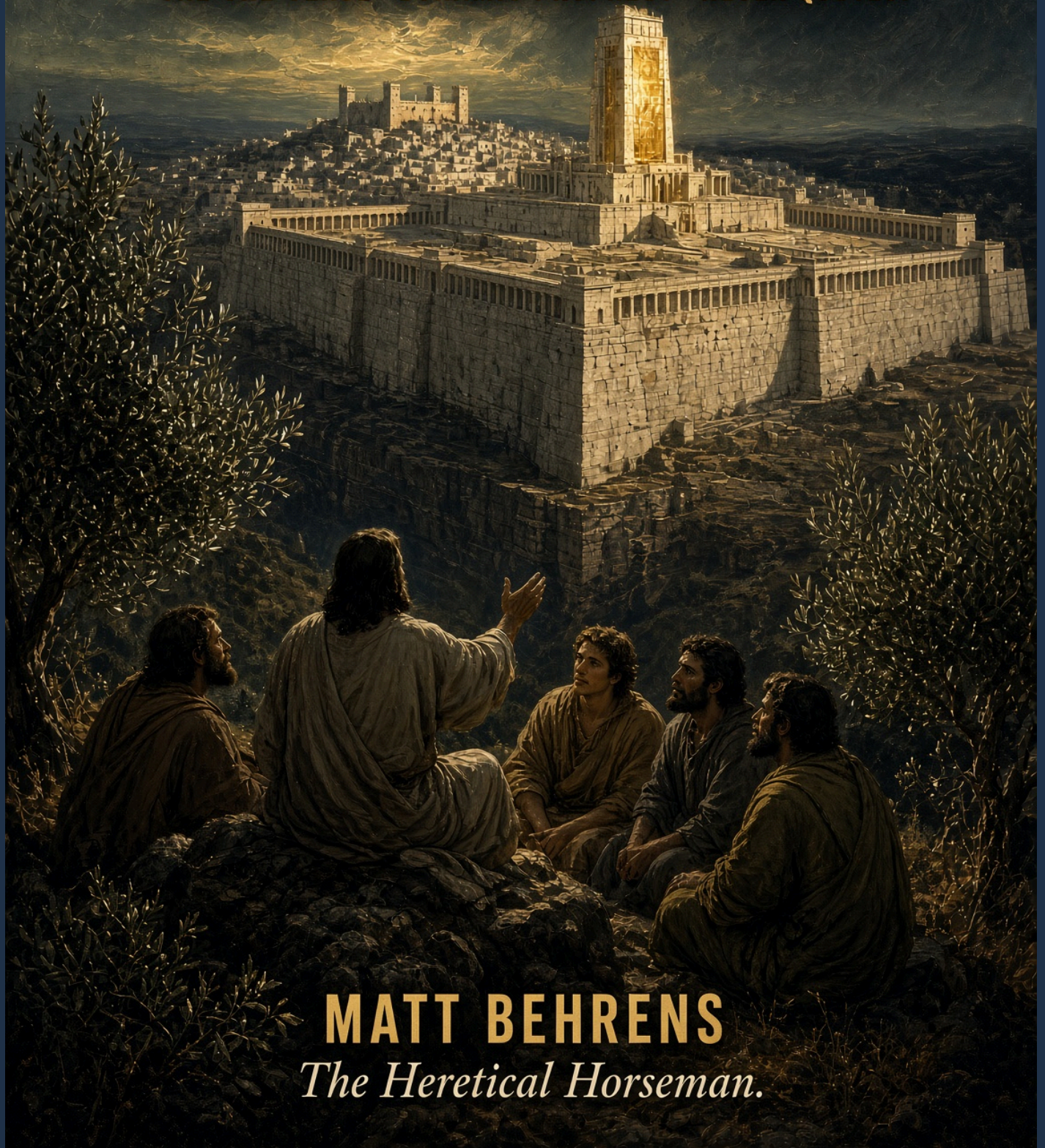


THE MOST EMBARRASSING VERSE IN THE BIBLE

C. S. Lewis called it that. Here is why it isn't.

THE ONE VERSE "DYNAMIC PROPHECY" NEVER QUOTES.



MATT BEHRENS

The Heretical Horseman.

The Most Embarrassing Verse in the Bible

The One Verse "Dynamic Prophecy" Never Quotes

A Response to Pete Wierzbicki's *Dynamic Prophecy: The Hermeneutical Foundation of
Apostolic Eschatology*

By Matt Behrens, The Heretical Horseman

Till all be fulfilled. (Matthew 5:18)

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A Note on Method

The title is borrowed. C. S. Lewis called Matthew 24:34, "This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled," "the most embarrassing verse in the Bible," and he meant it as a confession, not a joke ("The World's Last Night," 1960; see Chapter 5). The subtitle is a fact about the study I am answering: in seventy-one pages on Bible prophecy, that verse is never quoted. Everything that follows is about those two sentences.

Pete Wierzbicki and I have been going back and forth in a Facebook thread about Matthew 24:30. At the end of it he sent me his study, *Dynamic Prophecy: The Hermeneutical Foundation of Apostolic Eschatology and The Key to Understanding the Last Days*, and told me it would "clear up your confusion and perhaps prevent you from making strawman arguments that I never made and then tearing them down."

Fair enough. I read all seventy-one pages, twice. This is my answer.

I want to say up front what kind of document this is, because Pete's charge was strawmanning, and the only honest way to answer that charge is with a method, so here is mine.

First, I quote Pete verbatim, with his page numbers, every time I characterize his position. If I say "Pete argues," the words that follow are his words. Every quotation from *Dynamic Prophecy* is indexed in Appendix B so anyone can check me.

Second, I answer what he wrote, not what I imagine he thinks. Where his document is silent on something, I say it is silent rather than filling in the blank for him.

Third, I cite my sources. Scripture is the authority. When I bring in a commentator, it is to show that other careful readers saw the same thing in the text, not because a scholar said so, and I am careful about *which* scholars say *what*. The partial preterists: Kenneth Gentry, Gary DeMar, David Chilton in his published works, R. C. Sproul, agree with me about the first-century fulfillment of the Olivet Discourse and Revelation's early date, but they do not agree with me that the Second Coming, the resurrection, and the judgment were completed in AD 70. DeMar's position is contested: since about 2022 he has declined to affirm a future bodily return, general resurrection, or final judgment, and critics on his own side say he has become a full preterist in all but name, while he rejects the label; I cite him here only for the first-century fulfillment he has always held. Where I make that further claim, I cite the men who actually hold it, Don Preston, Michael Sullivan, David Green, and I say so. I will not hand Pete the easy win of catching me citing a man for a view he does not hold.

Fourth, I mark the difference between a refutation and a reading. Very few arguments in eschatology are knock-downs. Most are contests between readings, and the honest question is which reading does the most justice to the most texts. I will tell you when I think I have a

refutation and when I think I have the more faithful reading, and I will tell you where Pete's questions bite hardest against my own view. A response that never concedes anything is not a response; it is a performance.

A word on names. Pete uses three. *Dynamic prophecy* is the hermeneutic, the method of reading prophecy that his study is written to establish. *Present Millennialism* is the eschatological position he says rests on that method (p. 68). *Apostolic eschatology*, in his subtitle, is his umbrella term for the eschatology of the Apostolic (Oneness Pentecostal) faith he holds. This response answers the first, because he tells us the second stands on it, and it uses his labels the way he uses them. Nothing in it turns on the Oneness question or on any other distinctive of his tradition; the disagreement is about when the prophets' words were fulfilled, and that disagreement would be identical if he and I sat in the same pew.

Read him for yourself. Pete's study is posted in full at presentkingdom.com (<https://presentkingdom.com/share/dynamic-prophecy-release/>), and his ministry site is thepresentkingdom.com (<https://thepresentkingdom.com/>). I would rather a reader check my quotations against his pages than take my word for what he says; that is the whole point of Appendix B. He has also published a shorter companion study, *A Scriptural and Historical Refutation of Preterism* (Release Version 05/26/2025), which I address in Appendix D so that no one can say I answered the hermeneutic and ignored the polemic.

Fifth, the translation. Pete quotes the King James Version throughout, so I do too. Side-by-side comparison should not require anyone to wonder whether a difference in wording is a difference in translation.

A matter of scale. Pete's study is about twenty-three thousand words. Mine is longer, a little under thirty thousand before the appendices, because I quote him at length rather than summarize him, and it follows his chapter order, because I want to answer his argument in the shape he made it rather than rearranging it into a shape that is easier to hit. You as the reader should be able to view them, compare them, and come to your own conclusions.

One more thing. I am a full preterist, specifically I believe in Covenant Eschatology, the name that goes back to Max R. King. Pete knows that, and his document is aimed at the view. I am not going to pretend otherwise or soften it, but I want the reader to notice something early: Pete and I agree on far more than we disagree on, and the disagreement is narrower and sharper than the word "heretic" suggests. Appendix A is a ledger of what Pete affirms in his own words that I also affirm. It is long. The whole disagreement lives in one question, and the rest of this document is about that question.

Introduction: Shadow to Substance, and Never Back Again

Pete's thesis can be stated in his own words.

"Scripture often shows that a prophecy may have a genuine historical fulfillment while still pointing forward to a greater and final fulfillment. The first fulfillment establishes the pattern. The greater fulfillment expands it. The final fulfillment completes it."
(*Dynamic Prophecy*, p. 2)

He calls this principle *dynamic prophecy*, and he is careful to say what he means by it:

"Here, dynamic prophecy refers to God's method of progressively revealing one prophetic truth through types, shadows, historical events, covenantal judgments, preliminary fulfillments, greater fulfillments, present Kingdom reality, and ultimately the final fulfillment in Jesus Christ and the consummation of His Kingdom." (p. 3)

He insists the principle is not imported:

"It is not an artificial method imposed upon the Bible from the outside, nor is it a theological device invented to rescue a preferred system. It is a pattern demonstrated within the Bible itself." (p. 3)

He tells us exactly what the principle is for:

"It explains why Jesus could speak of the destruction of Jerusalem and, in the same prophetic discourse, point beyond that judgment to His visible and glorious return. The near fulfillment validates the prophecy and establishes the pattern; the final fulfillment completes it." (p. 3)

That last sentence is the whole document in miniature. Everything before it, Joshua the high priest, the Day of the Lord, Joel, Daniel, is there to build a principle, and everything after it applies the principle to one destination: Matthew 24 must be allowed to contain both AD 70 and a still-future visible return, without the text having to specifically say so.

Let me put one question on the table right now, because I am going to ask it in every chapter.

Who decides when a fulfillment is "not final"?

Pete's answer, if I read him rightly, is that the pattern decides. Once you have seen that the Passover pointed to Christ and Joshua the high priest pointed to the Branch, you know that fulfillments can be genuine without being complete, and so when you reach a New Testament prophecy that appears to be fulfilled in the first century, you are entitled, perhaps obligated, to treat that fulfillment as the shadow of a greater one.

My answer is that the biblical *text*, the inspired word of the writer, decides, and that the New Testament gives us two instruments for deciding. One is the apostles themselves: when an inspired writer tells us that an earlier thing was a shadow and a later thing is the substance, we believe him. The other is the time-statements: when Jesus or an apostle tells us *when* something will happen, we believe that too. Pete's method uses the first instrument freely and the second one never. I want to show that by the document's own words.

Here is the observation I most want the reader to sit with. In seventy-one pages about how to interpret Bible prophecy, and in a chapter devoted specifically to the Olivet Discourse, *Dynamic Prophecy* never quotes or discusses Matthew 24:34. Not once. I checked the file line by line before I put that on the cover, and I invite the reader to do the same.

I checked. The phrase "this generation" appears in the document only in general statements about prophecy addressing "the people of that generation" (p. 7) and in a quotation of 1 Peter 2:9 ("a chosen generation"). Matthew 24:34 is not cited. Matthew 23:36 is not cited. Matthew 16:28 is not cited. Matthew 26:64 is not cited. Matthew 10:23 is not cited. Revelation 1:1, 1:3, 22:6, and 22:10 are not cited. Luke 21:22 and 21:32 are not cited. 1 John 2:18, James 5:8–9, 1 Peter 4:7, and Romans 13:11–12 are not cited. The document does say, once, in a list, that "Context, audience, covenant, language, genre, historical setting, and Apostolic interpretation all remain essential" (p. 5), but it never once lets a New Testament time-statement do any work.

I am not saying this to score a point. I am saying it because it is the diagnostic feature of the whole method. A hermeneutic that can declare AD 70 "the shadow" and the Second Coming "the substance" (p. 27) without ever engaging the verse, four verses away, in which Jesus says all these things would be fulfilled within a generation has, by construction, made the time-statements irrelevant. That is not a small omission in a study of prophecy. It is the omission.

Another note that I will expand on later in this response: Let me say clearly what I am *not* arguing, since the Facebook thread went sideways on this.

I am not arguing that because cloud-language is figurative in Isaiah 19, it must be figurative everywhere. Pete attributed that to me and I did not say it. I said that Jesus did not invent the language of coming on clouds, that the Old Testament and Daniel 7 define it, and that the time-statements in the same chapter tell us when it applied. Context decides, and the timing is most certainly part of the context.

I am not arguing that "nothing happened" at the Transfiguration or that Pentecost was not a real fulfillment of Joel. I agree with Pete that both were real.

I am not arguing that the kingdom is finished, the gospel is over, or that Christians have nothing to look forward to. Pete's "present Kingdom" is my present Kingdom. I will show below how much of his Chapter 9 I could have written.

I am arguing one thing: that the Bible's own hermeneutic moves from shadow to substance and never back again; that the apostles were the inspired identifiers of what was shadow and what was substance; that they identified the first-century covenant transition, climaxing in the judgment of Jerusalem, as the substance to which the prophets pointed; and that they dated it. Fulfillment does not revert to shadow. Once you allow that it can, there is no fulfillment in Scripture that could not be reopened by the next interpreter with a pattern.

That is the one question. Now to Pete's chapters.

Chapter 1: Typology Is Real. Double Fulfillment Is Something Else.

Pete's first chapter sets out to prove that "dynamic prophecy is a biblical pattern," and the evidence he brings is typology:

"The Passover lamb was a real sacrifice offered in Egypt, yet it also pointed forward to Jesus Christ, 'the Lamb of God.' The Exodus was a real historical deliverance, yet it foreshadowed our redemption from sin through Christ. The tabernacle, and later the temple, were real places where God dwelt among His people, yet they also pointed forward to Christ Himself and ultimately to His Church as the living temple of God. David was a real king over Israel, yet he foreshadowed the greater King, Jesus Christ."
(p. 6)

He then anchors the principle in two texts:

"For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things..." (Hebrews 10:1)

"Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ." (Colossians 2:17)

Then comes the move on which the entire study depends:

"This principle applies not only to people, ceremonies, sacrifices, and institutions. It also applies to prophecy itself." (p. 7)

I want to be precise about where I agree and where I get off the train, because I agree with almost all of this chapter.

Where I agree

Every example Pete lists is a genuine type. Passover, the Exodus, the tabernacle and temple, David, Isaac on the altar, Joshua the son of Nun, all of these are real history that God designed to point forward to Christ. I would add to his list, not subtract from it. The New Testament is full of this, and a reader who cannot see it will misread half of Hebrews.

I also agree with his two proof-texts and, more importantly, with the *direction* they establish. Hebrews 10:1 says the law was a shadow "of good things to come," and the good things came in Christ. Colossians 2:17 says the ordinances were "a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ." Shadow, then substance. Old covenant, then Christ. That is the biblical pattern, and Pete is right to call it a pattern.

From typology to prophecy: the step Pete asserts but never shows

Now look closely at the sentence "It also applies to prophecy itself." Notice what has *not* been shown. Every example Pete gave is a case where an inspired New Testament writer identifies an Old Testament person, institution, or event as a shadow and identifies Christ or His church as the substance. Not one of his examples is a case where a New Testament writer identifies a *New Testament fulfillment* as a shadow of a *later* fulfillment. The pattern he demonstrates runs from the Old Testament to Christ. The pattern he needs runs from the first century to the end of the world. Those are not the same pattern, and the second has not been demonstrated, it has been asserted on the strength of the first.

Michael Sullivan puts the distinction exactly where it belongs:

"The issue is not whether the Old Testament contained types and anticipatory fulfillments. The inspired New Testament writers repeatedly affirm that it did. The issue is what happens once those realities reach their New Testament fulfillment. The consistent pattern of Scripture is movement from Old Testament type to New Testament antitype, from shadow to substance, from promise to fulfillment. What Scripture never teaches is a further movement from New Testament fulfillment back into another future antitype." (Michael Sullivan, "The Dilemma of Giving AD 70 Double Fulfillments," FullPreterism.com, June 22, 2026)

He names the authority problem that Pete's chapter never addresses:

"The inspired apostles possessed authority to identify Old Testament types and reveal their fulfillment in Christ. Modern interpreters possess no comparable authority to transform the apostles' imminent New Testament fulfillments into new shadows awaiting another consummation at the end of world history. The apostles were inspired interpreters of prophecy. Later theological systems are not." (Sullivan, "The Dilemma")

That is the crux. When Hebrews tells me the tabernacle was a shadow, I believe it because Hebrews is Scripture. When Pete tells me AD 70 was a shadow, I need to know who told *him*. If the answer is "the pattern," then the pattern has become a source of revelation, and it can be applied by anyone to anything, a huge issue with massive ramifications, because it hands the interpreter the ability to misuse, mischaracterize, and misrepresent Scripture in ways that can easily become manipulative.

What none of the types had: a time-statement

There is a second difference between Pete's examples and the prophecies he wants to apply them to, and it is the one his document never confronts. None of his typological examples carries a time-statement.

