

The DeMar v. Wilson Discussion – Partial Preterism’s Fatal Flaw: How *Mellō* and *Parousia* Gave Birth to Full Preterism

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Introduction

Fifteen years before Gary DeMar’s “Three Question Letter Controversy” with Doug Wilson and others, I was already answering Wilson, Gentry, and Mathison’s *When Shall These Things Be?* (2004) with a *book-length exegetical rebuttal*. Gary has repeatedly stated he is **not** a full preterist. I am. Yet Doug still refuses the public debate we once were planning at Westminster Theological Seminary or Reformed Theological Seminary – which is where it needs to take place.

As I predicted Gary has begun to write short article responses to Doug after their public discussion / debate Nov. 3, 2025. The first seems to address their exchange over “consistency” in Matthew 24 and 1 Corinthians 10:11. While this is instructive, it only rehashes cracks I exposed over a decade ago. Below, I respond directly to their points on *mellō* and *parousia*, quote the Greek texts in full (YLT), and let the syllogisms finish the job. The partial preterist position doesn’t just wobble—it collapses under the weight of its own concessions. Let the texts speak.

MELLO & PAROUSIA: THE WORDS THAT UNRAVEL PARTIAL PRETERISM

Mello – Gentry’s Selective Translations and Inconsistencies

Gary DeMar correctly notes Ken Gentry’s inconsistency in translating *mellō* (μέλλω) as “about to be” throughout Revelation to support an AD 70 fulfillment:

“For example, *mellō* appears 13 times in Revelation, and Ken Gentry translates it as “about to” 12 times in his two-volume commentary on Revelation *The Divorce of Israel*. His exception is with Revelation 1:19. Is there lexical certainty for not translating *mellō* as “about to” in 1:19? If there is, why do some commentators translate *mellō* as “about to,” and why did Gentry translate *mellō* in 1:19 as “about to” in the first edition of *The Beast of Revelation* and *Before Jerusalem Fell*?

There is no certainty that *mellō* should not be translated as “about to” in 1:19. In fact, in the way *mellō* is consistently used in Revelation, five times in chapters 2 and 3, the burden of proof is on those who do not translate *mellō* as “about to” in 1:19. It’s easy to understand non-preterist interpreters not translating *mellō* as “about to” but not a preterist like Gentry who translates *mellō* as “about to” or its equivalent 12 times and translates it once as “will take place.” “When Jesus speaks of ‘the things which will take place after these things,’” Gentry wrote, “He uses the verb *mellō*, which can mean ‘about to,’ in the sense of nearness in time.... Though John’s basic concern in Revelation is with the near term ..., we probably should not translate the word *mellō* as emphasizing nearness, since it seems intentionally to be avoiding the clearer language already appearing in the context (1:1, 3).” It seems to me that translating *mellō* as “about to” supports what 1:1, 3; 22:6, 10 state and its 12 other uses as “about to” in Revelation.”[\[1\]](#)

Gentry once encouraged us to follow “literal translations” such as Young’s Literal Translation (YLT), where *mellō* is consistently rendered “about to be.” Consider again Revelation 1:19 (YLT):

“Write the things that thou hast seen, and the things that are, and the things that are about to come [mellō] after these things.”

This verse serves as the outline for the entire book. If *mellō* means “about to” here, it must mean the end of the millennium events in Rev. 20:7-15 were also “about to be” fulfilled by AD 70. Gentry’s retreat from “about to” is not exegetical; it is creedal damage control.

The deeper issue lies in Paul’s use of *mellō*. Young’s Literal Translation renders the following:

- Romans 8:18 (YLT): “For I reckon that the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory about to be revealed in us.”
- Acts 17:31 (YLT): “Because He did set a day in which He is about to judge the inhabited world in righteousness...”
- Acts 24:15 (YLT): “Having hope toward God... that there shall be a resurrection of dead men, both of righteous and unrighteous, about to be.”
- 2 Timothy 4:1 (YLT): “I fully testify, then, before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who is about to judge living and dead at His appearing...”

