

This Generation

[Mark 13:28-30](#)



We said last week that all Christians believe in the Second Coming of Christ. To deny the **fact** of the second coming is to deny the inspiration of scripture. Do you agree? Well, I believe that the time of the second coming is just as clear as the **fact** of the second coming. I believe that to deny the **time statements** that the Bible gives of the second coming is also to deny inspiration. Do you still agree? If you agree then it seems that [Isaac Newton](#) denied inspiration because he sure didn't believe the time statements.

Last Wednesday, June 20, 2007, Fox News ran an article entitled, [Manuscript Shows Isaac Newton Calculated Date of Apocalypse](#).

Newton, who died 280 years ago, is known for laying much of the groundwork for modern physics, astronomy, math and optics. But in a new Jerusalem exhibit, he appears as a scholar of deep faith who also found time to write on Jewish law — even penning a few phrases in careful Hebrew letters — and combing the Old Testament's Book of Daniel for clues about the world's end.



In one manuscript from the early 1700s, Newton used the cryptic Book of Daniel to calculate the date for the apocalypse, reaching the conclusion that the world would end **no earlier than 2060**.

"It may end later, but I see no reason for its ending sooner," Newton wrote. However, he added, "This I mention not to assert when the time of the end shall be, but to put a stop to the rash conjectures of fanciful men who are frequently predicting the time of the end, and by doing so bring the sacred propheties into discredit as often as their predictions fail."

Newton obviously didn't believe Jesus when He said that ALL prophecy would be fulfilled in the generation in which He lived. Newton wasn't alone; most of Christianity doesn't believe Jesus' time statements.

We are studying Jesus' sermon on the mount of Olives, commonly known as the Olivet Discourse. In this discourse, Jesus is answering the questions that the disciples asked Him on the Mount of Olives just after leaving the temple. Jesus tells the disciples that the temple shall be completely destroyed:

And Jesus said to him, "Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone shall be left upon another which will not be torn down." (Mark 13:2 NASB)

To which the disciples responded:

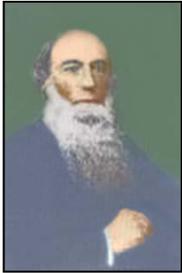
"Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign when all these things are going to be fulfilled?" (Mark 13:4 NASB)

The disciples question was basically two fold; **when** will these things happen, and **what signs** will indicate that they are about to happen? In verses 5-37, Jesus answers their questions. Context is king.

Please keep this in mind as you read Mark 13; the Lord is answering His disciple's questions. Jesus told them a number of things that would happen before the end came; the gospel would be preached to all the world; they would see the "abomination of desolation" that Daniel had spoken of (Luke tells us that this refers to the Roman armies surrounding Jerusalem). There would come a time of great tribulation. Then immediately after the tribulation, they would see the Son of man come in the clouds of heaven which referred not to a physical bodily return but to the destruction of Jerusalem.

To summarize and illustrate what He had been teaching, He further says:

"Now learn the parable from the fig tree: when its branch has already become tender, and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. ²⁹ "Even so, you too, when you see these things happening, recognize that He is near, right at the door. ³⁰ "Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place. (Mark 13:28-30 NASB)



[James Stuart Russell](#) said, "Words have no meaning if this language, uttered on so solemn an occasion, and so precise and express in its import, does not affirm the near approach of the great event which occupies the whole discourse of our Lord." I agree. If this language doesn't mean that the things He spoke of are near, it doesn't mean anything.

Jesus says, "***Now learn the parable from the fig tree***"—A popular interpretation of this passage considers the fig tree as a type, or illustration of Israel. According to this view, the fact that Israel became a nation on September 12, 1948 constitutes the budding of the fig tree, and may be taken as proof that the Lord's return is "near" in our day. We'll discuss this further a little later.

I think that the Lord is simply giving us a universal illustration here which the parallel account in Luke makes clear.

And He told them a parable: "Behold the fig tree and all the trees; ³⁰ as soon as they put forth leaves, you see it and know for yourselves that summer is now near. (Luke 21:29-30 NASB)

This is just a simple illustration. When you see the leaves on the tree begin to come out, you know that summer is near. You can understand that, can't you?