Passover was never accompanied by a promise that the true Lamb would come "within this generation." David was never told that the greater King would arrive "shortly." The tabernacle came with no clock. That is exactly why typology can span a thousand years without any tension: nothing in the type told anyone when the antitype would arrive or when they could specifically expect it.

The New Testament prophecies Pete wants to stretch are the opposite case. They come *with* clocks. "This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled" (Matthew 24:34). "There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom" (Matthew 16:28). "Things which must shortly come to pass" (Revelation 1:1). "The time is at hand" (Revelation 1:3). "It is the last time" (1 John 2:18, literally, the last *hour*). "The end of all things is at hand" (1 Peter 4:7). "The judge standeth before the door" (James 5:9).

The question for Chapter 1 is this: can a prophecy with an explicit time-limit be extended past that limit by appeal to a typological pattern drawn from prophecies that had no time-limit at all? Pete's chapter does not ask the question. It cannot, because the examples that make typology look obvious are precisely the examples where no time-statement was there to be overridden.

Don Preston states the standard God Himself set for prophecy, and it is worth quoting because it is blunt:

"If God does not keep the WHEN part of his promises, he has not kept his promise! The inspiration of the scriptures demands complete fulfillment of every aspect of God's promises. . . . Partial fulfillment means complete failure! It is Jehovah himself that gave the criteria for determining whether a prophet was true or false; if a prophet's prediction did not come true he was a false prophet, Deuteronomy 18:15ff." (Don K. Preston, "Can God Tell Time?," FullPreterism.com)

Preston is a full preterist and I cite him as one, but the point he is making is not a full-preterist point. It is Moses' point. "When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD hath not spoken" (Deuteronomy 18:22). The *when* is part of the *thing*.

The examples Pete did not use, and his readers will

I have been answering the examples Pete chose. Fairness requires me to answer the ones he did not choose, because they are the strongest cards the double-fulfillment school holds, and a reader who knows them will reach for them before he finishes this chapter. There are four, and they are all cases where the New Testament itself takes an Old Testament text that already had a fulfillment, or already had a clock, and applies it to Christ.

Hosea 11:1 and Matthew 2:15. Hosea wrote, "When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt." That is not a prediction at all. It is history, the Exodus, looked back on.

Matthew takes it and writes of the child Jesus returning from Egypt, "that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son." An inspired evangelist called a sentence about Israel's past "fulfilled" in Christ. That is typology in its purest form, Israel the son prefiguring the Son, and I grant every bit of it.

Isaiah 7:14 and Matthew 1:22–23. This is the hardest of the four for my side, and I will not pretend otherwise. Isaiah gave Ahaz a sign with a clock on it: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel... For before the child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good, the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings" (7:14, 16). Whatever the near fulfillment was, and interpreters argue over whether it was the prophet's own son in chapter 8 or Hezekiah, the sign was for Ahaz and its clock ran inside Ahaz's lifetime. Matthew then writes of the virgin birth, "Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet." Here is a prophecy with a time-statement, kept on time, and then given a greater fulfillment seven centuries later by an inspired writer. That is exactly the shape Pete needs.

Malachi 4:5 and Matthew 17:10–13. Malachi: "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD." The disciples asked why the scribes said Elijah must come first, and Jesus answered, "Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things. But I say unto you, That Elias is come already, and they knew him not." The double-fulfillment reading hears a future Elijah in "shall first come" and a past one in "is come already." I hear Jesus stating the prophecy's content and then announcing its fulfillment, because the next verse says the disciples "understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist" (17:13), and He had already said of John, "this is Elias, which was for to come" (11:14), and Gabriel had already said John would go "in the spirit and power of Elias" (Luke 1:17). This one is a reading on both sides, and I mark it as one.

Daniel 11:31 and Matthew 24:15. Daniel: "they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily sacrifice, and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate." Antiochus Epiphanes did that in 167 BC, and the book of Maccabees uses Daniel's phrase for it. Two centuries later Jesus told His disciples, "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place," and told them to run. Here, the objector says, is the Lord Himself taking a fulfilled prophecy and announcing another fulfillment. I would add that Daniel speaks of the abomination three times, not once (9:27, 11:31, 12:11), and that the one in 9:27 is tied to the seventy weeks and the destruction of the city, and the one in 12:11 to the shattering of the holy people, neither of which happened under Antiochus; so it is not settled that Jesus reapplied a fulfilled text rather than citing an unfulfilled one. I will not lean on that, because the objection stands even if He did reapply it.

Now put the four side by side and look at what they have in common, because this is where the argument is decided.

In every one of them, the greater fulfillment is announced by an inspired speaker. Matthew says "fulfilled." Jesus says "is come already" and "when ye shall see." Nobody in the first century found the second fulfillment by applying a pattern; they were told it by the Spirit of God, and they wrote it down as Scripture. That is the authority point Sullivan made above, and these four texts do not weaken it. They are the proof of it. The only people in the Bible who ever moved a prophecy to a second fulfillment were prophets and apostles.

In every one of them, the greater fulfillment comes with its own time-statement, and the time-statement was kept. Matthew's "fulfilled" is past tense. "Elias is come already." The abomination would be seen by the men Jesus was talking to, inside "this generation" (Matthew 24:34), and Luke tells us what they saw: "Jerusalem compassed with armies" (Luke 21:20). The second fulfillment never floated. It was dated, and it landed.

In every one of them, the movement runs from the Old Testament to Christ and His generation. Israel in Egypt to Jesus in Egypt. Ahaz's sign to Mary's son. Malachi's Elijah to John. Antiochus's abomination to the Romans in the holy place. Not one of them runs from a New Testament fulfillment forward to the end of the world.

That last point is the whole matter. Pete's method does not need the Old Testament to foreshadow Christ. Every Christian grants that. His method needs an inspired writer to tell us that an event the New Testament dated to the apostles' generation was itself a foreshadowing of something past that generation. The four texts his readers will bring are the four best places in Scripture to find such a thing, and none of them is it. What they show is that God's inspired servants may announce a greater fulfillment, that when they do they say so, and that when they say so they say when. A reader who wants to extend Matthew 24 past the generation Jesus named is asking for a fifth text, one where a prophet or an apostle does to a dated New Testament prophecy what Matthew did to Hosea. I have looked for it. I have not found it, and *Dynamic Prophecy* does not offer one.

I should say what this does and does not prove. It does not prove that AD 70 was the final fulfillment of Matthew 24; the time-statements do that work, and Chapter 5 makes the case. What it proves is narrower: that the typology of the New Testament, including its strongest examples, is evidence for the apostles' authority to identify fulfillments, and not evidence that the fulfillments they identified were shadows of something else.

"Double sense" prophecy: an old debate, already answered

Pete's principle has a longer name in the history of interpretation: the "double sense" or "double reference" of prophecy. It was debated at length in the 1800s, and the standard American

textbook on hermeneutics came down against it. Milton S. Terry's *Biblical Hermeneutics* (1883) warned:

"The moment we admit the principle that portions of Scripture contain an occult or double sense we introduce an element of uncertainty in the sacred volume, and unsettle all scientific interpretation." (Milton S. Terry, *Biblical Hermeneutics*)

Terry was not a full preterist and I am not citing him as one. I am citing him because he identified the cost that Pete's chapter never counts. Once a prophecy may mean its first fulfillment *and also* a greater one that the text does not announce, the interpreter has been handed a key that opens every door. Any prophecy anyone finds inconvenient in its plain fulfillment can be reopened as a shadow of something else. Pete says of his principle, "nor is it a theological device invented to rescue a preferred system" (p. 3). I take him at his word about his motives, but a method is judged by what it permits, not by what its author intends, and this method permits anything.

Pete's unfalsifiability charge applies to dynamic prophecy itself

In our thread, Pete said my reading was unfalsifiable: "At some point the interpretation becomes unfalsifiable because anything that did not happen is simply declared metaphorical." I want to answer that fairly, and I will do it in Chapter 5 where the texts are, but it needs to be said here that his own Chapter 3 contains the mirror image of the move he accuses me of:

"Initial fulfillments often become controversial precisely because they do not always line up with every detail in a final or exhaustive way. The problem is not that the prophecy failed, nor that the historical fulfillment was invalid, but that the ancient event was never intended to bear the full weight of the final consummation. Some details may appear incomplete, disproportionate, or difficult to align because the prophecy is still unfolding." (p. 13)

Read that slowly. When a fulfillment matches the prophecy, that confirms the pattern. When a fulfillment does not match every detail, that *also* confirms the pattern, because the mismatch shows "the prophecy is still unfolding." There is no possible state of the evidence that could count against dynamic prophecy. Fit is evidence for it; misfit is evidence for it. That is the definition of an unfalsifiable method. I do not say this to be cute. I say it because Pete raised the standard, and a standard applies to the one who raises it just as much as the other.

What Chapter 1 actually establishes

Stripped to what was demonstrated rather than asserted, Chapter 1 establishes this: the Old Testament contains types that find their substance in Christ and His church, and inspired writers tell us which is which. I affirm every word of that. It does not establish that New Testament fulfillments are themselves shadows; it does not establish that a dated prophecy can be pushed past its date; and it does not identify who has the authority to make either move. Those are the

three things the rest of the document needs, and none of them is in the chapter that was supposed to supply them.

One last text, because it shows what the New Testament does with its own "second coming" language. Hebrews 9:28 says Christ "shall appear the second time without sin unto salvation." That is the New Testament's one explicit "second" appearing, and the same writer, one chapter later, tells his readers *when* to expect it: "For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry" (Hebrews 10:37). The apostolic writer who most fully developed the shadow-and-substance principle is the same writer who told his first-century readers that the coming was a little while off and would not tarry. He did not treat the coming as a pattern awaiting a greater fulfillment. He treated it as near. Expected. In his direct contemporaries immediate future.

Chapter 2: Joshua the High Priest. A Sign Is Not a First Fulfillment

Pete calls Zechariah 6 "one of the clearest examples of dynamic prophecy" (p. 9). The prophecy is spoken to a real man, Joshua the son of Josedech; crowns are set on his head; and the word of the Lord says, "Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH" (Zechariah 6:12). Pete's reading of the fulfillment is one I share entirely:

"Jesus Christ perfectly fulfills every detail. He is the Branch. He builds the true temple of God, not merely a building made with hands, but His Church, a spiritual house built of living stones. . . . Christ bears the glory. He is both King and High Priest, not after the order of Aaron, but after the order of Melchizedek. He alone sits upon the throne while simultaneously serving as our great High Priest." (p. 11)

Amen. Now watch what the example actually demonstrates, because it demonstrates the opposite of what the chapter needs.

There was no first fulfillment

Pete's principle requires a *first fulfillment* that is genuine but not final: "The first fulfillment was real. The greater fulfillment was greater. The final fulfillment belonged to Christ." (p. 11). By his own account, Joshua fulfilled nothing:

"Joshua never sat upon a throne. He was a high priest, not a king. Under the Law of Moses, the offices of king and priest were deliberately kept separate. Joshua had no authority to reign as king over Israel, nor did he possess the right to permanently fulfill the royal significance represented by the crowns placed upon his head in this prophetic act. He could be used as the sign, but he was not the substance." (p. 10)

Again: "Joshua was the sign. Jesus is the substance." (p. 11)

Exactly right, and that is the problem. A sign is not a fulfillment. Joshua did not build the temple of the Lord in the sense the prophecy means, did not bear the glory, did not sit and rule on a throne, and was not a priest on a throne. He wore crowns for an afternoon as a living picture. Zechariah 3:8 says as much in the text itself: "Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, thou, and thy fellows that sit before thee: for they are men wondered at: for, behold, I will bring forth my servant the BRANCH." The Hebrew behind "men wondered at" is *anshe mopheth*, men who are a sign, a portent. The passage tells us in so many words that Joshua and his fellows were *signs* of the Branch who was still to be brought forth.

The structure of Zechariah 6 is: one sign, then one fulfillment. It is not: one fulfillment, then a greater fulfillment. Nothing was fulfilled in Joshua and then fulfilled again in Christ. The prophecy had one referent from the start, and Joshua was the enacted picture of Him. This is ordinary

typology, and it follows the ordinary direction: Old Testament sign, New Testament substance. It is a perfectly good example of what Chapter 1 established and a perfectly bad example of what Chapter 1 asserted.

The fulfillment is present, not future

Notice, too, *when* Pete locates the fulfillment of every detail. Not at the end of the world. Now. Christ is building His temple now (1 Peter 2:5, which Pete quotes). Christ bears the glory now. Christ sits and rules on His throne now (Acts 2:30–36; Hebrews 8:1). Christ is a priest upon His throne now (Hebrews 7:17; 8:1). Pete's Chapter 9 says all of this at length, and he is right.

Then the Branch prophecy is a case of a prophecy *completely* fulfilled in the present reign of Christ with no remainder waiting for a "greater and final" fulfillment. Zechariah did not say the Branch would sit on His throne provisionally and then sit on it again more fully later. Pete does not say that either, so the chapter's own example is a prophecy with exactly one fulfillment, which is my thesis, not his.

There is a last detail in the same passage that seals this. Zechariah 6:15 continues: "And they that are far off shall come and build in the temple of the LORD." Pete quotes Ephesians 2:13 in his Chapter 8: "But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ." Those who were far off building in the temple of the Lord are the Gentiles built into the church, and Paul says it was already happening. The Branch prophecy, start to finish, lands in the first-century church. Nothing about it points past the apostolic age to a further fulfillment.

No clock in Zechariah 6

Finally, and this will be a refrain: Zechariah 6 contains no time-statement. Nobody in Zechariah's day was told the Branch would sit on His throne "shortly" or "within this generation." The five centuries between the sign and the substance create no tension with the text because the text made no promise about timing. That is why this example feels so natural as typology. It is also why it cannot be used to license extending a New Testament prophecy that *does* make a promise about timing. The cases are not alike in the one respect that matters.

Pete closes the chapter with a fair sentence: "God's prophetic word may begin in a present historical circumstance while reaching forward to something far greater." (p. 12) Agreed, when God says so, as He does in Zechariah 3:8. What Zechariah 6 does not show, and what Pete needs it to show, is that a prophecy God says was fulfilled in one generation may be reopened as a shadow of a later one. Joshua was never a fulfillment. He was a picture. The picture had one subject, and the subject has come. No future greater fulfillment needed.

Chapter 3: The Day of the Lord. Shared Language Is Not Shared Fulfillment

This is the chapter where Pete makes his most important concession, and I want to give him full credit for it before I show what it costs him.

He observes, correctly, that the prophets describe historical judgments on individual nations, Babylon, Egypt, Edom, Tyre, Moab, Assyria, Jerusalem, with language that *sounds like* the end of the universe:

"Consider Isaiah's prophecy against Babylon:

'For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine.' — Isaiah 13:10, KJV

Isaiah is clearly speaking in context of the coming destruction of Babylon. The judgment had a real historical setting. It concerned a real empire. It was fulfilled in history. Yet the language used to describe that judgment is cosmic in scope. The sun is darkened. The moon does not give her light. The stars and constellations are affected. This language later appears in the teaching of Jesus concerning the events connected with His coming." (pp. 13–14)

Hold on to that paragraph. Pete has just affirmed that sun-moon-stars language described the historical fall of an empire and "was fulfilled in history." He has also affirmed that Jesus uses the very same language in Matthew 24:29. In Chapter 5 he will insist that when Jesus uses it, it "extend[s] beyond anything that occurred in AD 70" (p. 25). The reader is entitled to ask why the identical idiom means a historical judgment on Babylon in Isaiah's mouth and a cosmic consummation in Jesus' mouth. Pete's answer, offered from a vantage point thousands of years removed from the event, is the pattern. My answer is the same one I gave in Chapter 1: the text decides, and the text has a clock in both places.

Isaiah 13 has its own clock

Pete quotes Isaiah 13:10 but not the verses around it. Isaiah 13:6 says, "Howl ye; for the day of the LORD is at hand." Isaiah 13:22 closes the oracle: "her time is near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged." The oracle is addressed "concerning Babylon" (13:1), it announces a Day of the Lord, it describes that Day in de-creation language, and it dates that Day as near. That is the complete anatomy of an Old Testament Day of the Lord: 1) a named target, 2) cosmic idiom, and 3) a time-statement.

Now compare Matthew 24. 1) A named target: the temple and Jerusalem (24:1–2, 15–16; Luke 21:20). 2) Cosmic idiom: "the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the

stars shall fall from heaven" (24:29): Isaiah 13:10 nearly word for word. 3) A time-statement: "This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled" (24:34). Every element that makes Isaiah 13 a historical judgment on Babylon is present in Matthew 24 as a historical judgment on Jerusalem. Pete grants the first two elements. His method simply never mentions the third, yet it may be the most important part of prophetic writings.

David Chilton stacked these texts a generation ago and drew the conclusion that the idiom demands:

"All through the Old Testament God was coming 'on clouds,' in salvation of His people and destruction of His enemies: 'He makes the clouds His chariot; He walks upon the wings of the wind' (Ps. 104:3). When Isaiah prophesied God's judgment on Egypt, he wrote: 'Behold, the Lord is riding on a swift cloud, and is about to come to Egypt; the idols of Egypt will tremble at His presence' (Isa. 19:1). The prophet Nahum spoke similarly of God's destruction of Nineveh: 'In whirlwind and storm is His way, and clouds are the dust beneath His feet' (Nah. 1:3). God's 'coming on the clouds of heaven' is an almost commonplace Scriptural symbol for His presence, judgment, and salvation." (David Chilton, *Paradise Restored*, pp. 97–98)

Chilton wrote that as a partial preterist, and I cite him as one. The point does not depend on full preterism. It depends on reading Isaiah. It depends on a proper reading of the Biblical text in its *full context*.