Paul addressed living audiences who expected glorification, resurrection, and judgment in their lifetime. Consistent translation of *mellō* as “about to” places these events in AD 70. The analogy of faith and John and Paul’s use of *mello* destroys Gentry and Wilson’s hyper-creedalism.

Parousia (Matthew 24:3, 27, 37 / Luke 17:24)

Gentry now insists the *parousia* in Matthew 24:3, 27, 37 is future, despite once teaching it was fulfilled in AD 70. Why the change? Because Paul uses *parousia* for the Second Coming and resurrection in 1 Corinthians 15:23 and 1 Thessalonians 4:15–17 as full preterist and even his Amillennial critics have been pointing out to him for years.

Yet Gentry’s own editor Keith Mathison (*WSTTB?*), takes the *parousia* in both Matthew 24:3, 27, 37 and Luke 17:24—along with the “lightning” (better “light of day,” A Faithful Version)—as fulfilled in AD 70. Gentry’s other co-author Doug Wilson in *WSTTB?* agrees that *parousia* in Matthew 24:3, 27, 37 was fulfilled in AD 70. This is not a small “inconsistency”:

Syllogism #1

Major: The *parousia* or coming of the Son of Man like the light of day shining from east to west in Matthew 24:3, 27, 37 and Luke 17:24 is the Second Coming event that ushers in the resurrection and judgment of the living and dead (Gentry).

Minor: But the *parousia* or coming of the Son of Man like the light of day shining from east to west in Matthew 24:3, 27, 37 and Luke 17:24 was fulfilled in AD 70 (Mathison, Gentry’s and Wilson’s editor and co-author in *WSTTB?*).

Conclusion: The *parousia* or Second Coming of Christ in Matthew 24:3, 27, 37 and Luke 17:24 was fulfilled spiritually in AD 70, ushering in the resurrection and judgment of the living and dead. This is when the kingdom was realized spiritually “within” the church, and all these events were not seen with physical eyes (*parousia*, resurrection of the dead, or the arrival of the kingdom “within”—Luke 17:20–24; Full Preterism / Mike Sullivan, co-author of *House Divided*).

Syllogism #2

Major: The *parousia* of Matthew 24:3, 27, 37 is the same Second Coming or *parousia* event in Paul’s teaching in 1 Corinthians 15:23 and 1 Thessalonians 4–5 that ushers in the resurrection (Gentry).

Minor: But the *parousia* of Matthew 24:3, 27, 37 was fulfilled in AD 70 (per Mathison and Wilson – Gentry’s editor and co-author in *WSTTB?*).

Conclusion: The *parousia* or Second Coming of Christ that ushers in the resurrection in Matthew 24:3, 27, 37; 1 Corinthians 15:23; and 1 Thessalonians 4–5 was fulfilled in AD 70 (Full Preterism / Mike Sullivan, co-author of *House Divided*).

Other signers of the anti-full-preterist letter, such as Phillip Kayser and Mike Bull, take the *parousia* in 1 Corinthians 15:23 and 1 Thessalonians 4:15–17 as AD 70—further collapsing the partial preterist position. These are not *minor* inconsistencies; they **formed full preterism**.

1 CORINTHIANS 10:11 – “THE ENDS OF THE AGES”

Wilson’s Exegesis Backfires

In his debate with Gary DeMar, if I recall, Doug claimed the “ages” of 1 Corinthians 10:11 reach back to Adam, Abraham, Moses, David, etc., each with its own eschatology. He admits the ends of these ages “had come upon” the Corinthians (1 Corinthians 10:11).

Syllogism #3

Major: The “ages” represent the eschatology from Adam to Moses (Wilson).

Minor: The fulfillment and end of these ages had come upon the Corinthians (Wilson / 1 Corinthians 10:11).

Conclusion: The eschatology of the “ages” from Adam to Moses—including the Adamic eschatology connected to Christ’s *parousia* overcoming the Mosaic “law” in 1 Corinthians 15:23–56—had come upon the Corinthians and was fulfilled in AD 70 (Wilson—if not, why not?).