"Now learn the parable from the fig tree: when its branch has already become tender, and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. ²⁹ "Even so, you too, when you see these things happening, recognize that He is near, right at the door. (Mark 13:28-29 NASB)

Jesus said that, just like you know that summer is near when you see the leaves coming out on the trees, "***even so***" when you see the things come to pass that I have been talking about, (the gospel preached to all the world, the abomination of desolation, the great tribulation, and the Son of man come in the clouds of heaven) you know that the end is near. It is just like someone standing at the door about to enter.

James used this same illustration of "standing at the door" to speak of the nearness of the Lord's return:

Be patient, therefore, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. Behold, the farmer waits for the precious produce of the soil, being patient about it, until it gets the early and late rains.⁸ You too be patient; strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.⁹ Do not complain, brethren, against one another, that you yourselves may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing right at the door. (James 5:7-9 NASB)

The word “coming” in verse 8 is the Greek word *parousia*. And the word “at hand” is the Greek word *eggizo*, [en-gid'-zo] which means: “to bring near, to join one thing to another; to draw or come near to.” James used this same illustration of “standing at the door” to speak of the nearness of the Lord's return.

"Even so, you too, when you see these things happening, recognize that He is near, right at the door. (Mark 13:29 NASB)

The wording for “*He is near*” is ambiguous. It could be translated “*He is near*” or “*It is near*.” If you have the New American Standard Version it says “He.” If you have the New International Version it says “It is near.” Since the pronoun is not there, then the interpreter is left to speculate what verses 28-30 are referring to. Are they referring to the destruction of the temple, described in verses 5-23? Or are they referring to the return of Jesus, described in verses 24-27? As we have seen in our past messages these are one in the same event, so it really doesn't matter if we say “it” is near or “He” is near. The “He” or “it” that is near is the coming of the Son of Man to destroy Jerusalem. In the parallel passage in Luke it says that the Kingdom of God is near:

"Even so you, too, when you see these things happening, recognize that the kingdom of God is near. (Luke 21:31 NASB)

Now, we know from other verses that the kingdom of God had come to them already:

"But if I cast out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. (Luke 11:20 NASB)

Now having been questioned by the Pharisees as to when the kingdom of God was coming, He answered them and said, "The kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed; 21 nor will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or, 'There it is!' For behold, the kingdom of God is in your midst." (Luke 17:20-21 NASB)

If the kingdom of God had already come, how can it now be said to be near? In our text in the Olivet Discourse Jesus is referring to the full manifestation of the kingdom that would come in power and glory at [A.D. 70](#).

Now I want us to focus on the next verse, this is a very misunderstood verse:

"Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place. (Mark 13:30 NASB)

Jesus here, very plainly and very clearly, tells **HIS DISCIPLES** that **ALL** of the things He had mentioned would come to pass in **THEIR GENERATION**. This includes the gospel being preached in all the world, the abomination of desolation, the great tribulation, and the coming of the Son of man. This is so clear that it greatly troubles those who hold to a futuristic eschatology. Listen to some comments made on this verse.

[C.S. Lewis](#) said, *"The apocalyptic beliefs of the first Christians have been proved to be false. It is clear from the New Testament that they all expected the Second Coming in their own lifetime. And, worse still, they had a reason, and one which you will find very embarrassing. Their Master had told them so. He shared, and indeed created, their delusion. He said in so many words, 'this generation shall not pass till all these things be done.' And he was wrong. [How did Lewis say that—how did he say that Jesus was wrong? Just take the Bible & throw it out...If Jesus is wrong we're done!] He clearly knew no more about the end of the world than anyone else. This is certainly the most embarrassing verse in the Bible."* (Essay "The World's Last Night" (1960), found in *The Essential C.S. Lewis*, p. 385) [Lest anyone think that this work was written during Lewis' years as an atheist—he was born in 1898 and converted to theism in 1929 and two years later he named Christ as his savior at the age of 33—29 years after his conversion]



