

THIS GENERATION

“And so upon you will come all the righteous blood that has been shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah son of Berekiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. I tell you the truth, all this will come upon this generation” (Matt. 23:36).

Let’s take a closer look at “this generation” of which Christ spoke for perhaps it will give us insight into our “own generation”.

The generation of Jesus was a very bad generation. God was not happy about this. Peter reminds us that God is long suffering to us, not wanting anyone to perish but everyone to come to repentance. The sad reality, however, is that not everyone will come to repentance. In the next verse, therefore, Peter reminds us of the judgement of God. Peter said that the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night in which the heavens will disappear with a great noise, the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be burned up (2 Pet. 3:8-10).

Peter then asked this important question: **“Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of person ought you to be?” (2 Pet. 3:11).**

This question was not only valid for Peter’s “generation”, it is also a valid question for our “generation”. Please consider today what kind of a person you should be?

LESSONS FROM HISTORY

- History teaches that there is a limit to the patience of God.
- For example, the Lord waited patiently in the days of Noah (1 Pet. 3:20), but there came a time when His patience ran out and He destroyed that sinful generation with a flood (Gen. 6:1-8).
- Later the outcry from the wicked cities of Sodom and Gomorrah became so great that God could no longer look the other way. That was also an evil generation. Just think, if there had only been ten righteous people in Sodom it would not have been destroyed (Gen. 18:20-19:29).
- The Hebrews wandering in the wilderness also represented an evil generation. They tried and tested God for forty years in the desert until finally He became so angry with “that generation” that He declared in His anger that they would never enter into His rest (Heb. 3:8-11).
- The sinful cities of Canaan also represented an evil generation. Remember, they were not destroyed until the sin of the Amorites had reached it’s full measure (Gen. 15:16).
- We repeat! There is a limit to the patience of God!
- So Jesus said to His own wicked generation: **“Fill up then, the measure of the sin of your forefathers! You snakes! You brood of vipers! How will you escape being condemned to hell? Therefore I am sending you prophets and wise men and teachers. Some of them you will kill and crucify; others you will flog in your synagogues and pursue from town to town. And so upon you will come all the righteous blood that has been shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah son of Berekiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. I tell you the truth, all this will come upon this generation. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who killed the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing. Look, your house is left to you desolate.**

For I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, ‘Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord’” (Matt. 23:32-39).

- As we have said, Jesus lived in a very evil generation.
- As we have said there is a limit to the patience of God!
- Jesus pointed out that the teachers of the Law and Pharisees compassed sea and land to make a proselyte, but when they converted someone he became twice as much the child of hell as they were (Matt. 23:15). The downward spiral of the Jewish nation reached a saturation point of evil when Jesus was born. That generation was ripe for judgement!

THE FULNESS OF TIME

“But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under the law that we might receive the full rights of sons” (Gal. 4:4).

Just as a pregnant woman reaches the fullness of her time, the world also reached the fullness of its time. As we have said, it was an extremely evil generation. The “fulness” of that generation not only represented the fulfillment of prophecy, but also the fullness of political and religious degradation.

We must not forget that after centuries of digression, the generation of Jesus was ripe for destruction. Remember, it was during “that generation” that the Jews were forced out of Jerusalem and the Jewish Temple was so completely destroyed that not one stone was left upon another that was not cast down (Matt. 24:2). Please consider the graphic way that Jesus described His own generation.

- Jesus likened His generation to children in the marketplace who were so confused they didn’t know whether they wanted to laugh or cry (Matt. 11:16-19).
- He said it was an “evil and adulterous generation” (Matt. 12:39; Mk. 8:38).
- He said the men of Nineveh would rise up and condemn “this generation” (Matt. 12:41).
- He also said the queen of the South would rise up in the judgement and condemn “this generation” (Matt. 12:42).
- He said it was a “wicked generation” (Matt. 12:45).
- He said it was a “faithless and perverse generation” (Matt. 17:17).
- He said it was an “evil generation” (Lk. 11:29).
- Jesus said He would be rejected by “this generation” (Lk. 17:25).
- Jesus said to the leaders of that generation: **“how can you escape being condemned to hell?” (Matt. 23:33).**
- Peter admonished the Jews: “save yourselves from this crooked generation” (Acts 2:40).
- Paul wanted believers to be blameless, harmless, and without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation (Phil. 2:15).
- We too need to be blameless, harmless, and without rebuke in our own generation.
- Remember! Wicked generations are ripe for judgement!

OUR GENERATION

Paul warned Timothy: **“But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self control, brutal,**

not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, loves of pleasure rather than lovers of God – having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with them” (2 Tim. 3:1-5).

Please consider that our own generation might be the “last days” Paul warned about. Please focus on this possibility and learn from history! Remember! Wicked generations are ripe for judgement!

Two things have been true in every generation throughout all of history.

(1) Most people in every generation have been wrong! Remember! The road that leads to destruction is broad and the gate is wide. Unfortunately, MANY will go in thereat. Sadly, Satan is leading them like sheep to the slaughter!

(2) In every generation, however, there have been a FEW who dared to be different. They chose to enter the narrow gate that leads to life (Matt. 7:13,14). Often these courageous followers of God were ridiculed, and many times they had to walk alone. The Bible calls them the “remnant” (Rom. 11:5). The book of Hebrews reminds us that the world is not worthy of these faithful believers (Heb. 11:38).

On the Day of Judgement all of humanity from every generation will be present. **“For we must all stand before the Judgement seat of Christ” (2 Cor. 5:10).** Ultimately everyone will be divided into only two groups. One group was popular, followed the broad way, and are eternally lost.

The other group suffered ridicule, walked the narrow way, and are eternally saved! (Matt. 25:31-46)

To which group will you belong?

Remember, it’s not too late to change! If you have not yet received Jesus as your Savior, heed the inspired words of Peter and: **“Save yourselves from this corrupt generation”! (Acts 2:40)**

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