It is not a preterist peculiarity. N. T. Wright, no preterist of any kind, describes the idiom the same way:

"When Jewish writers spoke of the sun and moon being darkened; when they spoke of angels gathering people from the four winds of heaven; when, in particular, they spoke of a Son of Man who would come on the clouds of heaven—in each of these cases they were using language in this metaphorical way. It is flagrantly absurd to think that Jesus, in saying that sort of thing, envisaged himself or anyone else literally flying around in mid-air on an actual cloud." (N. T. Wright, *Who Was Jesus?*, p. 55)

Wright adds on the next page: "They didn't expect the end of the world; merely the end of *the present way the world was run*" (*Who Was Jesus?*, p. 56). I disagree with Wright about a great deal, but on what first-century Jews meant by this language, he and Chilton and Gary DeMar and Kenneth Gentry are all saying the same thing, from very different theological addresses.

One idiom used many times is not one prophecy fulfilled many times

Here is where I think Chapter 3 makes a category mistake, and I want to state it carefully so it cannot be called a strawman, again.

Pete writes: "the same prophetic pattern may appear in more than one historical setting, growing in significance until it reaches its final fulfillment" (p. 16). Again: "The Day of the Lord comes upon individual nations throughout the Old Testament, yet those historical judgments point forward to the final Day of the Lord that will encompass the entire world." (p. 7)

Notice that Isaiah 13 (Babylon) and Ezekiel 32 (Egypt) and Isaiah 34 (Edom) are not three fulfillments of *one* prophecy. They are three different prophecies about three different nations, each with its own fulfillment, that happen to share an idiom. The prophets had a vocabulary for national judgment and they used it repeatedly. That is a fact about *language*, not a fact about *fulfillment*. Babylon's fall did not "point forward" to Egypt's fall; Egypt's fall was not a "greater fulfillment" of Babylon's. Each was the fulfillment of its own oracle without a greater fulfillment in the future.

Pete's principle needs something quite different: that *a single* prophecy is fulfilled, and then fulfilled again on a larger scale, and then fulfilled finally. The recurrence of the Day-of-the-Lord idiom across many oracles does not show that. It shows that when Jesus reached for the idiom in Matthew 24:29, His hearers would have understood it the way Isaiah's hearers understood it in Isaiah 13, as the language of a nation's covenantal collapse under God's judgment. Which is precisely how I read it. That covenantal collapse was thoroughly known to Israel and Judah through the curses of Deuteronomy 28.

Pete's "first error" describes no preterist I know

Pete then names the two errors his method avoids:

"The first error is to assume that because a prophecy had a genuine historical fulfillment, it can have no greater fulfillment beyond that event. This often leads to partial preterism, where many prophecies concerning the coming of the Lord, the resurrection, the gathering together of the saints, and the final judgment are confined almost entirely to the events surrounding AD 70. But Scripture does not teach us to read prophecy that way. A historical fulfillment may be genuine without being final."
(p. 15)

I want to answer the description, not the label. No preterist I know of, partial or full, holds that "because a prophecy had a genuine historical fulfillment, it can have no greater fulfillment beyond that event." That is not the principle. The principle is that a prophecy *fulfilled according to its own stated time and terms* is fulfilled, and that whoever wants to reopen it needs an inspired text, not a pattern. If Scripture somewhere says that the judgment of AD 70 was itself a shadow of another judgment, I will believe Scripture. Chapter 3 does not supply that text. It supplies the assertion that "the historical judgment is not the complete fulfillment. . . . It is the shadow. The final Day of the Lord is the substance." (p. 15) That is the conclusion restated as a premise.

The New Testament's own Day of the Lord had a date

There is one more thing Chapter 3 leaves out, and it decides the matter. The New Testament does speak of *the* Day of the Lord, the great one, the one Pete calls final, and every time it does, it is addressed to first-century readers as near.

Paul to the Thessalonians: "For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. . . . But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief" (1 Thessalonians 5:2, 4). The Thessalonians were the "ye" who needed to be ready for that Day.

Paul to the Romans: "now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand" (Romans 13:11–12).

Hebrews: "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching" (Hebrews 10:25). They could see the Day approaching.

James: "the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. . . . behold, the judge standeth before the door" (James 5:8–9).

Peter, after quoting Joel's "great and notable day of the Lord," told the crowd, "Save yourselves from this untoward generation" (Acts 2:20, 40).

Pete's chapter ends: "It moves forward toward the final and terrible Day of the Lord, when Jesus Christ will appear in glory, the dead will be raised, the saints will be gathered, the wicked will be judged." (p. 16) I agree that the prophets pointed to a great and terrible Day. What I cannot find anywhere in the New Testament is an apostle telling his readers that Day was thousands of years off. I find them telling their readers it was at hand, approaching, at the door, and coming on "this untoward generation." If the Day the apostles announced as near was only a shadow of the real one, then the apostles' nearness-language was pointing at a shadow, and their readers were told to watch for something that was not the thing. I do not think Pete believes that, but it is what the method requires, as he has laid it out.

Chapter 4: Joel. "This Is That," and Then "This Untoward Generation"

Pete calls Joel the book that "beautifully demonstrates the principle of dynamic prophecy" (p. 17), and his reading of the first two-thirds of the argument is one I have no quarrel with. The locust plague was real. The call to repentance was real. The Day of the Lord was "at hand" in Joel's own day (Joel 1:15). Pentecost was a genuine fulfillment of Joel 2:28–29, and Pete is exactly right that Peter's words leave no room for a "proto-fulfillment":

"Peter's words are decisive. Pentecost was not merely similar to Joel's prophecy. It was not only an illustration or application. Peter said, 'This is that.' The outpouring of the Holy Ghost was a genuine fulfillment of Joel's prophecy." (p. 20)

I could not have said it better, and neither could David Chilton, who made the same point almost a Biblical generation before either of us:

"Contrary to some modern expositions of this text, Peter did not say that the miracles of Pentecost were like what Joel prophesied, or that they were some sort of 'proto-fulfillments' of Joel's prophecy; he said that this was the fulfillment: 'This is that which was spoken of through the prophet Joel.'" (David Chilton, *Paradise Restored*, p. 113)

Now here is the turn on which Pete's chapter depends:

"Those events were not exhausted on the Day of Pentecost. The sun was not finally turned into darkness. The moon was not finally turned into blood. The great and terrible Day of the LORD did not arrive in its complete and final sense that morning in Jerusalem. Yet Peter includes those words as part of the same prophecy. This proves that Joel's prophecy is dynamic." (p. 21)

The conclusion he draws from it:

"If Pentecost was a real fulfillment, but not the final fulfillment, then prophecy cannot be collapsed into the first century alone. That undermines Preterism." (p. 23)

I want to answer this precisely, because the argument has a hidden step.

Nobody says Pentecost was the Day of the Lord

Pete is refuting a position no preterist holds. No preterist claims that the sun was darkened and the great and terrible Day arrived "that morning in Jerusalem." Pentecost was the *outpouring*; the Day of the Lord was still ahead of Peter's hearers, which is exactly why Peter kept quoting. It was the beginning of the "latter days" developed by Joel and set out by Moses in Deuteronomy 31:28 - 32:43. He did not stop at "they shall prophesy." He went on through the wonders in heaven, the blood and fire and vapor of smoke, the sun turned to darkness, "before that great

and notable day of the Lord come" (Acts 2:19–20). Why quote the part about the Day if the Day was not relevant to his audience?

Peter answers that himself, nineteen verses later: "And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation" (Acts 2:40). The Spirit had been poured out; the signs were coming; the great and notable Day was on its way; and the generation that needed saving from it was the one standing directly in front of him.

The sequence Pete lays out, outpouring, then signs, then the Day, is precisely the preterist sequence. The only difference is the length of the arrow. Pete's runs from AD 30 to the end of the world. Mine runs from AD 30 to the end of the old covenant age at the destruction of the old heaven and old earth sacrificial system in AD 70. The hidden step in his argument is the assumption that "not exhausted at Pentecost" means "not exhausted in the first century." Those are not the same claim. Pentecost and the fall of Jerusalem were nearly forty years apart. Both are first-century events. "Pentecost did not exhaust Joel" is true and does not undermine preterism at all; it *is* preterism.

Chilton again, from the same book:

"As we will see in Chapter 13, Peter's inspired interpretation of this text in Acts 2 determines the fact that Joel is speaking of the period from the initial outpouring of the Spirit to the destruction of Jerusalem, from Pentecost to Holocaust." (Chilton, *Paradise Restored*, p. 97)

Where Joel locates the Day

Joel tells us where the deliverance on the Day would be found: "for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the LORD hath said, and in the remnant whom the LORD shall call" (Joel 2:32). The Day falls where the remnant is, in Zion and Jerusalem, and the remnant escapes it. That is the shape of the war of AD 66–70, Revelation's forty-two months (11:2), exactly: the judgment fell on Jerusalem, and the church, warned by Jesus to flee when they saw the city surrounded by armies (Luke 21:20–21), escaped. Eusebius records that the Jerusalem church withdrew to Pella before the siege (*Ecclesiastical History* 3.5). The remnant was delivered out of the very city the Day fell upon.

The "wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath" (Acts 2:19) were also, in Jesus' own words, part of what that generation would see: "fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven" (Luke 21:11). Whatever one makes of them, Josephus, no Christian by any standards, reports exactly such portents in the run-up to the city's fall: "chariots and troops of soldiers in their armor were seen running about among the clouds, and surrounding of cities," and priests in the temple at Pentecost hearing "a sound as of a great multitude, saying, 'Let us remove hence'" (*Wars of the Jews* 6.5.3). Tacitus, a Roman with even less reason to help, records

the same: armies in the sky, the temple doors opening by themselves, a voice announcing the gods were departing (*Histories* 5.13). I do not build a doctrine on portents, but when a prophet says there will be wonders in heaven before the Day, and two hostile historians independently record wonders in heaven before the Day, it is worth noticing that the "signs" element of Joel did not go unfulfilled in the first century either. They occurred when they were anticipated.

Joel 3 and "those days"

Pete's chapter moves to Joel 3, where the nations are gathered to the valley of Jehoshaphat, and treats this as the point at which the prophecy leaves the first century behind: "The scope has widened dramatically. The judgment now involves 'all nations.'" (p. 21)

Let me be candid: Joel 3 is the part of Joel whose fulfillment is hardest to pin down, and I will not pretend otherwise. Preterist readers have offered more than one placement for it, and I hold my own reading loosely, but there is one thing in the text that should not be passed over. Joel ties chapter 3 to the same period as the outpouring with his own connective: "For, behold, in those days, and in that time, when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem, I will also gather all nations" (Joel 3:1–2). "In those days" is the phrase he had just used for the outpouring of the Spirit: "And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit" (2:29). Joel himself places the gathering of the nations in the same "days" as the Spirit's outpouring. He does not put two thousand years between them. Pete's method does, and the text does not ask it to.

The last days of what?

One more phrase from this chapter deserves attention, because it will matter in Chapter 9. Pete writes: "Peter's use of Joel proves that the last days had already begun in the outpouring of the Holy Ghost" (p. 22). Agreed, but the last days of *what*?

"Last" is a relative word. The New Testament is unanimous that the apostles lived in the last days: "God . . . hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son" (Hebrews 1:2); Christ "was manifest in these last times for you" (1 Peter 1:20); "it is the last time" (1 John 2:18); and Paul says the "ends of the world," the ends of the ages, had come upon the Corinthians (1 Corinthians 10:11). Hebrews even says that Christ appeared "now once in the end of the world" (Hebrews 9:26). If "last days" means the last days of the whole human story, then the last days have now lasted longer than everything that came before them, and the word "last" has stopped meaning anything.

We do not have to guess what the phrase means, because the Bible defines it before the prophets ever use it. The "latter days" is Moses' term, and Moses told Israel exactly whose latter days they would be.

Moses defined Israel's latter days: Deuteronomy 31:28–32:43

On the last day of his life, Moses gathered the elders and officers of the tribes and said: “Gather unto me all the elders of your tribes, and your officers, that I may speak these words in their ears, and call heaven and earth to record against them. For I know that after my death ye will utterly corrupt yourselves, and turn aside from the way which I have commanded you; and evil will befall you in the latter days; because ye will do evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger through the work of your hands” (Deuteronomy 31:28–29).

Then he sang the Song of Moses, with heaven and earth as the witnesses (32:1). The Song is a covenant lawsuit, and it lays out the whole course of Israel’s “latter days” in advance. Israel would corrupt herself: “They have corrupted themselves, their spot is not the spot of his children: they are a perverse and crooked generation” (32:5). God would hide His face and wait for that generation’s end: “I will hide my face from them, I will see what their end shall be: for they are a very froward generation, children in whom is no faith” (32:20). He would provoke them to jealousy by a people that was no people (32:21). Then the appointed day: “To me belongeth vengeance, and recompence; their foot shall slide in due time: for the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste. For the LORD shall judge his people, and repent himself for his servants, when he seeth that their power is gone” (32:35–36), and the Song ends where Israel’s story ends: “for he will avenge the blood of his servants, and will render vengeance to his adversaries, and will be merciful unto his land, and to his people” (32:43).

That is the definition of Israel’s latter days, written by Moses before Israel had a king: a terminal *generation*, “perverse and crooked,” with “no faith”; a day of *vengeance* that God calls “at hand” and that “make[s] haste”; a moment when “their power is gone”; and the avenging of “the blood of his servants.” Every later prophet who speaks of the latter days is speaking inside that frame. Daniel’s “when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people” (12:7) is Moses’ “when he seeth that their power is gone” (32:36).

Now watch what the New Testament does with the Song. It does not treat it as a pattern awaiting a greater fulfillment. It treats it as the script being played out in that generation.

Jesus called His contemporaries by Moses’ name for the terminal generation: “O faithless and perverse generation” (Matthew 17:17). He told the scribes and Pharisees that the blood of the servants would be avenged on them: “That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth . . . Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation” (23:35–36): Deuteronomy 32:43’s “he will avenge the blood of his servants,” assigned to a named generation, and he called Jerusalem’s judgment “the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled” (Luke 21:22): Moses’ vengeance, Moses’ “all things,” Moses’ “at hand.”

Peter, on the day of Pentecost, closed his Joel sermon with the Song: “Save yourselves from this untoward generation” (Acts 2:40). The Greek word is the Septuagint’s word for Deuteronomy 32:5’s “crooked” generation. Peter had just said “this is that” about the outpouring; he then told his hearers they were the generation Moses sang about.

Paul told the Philippians they lived “in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation” (Philippians 2:15): Deuteronomy 32:5 again, and in Romans 10:19, explaining why the Gentiles were coming in while Israel stumbled, he quoted Deuteronomy 32:21 outright: “First Moses saith, I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people.” Paul did not say Moses’ prophecy was being previewed. He said it was happening.

The writer of Hebrews is the most pointed of all. Warning his readers of the judgment coming on those who trampled the Son of God, he quoted the Song’s day of vengeance: “For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people” (Hebrews 10:30): Deuteronomy 32:35–36 verbatim. Seven verses later he told them when: “For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry” (10:37). The vengeance of the Song of Moses and the coming of the Lord are in the same paragraph, and the paragraph says “a little while.”

Revelation, the book of the consummation, has the redeemed sing “the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb” (15:3) as the vials of wrath are poured out, and gives the reason for Babylon’s fall in Moses’ words: “in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints” (18:24).

Michael Sullivan, who has done more than anyone I know to put this text back at the foundation, states the result:

“Moses envisioned one covenant lawsuit. One latter-days rebellion. One appointed *kairos* of judgment. One covenantal vindication. Jesus said it came upon ‘this generation.’ Paul said it was unfolding in his generation. The burden therefore rests upon advocates of double fulfillment to prove that Moses anticipated another covenant climax beyond the one Christ and His apostles explicitly identified. Such proof is conspicuously absent.” (Sullivan, “The Dilemma”)

When Pete writes that the last days “had already begun” at Pentecost and then places their end at the end of the world, he has taken Moses’ phrase and detached it from Moses’ definition. The latter days were Israel’s latter days, the days of the perverse and crooked generation, the day of vengeance at hand, the moment her power was gone. Jesus, Peter, Paul, Hebrews, and John all identified that generation as their own. *Dynamic Prophecy* does not cite Deuteronomy 31 or 32 at all. That is the foundation the whole prophetic house sits on, and the study never goes into the basement.

If the last days were the last days of the old covenant age, the age of the temple, the priesthood, and the Law that was “ready to vanish away” (Hebrews 8:13), then every one of the “last days” texts means exactly what it says. The apostles lived at the end of an age. Moses told them which one, and the age ended in AD 70.

One more thing from the Song, because it will matter when 2 Peter 3 comes up in Chapter 10. Moses opened the lawsuit by summoning the witnesses: “Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth” (Deuteronomy 32:1), the same pair he had called “to record against them” in 31:28. Heaven and earth, in the covenant, are the witnesses to the covenant, and the prophets go on to use the pair for the covenant order itself: God tells Zion that He planted the heavens and laid the foundations of the earth in order to “say unto Zion, Thou art my people” (Isaiah 51:16). That is the background I hear when Jesus says, “Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled” (Matthew 5:18), and when Hebrews says the voice that once shook the earth would shake “not the earth only, but also heaven,” removing “those things that are shaken” so that the unshakable kingdom remains (12:26–27). I offer this as a reading, and I know the futurist reads the pair as the physical cosmos; the point here is only that “heaven and earth” has a covenant sense in Scripture, attested from Moses forward, and that a reader must decide which sense 2 Peter 3 is using rather than assume it.