Remember what we said earlier; to deny the [time statements](#) that the Bible gives of the second coming, is to deny inspiration. Because of his physical view of the nature of the Second coming, he couldn't believe this clear time statement. He felt that it hadn't happened yet, and therefore Jesus had to be wrong. That would be, in fact, much more than embarrassing, it would be devastating to the credibility of Jesus. If Jesus was wrong, as Lewis says he was, what else might He have been wrong about? What if He was wrong about those who believe in Him having everlasting life? When you begin to attack the credibility of Jesus you are in trouble—but relax! Jesus wasn't wrong; Lewis was the one who was wrong. We can count on the truthfulness of what Jesus tells us. Aren't you glad of that?

Others also had trouble with this verse. The New Jerome Commentary says *"This is a troublesome verse."* (p. 667) W. Robertson Nicholl wrote, *"What is said therein is so perplexing as to tempt a modern expositor to wish it had not been there, or to have recourse to critical expedients to eliminate it from the text."* (*The Expositor's Greek Testament*, p. 294)

This verse does not fit with a futuristic eschatology. When properly interpreted you must either accept the fact that Christ has returned. You have 2 choices:

1. Call Him a liar or say that He was mistaken
2. Decide that I might have the wrong idea about the nature of the 2nd coming

Which of these choices are you more comfortable with? This verse doesn't fit into their eschatology so they would like to eliminate it. This verse is devastating to a futuristic eschatology, so let's examine it carefully and make sure we understand exactly what Jesus is saying. Let's start by examining the meaning of the word "generation". Generation, in our text, comes from the Greek word [genea](#), (ghen-ay-ah) which means, by implication "an age." In Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the NT, we can see that the "genea." means: *"The whole multitude of men living at the same time."* William F. Arndt and Wilber Gingrich, (*A Greek-English Lexicon of the NT and Other Early Christian Literature*) define "genea" as: *"basically, the sum total of those born at the same time, expanded to include all those living at a given time, contemporaries."*

If you look at the way Jesus used the word "generation," I think it will be abundantly clear that it **always** refers to His contemporaries, the Jewish people of His own period. Let's look at a few of the uses of "generation." He's talking about people alive at that time.

that upon you may fall the guilt of all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. ³⁶ ***"Truly I say to you, all these things shall come upon this generation.*** (Matthew 23:35-36 NASB)

Jesus is in the temple speaking to the Jews, He says that all the judgment that He had spoken about would come upon them. I don't know of any commentator who understands this as referring to any other than the existing generation.

"For just as the lightning, when it flashes out of one part of the sky, shines to the other part of the sky, so will the Son of Man be in His day. ²⁵ ***"But first He must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation.*** (Luke 17:24-25 NASB)

What generation did Christ suffer many things from, and what generation rejected Him? It is clear, He is speaking of His contemporaries. Look at how some of the translations deal with Mark 13:30:

- ⊕ ***New English Bible:*** "I tell you this: the present generation will live to see it all."
- ⊕ ***Today's English Version:*** "Remember this! All these things will happen before the people now living have all died."
- ⊕ ***Moffatt's Translation:*** "I tell you truly, the present generation will not pass away, till all this happens."
- ⊕ ***Weymouth's Translation:*** "I tell you in solemn truth that the present generation will certainly not pass away until all this has taken place."

These translations make it quite clear. The meaning of the word was that of the "present" generation in the time of Christ; not to a future generation thousands of years away.

So in etymology and usage, "generation" means: "those born at the same time, contemporaries."

How long is a generation? [John Walvoord](#) said, "*A generation is normally from thirty to one hundred years.*" I have no clue where he got that from. He's the only one I know of who gives it that broad of a span. Most commentators see a generation as referring to a thirty to forty year time. More important than that, what does the Bible say about the time of a generation? Let's look and see:

Therefore all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; and from David to the deportation to Babylon fourteen generations; and from the deportation to Babylon to the time of Christ fourteen generations. (Matthew 1:17 NASB)

In this genealogical table, we have data to estimate the length of a generation. It tells us that from the captivity in Babylon until Christ are fourteen generations. Now the date of the captivity, in the reign of Zedekiah, is said to be 586 BC. From 586 BC until the birth of Christ would be about 586 years which, divided by fourteen, makes the average length of a generation about **41 years**.

DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS AS WHEN THEY PROVOKED ME, AS IN THE DAY OF TRIAL IN THE WILDERNESS,⁹ WHERE YOUR FATHERS TRIED Me BY TESTING Me, AND SAW MY WORKS FOR FORTY YEARS. ¹⁰ ***"THEREFORE I WAS ANGRY WITH THIS GENERATION, AND SAID, 'THEY ALWAYS GO ASTRAY IN THEIR HEART; AND THEY DID NOT KNOW MY WAYS';*** (Hebrews 3:8-10 NASB)

"So the LORD'S anger burned against Israel, and He made them wander in the wilderness forty years, until the entire generation of those who had done evil in the sight of the LORD was destroyed. (Numbers 32:13 NASB)

Forty years is a significant number in the Bible:

1. The children of Israel wandered in the wilderness for forty years before entering the promise land.
2. The New Testament saints also were in a transition period for forty years before entering the New Jerusalem, which is above.
3. David reigned for forty years.
4. Christ's reign from Pentecost to the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, was also a forty year reign which Revelation 20 refers to as the millennial reign of Christ.

Some have tried to twist the etymology of the word "generation" in Mark 13:30 to make it mean "race," and try to make Jesus say that all these things would happen before the "Jewish race" had passed away. The word for race is *genos*. The word in our text is *genea*, (ghen-ay-ah). There is no biblical or linguistic justification for such a position. Generation does NOT mean race! Not only will this not fit linguistically it won't fit logically either. *"Truly I say to you, this 'Jewish race' will not pass away until all these things take place."* That would imply that once "these things" do take place the Jewish race will pass away. But that doesn't fit their theology! They see a millennial reign of the Jews after this time.

Some say, *"the generation that sees these signs will not pass away..."* That is adding words to the text that are not there.

Jesus uses the near demonstrative "this" generation. Every time "this" is used in the New Testament it always refers to something that is near in terms of time or distance. If I said, "This building" is going to be remodeled. What building am I talking about? You know that I'm referring to the one close to me. The one we are sitting in. But if I said, "That building" I'm referring to one further away, not the one we are in. Jesus could have said, "That generation." But He didn't! Jesus is saying that everything that He has spoken about will happen before the generation that He was speaking to would pass away.

[C.I. Scofield](#), in his Bible's reference to this verse in Matthew 24:34, recognized this, and actually SWITCHED the definition of the word from that of *genea* to that of *genos*, an entirely different word!



Scofield said, (p. 1034, old edition, Scofield Reference Bible): *"Gr. genea, the primary definition of which is, 'race, kind, family, stock, breed.' (So all lexicons) That the word is used in this sense here is sure because none of 'these things,' the world-wide preaching of the kingdom, the great tribulation, the return of the Lord in visible glory, and the regathering of the elect, occurred at the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, A.D. 70. The promise is, therefore, that the generation—nation, or family of Israel— will be preserved unto 'these things'; a promise wonderfully fulfilled to this day."*

Scofield used the definition for the Greek *genos* and the word in our text is *genea*. He did so because of his view of the nature of the second coming. Since he felt that these things hadn't happened yet he had

to change the meaning of the word. Wouldn't it be better to line up with God no matter how crazy it seemed to be?

Genos is not the word used in Mark 13:30. Peter uses the word “genos” in:

But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God's OWN POSSESSION, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; (1 Peter 2:9 NASB)

Here it is evident that “*genos*” means: “kind, nation, offspring.” But this is not the word used in Mark 13:30.