Paul connects:

- 1 Corinthians 1:7–8 — eagerly awaiting the revelation of Christ, confirmed “to the end,” blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- 1 Corinthians 10:11 — “upon whom the ends of the ages have come.”
- 1 Corinthians 15:23–24, 51 — The “Parousia” and “end” were so close that “we [Paul and the Corinthians] shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed”—that is the event was expected in the lifetime of the Corinthians.

How were the Corinthians to distinguish different “ends” or “comings”? They weren’t. Only hyper-creedal eisegesis splits what Paul unified.

Wilson’s Mello Silence

Gary cites a section of Wilson's book or co-authored book *Biblical Pictures of the New Cosmos* where he appeals to Hebrews 6:5 ("powers of the age about to [*mellō*] come") and Ephesians 1:21 ("not only in this age but also in the one about to [*mellō*] come") to argue the new covenant age arrived in AD 70—yet he refuses to strengthen his point by pointing out that *mello* is used in these passages. The reason for this is that the more attention Partial Preterists such as Wilson draw to *mellō* as meaning "about to be" fulfilled in AD 70, the more they are going to have to consistently address it in Romans 8:18 YLT, Acts 17:31 YLT, Acts 24:15 YLT, or 2 Timothy 4:1 YLT where the glorification of the Church, resurrection of the just and unjust, and the judgment of the world or of the living and dead were events that were "about to be" fulfilled in AD 70 and not at the alleged "end of world history." Like Gentry, the more he honors *mellō* as "about to be," the faster his creeds collapse. This is not mere inconsistency—it is incomplete and borderline deceptive exegesis.

Doug Wilson's Silence on Mello again and the "Enemies" of Psalm 110 in Hebrews 10:26-27

In this section Doug also appeals to Hebrews 10:26-27 to demonstrate that God's enemies were judged by fire in AD 70. Again, the author uses *mello* concerning the judgment of fire that was "about to consume" these "enemies." The other issue here is that contextually these are the "enemies" of Psalm 110 that the author quotes in Hebrews 10:12-27! Therefore, just as we have in 1 Corinthians 15, we have an imminent coming of Christ (v. 37—He would come "in a very, very little while and would not delay") that was "about to" "repay" and destroy the last enemies of Psalm 110.

Conclusion

The "inconsistencies" within partial preterism are not minor tensions; they are foundational fractures that produced full preterism. Mathison, Wilson's co-authors, and men like Phillip Kayser and Mike Bull concede AD 70 fulfillments that demand full preterism by their own logic. My interaction with Doug—*House Divided vs. When Shall These Things Be?*—predates the DeMar-Wilson or Three Question Letter Controversy by over fifteen years. Gary is not a full preterist. I am.

Gary once held our book (*HD*) up at a full preterist conference and reminded everyone what Gary North once said—"the side that refuses to respond or quits responding has lost the debate." This means that Gentry, Wilson, and Mathison have lost that written debate, and Doug keeps backing out of an oral one with me. Gary is also correct to point out that the Reformed community focused on him more than myself or other full preterists because Gary is "more of a public figure." Wilson and the partial preterists were also very concerned because after David Chilton came over to full preterism, they couldn't lose Gary DeMar too—so they had to make a public example of him as they did with Chilton. After all, **EVERYONE** knows Wilson and Gentry's "orthodox" partial preterism leads to full preterism.

Doug, it is neither just nor righteous to continue ducking a debate with me and full preterism. Gary has clarified his position. **WHEN** will you do the right thing and debate me—Mike Sullivan, co-author of *House Divided*—at WTS or RTS, as we once began to plan? The exegetical record demands it, and everyone wants to see **THAT** debate. The audience deserves it.

[1] Gary DeMar, *The “End of the Age” and Interpretive Changes*, Nov. 11, 2025, <https://americanvision.org/posts/the-end-of-the-age-and-interpretive-changes/>

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