Joel, then, is not the book that undermines preterism. Read with Acts 2:40 and Joel 2:32 and 3:1 in view, it is the book that lays out the first-century sequence in order: Spirit poured out, signs, the Day on Jerusalem, the remnant delivered in Zion, “this untoward generation” warned. Pete has the sequence right. He has only extended the last arrow past the audience it was aimed at. Unfortunately, it is not just Pete who does this. It is the mistake made by the vast majority of Christian authors, pastors, and prophecy pundits.

Chapter 5: The Olivet Discourse. Where the Method Meets a Critical Test

Everything in *Dynamic Prophecy* is built to arrive here. Pete says so: "This is especially important in Matthew 24 and 25" (p. 4), so this is the chapter I will spend the most time on, and I will quote him at length so no one can say I trimmed his argument to fit my answer.

Where we stand together

Pete affirms more about AD 70 than most pastors will say out loud:

"The destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 was not an accidental historical event. It was a genuine fulfillment of many of Jesus' warnings. Jerusalem was surrounded by armies. The temple was destroyed. Not one stone was left upon another. Those in Judea fled to the mountains, just as Jesus had instructed. The covenantal judgment Christ foretold came to pass with remarkable accuracy." (p. 24)

He affirms Luke 21:20 as fulfilled: "Historically, this was fulfilled in AD 70 when the Roman armies surrounded Jerusalem and destroyed both the city and the temple." (p. 24) And in Chapter 8 he goes further than many partial preterists: "There was a genuine covenantal coming in judgment against Jerusalem in AD 70." (p. 43)

I want the reader to register how much that is. Pete holds that Jesus predicted the temple's destruction, that the abomination-of-desolation warning was about Roman armies, that the flight to the mountains happened, and that AD 70 was a *coming* of Christ in judgment. Between Pete and me there is no disagreement about verses 1 through 28 of Matthew 24. The disagreement begins at verse 29 and runs to verse 31. Three verses.

Pete's claim, in full

"As the discourse progresses, Jesus speaks of events that clearly reach beyond the destruction of Jerusalem. He declares:

'Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven...' — Matthew 24:29, KJV

He then continues:

'And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.' — Matthew 24:30, KJV

Finally, He says:

'And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.' —
Matthew 24:31, KJV

These events extend beyond anything that occurred in AD 70. The visible appearing of Christ, the gathering together of His elect, and the consummation of the age belong to the final fulfillment of God's redemptive and prophetic plan. Jerusalem was judged in the first century, but the Son of man did not visibly appear in power and great glory before all nations. The trumpet did not sound for the final gathering of the saints. The resurrection and final judgment did not occur." (pp. 24–25)

Now watch the reasoning. How does Pete know these verses "extend beyond anything that occurred in AD 70"? Because "the Son of man did not visibly appear," "the trumpet did not sound," "the resurrection and final judgment did not occur." Each of those is a statement about what a fulfillment *would have had to look like*, visible appearance, audible trumpet, bodies out of graves, followed by the observation that it did not look like that in AD 70. That is what the system requires. Once a future visible return is fixed as the non-negotiable, these verses must be assigned to it, even though no delineation, separation, or gap appears anywhere in the text.

In our Facebook thread, Pete made this argument with a story. Suppose, he said, he told his boss: tomorrow you will *see* me drive into the parking lot in a red Ferrari, step out in a fine suit, walk through the front doors with bodyguards on both sides, and sit down at my desk. Then tomorrow comes and he never shows up. When the boss asks where he was, he answers that he meant it metaphorically, the Ferrari was his authority, the bodyguards his influence, the desk the effect of his work. Absurd, Pete said, because the words created the unmistakable expectation of an actual, visible arrival, and that, he argued, is exactly what Jesus' words do in Matthew 24:30: "They shall see the Son of man coming." In his words: "If nobody saw Jesus coming in A.D. 70—and nobody did—then the very event Jesus described in those words was not fulfilled in A.D. 70."

The paragraph from his document above is that same argument in longer form. Now notice its shape, because it is the very shape Pete accused *me* of. He said that I "begin by deciding Matthew 24 was fulfilled in A.D. 70" and that "anything that did not happen is simply declared metaphorical." But look at his own reasoning: he begins by deciding what the words must mean, a visible descent, an audible trumpet, observes that it did not happen that way, and concludes the verses are unfulfilled. The Ferrari story only works because a man promising to drive into a parking lot is speaking literally. Whether Jesus, quoting Daniel and Isaiah to first-century Jews, was speaking that way is the whole question. It cannot be the starting assumption, not for him, and not for me. Neither of us gets to assume the meaning of the words. Both of us have to earn it from the text, so let me go verse by verse and earn it.

The verse Pete never quotes

Four verses after the passage Pete says "extend[s] beyond anything that occurred in AD 70," Jesus says: "Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled" (Matthew 24:34). Luke's parallel is the same: "Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled" (Luke 21:32).

Dynamic Prophecy never cites this verse. Not in the Olivet chapter, not anywhere. A study that argues verses 29–31 belong to the end of the world, and never mentions the verse in which Jesus says when verses 29–31 would be fulfilled, has not engaged the passage. It has engaged the passage minus the sentence that decides the question. Whatever the reason, it is the kind of omission that costs a study its credibility.

What "this generation" means is not a mystery in Matthew. Jesus uses the phrase repeatedly, and always of His contemporaries: "But whereunto shall I liken this generation?" (11:16); "The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation" (12:41); and one chapter before the Olivet Discourse, closing His indictment of the scribes and Pharisees, "Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation" (23:36). The very next words are "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem" and "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate" (23:37–38), and the next event is Jesus walking out of the temple and predicting its destruction (24:1–2). Same speaker, same audience, same phrase, same judgment, one chapter apart. Even the Pharisees knew who He was speaking of (Matthew 21:45).

R. T. France, whose NICNT commentary on Matthew is as mainstream as evangelical scholarship gets, wrote this about 24:34:

"'This generation' has been used frequently in this gospel for Jesus' contemporaries, especially in a context of God's impending judgment; see 11:16; 12:39, 41–42, 45; 16:4; 17:17, and especially 23:36, where God's judgment on 'this generation' leads up to Jesus' first prediction of the devastation of the temple in 23:38. It may safely be concluded that if it had not been for the embarrassment caused by supposing that Jesus was here talking about his parousia, no one would have thought of suggesting any other meaning for 'this generation,' such as 'the Jewish race' or 'human beings in general' or 'all the generations of Judaism that reject him' or even 'this kind' (meaning scribes, Pharisees, and Sadducees). Such broad senses, even if they were lexically possible, would offer no help in response to the disciples' question 'When?'" (R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, NICNT, p. 930)

I should be exact about France, because I promised not to cite men for views they do not hold. France reads Matthew 24:4–35 as Jesus' answer about the temple's destruction within that generation, including verses 29–31, which he takes as Daniel 7 enthronement language rather than a descent to earth, while treating the word "coming" (*parousia*) in verse 27 as a reference

to the still-future return, locating the parousia proper from verse 36 onward, and remaining no preterist. Gary DeMar's review of the commentary notes exactly that disagreement ("Commenting on Commentaries," *American Vision*, September 11, 2007). France is not on my side of the whole argument. He is on my side of *this* verse, and he says the only reason anyone has ever read "this generation" differently is embarrassment.

Embarrassment has a pedigree: C. S. Lewis

France's word "embarrassment" is not a rhetorical flourish; it has a pedigree. C. S. Lewis, the most trusted apologist of the last century, looked hard at this verse and did not flinch from what it says. He put the critic's charge in the critic's own mouth:

"'Say what you like,' we shall be told, '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. He clearly knew no more about the end of the world than anyone else.'" Then, in his own voice: "It is certainly the most embarrassing verse in the Bible."

Here is what Lewis did with the embarrassment. He did not reinterpret "this generation." He conceded the point and folded it into Jesus' confessed ignorance of the day and hour: "The facts, then, are these: that Jesus professed himself (in some sense) ignorant, and within a moment showed that he really was so" (C. S. Lewis, "The World's Last Night," in *The World's Last Night and Other Essays* [New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1960], pp. 97–99; quoted in part in DeMar, *Last Days Madness*, pp. 36–37).

Lewis was too honest a reader to pretend the phrase meant something other than the people standing in front of Jesus, so he chose to say Jesus was mistaken. I will not say that, but notice the shape of the choice Lewis faced: either "this generation" means that generation and Jesus was wrong, or "this generation" means that generation and Jesus was right. Both Lewis and I take the phrase at face value. The only other option, the one Pete's method requires, is to say the phrase does not mean what Lewis, France, and every other plain reader knew it meant. Between an apologist who admits the plain meaning and a method that avoids it, I know which one I would rather answer to.

Pete, in our thread, called Matthew 24:34 "a difficult timing statement." It is not difficult. It is the plainest sentence in the chapter. It becomes difficult only after one has decided that verses 29–31 must describe something that did not happen in that generation.

Pete's own rule, applied to Pete's own division

Pete's introduction contains a principle I agree with completely:

"Some separate Matthew 24 between AD 70 and the Second Coming, then insert an unstated thousand-year interval into the same discourse and push much of Matthew 25 into a distant future millennium, creating yet another separate event for the end of the world and final judgment. The text itself never announces these divisions. They are imposed upon it by the prophetic system being brought to the passage." (p. 4)

Now read Pete's Chapter 5. Verses 1–28: AD 70. Verses 29–31: the end of the world. What announces the division at verse 29? The verse begins "Immediately after the tribulation of those days," which is the tightest possible connection to what precedes, not a break from it. Pete's own rule says that a division the text does not announce is "imposed upon it by the prophetic system being brought to the passage." His system brings a division at verse 29. The text does not.

To be fair, Pete would say dynamic prophecy is not a "division" but a single discourse with near and far fulfillment inside it, "a connected prophetic revelation in which near and final fulfillment can exist within the same context" (p. 4), but that is a distinction without a difference for the reader who wants to know what Jesus meant by "all these things" in verse 34. Either "all these things" includes verses 29–31 or it does not. If it does, Jesus put them within the generation. If it does not, Pete has divided the discourse exactly where the dispensationalist does, and only the label has changed.

Verse 29: the idiom Pete already granted

I dealt with this in Chapter 3 and will not repeat it. Pete affirms that Isaiah 13:10's darkened sun and failing stars described the historical fall of Babylon and "was fulfilled in history" (p. 14). Jesus quotes that verse. The idiom means in Matthew 24:29 what it meant in Isaiah 13:10: the covenantal collapse of a nation under God's judgment. Pete has to explain why the same words change meaning when Jesus says them. The pattern is not an explanation; it is the claim.

Verse 30: which direction does the Son of Man travel?

"And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."

The language is Daniel 7:13–14, and everyone agrees about that, including Pete, so the first question is what Daniel 7:13 describes. Here is Pete's own document on that vision:

"Daniel 7 gives the same truth from another angle. The beast kingdoms arise out of the earth, but their dominion is not final. Daniel sees the Son of man brought near before the Ancient of days, and there is given unto Him dominion, glory, and a kingdom . . .

The stone is cut without hands. The Son of man receives dominion from heaven. The saints are given the Kingdom. These truths harmonize with the New Testament declaration that Christ is already exalted, already reigning, and that His people have already been made kings and priests unto God." (p. 29)

Here is Pete in our thread:

"In Daniel 7:13 the Son of Man comes TO THE ANCIENT OF DAYS: 'One like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days...' That is an enthronement/exaltation scene, not Jesus descending upon Jerusalem in A.D. 70."

Pete agrees that Daniel 7:13 is an enthronement scene, that the Son of Man travels *to* the throne, and that it is fulfilled in Christ's present reign. Then Jesus takes that exact scene and says "they shall see" it. The natural reading is that they would see the *enthroned* Son of Man, see, that is, the evidence that the man they crucified was on the throne of heaven, and what evidence of that would the tribes of the land see? The destruction of the temple that had condemned Him. That is not a full-preterist invention. It is what Chilton wrote as a partial preterist, in a book that never denies a future Second Coming:

"The destruction of Jerusalem was the sign that the Son of Man, the Second Adam, was in heaven, ruling over the world and disposing it for His own purposes. At His ascension, He had come on the clouds of heaven to receive the Kingdom from His Father; the destruction of Jerusalem was the revelation of this fact. In Matthew 24, therefore, Jesus was not prophesying that He would literally come on the clouds in A.D. 70 (although it was figuratively true). His literal 'coming on the clouds,' in fulfillment of Daniel 7, had taken place about 40 years earlier. But in A.D. 70 the tribes of Israel would see the destruction of the nation as the result of His having ascended to the throne of heaven, to receive His Kingdom." (Chilton, *Paradise Restored*, pp. 98–99)

N. T. Wright, from outside the preterist camp entirely, reads Mark 13's parallel the same way:

"the 'coming of the son of man' does not refer to the 'parousia' in the modern scholarly, and popular, sense of a human figure travelling downwards towards the earth on actual clouds... The word 'coming', so easily misread in English, is in Greek *erchomenon*, and so could mean either 'coming' or 'going'... The 'coming of the son of man' is thus good first-century metaphorical language for two things: the defeat of the enemies of the true people of god, and the vindication of the true people themselves. Thus, the *form* that this vindication will take, as envisaged within Mark 13 and its parallels, will be precisely the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple." (N. T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, pp. 359–60)

Pete's answer in the thread was that Daniel 7 "points naturally toward Christ's exaltation, not toward a supposed invisible second coming in A.D. 70." But that is my point, not an objection to

it. Nobody is claiming Jesus descended invisibly to Jerusalem. The claim is that Matthew 24:30 uses Daniel 7 the way Daniel 7 reads: the Son of Man enthroned, and His enthronement made visible in judgment on the earth. Pete's reading of Daniel 7 and mine are identical. The only question is whether Jesus, quoting Daniel 7, meant what Daniel 7 means.

Matthew 26:64: Pete's concession decides the "see" question

The Ferrari argument rests on one word: *see*. "THEY SHALL SEE HIM. . . . If nobody saw Jesus coming in A.D. 70—and nobody did—then the very event Jesus described in those words was not fulfilled in A.D. 70." That was Pete's opening post.

Jesus used the same words to Caiaphas: "Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven" (Matthew 26:64). "Ye shall see." "Coming in the clouds of heaven." Same Daniel 7 language, same verb, addressed to a specific living man and the council around him.

Pete's reading of that verse, in his own words from the thread:

"Caiaphas and that generation would 'see' Christ vindicated: the man they condemned would be raised, exalted, enthroned, and demonstrated to be the Messiah they rejected. That passage establishes Christ's vindication and heavenly authority."

I agree with every word but notice what has been conceded. Pete reads "ye shall see the Son of man . . . coming in the clouds of heaven" as Caiaphas's generation seeing Christ's vindication and enthronement demonstrated, not as Caiaphas watching a body descend from the sky. On that reading "ye shall see" plus "coming in the clouds" does not, on Pete's own reading, require optical sight of a physical descent.

That is the Ferrari argument's premise, and Pete has abandoned it in the one verse where the audience is named. The premise cannot be true in 24:30 and false in 26:64. The words are the same, the source text is the same, and the audience, a generation then living, is the same. If "ye shall see" in 26:64 means "your generation will witness the demonstration of my enthronement," then "they shall see" in 24:30 may mean exactly that, and the inference "nobody saw Him, therefore it was not fulfilled" does not go through.

I want to be measured here. This does not prove full preterism. It does not settle the resurrection or the judgment. It settles one thing: the argument from the word "see" in Matthew 24:30 fails, by Pete's own handling of Matthew 26:64. That much I think is a refutation rather than a reading, and I would ask Pete, if he thinks otherwise, to show the difference between the two verses that lets "ye shall see" be non-optical in one and necessarily optical in the other.

Verse 31: angels, trumpet, gathering

"And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."

Pete's thread post treated this verse as the one that could not be spiritualized: "THEY SHALL SEE HIM. THE SON OF MAN COMES. POWER. GREAT GLORY. ANGELS. A GREAT TRUMPET. THE GATHERING OF HIS ELECT FROM THE FOUR WINDS." And his document says "The trumpet did not sound for the final gathering of the saints" (p. 25).

Every element of this verse is Old Testament language with an Old Testament meaning, and Pete's own method says Old Testament meaning controls, so let me take them in order.

Angels. The Greek *angelos* means messenger, and Scripture uses it of human messengers constantly: John the Baptist is "my messenger [*angelos*]" (Matthew 11:10); Jesus "sent messengers [*angeloi*] before his face" (Luke 9:52); the priest is "the messenger of the LORD of hosts" (Malachi 2:7). Gary DeMar, discussing this verse, points out that even a dispensationalist like Ed Hindson concedes "The term angel (Greek, *angelos*) means 'messenger.' . . . His true prophets and preachers are called angels of the churches (Rev. 2:1, 8, 12, 18; 3:1, 7, 14)" (DeMar, *Last Days Madness*, 4th ed., p. 130). Whether verse 31's messengers are heavenly or human is decided by context, not by the English word.

Trumpet. "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the LORD in the holy mount at Jerusalem" (Isaiah 27:13). That is the source of Jesus' "great trumpet," and in Isaiah it summons the scattered to worship. DeMar: "The 'great trumpet' of verse thirty-one is the call of the gospel. It refers to Numbers 10:1–10 where silver trumpets were made to call the people together for worship and to set them on their march" (*Last Days Madness*, p. 131).

