentile.** A coincidence? It could hardly be so. Sadly, both Jew and Gentile rejected Jesus Christ, and the "times of the Gentiles" ended on June 6, 1967. Since that time the nations have been in moral decline, as evidenced by institution of "legal" abortion, pornography, drugs, gay marriage, and the fact that in this generation America has become an idolatrous nation. This generation has brought the greatest "falling away" and "apostasy" since the dark ages. "Another gospel" II Corinthians 11:4 has been preached, and "another spirit" has been received. Professing "believers" have been taught "how to speak in tongues" and "prophecy." At the same time, sexual impurity has become rampant in many churches, with 68% of the men regularly watching pornography, according to one survey. Most "believers" today believe sin is the norm for a child of God. What is most amazing to me is the fact that "Christian ministers" are preaching to the largest crowds in the history of the world, while at the same time we are "losing ground" in the nations. There is much evidence that the "spirit of antichrist" is presently taking control of our national government. Sadly, it had to find a place in the church before it could come to our nation.

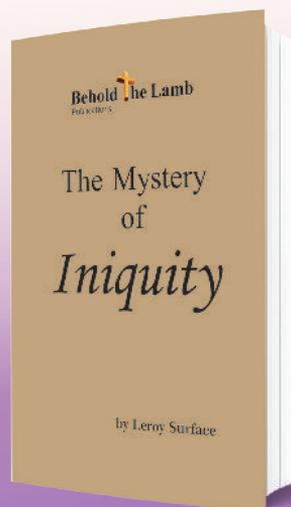
"And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh" Luke 21:28. "So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand. Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away" Luke 21:31-33. "And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth." Luke 21:34-35

Jesus said **"Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not"** Luke 12:40. I can remember when Israel became a nation in 1948, and there was a great revival. People were "getting ready" for Jesus

to come. Again, in June 1967 during the six day war in Israel the churches filled up with people who were "getting ready." Across the nation people gathered in all night prayer meetings, crowds filled the churches, believing that at any moment Jesus would come. Perhaps some can remember the phenomenon of 1988. A man wrote a book titled, "Eighty Eight Reasons Why Jesus Must Come In 1988." Multitudes around the world were convinced. Again the churches filled to capacity with people seeking to "get ready" for Jesus to come. In each of these cases the multitudes soon cooled off, and people went back to their self-centered living, seeking the things of this present world rather than the things of Heaven. The next alert came in the year 2000, and vast multitudes were again "getting ready." Vigils were held, while others made a pilgrimage to Rome. Still others made the trip to Jerusalem to meet Jesus when He came. Everyone with any Christian belief at all was "getting ready."

Sounds good, right? Except for one thing. Jesus did not say, "get ready," but rather He said, **"be ready."** He did not say He would come when the multitudes expect Him and prepare themselves, instead He said He would come **"...at an hour when ye think not."**

Even though very little has been said about the return of Jesus in recent years, He is still coming. This is still the generation which Jesus said "...shall not pass away until all be fulfilled." Jesus is coming! One thing is certain, those who wait to "get ready" will not "be ready" when He comes. The unfaithful servant who said in his heart "My lord delayeth his coming" Luke 12:45 was not ready when his lord came. The foolish virgins slumbered and slept without oil in their lamps Matthew 25:3. They had prepared for an earlier time, but he came in an hour that they thought not. Today is the day of salvation. Now is the acceptable hour. Tomorrow will be too late for many. Even so, come quickly Lord Jesus.



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