The following quote by [David Chilton](#) is very informative: “*Some have sought to get around the force of this text by saying that the word **generation** here really means **race**, and that Jesus was simply saying that the Jewish race would not die out until all these things took place. Is that true? I challenge you: Get out your concordance and look up every New Testament occurrence of the word **generation** (in Greek, **genea**) and see if it **ever** means 'race' in any other context. Here are all the references for the Gospels: Matthew 1:17; 11:16; 12:39, 41, 42, 45; 16:4; 17:17; 23:36; 24:34; Mark 8:12, 38; 9:19; 13:30; Luke 1:48, 50; 7:31; 9:41; 11:29, 30, 31, 32, 50, 51; 18:8; 17:25; 21:32. Not one of these references is speaking of the entire Jewish race over thousands of years; all use the word in its normal sense of the sum total of those living at the same time. It always refers to contemporaries. In fact, those who say it means "race" tend to acknowledge this fact, but explain that the word suddenly **changes** its meaning when Jesus uses it in Matthew 24!*”

What Jesus meant by all those things happening in that generation, including the parousia of Christ, was that they would all happen while some of those folks to whom He preached were still alive, just as He said they would be in:

"For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels." 9:1 And He was saying to them, "Truly I say to you, there are some of those who are standing here who shall not taste death until they see the kingdom of God after it has come with power." (Mark 8:38-9:1 NASB)

He also told His disciples this in:

"But whenever they persecute you in this city, flee to the next; for truly I say to you, you shall not finish going through the cities of Israel, until the Son of Man comes. (Matthew 10:23 NASB)



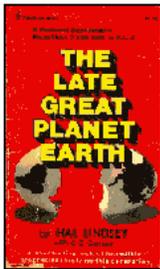
Some say that the “generation” Jesus mentioned would be the generation following the event of Israel becoming a nation in 1948. Then, taking a generation as forty years, they said that the second coming would happen in September of 1988. Do you remember the book, “[88 reasons why the rapture will happen in 1988](#)”, written by Edgar Whisenant?”

[Hal Lindsey](#) said, “*When the Jewish people, after nearly 2,000 years of exile, under relentless persecution, became a nation again on 14 May 1948, the 'fig tree' put forth its first*

leaves.

Jesus said that this would indicate that He was 'at the door,' ready to return. Then He said, 'Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place. (Matthew 24:34 NASB).

What generation? Obviously, in context, the generation that would see the signs — chief among them the rebirth of Israel. A generation in the Bible is something like forty years. If this is a correct deduction, then within forty years or so of 1948, all these things could take place. Many scholars who studied Bible prophecy all their lives believe that this is so." (The Late Great Planet Earth, pp. 53-54).



Hal says that the chief sign would be the rebirth of Israel. Where in Mark 13 do you see anything remotely close to speaking about a rebirth of Israel? It is speaking about Israel's destruction, not its rebirth! He also says that within forty years of 1948, all these things could take place. Well, it has been fifty nine years and the temple has not even been rebuilt, so it will be a good while before it can be destroyed. It looks like Hal was way off.

When Jesus said "all these things" would occur before that generation was over, He was talking about everything that He had been discussing from verse 5 through verse 29. This included the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ in power and glory to destroy Jerusalem. The disciple's question had been when will this temple be destroyed, and in verse 30, He tells them it will happen in their generation.

If the Lord's teaching on His second coming doesn't agree with our concept of it, what should we do? We need to change our concepts to line up with His teaching, not twist His words to make them fit our views. This is the Word of God, let's not twist it and distort it, let's simply submit to it.

Before closing, I would like to expound a little on the idea of generation meaning race. We have already shown that this is not a legitimate translation of *genea*. But for those who attempt to translate it as "this race of Jews will not pass, till all these things are fulfilled," it must be understood that **THERE IS NO JEWISH RACE TODAY**. This is where I'm going to call upon you to be good Berean's and check this out. I'm not anti-Semitic. I get accused of that when I say something like this. I'm just being Biblical.