Gather from the four winds. "If any of thine be driven out unto the outmost parts of heaven, from thence will the LORD thy God gather thee" (Deuteronomy 30:4). Chilton notes that Jesus is quoting Moses, and that the verb Jesus uses is *episynagō*, to synagogue:

"Christ's use of the word gather is significant in this regard. The word, literally, is a verb meaning to synagogue; the meaning is that with the destruction of the Temple and of the Old Covenant system, the Lord sends out His messengers to gather His elect people into His New Synagogue. Jesus is actually quoting from Moses, who had promised: 'If your outcasts are at the ends of heaven, from there the Lord your God will synagogue you, and from there he will take you' (Deut. 30:4, Septuagint)." (Chilton, *Paradise Restored*, p. 99)

Jesus had used the same verb one chapter earlier, of the same city: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem . . . how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate" (Matthew 23:37–38). The house is left desolate; then the Son of Man sends His messengers to gather the elect into the new house. That is the sequence of 23:38 to 24:31, and it is the sequence of Acts.

Here is the thing I most want Pete to see: this reading of the gathering is *his own ecclesiology*. His Chapter 8 argues, with Ephesians 2:13–19, 1 Corinthians 12:13, and Galatians 3:28–29, that Christ "hath made both one," that Jew and Gentile are gathered "in one body by the cross," that the church is "the holy nation" of 1 Peter 2:9 (pp. 39–40). That is the gathering of the elect from the four winds. Pete believes it happened. He believes it is happening. He simply does not connect it to the verse where Jesus predicted it, and he does not, I think, because he has already decided that verse 31 has to be a rapture-like event in order for verse 34 not to mean what it says.

R. V. G. Tasker, the Tyndale commentator on Matthew, was no preterist, and he read the verse this way:

"It was in fact only after the old order ended with the destruction of the Temple that world evangelism by the Christian Church, now entirely separate from Judaism, could be conducted in earnest. Not till then could the trumpet of the gospel be sounded throughout the world. Not till then could the Son of man, having 'visited' the old Israel in judgment, send his angels (i.e. His messengers) to gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other, a result which could be obtained only when the gospel had been preached to the whole world (29–31)." (R. V. G. Tasker, quoted in DeMar, *Last Days Madness*, p. 132)

Luke 4:21 and the "day of vengeance"

Pete offers one further argument for Jesus dividing a single prophecy across time:

"This same principle is seen when Jesus stood in the synagogue and read from the prophet Isaiah. . . . Then He closed the book and said:

'This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.' — Luke 4:21, KJV

Yet He stopped before reading the next phrase concerning 'the day of vengeance of our God.' The prophecy was one passage, but Jesus Himself divided its fulfillment according to God's appointed order. The first part was being fulfilled in His earthly ministry; the later portion still awaited its proper time." (p. 26)

I agree that Jesus stopped before "the day of vengeance." I agree that the vengeance still awaited its time. What Pete does not mention is that Jesus later told us when that time was. In the same Gospel, in the same discourse Pete's chapter is about, Jesus said of the siege of Jerusalem: "For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled" (Luke 21:22).

Jesus left the day of vengeance unread in Nazareth and announced it on the Mount of Olives, and He tied it to the armies surrounding Jerusalem and to "this generation" (Luke 21:20, 32). (For the sake of precision: the Greek of Luke 21:22 echoes the "days of vengeance" of Hosea 9:7 and the covenant vengeance of Deuteronomy 32:35 more closely than the exact wording of Isaiah 61:2 in the Septuagint; the concept, though, is the same day, the vengeance that accompanies the acceptable year.) Pete's example of a divided prophecy is a good one. Its second half was dated by Jesus, and the date was AD 70, so the example does not show that a prophecy's later portion may float free of the first century. It shows the opposite: when Jesus divided Isaiah 61, He assigned the later portion to His own generation.

Note the scope of the clause: "that all things which are written may be fulfilled." Not some things. All things. Sullivan's observation is worth repeating: "This is one of the most sweeping statements in the Gospels. The context is not merely the destruction of a city" ("The Dilemma"). It is Jesus placing the fulfillment of everything written at the judgment of Jerusalem. Pete's tagline for AD 70 is "the shadow." Jesus' tagline for it is "all things which are written."

Where does Scripture call AD 70 a shadow?

That sentence (p. 27) is the thesis of the chapter, so I will ask about it directly. Where does the New Testament call AD 70 a shadow?

Hebrews uses the word of the Law (10:1). Colossians uses it of ordinances, meat, drink, holy days, new moons, sabbaths (2:16–17). Both texts contrast old-covenant institutions with Christ. Neither text, and no other text, calls a *judgment* a shadow of another judgment, or calls a *coming* of Christ a shadow of another coming. The shadow-substance vocabulary in Scripture has a fixed subject: the Mosaic order versus Christ and His covenant. Pete has lifted the vocabulary off that subject and set it on top of AD 70. That is the move the whole study exists to justify, and it is made here in one sentence without a text.

The circularity charge, answered

Pete's thread post said: "You begin by deciding Matthew 24 was fulfilled in A.D. 70. Jesus was not visibly seen? Then 'see' must be symbolic. He did not visibly descend? Then 'coming' must mean judgment."

That is not the order of my reasoning, and I would like the record to show the order. I begin with Daniel 7, which Pete agrees is enthronement. I take the Old Testament's cloud-idiom, which Pete agrees is judgment language in Isaiah 19. I take Matthew 26:64, which Pete agrees does not require optical sight. I take Isaiah 27:13 and Deuteronomy 30:4 for the trumpet and the gathering, which Pete's own method says should control, and I take Matthew 24:34, which Pete does not mention. From those five things I conclude that verses 29–31 describe the enthroned

Son of Man vindicated in the fall of Jerusalem and gathering His people by the gospel. I do not start at AD 70 and work backward. I start at the texts Jesus was quoting and work forward, and AD 70 is where they land.

Pete's reasoning, by his own paragraph on page 25, runs: the words must mean a visible appearance, an audible trumpet, and bodies from graves; those did not occur in AD 70; therefore verses 29–31 are unfulfilled. The first premise is the one that needs proving, and it is the one his document never proves. It is assumed, as it was assumed in the Ferrari story, where the whole force of the analogy came from the fact that a man promising to drive into a parking lot is making a literal promise. Whether Jesus, quoting Daniel and Isaiah to Jews, was making that kind of promise is the question. It cannot be the premise.

Matthew 16:27–28 and the Transfiguration

This came from our thread rather than the document, but it belongs here because it is the same argument in a different chapter. Pete wrote:

"Jesus said SOME standing there would see Him in kingdom glory. Six days later, some standing there—Peter, James, and John—were taken up the mountain and shown Him in supernatural glory. Peter later explicitly connects that event with Christ's 'power and coming' . . . That is devastating to the argument that Matthew 16:28 must be A.D. 70."

Three problems, none of which I invented.

First, verse 27. "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works" (Matthew 16:27). The coming of verse 28 is the coming of verse 27, and verse 27's coming rewards every man according to his works. Nobody was rewarded according to his works on the Mount of Transfiguration. I raised this in the thread, "Jesus didn't come with His angels to judge every man at the Transfiguration," and it has not yet been answered. It needs one, because verse 28 is a time-limit on verse 27, and the Transfiguration cannot be the fulfillment of a verse whose content it does not contain.

Notice what kind of language verse 27 is. "Reward every man according to his works" is not a devotional phrase; it is the vocabulary of the day of judgment. Paul uses the same words for "the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; who will render to every man according to his deeds" (Romans 2:5–6). The phrase "reward with him" comes straight from Isaiah's announcement of the Lord's coming: "Behold, the Lord GOD will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him" (Isaiah 40:10; repeated in 62:11).

Jesus quotes that Isaiah line one more time at the very end of the Bible, with a date attached: "And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work

shall be" (Revelation 22:12). The coming-with-reward of Matthew 16:27 is the coming-with-reward of Revelation 22:12, and Revelation 22:12 says *quickly*. It is also, plainly, the coming of Matthew 25:31, "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory," which is the same sentence as 16:27 with the sheep and goats attached. Whatever 16:27 describes, 25:31 describes, and 16:28 puts it inside the lifetime of men standing there.

The harvest had already been announced, and the tools were already in hand. John the Baptist opened Matthew's Gospel with "the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (3:2) and then told the Pharisees and Sadducees, "O generation of vipers," to "flee from the wrath to come" (3:7), because "now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees" (3:10) and the Coming One already holds the winnowing fan: "Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire" (3:12).

Axe at the root. Fan in hand. Wrath *to come*, aimed at *that* generation of vipers, the same phrase Jesus turns on them in 23:33, three verses before "all these things shall come upon this generation." Jesus explained the harvest Himself: "the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels . . . The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend" (13:39–41), and "then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father" (13:43): Daniel 12:3's "shine as the brightness of the firmament," from the chapter Daniel dated to the shattering of the holy people.

Daniel 7 supplies the throne, the books opened, and "judgment . . . given to the saints" (7:10, 22). Matthew 10 supplies the reward and the deadline in one breath: "he that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward" (10:41), and "Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come" (10:23). The vineyard parable ends with the lord coming to "miserably destroy those wicked men," and "they perceived that he spake of them" (21:41, 45); the wedding parable ends with the king who "sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city" (22:7).

Paul told the persecuted Thessalonians it was "a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you . . . when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance" (2 Thessalonians 1:6–8), recompense, angels, vengeance, to people alive then. James told his readers the husbandman was waiting for the harvest and "the judge standeth before the door" (5:7, 9). John saw it: "upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man . . . Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe" (Revelation 14:14–15): Son of Man, cloud, sickle, harvest, in a book that says the time is at hand.

That is the field Matthew 16:27 stands in. "Coming in the glory of his Father with his angels" to "reward every man according to his works" is the Son of Man arriving with the sickle. Jesus said

some standing there would live to see it. Forty years later the axe fell at the root, the floor was purged, and the city was burned. The Transfiguration was a preview of the King. AD 70 was the harvest.

Second, "some standing here . . . shall not taste of death." Gary DeMar states the difficulty plainly:

"Some claim that the 'coming' Jesus had in mind was the transfiguration. But the transfiguration cannot be its fulfillment since Jesus indicated that some who were standing with Him would still be alive when He came but most would be dead. If we adopt the view that the transfiguration is the fulfillment, we must conclude that most of the people with whom Jesus spoke were dead within a week of Jesus' prediction (Matt. 17:1)!" (DeMar, *Last Days Madness*, p. 32)

DeMar then cites Henry Hammond (1605–1660), who made the same point four centuries ago: the Transfiguration "cannot be, because the 27th verse of the son of man's coming in his glory with his Angels to reward, \&c. (to which this verse clearly connects) cannot be applied to that" (quoted in DeMar, p. 33). This is not a novel objection. It is the older reading.

Third, 2 Peter 1:16–18 does not say what Pete needs it to say. Peter says the apostles "made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" and "were eyewitnesses of his majesty" on the holy mount. He then says, "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed" (1:19), and two chapters later he is still answering scoffers who ask "Where is the promise of his coming?" (3:4) and still exhorting his readers to look for "the coming of the day of God" (3:12). Peter did not think the Transfiguration *was* the coming. He thought it was a foretaste that certified the coming, which he still expected. As I put it in the thread, a preview isn't necessarily the fulfillment of everything Jesus just promised, and 2 Peter 3 is Peter saying so.

Where Pete's reading is strongest: Matthew 24:36 and after

I promised to say where Pete's questions bite, and in this chapter they bite at verse 36 and beyond. "But of that day and hour knoweth no man" (24:36) introduces a section many careful readers, France among them, take as the parousia proper, and Matthew 25:31–46, with "all nations" gathered before the Son of Man, is the passage most naturally read as a universal judgment. I read both as continuous with what precedes, for reasons that would take another chapter (the same "coming," the same generation, "all nations" as the Gentile world of the Roman *oikoumenē* that the gospel had reached by AD 70: Colossians 1:6, 23), but I hold that as the reading I find most faithful, not as a demonstration, and I will not pretend the structure of 24:36–25:46 is as plain as 24:34. What I will say is that whatever one does with 24:36 onward, it does not reach back and change what "all these things" means in 24:34. The time-statement governs everything before it, and everything before it includes verses 29–31.

That is the chapter. Pete and I agree on twenty-eight verses. On three, he says the pattern requires a fulfillment that did not occur, and I say the fourth verse after them tells us when they occurred. One of us is reading a verse that is in the chapter. The other is reading a pattern that is not.

Chapter 6: Daniel. The Book That Dates Its Own End

Pete's chapter on Daniel is, for most of its length, a chapter I would sign. He is right that Daniel establishes the symbolic vocabulary of biblical prophecy; right that "The beasts are not literal monsters. They represent kings and kingdoms" (p. 28); right that Daniel 2's stone "comes from God. It strikes the kingdoms of men, outlasts them, and grows into a mountain that fills the earth" (p. 29); and right, above all, about Daniel 7:13–14:

"Daniel 7 gives the same truth from another angle. The beast kingdoms arise out of the earth, but their dominion is not final. Daniel sees the Son of man brought near before the Ancient of days, and there is given unto Him dominion, glory, and a kingdom . . . These truths harmonize with the New Testament declaration that Christ is already exalted, already reigning, and that His people have already been made kings and priests unto God." (p. 29)

I dealt in Chapter 5 with what that concession does to Matthew 24:30 and 26:64, and I will not repeat it. What I want to do here is show what Pete's chapter leaves out of Daniel, because Daniel is the one prophet who tells us, in so many words, when his visions would be finished, and *Dynamic Prophecy* never quotes those words.

Daniel 2: "in the days of these kings"

Pete says the stone "strikes the kingdoms of men" and becomes the everlasting kingdom. Daniel says when: "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed" (Daniel 2:44). The kings are the kings of the fourth kingdom: Rome, on the reading Pete and I share. The kingdom of God was set up in the days of Rome. Pete agrees; that is his present Kingdom, but then Daniel 2 is another prophecy with exactly one fulfillment, in the first century, which Pete reads as complete in its essentials. There is no "greater fulfillment" of the stone striking the image waiting in the future; the striking happened, and the mountain is growing. Pete's own reading of Daniel 2 is not dynamic. It is fulfilled, and the kingdom it set up is everlasting. I would ask the reader to hold onto that, because a kingdom that was set up on time and never ends is a strange place to look for a fulfillment still waiting.

Daniel 7: the direction is fixed, and so is the sequel

The Son of Man in Daniel 7:13 "came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days." Up, not down. Pete agrees. Daniel 7 does not stop at the enthronement, though; it goes on to say what the enthronement produces on earth. The little horn "made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom" (7:21–22). "And the

kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High" (7:27).

Pete affirms that the saints possess the kingdom now: "The saints are given the Kingdom. These truths harmonize with the New Testament declaration that . . . His people have already been made kings and priests unto God" (p. 29). Then, on Pete's reading, the judgment that gave the saints the kingdom has already been given. Daniel 7's sequence, beast, persecution, the Ancient of Days sitting in judgment, the Son of Man enthroned, the saints possessing the kingdom, is, on Pete's own account of it, realized. That is not a small thing to have granted. It means that the Daniel 7 vision, which Jesus quotes in Matthew 24:30 and 26:64, contains no *second* coming of the Son of Man in the opposite direction. Daniel knows one coming, and it is to the throne.

Daniel 12: the verse Pete does not cite

Dynamic Prophecy cites Daniel 12 once, verse 1, for the book of life (p. 58). It does not cite verses 2, 3, 4, or 7. Those are the verses that make Daniel 12 the hinge of New Testament eschatology, so let me quote them.

"And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." (Daniel 12:1-2)

Here is the great tribulation and the resurrection, side by side, "at that time." Then Daniel asks when, and the angel answers: "And I heard the man clothed in linen . . . and sware by him that liveth for ever that it shall be for a time, times, and an half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished" (Daniel 12:7).

All these things shall be finished when the power of the holy people is shattered. That is Daniel's own time-statement for the tribulation and the resurrection. The holy people are Israel. The shattering of their power is the event Jesus described in Matthew 24 and Luke 21 and dated to His generation, the end of the temple, the priesthood, the city, the national existence. Daniel does not put the resurrection at the end of the world. He puts it at the end of Israel's old-covenant power.

Jesus quoted Daniel 12:1 for His own "great tribulation": "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be" (Matthew 24:21). He located it in Judea, "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place . . . Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains" (24:15-16), and He placed it, with everything else, inside "this generation" (24:34).

Daniel says the tribulation ends when the holy people are shattered; Jesus says the tribulation is in Judea when the abomination stands in the holy place; and Pete himself says Luke's version of that sign "was fulfilled in AD 70 when the Roman armies surrounded Jerusalem" (p. 24).

Yet Pete's conclusion says: "The Great Tribulation was not encapsulated in 70 AD, nor is it the doorway into a future earthly millennium; it is the final crisis at the end of the present millennial reign" (p. 63). I have read the document carefully for the text that moves Daniel's time of trouble two thousand years past the scattering of the holy people, and it is not there. The move is made by the pattern, not the text.

Michael Sullivan, a full preterist writing as one, states the reading that Daniel 12:7 forces if it is allowed to speak:

"Daniel locates resurrection, tribulation, and consummation at the single time when 'the power of the holy people' is shattered (Dan. 12:7). Jesus likewise identified the destruction of Jerusalem, the tribulation, His coming upon the clouds, the gathering of the elect / resurrection, the fulfillment of all that had been written in the Old Testament with the end of the old covenant age—all coming within His generation (Matt. 23:36; 24:3-34; Luke 21:20-32). Therefore, Daniel's resurrection and consummation belong to the covenantal transition culminating in AD 70—not to another future eschatological horizon." (Sullivan, "The Dilemma")

I will say plainly what that reading costs, because this is where Pete's side of the argument is strongest. If Daniel 12:7 dates Daniel 12:2, then the resurrection of "many of them that sleep in the dust" is dated to the shattering of the holy people, and one is obliged to say what that resurrection was. I take it up in Chapter 9 and I will not dodge it, but notice that the cost is created by the *text*, not by my system. Daniel 12:7 is the verse that ties the resurrection to AD 70. The full preterist did not put it there. He is the one who declined to move it.