Notice what Jesus told the Jewish leaders of His day:

And He began to speak to them in parables: "A man PLANTED A VINEYARD, AND PUT A WALL AROUND IT, AND DUG A VAT UNDER THE WINE PRESS, AND BUILT A TOWER, and rented it out to vine-growers and went on a journey. ² "And at the harvest time he sent a slave to the vine-growers, in order to receive some of the produce of the vineyard from the vine-growers. ³ "And they took him, and beat him, and sent him away empty-handed. ⁴ "And again he sent them another slave, and they wounded him in the head, and treated him shamefully. ⁵ "And he sent another, and that one they killed; and so with many others, beating some, and killing others. ⁶ "He had one more to send, a beloved son; he sent him last of all to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' ⁷ "But those vine-growers said to one another, 'This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the

inheritance will be ours!"⁸ "And they took him, and killed him, and threw him out of the vineyard."⁹ "What will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the vine-growers, and will give the vineyard to others. (Mark 12:1-9 NASB)

Imagine this! Jesus is saying that He is the Son of God, that He comes in God's authority, that they will kill Him, and that God will not only destroy them, but He will give their leadership to the Gentiles. Notice how Luke's account renders this:

"He will come and destroy these vine-growers and will give the vineyard to others." And when they heard it, they said, "May it never be!" (Luke 20:16 NASB)

The response of the Lord's hearers is "May it never be!" This is from the Greek words *me ginomai*—"God forbid!" This is the only place in the gospels that this expression, common to Paul, appears. It is a thought almost too horrible to consider.

"He will come and destroy the vine-growers"—Historically, how did God destroy the "vine-growers"? Forty years later, Roman armies came in, surrounded the city of Jerusalem and captured it, and the chief priests, the scribes and the elders were led away in chains into captivity, to be dispersed among the nations. God did exactly what He said He would do in this parable.

"And will give the vineyard to others"—God, through the Gospel, was preparing a new nation, which would take the place of the old in which only Jews and proselytes participated. That new nation was to create one new man from both Jew and Gentile through the work of the cross ([Eph. 2:11-22](#)), and so create one brand new nation which relied not upon natural descent from one man but a spiritual rebirth in the one Man, Jesus Christ, bringing harmony to all true children of God. There's now no difference between Jew and Gentile ([Col. 3:11](#), [Rom. 10:12](#), [Gal. 3:28](#), [Acts 10:34-35](#)) because the nation of God is built around Jesus—it's become no longer geographical but multi-national.

After the [destruction of Jerusalem](#) the nation of Israel, after the flesh, was scattered throughout the earth, and lost all tribal relations. This scattering was made immutable due to the fact that all tribal genealogical records were destroyed with the Temple in A.D. 70. The simple fact is that there is no existing Jewish race.

Consider the following quotations:

The Encyclopedia Britannica (1973)*"The Jews As A Race: The findings of physical anthropology show that, contrary to the popular view, there is no Jewish race. Anthropometric measurements of Jewish groups in many parts of the world indicate that they differ greatly from one another with respect to all the important physical characteristics."* (vol. 12, page 1054)

Encyclopedia Judaica Jerusalem (1971)*"It is a common assumption, and one that sometimes seems ineradicable even in the face of evidence to the contrary, that the Jews of today constitute a race, a homogeneous entity easily recognizable. From the preceding discussion of the origin and early history of the Jews, it should be clear that in the course of their formation as a people and a nation they had already assimilated a variety of racial strains from people moving into the general area they occupied. This had taken place by interbreeding and then by conversion to Judaism of a considerable number of communities. . . ."*

"Thus, the diversity of the racial and genetic attributes of various Jewish colonies of today

renders any unified racial classification of them a contradiction in terms. Despite this, many people readily accept the notion that they are a distinct race. This is probably reinforced by the fact that some Jews are recognizably different in appearance from the surrounding population. That many cannot be easily identified is overlooked and the stereotype for some is extended to all—a not uncommon phenomenon" (Encyclopedia Judaica Jerusalem, 1971, vol. 3, p. 50).

Encyclopedia Americana (1986) *"Racial and Ethnic Considerations. Some theorists have considered the Jews a distinct race, although this has no factual basis. In every country in which the Jews lived for a considerable time, their physical traits came to approximate those of the indigenous people. Hence the Jews belong to several distinct racial types, ranging, for example, from fair to dark. Among the reasons for this phenomenon are voluntary or involuntary miscegenation and the conversion of Gentiles to Judaism"* (Encyclopedia Americana, 1986, vol. 16, p. 71).