Daniel 12:4 and Revelation 22:10: seal it / don't seal it

Daniel was told: "But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end" (Daniel 12:4). Why seal it? Because the appointed end was far off. John, seeing the same end, was told the opposite: "Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand" (Revelation 22:10).

Don Preston has pressed this contrast for years:

"Daniel was told to seal up his vision because the time for its fulfillment was a long time away . . . John was specifically told NOT TO SEAL UP HIS VISION BECAUSE WHAT HE SAW WAS AT HAND! John is told his vision, not part of his vision, was 'at hand' and 'must shortly come to pass!' Reader, did God call the 365 years for the fulfillment of Daniel's prophecy a 'long time' and call the fulfillment of Revelation, which most

commentators say has not been fulfilled after 2000 years so far, 'at hand?' To say the least, this would hardly be consistent!" (Preston, "Can God Tell Time?")

Pete's chapter says of Daniel's pattern, "The New Testament carries it forward. Revelation brings it to completion" (p. 31). Agreed, but if Daniel's sealed end and John's unsealed end are the same end, and Pete's own continuity argument requires that they are, then the end that was centuries away from Daniel was "at hand" for John. Pete never engages the seal/unseal contrast, and I do not see how his timeline survives it.

Daniel 9: "unto the end of the war desolations are determined"

Dynamic Prophecy never cites Daniel 9:24–27, not in the Daniel chapter, not anywhere. He ignores yet another critical time text. They matter, because they are the prophecy that names the terminus. "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city . . . to seal up the vision and prophecy" (9:24). Within that span "the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined" (9:26). Daniel's seventy weeks end in the destruction of the city and sanctuary and in a determined desolation. I should be exact here, because the continuous-span readers do not all agree: Gentry and many continuous-span readers close the seventieth week in the 30s and read the destruction of verse 26 as the consequence that follows it, while others, and I am one, run the determined desolation of verse 27 to AD 70 itself. On either reading the prophecy ends in the fall of the city, and on neither is there a gap; Pete's Chapter 8 rejects the dispensational gap that would make it otherwise.

There is a footnote to this from history that I cannot resist, since I recently spent a week in the sources. When the emperor Julian tried to rebuild the Jerusalem temple in AD 363 and the project collapsed within days, Ephrem the Syrian, writing within the year, reached for Daniel 9:26–27, the prophecy of the sanctuary's determined desolation, to explain it (see Jan Willem Drijvers, "Ammianus Marcellinus 23.1.2–3: The Rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem," on Ephrem's *Hymns against Julian* 4). A fourth-century Christian, with no preterist system, read Daniel's determined desolation as the standing verdict of AD 70. That is what the text says, and it is what the early church saw.

The beast is dated too: "five are fallen, and one is" (Revelation 17:10)

Pete's closing section connects Daniel 7's beast to Revelation 13's, and I agree with the connection. Revelation, though, dates its beast. "And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space" (Revelation 17:10). John writes under the sixth king. That is a point on a calendar, though not an uncontested one, since the count depends on whether one starts with Julius or Augustus, a question Gentry himself works through, and it is the reason Kenneth Gentry, a partial preterist

who has written against full preterism, and whom I cite only for what he holds, devoted a book to arguing Revelation was written before AD 70 (*Before Jerusalem Fell*). Pete says Daniel's beast pattern "continues to appear throughout history until it reaches its final form" (p. 31). Revelation says the beast John saw was reigning in his day, in a book of things that "must shortly come to pass." I will return to that in the next chapter.

What Daniel establishes

Pete's summary is: "Daniel gives us the pattern. The New Testament carries it forward. Revelation brings it to completion." (p. 31) Mine is shorter. Daniel dates his own end, three times: the kingdom comes in the days of Rome's kings (2:44); the Son of Man comes to the throne and the saints possess the kingdom (7:13–14, 22, 27); and the tribulation and resurrection are finished when the power of the holy people is shattered (12:7). Pete affirms the first two as fulfilled. The third uses the same kind of clock, and his document does not quote it, simply ignoring the texts altogether.

Chapter 7: Revelation. The Book With a Timestamp on Both Ends

Pete's chapter on Revelation opens with a sentence I would put in my own pinned post: "The Book of Revelation does not introduce an entirely new prophetic system. It does the exact opposite." (p. 32) He is right that Revelation gathers the Old Testament's vocabulary, Babylon, Egypt, Sodom, Jerusalem, the temple, the Lamb, the beast, the marriage supper, and brings it to a head. He is right that "Revelation cannot be rightly interpreted apart from the rest of Scripture" (p. 35). He is right, and it is not a small thing to be right about, that "I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it" (Revelation 21:22) is where the tabernacle-temple pattern ends.

I want to add one thing that his chapter does not mention, and then show what it does to the chapter's conclusion. Revelation tells us when it would be fulfilled. It tells us at the beginning and again at the end, and it uses every imminence word the Greek language had.

The book's own time-frame: "shortly" and "at hand" at both ends

"The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass" (1:1). "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand" (1:3). At the far end: "These sayings are faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done" (22:6). "Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand" (22:10). "Behold, I come quickly" (22:12). "Surely I come quickly" (22:20).

Dynamic Prophecy cites none of these. In a chapter titled "The Book of Revelation: The Grand Consummation of Dynamic Prophecy," the book's own statement of its time-frame does not appear. A study of Revelation that does not weigh the book's own statement of when has left out the first thing the book says about itself.

Kenneth Gentry, a partial preterist who has argued in print against full preterism and holds firmly to the creeds and confessions, wrote thirteen pages on those words and concluded:

"How could events related to the collapse of the Roman Empire two or three hundred years in the future be considered 'at hand,' as per Swete, Barnes, and others? Several generations of these Christians would have waxed and waned over such a period. Even more difficult to understand is how events two or three thousand years in the future could be considered 'at hand,' as per Mounce, Walvoord, and others. How could such events so remotely stretched out into the future be 'at hand'? But if the expected events were to occur within a period of from one to five years—as in the case with

Revelation if the book were written prior to A.D. 70—then all becomes clear."
(Kenneth L. Gentry, Jr., *Before Jerusalem Fell*, p. 141)

Gentry's argument is aimed at futurists, and it lands on Pete's Revelation chapter as squarely as on any dispensationalist's. If the beast's "final form" and the "final Day of the Lord" are still ahead of us, then "the time is at hand" was not true when John wrote it, and "shortly" has meant nineteen centuries and counting.

R. C. Sproul, in his foreword to the CEF preterism symposium, named the cost of ignoring that:

"The critics stress the time-frame references of New Testament prophecy regarding the Parousia of Jesus and the end of the age as their Exhibit A in their evidence against biblical inspiration. Christians who insist on inspiration tend to either ignore the time-frame references or spiritualize them away with special pleading techniques of exegetical gymnastics." (R. C. Sproul, Foreword to *And It Came to Pass*, p. vi)

The reason he found the preterist reading compelling:

"The advantage of preterism is that it 'saves the phenomena' of the New Testament time-frame references; it interprets biblical prophecy according to the images used in Scripture itself; and it offers a framework for consistent interpretation of the difficult apocalyptic literature of the Bible, such as that found in Daniel and Revelation."
(Sproul, p. vii)

I will be exact about Sproul, as I promised: on the same page he rejects "radical preterism" over the bodily resurrection and 1 Corinthians 15, and I will meet that objection in Chapter 9, but on the time-frame references, Sproul is saying that the choice is between taking them at face value and "spiritualiz[ing] them away." Pete's method does the second. It does not deny the words; it lets a pattern outrank them.

Revelation 1:7: the tribes of the land, and the ones who pierced Him

In the thread Pete quoted this verse as decisive: "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him." (Revelation 1:7)

Three things in the verse fix its reference. "They also which pierced him" is a specific group of first-century people, drawn from Zechariah 12:10: "they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him." The mourners in Zechariah are "the land . . . every family apart" (12:12), Judah and Jerusalem, not the globe, and the Greek behind "kindreds of the earth" is *phylai tēs gēs*, which Gentry examined with the lexicons open:

"The Greek word for 'tribe' is *phylē*, which in Scripture most frequently refers to the Jewish tribes. The *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* notes that the

Septuagint 'with few exceptions . . . has *phylē*, so that this becomes a fixed term for the tribal system of Israel.' . . . In addition, the Greek word for 'earth' in Revelation 1:7 is *gē*, which most usually means either: (1) 'earth, globe' or (2) 'land.' Thus, upon purely lexical considerations, the term can be understood as designating the Promised Land. As a matter of fact, literal translations of the Scripture lean in this direction. Robert Young's *Literal Translation of the Holy Bible* translates it: 'Lo, he doth come with the clouds, and see him shall every eye, even those who did pierce him, and wail because of him shall all the tribes of the land. Yes! Amen!'" (Gentry, *Before Jerusalem Fell*, pp. 127–128; Greek terms transliterated)

Gentry cites Adam Clarke, the Methodist commentator of two centuries ago, on the same verse: "By this the Jewish people are most evidently intended, and therefore the whole verse may be understood as predicting the destruction of the Jews; and is a presumptive proof that the Apocalypse was written before the final overthrow of the Jewish state" (Clarke, quoted in Gentry, p. 127).

The verse Pete offered as proof of a globally visible descent is, on its Old Testament source and its own vocabulary, a verse about the tribes of the land seeing the One they pierced come in judgment, and it sits four verses after "the time is at hand." I said in the thread that Revelation 1:7 "reinforces that connection rather than overturning it," and I stand by that; here is the lexical work behind it.

Babylon, and the city that killed the prophets

Pete writes: "in Revelation, Babylon becomes far more than one ancient city or empire. Babylon becomes the prophetic symbol of the worldwide false religious system united with political power in opposition to God and His people." (p. 32)

That is one reading. Here is why I think Revelation itself identifies its Babylon more narrowly. The book names "the great city" once in plain terms: "the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified" (Revelation 11:8). Our Lord was crucified in Jerusalem. When Babylon falls, John calls her "that great city" (17:18; 18:10, 16, 18, 19, 21), the same title, and her crime is the crime Jesus laid at Jerusalem's door: "in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints" (18:24). Compare Matthew 23:35–37: "That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth . . . O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets." Revelation's harlot wears the sins Jesus assigned to Jerusalem, and she is called by the name Revelation gives Jerusalem. David Chilton argued this at length in *The Days of Vengeance* and Gentry holds it as well; it is the common partial-preterist reading, not a full-preterist novelty. I hold it as the reading I find most faithful, and I note that Pete's chapter offers no text for the "worldwide system" identification, only the pattern.

The temple that was still standing

Pete's chapter traces the temple from tabernacle to Christ to church to "no temple" in Revelation 21. He leaves out one station on that line: Revelation 11. "And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months" (Revelation 11:1-2).

John is told to measure a temple with a court and worshippers, and told that the Gentiles will trample the city for forty-two months. That is a standing temple about to be trampled, which is Jerusalem before AD 70, and which is why Gentry treats Revelation 11:1-2 as internal evidence for the early date. The book's arc runs from a temple still standing (chapter 11) to no temple at all because God and the Lamb are the temple (chapter 21). That arc is the covenant transition. It is what the book is about, and the book says the transition was "at hand."

The marriage, and the city they had already come to

Pete cites Revelation 19:7, "the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready," as the point where the covenant relationship "reaches its appointed end" (p. 35), and he treats the New Jerusalem of chapter 21 as "the eternal dwelling place of God's redeemed people" still ahead of us (p. 33).

John tells us who the bride is: "Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God" (21:9-10). The bride is the city, and the city is the people. Hebrews tells first-century believers they had already arrived at it: "But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem" (Hebrews 12:22). Paul says it is our mother now: "Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all" (Galatians 4:26), and the city's gates are open and its business is invitation: "the Spirit and the bride say, Come. . . . And let him that is athirst come" (Revelation 22:17). There are still people outside the city (22:15) and nations walking by its light (21:24). That is not a picture of a sealed eternal state. It is a picture of the New Covenant people of God in the world, with the door open, inviting those outside the gates of the city.

Pete's own Chapter 8 says the church is the temple, the holy nation, the one body, the fulfillment of Israel's promises. The New Jerusalem is the same reality under John's last name for it. Pete stops one step short of his own conclusion.

What the chapter establishes

Pete ends: "Revelation does not replace the prophetic witness of Scripture. It completes it." (p. 36) Agreed, and a completed thing has a date. Revelation gives its date six times, at both ends of the book, in the strongest terms available. Any reading of the book that leaves its central events nineteen centuries past "at hand" has not completed the prophetic witness. It has reopened it through man-made systems.

Chapter 8: Dispensationalism. We Agree, and Then Pete Keeps One of Its Habits

There is very little in Pete's eighth chapter I would change. His indictment of dispensationalism is the one I agree with and he makes it well. It "takes the unified prophetic pattern of Scripture and divides it into separate programs, separate peoples, separate hopes, separate comings, separate resurrections, and separate kingdoms" (p. 37). It treats the church as a parenthesis; it postpones the kingdom; it expects "a return to earthly shadows: a rebuilt temple, renewed temple focus, Jewish-centered prophetic separation" (p. 41); it removes the church from tribulation by a secret rapture the text never mentions. Against all of that Pete sets Ephesians 2, 1 Corinthians 12:13, Galatians 3:28–29, and 1 Peter 2:9, and concludes: "The Church is not a parenthesis. The Church is not an accident. The Church is the blood-bought people of God, the temple of the Holy Ghost, the holy nation, the royal priesthood, and the one body of Christ in which believing Jews and Gentiles are gathered together through the cross." (p. 41)

Amen, without reservation, and this too:

"Scripture reveals one Christ, one redemption, one Kingdom, one people of God, one resurrection hope, one gathering together of the saints, and one final consummation at the appearing of Jesus Christ. The prophetic story does not move toward fragmentation. It moves toward unity in Christ." (p. 38)

One coming. One resurrection. One gathering. One consummation. I want to hold Pete to that, because it is right, and because his own system does not keep it.

Pete's system has two comings: the very thing he faults dispensationalism for

Pete's chapter faults dispensationalism because "It divides the coming of Christ where Scripture presents one glorious appearing" (p. 43). Two paragraphs earlier he wrote:

"Dynamic prophecy preserves this unity. There have been historical comings of God in judgment. There was a genuine covenantal coming in judgment against Jerusalem in AD 70. But these historical judgments do not exhaust the promise of Christ's visible appearing. They point forward to it. They establish the pattern. The final coming completes it." (p. 43)

On Pete's account there was a coming of Christ in AD 70, and there will be a final coming. That is two comings of Christ. Pete would say the first was a "covenantal coming in judgment" and the second the "visible appearing," and that the distinction preserves unity, but the dispensationalist says the same about his rapture and his revelation: one is *for* the church, one is *with* the church;

different in kind, so not really two. Pete rightly does not accept that distinction from them. I do not see why it should be accepted from him.

The question this raises is concrete, and it is one Pete's document does not answer: **in the Olivet Discourse, which verse describes the AD 70 coming he affirms?**

"Coming" is used of the Son of Man in Matthew 24:27 ("so shall also the coming of the Son of man be"), 24:30 ("they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven"), 24:37 and 24:39 ("so shall also the coming of the Son of man be"), 24:44 ("in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh"), and 25:31 ("When the Son of man shall come in his glory"). Pete assigns 24:30 to the final coming. If 24:30 is not the AD 70 coming, then the AD 70 coming that Pete says was "genuine" is nowhere in the discourse that predicted AD 70. Jesus described the siege, the abomination, the flight, and the tribulation in verses 15–28 without once calling any of it His coming, and then, on Pete's reading, switched to a different coming at verse 30. That leaves Pete's "genuine covenantal coming in judgment against Jerusalem" as an event Jesus never named in the one place He was asked about it. The disciples asked, "what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" (24:3). Jesus answered with verses 4–34 and closed with "this generation." Either the coming He described is the coming they asked about, or He did not answer their question.

I do not think Pete has noticed this, because the pattern does the work and the verse-by-verse never has to be done, but it should be done. The "one coming" he insists on against dispensationalism is the one coming I insist on against him. It was the coming Jesus dated.

The unannounced division at Matthew 24:29

I quoted it in Chapter 5 and it belongs here too: "The text itself never announces these divisions. They are imposed upon it by the prophetic system being brought to the passage." (p. 4) Pete applies that rule to the dispensationalist who separates Matthew 24 from Matthew 25 with a millennium. He does not apply it to himself when he separates Matthew 24:28 from Matthew 24:29 with two thousand years. "Immediately after the tribulation of those days" is a connective, not a division. If the rule is good against them, it is good against him.

The Great Tribulation: sealed before the judgment, firstfruits, "out of great tribulation"

Pete's chapter says the saints must endure "a final time of trouble, a final conflict, and a final testing of God's people before the coming of the Lord" (p. 42), and his conclusion says the Great Tribulation "was not encapsulated in 70 AD" (p. 63). I addressed Daniel 12:7 in Chapter 6. Two texts from Revelation belong here.

John introduces himself as already inside the tribulation: "I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ" (Revelation 1:9). The kingdom and the tribulation were both present realities to John and his readers. He warns Smyrna, "ye shall have tribulation ten days" (2:10), and Philadelphia of "the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth" (3:10), an hour that, in a book of things "shortly to come to pass," was coming on them, and when the great multitude appears, the elder says, "These are they which came out of great tribulation" (7:14). Jesus said the great tribulation would be in Judea, when the abomination stood in the holy place, within that generation (Matthew 24:15–21, 34). Revelation's readers were in it. That is the reading I find most faithful, and I hold it because Revelation 1:9 says "companion in tribulation" in the present tense.