Collier's Encyclopedia (1977) *"A common error and persistent modern myth is the designation of the Jews as a 'race! This is scientifically fallacious, from the standpoint of both physical and historical tradition. Investigations by anthropologists have shown that Jews are by no means uniform in physical character and that they nearly always reflect the physical and mental characteristics of the people among whom they live"* (Collier's Encyclopedia, 1977, vol. 13, p. 573).

Today, being a Jew simply means that one is of the Judaistic religion or a convert to it, or else in a "brotherhood" of those who are. Therefore, being a Jew has nothing to do with race. We are familiar with a number of notable figures, such as Sammy Davis, Jr., Elizabeth Taylor, and Tom Arnold, in fact, who became Jews by conversion to the religion of Judaism.

John Bray said, *"Many Christians do not know that the vast majority of so-called Jews in the world today are the Ashkenazim Jews, while the remainder of them are the Sephardim Jews. The Ashkenazim Jews have as their background not the nation of Israel but a country called Khazaria, which country at one time was the largest country in Europe. The settlers of Khazaria were Turks and Huns. In A.D. 740 King Bulan of Khazaria decided to adopt the Judaistic religion for his country. A number of Jews were already living there. So he converted to Judaism, along with all his officials, and whole nation ended up being known as a nation of Jews. In 970 Russia came in and dominated the situation, and the Khazars were scattered, many of them going down into Poland and Lithuania. Where at the dawn of our modern civilization the largest concentration of Jews were found. Today, the largest percentage of so-called Jews in the world have as their background this group of people."* (This information is fully documented in detail in John Bray's book, *Israel in Bible Prophecy*)

Funk and Wagnall's New Encyclopedia (1970) *"In 1970 the Israeli Knesset adopted legislation defining a Jew as one born of a Jewish mother or a convert."* (vol. 14, p. 214)

H.G. Wells: *"There can be little doubt that the scattered Phoenicians in Spain and Africa and throughout the Mediterranean, speaking as they did a language closely akin to Hebrew and being deprived of their authentic political rights, became proselytes to Judaism. For phases of vigorous proselytism alternated with phases of exclusive jealousy in Jewish history. On one occasion the Idumeans, being conquered, were all forcibly made Jews. There were Arab tribes who were Jews in the time of Muhammad, and a Turkish people who were mainly Jews in South Russia in the ninth century. Judaism is indeed the reconstructed political ideal of many*

shattered peoples - mainly Semitic.... The main part of Jewry never was in Judea and had never come out of Judea" (The Outline of History, p. 505).

Therefore, we can clearly and confidently assert that there is no such thing as a Jewish race, nor ever can there be. These facts are devastating to Dispensationalism. There are no twelve tribes today; there is no Jewish race today.

We know that there is no possibility that this passage of the [Olivet Discourse](#) has any relation to a future Jewish race, since there is no such thing. Since the fall of Jerusalem, and the scattering of the nation of Israel in the first century, the nation calling itself Israel has consisted of a collection of people from nearly every nation in the world, with no relation to the twelve tribes of the historical nation known as Israel. Any attempts to state that there is, or will ever again be, a race of Israelites are proven to be futile and of no force. There is no Jewish race. So, as you can see, to try to translate the word *genea* as race does not fly.

Mark 13 was a prophecy that has already been fulfilled, and therefore, has no future fulfillment at all today. It all happened in the generation that heard Jesus speak these words. Jesus said of the days of Jerusalem's fall in 70 AD:

because these are days of vengeance, in order that all things which are written may be fulfilled. (Luke 21:22 NASB)

All prophecy was fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem, which happened in the life time of the generation to which Jesus spoke. It's all fulfilled. Let's not twist and distort Jesus' words to make them fit our views. Let's change our views to line up with His words. Put it in context and keep it in context.

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