Revelation tells us who came through that tribulation, and it tells us in harvest language that has a calendar built into it. Before the judgments fall, an angel cries, "Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel" (Revelation 7:3–4). The picture is Ezekiel 9, where God sends a man through Jerusalem to "set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof" (Ezekiel 9:4) before the executioners are loosed on the city. Chilton, a partial preterist, identifies the source: "The primary Old Testament background for St. John's imagery is Ezekiel 9:1–7, which shows God commissioning executioners to destroy everyone in the city of Jerusalem . . . The godly are marked for protection, in order that the apostates in Jerusalem may be destroyed" (*Days of Vengeance*, p. 205). A remnant from the tribes of Israel, sealed before Jerusalem is judged, that is the first-century Jewish church, and immediately after them John sees "a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations" (7:9), the ones who "came out of great tribulation" (7:14). Chilton again: "the sealed Remnant of Israel is the holy seed, the 'first fruits' (14:4) of the new Church, destined to expand into an innumerable multitude gathered in worship before the Throne in heaven" (*Days of Vengeance*, p. 214). Pete's own Chapter 8 says the church is the holy nation into which Jew and Gentile are gathered. Revelation 7 is that gathering, drawn in the order it happened: the remnant of the tribes first, then the nations, through the tribulation.

Then John names the remnant's status: "These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb" (Revelation 14:4). Firstfruits is not a decorative word. It is a date on Israel's calendar. "When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest unto the priest: and he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD . . . on the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it" (Leviticus 23:10–11). The sheaf was waved at Passover; the firstfruits loaves were offered seven weeks later at Pentecost; the harvest was gathered the same season. Firstfruits, by

definition, come *weeks* before the harvest they belong to, not centuries. Paul uses the word that way of Christ: "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept . . . But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming" (1 Corinthians 15:20, 23), raised, as it happens, on the day the sheaf was waved.

James uses it of his readers, and look who they are: "James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad" (James 1:1). "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures" (1:18). The twelve tribes, scattered, redeemed, called firstfruits, the same people John saw sealed from the tribes and called firstfruits unto God and the Lamb. James closes his letter where he opened it, at harvest: "Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth . . . Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh" (5:7–8).

Don Preston puts the sequence in one sentence: "Christ was the first fruit of the first fruit, they were the ensuing first fruit of the harvest, and they were living in the last days before the harvest at Christ's parousia (James 5:6–10) which had drawn near." And the connection to Revelation: "Just as James was writing to the twelve tribes scattered abroad, and referred to them as the first fruit of God's New Creation, in Revelation John saw the 144,000 out of the twelve tribes. And who were they? They were the first fruit" (Don K. Preston, "The First Fruit of the Resurrection #1," DonKPreston.com, May 15, 2018). Chilton had drawn the same line years earlier: "the New Testament uses firstfruits to describe the Church of the Last Days, the 'first-generation' Church (Rom. 16:5; 1 Cor. 16:15), especially the faithful Remnant from the twelve tribes of Israel (James 1:1, 18)" (*Days of Vengeance*, p. 357).

Now put the pieces in order and watch what the timing does. Christ is the firstfruits of the firstfruits, raised on the day of the wave-sheaf. The first-generation believers from the twelve tribes are the firstfruits, offered at Pentecost. They are sealed before the judgment, they come out of the great tribulation, and ten verses after John calls them firstfruits he sees the harvest itself, the same harvest I traced from Matthew 16:27 through Matthew 13 in Chapter 5: "one sat like unto the Son of man . . . Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe" (Revelation 14:14–15).

Firstfruits in verse 4; harvest in verse 15; "the time is at hand" on the cover of the book. This is where Pete's "final crisis at the end of the present millennial reign" (p. 63) breaks against the calendar Scripture itself supplies. Israel never waved a sheaf in the spring for a harvest that would not be reaped for two thousand years. A firstfruit that precedes its harvest by twenty centuries is not a firstfruit of anything; the word has lost its meaning, exactly as "shortly" and "this generation" lose theirs. The men James wrote to were the firstfruits *because the harvest was that season*, the harvest Jesus described in Matthew 13 as "the end of the world," the end of the age, with the angels as reapers, and dated in Matthew 24 to "this generation." Preston presses

the argument one step further than timing, that if the firstfruits were not raised from biological death, the harvest they anticipated was not a biological resurrection either, and I hold that with him, as a full-preterist reading, but the timing point stands on its own, and it needs no system: firstfruits and harvest belong to one season. Pete's document mentions the great tribulation as future and never mentions the firstfruits who came out of it.

Pete says the church is not removed from the final testing but endures it. I agree. The first-century church endured it. Its name was the Neronian persecution and the Jewish war, and it fell on the generation Jesus said it would.

One resurrection hope: at whose "last day"?

Pete writes that dispensationalism "fragments the resurrection where Scripture points to the last day" (p. 43). I agree that Scripture points to the last day, and I want to ask what day that was.

Jesus said He would raise His people "at the last day" (John 6:39, 40, 44, 54), and Martha knew the doctrine: "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day" (John 11:24). The last day of what? The apostles said they were living in "the last days" (Hebrews 1:2), "the last time" (1 John 2:18), "these last times" (1 Peter 1:20), with "the ends of the world" come upon them (1 Corinthians 10:11) and Christ appearing "in the end of the world" (Hebrews 9:26). If those were the last days of the old covenant age, and I argued in Chapter 4, from Moses' own definition of Israel's latter days in Deuteronomy 31–32, that no other reading makes the word "last" mean anything, then the last day was that age's last day, and the resurrection Jesus placed on the last day belongs to the end of that age. That is where Daniel 12:7 placed it too. I offer this as a reading, and I know what it costs; Chapter 9 pays the bill, but it is the reading that keeps Pete's "one resurrection hope" attached to the day Jesus named.

Shadow to substance runs one way, including for the coming and the resurrection

The best paragraph in Pete's chapter is this one:

"When a system insists that the prophetic hope requires a return to those shadows, it moves against the direction of biblical revelation. Scripture does not move from Christ back to animal sacrifices, from the living temple back to a building, from the blood of Jesus back to memorial offerings, from the royal priesthood of believers back to old covenant priestly structures, or from the heavenly reign of Christ back to a merely earthly throne." (p. 41)

I would only ask Pete to follow the trajectory the whole way. The direction of revelation is from earthly to heavenly, from shadow to substance, from the temple made with hands to the people in whom God dwells. He accepts that direction for the temple, the priesthood, the sacrifices, the

nation, the land, and the throne. He stops it at the coming, the resurrection, and the consummation, and reverses it there: the coming must be a visible descent, the resurrection must be bodies from graves, the consummation must be an event on the calendar of the physical world. Those are the very things he has just said revelation does not move back toward. I am not claiming that this settles the resurrection question; I am claiming that Pete's own principle, "That is progression, not regression" (p. 41), should at least make him ask whether the New Testament's language about the coming and the resurrection is the substance or the shadow. Hebrews 12:22–28 gives the answer for the kingdom: "Ye are come unto mount Sion . . . we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved." The saints had come to the heavenly city. That is the direction. Pete's "final consummation" turns around and walks back down the mountain.

Chapter 9: Present Millennialism. The Kingdom We Share, the Consummation We Do Not, and the Question I Owe Pete an Honest Answer On

I said in my note on method that I could have written much of Pete's ninth chapter. Let me prove it by quoting it.

"When Jesus came, He did not announce a kingdom that had no present reality. He did not preach a kingdom that had been postponed. He did not tell His disciples that the Kingdom would remain absent until a distant earthly age. He came preaching the Kingdom of God." (p. 45)

"The outpouring of the Holy Ghost was not evidence that the Kingdom had failed to arrive. It was evidence that Christ had been exalted. The King had ascended. The King had received the promise. The King had poured out His Spirit upon His people." (p. 46)

"The Kingdom, therefore, is not absent. It is not waiting for a future earthly age in order to begin. It is present now because the King reigns now." (p. 47)

Mark 1:15, Matthew 12:28, Luke 17:20–21, Acts 2:33 and 36, Colossians 1:13, Revelation 1:5–6 and 5:9–10, every text Pete brings for the present Kingdom is a text I bring for it. The saints are kings and priests now. The millennium is not a future earthly interval. Christ "reigns in the midst of His enemies" (p. 50). All of it, yes.

Where is the disagreement? Pete states it in one line: "The Kingdom itself is not future. Its consummation is future." (p. 47) And he lists what the consummation contains: "the visible return of Jesus Christ, the resurrection of the dead, the gathering together of the saints, the final judgment, the destruction of death, or the consummation of all things" (p. 47). He says Present Millennialism "does not spiritualize away" any of them (p. 47).

Three things need saying about that list, and then I owe Pete a straight answer on the resurrection.

First: the consummation, too, was dated

Every one of the items on Pete's list is something the New Testament places on a first-century clock. I have been listing the time-texts throughout this response and will not repeat them all, but the ones that speak of the *end* are the ones that matter here.

"Then cometh the end," Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15:24. Five chapters earlier, to the same church, he had said "the ends of the world are come" upon them (1 Corinthians 10:11), literally the ends of the ages. Peter: "But the end of all things is at hand" (1 Peter 4:7). Jesus was asked

about "the end of the world," the end of the age, and answered with "this generation" (Matthew 24:3, 34). Hebrews says Christ appeared "in the end of the world" (9:26). Even Romans 8, which Pete's companion study says "seals the argument" for a future redemption, is dated by Paul in the sentence that opens it: "the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us" (8:18), where "shall be revealed" renders the participle *mellousan*, "about to be," the same verb Paul used at his trial for the resurrection that was "about to be" (Acts 24:15, *mellein*). I do not develop Romans 8 further here; I note only that the groaning creation of 8:19–23 was waiting for something Paul called near. *Dynamic Prophecy* never cites 1 Corinthians 15 at all, and never engages any of these. "Its consummation is future" is asserted against the only texts that speak of when the consummation would be.

Second: Revelation 20 is inside a book that says "at hand"

Pete reads the thousand years as "the symbolic period of Christ's present Kingdom rule" from the ascension to the visible return (p. 48). I agree that the number is symbolic; so, refreshingly, does Pete, which means neither of us is bound to make it long. The question is where the book places it. Revelation 20 sits between "the time is at hand" in 1:3 and "the time is at hand" in 22:10, and everything after the thousand years, Satan loosed, the camp of the saints compassed, the dead judged, death and hell cast into the lake of fire, the New Jerusalem descending, is part of the "things which must shortly come to pass."

The full-preterist reading, which Michael Sullivan has laid out in detail, is that the millennium is the transition period between the cross and the fall of Jerusalem, the "already/not yet" of the apostolic generation, and that Paul's "the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly" (Romans 16:20) is the crushing of Revelation 20 and Genesis 3:15 announced as near. Don Preston presses the same text: "in chapter 13:11–12, inspiration promised the anticipated day was 'at hand;' and in chapter 16:20 Paul told them God would 'bruise Satan under your feet shortly'" ("The Binding of Satan," FullPreterism.com). I hold this reading, and I will say honestly that it is the least intuitive part of full preterism to a reader coming to it cold. A "thousand years" that spans forty is a hard sell, but the alternative Pete offers is a "shortly" that spans two thousand, and between the two, I will take the reading that leaves John's own frame intact. Whichever way one goes, it is a reading, and Pete's chapter offers none of the book's time-frame to weigh against it.

Third: the label is not the problem; the method under it is

Pete's "Final Clarification" insists that "Present Millennialism is not amillennialism" (p. 68), and then concedes, honestly, "While amillennialists would also affirm most of this, the label is misleading" (p. 68). He says the real difference is hermeneutical: Present Millennialism is "built upon the principle of dynamic prophecy" (p. 68). I take him at his word, but that means the

distinctiveness of his position rests entirely on the method this response has been examining, a method that, as far as I can find, never engages a single New Testament time-statement. The label is not the problem. The method under the label is.

Acts 1:11: the strongest futurist text, and where I read it

The first item on Pete's list is "the visible return of Jesus Christ," and the text behind it, in his companion study rather than in *Dynamic Prophecy*, is Acts 1:11: "this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." He writes: "He ascended visibly and bodily. The promise is that He returns the same way" (*Refutation*, p. 3). I have said throughout this response that I would name the places where the futurist holds the better-looking text, and this is the first of them. Read cold, the verse says what Pete says it says. I owe him an answer rather than a wave, and here it is.

Start with what the men on the hill saw. Luke does not say Jesus rose until He was a speck. He says, "while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight" (Acts 1:9). A cloud took Him and hid Him, and the first readers of Luke knew which cloud, because Daniel had described it: "one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days... And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom" (Daniel 7:13–14). The disciples had just asked about the kingdom (Acts 1:6). The ascension was the answer. He went up in the glory-cloud to take the throne. That is not a full-preterist reading; DeMar and Chilton, partial preterists both, read Acts 1:9 that way: "At His ascension, Jesus had come up to the Ancient of Days 'with the clouds of heaven' to receive the kingdom from His Father (Mark 16:19; Acts 1:9)" (*Last Days Madness*, p. 123); "The Bible tells us exactly when Jesus came with the clouds of heaven: And after He had said these things, He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight (Acts 1:9)" (*Paradise Restored*, p. 98).

Then the angels: He "shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go." Luke wrote that sentence, and Luke had already told his readers what the Son of Man's coming in a cloud looks like and when it falls: "And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory... Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled" (Luke 21:27, 32). Same author, same cloud, with a date on it. Jesus had told the high priest the same thing and given it a start time: "Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven" (Matthew 26:64). I made the case in Chapter 5 that "hereafter" is *ap' arti*, "from now on," and that Pete himself reads Caiaphas's "seeing" as a generation witnessing Christ's vindication rather than a man watching the sky. If that is what "see him coming in the clouds" means in Matthew 26, it is what it means in Acts 1, and the one who wrote "in like manner" is the one who wrote "this generation shall not pass away."

That is the idiom of a cloud-coming everywhere in the prophets. "Behold, the LORD rideth upon a swift cloud, and shall come into Egypt: and the idols of Egypt shall be moved at his presence" (Isaiah 19:1), and the instrument of that coming was the Assyrian army. God had always come on a cloud against a nation, and nobody in Egypt looked up and saw Him. He went up in the cloud of glory to receive the kingdom; He came in the clouds of judgment on the city that pierced Him, and John says that is who was promised the sight: "every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him" (Revelation 1:7). As they saw Him go, Jerusalem saw Him come. In like manner.

The phrase itself, *hon tropon*, will not carry the whole futurist case either. Preston: "While *hon tropon* can sometimes mean identicalness, it more often means general likeness, without specificity. For instance, in Matthew 23:37, Jesus said he had desired to gather Jerusalem 'as (*hon tropon*) a mother hen gathers her chicks.' Surely no one would argue that Jesus wanted to gather Jerusalem under his literal arm!" (Don K. Preston, "What About Acts 1?," FullPreterism.com, August 30, 2009). Preston also notes that the men who press "identical manner" do not hold it themselves: He left silently and to a handful of witnesses, and they expect Him to come with a trumpet and to every eye on earth.

Now the flank at full strength, because Pete is entitled to it. *Hon tropon* stresses manner, and the manner included "while they beheld." The futurist's best line is: they watched a body rise, so they must watch a body descend. My answer is Matthew 26:64 and Revelation 1:7. The watching was promised to the generation that watched Him go, "from now on," and Jesus defined the seeing as seeing the Son of Man come on the clouds while Caiaphas lived. I would add that the angels' question, "why stand ye gazing up into heaven?" is a strange rebuke to give men whose whole duty, on Pete's reading, was to keep watching the sky. That is the way I read Acts 1:11, and I read it inside the timing Jesus and Luke gave rather than apart from it. It is a reading, not a refutation, and the burden it carries is the one Pete named: on my view no one in AD 70 saw a body in the air, and I say the text never promised one. He will say that is redefining "see." I say it is letting Jesus define it, in the one place He told a man when the seeing would begin. The reader has both, with the verses, and can judge.

The resurrection: what I believe, what it rests on, what it costs

Here is the objection Sproul raised against "radical preterism" in the same foreword I quoted for the time-texts: it "faces serious difficulties with crucial issues, such as the believer's experience of the resurrection of the body (1 Corinthians 15)" (*And It Came to Pass*, p. vii). Pete's document asserts a future resurrection rather than arguing for it, but the assertion is the strongest card in his hand, and I said I would not bluff about it, so let me lay out what I believe, what it rests on, and what it costs.

What it rests on. Daniel 12:2 is the clearest Old Testament resurrection text, and Daniel 12:7 dates it: "when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished." I made that argument in Chapter 6. Jesus tied the resurrection to "the last day" (John 6:39–54), and the apostles said they were in the last days. Jesus said in John 5:25, "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live," and three verses later, "the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice" (5:28), the same hour, arriving in stages. I read "the graves" there as the realm of the dead, Sheol, the "death and hell" that give up their dead in Revelation 20:13, rather than as cemeteries; I note against myself that John's word, *mnēmeion*, is the word he uses for Lazarus's tomb and for Christ's, so that reading has to be argued from the Old Testament background (Ezekiel 37:12–13, where God opens Israel's "graves" and the graves are the exile) and not assumed. Paul, defending the resurrection before Agrippa, called it "the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers" and "the hope of Israel" (Acts 26:6–8; 28:20), not a separate hope but corporate Israel's own, and when he tells the Corinthians what the resurrection will accomplish, he quotes the prophets: "then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" (1 Corinthians 15:54–55). The sayings that are written are Isaiah 25:8, spoken over Zion's mountain, and Hosea 13:14, God's promise to ransom Israel "from the power of the grave." The resurrection Paul preached was the fulfillment of Israel's Scriptures, and Israel's Scriptures had a terminus: the shattering of the holy people. Add that Paul, at his trial, said "there shall be a resurrection of the dead" using the Greek verb *mellō*: Young's Literal Translation renders it "there is about to be a rising again of the dead" (Acts 24:15), and that Revelation, in a book "at hand," shows "death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them" (20:13).

What I believe it was. The resurrection of AD 70 was the raising of God's covenant people out of the death that reigned from Adam and was given its "sting" by the Law, "The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law" (1 Corinthians 15:56), into the life of the New Covenant; the emptying of Hades; the end of the waiting; the opening of the presence of God. Preston, Sullivan, and David Green have each worked this out at length, and I cite them as the men who hold it. For the individual believer since, the hope is not a future exit from a grave but what Paul already described: "absent from the body, and . . . present with the Lord" (2 Corinthians 5:8). "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth" (Revelation 14:13).

What it costs, plainly. Four things, and I will not soften them.

Second Timothy 2:18. Paul names Hymenaeus and Philetus, "who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some." I say the resurrection is past. The surface reading is against me and I know it. The full-preterist answer, Green and Sullivan make it, is that Paul condemned a *timing* error, not a description of the resurrection's nature: they said it was past when it was still future, some years before AD 70, and

in doing so cut the believers off from the hope that was still ahead of them. Paul's silence about the *nature* of their error, in a passage where he names the error, is the hinge of that reading. It is a defensible reading. It is not a knock-down, and I will not call it one. What I will note is that Keith Mathison, the editor of the standard Reformed volume against full preterism, conceded that the verse "cannot be used to criticize hyper-preterism until . . . [it can be] demonstrated from other texts that nothing of the sort occurred in A.D. 70" (Keith A. Mathison, *When Shall These Things Be?*, p. 194, as quoted by Sullivan, "What About Hymenaeus and Philetus?"). Even the prosecution grants that the verse does not settle the question by itself.

Everyone who has died since. If the resurrection was the emptying of Hades in AD 70, what of the believer who dies today? I gave my answer above, the door Christ opened stays open, and the believer walks through it, and I gave Pete's side its due in a post some weeks ago: the futurist has the mirror question of what a believer already "with the Lord" still needs a resurrection *for*. If one answers instead that the dead sleep until the resurrection, the question only moves: then the faithful of Hebrews 11, who "received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect" (11:39–40), have waited two thousand years past the "little while" the same writer promised them in Hebrews 10:37. Both views carry homework here. I claim only that mine is not obviously heavier. It also fits the kingdom that Daniel said would never be destroyed and that Isaiah said would increase without end (Daniel 2:44; Isaiah 9:7): the old covenant faithful, the apostles, every believer who has died since, and every believer still to come enter the same presence by the same door.

The spiritual body. Paul's "spiritual body" in 1 Corinthians 15:44 is, on the grammar, as N. T. Wright has argued at length, a body animated by the Spirit rather than an immaterial one, and Jesus' risen body was touched and ate fish. I do not deny either. The full-preterist claim is not that Christ's body was immaterial; it is that the corporate resurrection of the covenant people is what 1 Corinthians 15 is about and Paul develops that specifically from Hosea, and that Christ's own bodily rising is its firstfruits and guarantee. Whether that reading does justice to verses 35–49 is the fairest place for a critic to press, and I would rather have that argument in the open than pretend it is not there.

Nineteen centuries. The church has confessed a future bodily resurrection since the creeds. Full preterism has to say the church misread the timing for a very long time. That is a heavy thing to say, and I say it only because the same church, for most of the same centuries, read Matthew 24:34 as something other than a generation, a reading that Gentry, DeMar, Sproul, and the partial preterists generally now say was mistaken. Preston's argument is that the fathers lost audience relevance early and never recovered it ("What About the Creeds and Church History?," FullPreterism.com). I find that persuasive. I do not find it costless.

That is the honest ledger. Pete's list of what remains future is, to my reading, a list of things the New Testament dated, described in Israel's covenantal categories, and located at the end of the age the apostles said they were living in. I could be wrong about the resurrection; if I am, the texts above are where the error would be found, and I would rather be shown it there than have it assumed by a pattern. What I am confident of is narrower: that nothing in *Dynamic Prophecy* engages those texts, and that "its consummation is future" cannot be established by a hermeneutic that never asks the New Testament when.

Chapter 10: The Seven Churches. Patterns Applied, and a Coming Promised to Them

Pete's tenth chapter is pastoral, and it is good. He shows that Christ addresses the seven churches in the vocabulary of the Old Testament, candlesticks, Balaam, Jezebel, manna, the tree of life, the rod of iron, white garments, the book of life, the key of David, the new name, and that "the prophetic patterns already revealed in Scripture may be applied by Christ to real spiritual conditions among His people" (p. 53). He is careful to say "This does not create new Scripture" (p. 56), and careful to say that the patterns are "diagnostic" (p. 56) rather than predictive. I have no argument with any of that. A church can be Laodicean. A leader can operate in a Jezebel pattern. Christ still walks among the candlesticks.

I want to add only what the chapter leaves out, because the letters to the seven churches contain the one thing this whole response has been about, and they contain it in Christ's own voice.

The coming promised to the seven churches

To Ephesus: "Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent" (2:5). Pete quotes this verse (p. 54) and rightly calls it "covenant-warning language." Notice the tense and the audience: *I will come unto thee quickly*. To Ephesus.

To Pergamos: "Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth" (2:16).

To Thyatira: "But that which ye have already hold fast till I come" (2:25).

To Sardis: "If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee" (3:3).

To Philadelphia: "Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown" (3:11). Again: "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth" (3:10), the Greek says the hour is *about to come* (*mellousēs*), and "all the world" is the *oikoumenē*, the inhabited Roman world.

To Laodicea: "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock" (3:20), the same image James used of the Judge who "standeth before the door" (James 5:9).

Seven real churches in Asia, addressed by name, told that Christ was coming to them quickly, told to hold fast *till* He came, told that the hour of trial was about to come on the Roman world. Pete's chapter applies the *patterns* in these letters to churches today, and I agree that they apply,

but the *promise* in these letters, "I come quickly," was made to those seven churches, and Pete's method does not say what it meant to them. If Christ's "I will come unto thee quickly" to Ephesus was a covenantal coming in judgment on that church, then Christ's coming in Revelation can be a covenantal coming in judgment, and the book's "I come quickly" at 22:7, 12, and 20 is the same voice saying the same thing to the same readers. If, on the other hand, "I come quickly" to Ephesus meant the visible Second Coming, then it was not quick. Pete's system has a third option, a covenantal coming to Ephesus and a visible coming at the end, and I will not pretend it does not; what I ask is where the letters themselves signal the change of referent, because the same voice says "I come quickly" in the letters and at the close of the book, and the text never tells the reader it has switched comings.

Those seven churches no longer exist. A futurist reader has to make that fact fit, and the only way to do it is to say that Christ's "I come quickly" had no relevance to the churches it was addressed to.

The promises to the overcomer

Pete says the promises to the overcomer "reach backward into Old Testament imagery and forward into final consummation" (p. 62): the tree of life, hidden manna, the rod of iron, white garments, the pillar in the temple, the name of the New Jerusalem. He reads the New Jerusalem as still to come, so the promises are, on his reading, deferred.

Look at the one he singles out for Philadelphia: "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God" (3:12). Hebrews told first-century believers they had already come to that city (12:22). Paul said it was already their mother (Galatians 4:26). The temple in which the overcomer is a pillar is the temple Pete's own Chapter 8 identifies as the church, the living temple of 1 Peter 2:5. The promises to the overcomer are not deferred to the end of the world. They are the possession of the one who overcomes, in the city that has come down.

The New Jerusalem: present tense, on Chilton's reading too

Everything in that list runs through one question: *when* does the city come down? Pete's answer is the future. "Revelation finally presents the New Jerusalem, the eternal dwelling place of God's redeemed people" (p. 33). "The Church is the temple of God now, but Revelation still points forward to the New Jerusalem and the eternal dwelling of God with His people" (p. 47). I showed in Chapter 7 that John names the city as the bride (21:9–10), that Hebrews tells first-century believers "ye are come" to it (12:22), and that Paul calls it "the mother of us all" (Galatians 4:26). What I want to add here is what David Chilton did with the new heavens, the new earth, and the

New Jerusalem, because Chilton was a partial preterist who held a future Second Coming when he wrote it, and he still could not read Revelation 21 as a postponed city.

He opens his chapter on Revelation 21–22 by heading off the reflex:

"Well, finally we've gotten to a place in Revelation where everyone's agreed, right? 'The new heaven and earth'—that's got to be literal, referring to eternity after the end of the world, right? Wrong. Or, to be absolutely precise, I should say: Yes and no. . . . But what is important is that these things are true now. Heaven is a continuation and perfection of what is true of the Church in this life. . . . John was telling the early Church of present realities, of blessings that existed already and would be on the increase as the gospel extended and renewed the earth." (David Chilton, *Paradise Restored*, p. 193)

Then he does what Pete's method never does: he asks where the phrase "new heaven and new earth" came from, and he reads the source. Isaiah 65:17–25. Isaiah's new heavens and earth have people building houses, planting vineyards, bearing children, and dying at a hundred:

"This cannot be speaking of heaven, or of a time after the end of the world; for in this 'new heaven and earth' there is still death (at a very advanced age—the lifetime of a tree'), people are building, planting, working, and having children." (*Paradise Restored*, p. 194)

That is the argument I made in my own post on Revelation 21–22 some weeks ago, and I did not know until I went back to Chilton that he had made it first. Then the city itself:

"No, it's not a space station. It is something which should be much more thrilling: it is the Church. The Bride is not just in the City; the Bride is the City (cf. Rev. 21:9–10). We are in the New Jerusalem now. Proof? The Bible categorically tells us: 'You have come to Mount Zion and to the City of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem . . .' (Heb. 12:22–23; cf. Gal. 4:26; Rev. 3:12). The New Jerusalem is a present reality; it is said to be coming down from heaven because the origin of the Church is heavenly." (*Paradise Restored*, p. 195)

The tears, which is where the futurist reader always plants his flag: "Ultimately, this will be fulfilled in heaven to the utmost extent. But we must recognize that it is true already. God has wiped away our tears" (*Paradise Restored*, p. 195). His conclusion: "definitively and progressively, it is true now. We are living in the new heaven and the new earth; we are citizens of the New Jerusalem. The old things have passed away, and all things have become new" (*Paradise Restored*, p. 196). He put it in his forty-five theses at the back of the book: "The New Creation has already begun: The Bible describes our salvation in Christ, both now and in eternity, as 'a new heaven and a new earth'" (*Paradise Restored*, p. 215), and "The 'New Jerusalem,' the City of God, is the Church, now and forever" (*Paradise Restored*, p. 216).

In *The Days of Vengeance* he went further and dated the arrival. He takes 2 Peter 3 as "the definitive New Testament text on the 'new heaven and earth,'" sets it in "the forty-year transitional period (cf. Heb. 8:13) between Christ's Ascension and the destruction of the Old Covenant Temple," and concludes: "Just as God had destroyed the 'world' of that day by the Flood, so would He destroy the 'world' of first-century Israel by fire in the fall of Jerusalem. St. Peter describes this as the destruction of 'the present heavens and earth' (2 Pet. 3:7), making way for 'new heavens and a new earth' (v. 13). Because of the 'collapsing-universe' terminology used in this passage, many have mistakenly assumed that St. Peter is speaking of the final end of the physical heaven and earth, rather than the dissolution of the Old Covenant world order" (*Days of Vengeance*, p. 540). He then brings in John Owen, the seventeenth-century Puritan, no preterist of any modern stripe, who asked where God had ever *promised* new heavens and a new earth, found the promise in Isaiah 65:17, and answered that "this is a prophecy of Gospel times only; and that the planting of these new heavens is nothing but the creation of Gospel ordinances, to endure forever" (Owen, quoted in *Days of Vengeance*, p. 543). Chilton's verdict: "According to Isaiah, this New Creation cannot be the eternal state, since it contains birth and death, building and planting (65:20–23). The 'new heavens and earth' promised to the Church comprise the age of the Gospel's triumph . . . Once the Lord comes to destroy the scaffolding of the Old Covenant structure, the New Covenant Temple will be left in its place, and the victorious march of the Church will be unstoppable" (*Days of Vengeance*, p. 543).

I will be exact about Chilton, as I have been about everyone else. In these books he kept a future Second Coming and a consummation "in eternity," and he says so on the same pages: "that which is to be absolutely and completely true in eternity is definitively and progressively true now" (*Days of Vengeance*, p. 537). I do not hide that, and I do not cite him for full preterism, but look at what he has already conceded, as a partial preterist writing the standard preterist commentary on Revelation. The new heavens and new earth of Isaiah 65 and 2 Peter 3 are the New Covenant order, and they arrived when the old order was dissolved in the fall of Jerusalem. The New Jerusalem is the church. It is coming down *because the church's origin is heavenly*, not because a city is scheduled to land. We are citizens of it now. What Chilton leaves for "eternity" is the believer's experience of heaven to the utmost extent, not a future descent of the city, and not a future arrival of the new creation. Pete's method says "Revelation still points forward to the New Jerusalem" (p. 47). The partial preterist who wrote the book on Revelation says we are living in it. Between them stands one question, and it is the same question as everywhere else in this response: does the text say when? "The time is at hand" (22:10), and "Behold, I make all things new . . . It is done" (21:5–6).

What the chapter establishes

Pete's summary sentence is: "The same Christ who holds the key of David also knocks at the door" (p. 62). Yes, and the same Christ who knocked at Laodicea's door said He was coming to Ephesus quickly. The seven letters are the front porch of the book of Revelation, and everything in the book is addressed to the people on that porch. They were told to hold fast till He came. He told them it would be quick. A method that cannot say what "quickly" meant to Ephesus is not yet a method for reading Revelation. It is a method for reading Revelation as if Ephesus were not there.

Chapter 11: Conclusion. Two Hermeneutics, One Question, Six Questions for Pete

Pete closes his study with a claim about method: "This is not a theory imposed upon the Bible from the outside. It is the Bible's own method of revealing prophecy." (p. 63) And a claim about what it protects against: "It does not force every prophecy entirely into the first century, as though all prophetic hope ended with the destruction of Jerusalem. It does not postpone the Kingdom entirely into the future, as though Christ is not reigning now." (p. 64)

I have tried, chapter by chapter, to show that the first claim is not demonstrated and the second is not the choice. Let me put the two hermeneutics side by side as plainly as I can.

Pete's hermeneutic

A prophecy may have a genuine historical fulfillment that is nonetheless not final; the earlier fulfillment "establishes the pattern" and a "greater" and then "final" fulfillment completes it (p. 2). The evidence for this is Old Testament typology, Passover, the Exodus, the temple, Joshua the high priest, and the recurrence of Day-of-the-Lord idiom across many oracles. The principle is then applied to the New Testament: AD 70 was "the shadow" and the Second Coming is "the substance" (p. 27); the tribulation, resurrection, gathering, and judgment "belong to the final fulfillment" (p. 25). Whether a given New Testament fulfillment is final is decided by whether it matched the expected form, "the Son of man did not visibly appear," "the trumpet did not sound" (p. 25). The New Testament's time-statements play no role in the decision. None of them is cited.

The apostolic hermeneutic, as I understand it

Types and shadows are real, and inspired writers identify them: the Law and its ordinances were shadows; Christ and His church are the body (Hebrews 10:1; Colossians 2:17). The movement is from shadow to substance and does not reverse. The "latter days" were defined by Moses as the days of Israel's terminal, "perverse and crooked generation" and her day of vengeance (Deuteronomy 31:29; 32:5, 20, 35–36), and they were the last days the apostles said they lived in (Hebrews 1:2; 1 Peter 1:20; 1 John 2:18). The consummation of that age, the coming of the Son of Man in judgment, the end of the covenant order, the resurrection of Israel's hope, the arrival of the heavenly Jerusalem, was placed by Jesus within His generation (Matthew 24:34; Luke 21:22, 32) and by the apostles at hand, near, shortly, about to be (Romans 13:12; 1 Peter 4:7; James 5:8–9; Hebrews 10:37; Revelation 1:1, 3; 22:6, 10). Whether a fulfillment is final is decided by whether the text says so and by whether the time-statement has been honored. A pattern may illustrate; it may not override.

The one question, answered

I asked at the start: who decides when a fulfillment is "not final"? Pete's document, read in full, answers: the interpreter, by comparing the event to the form he expected and finding it short. That is what "the Son of man did not visibly appear in power and great glory before all nations" (p. 25) means as a method. The expectation is supplied from outside the text, the event is measured against it, and the shortfall is declared a shadow.

The apostolic answer is: the text decides, and the text has already decided. Jesus said all these things would be fulfilled in that generation. Luke says the days of vengeance were the days in which all things written would be fulfilled. Hebrews says the old covenant was ready to vanish and the coming would not tarry. John says the time was at hand and was forbidden to seal it. The Son of Man came to the Ancient of Days, the tribes of the land saw the sign of His enthronement in the ruin of the house that condemned Him, and the messengers went out with the trumpet of the gospel to gather the elect from the four winds into the New Jerusalem that had come down. The firstfruits from the twelve tribes were gathered in that season and the harvest followed in the same season. The old covenant heavens and earth passed away, the new came, and the city, the bride, the church, descended with her gates open and her invitation still going out. That is the fulfillment. It does not become a shadow because we, at a distance of nineteen centuries, expected it to look like a Ferrari in a parking lot.

Six questions for Pete

I said I would hand back the burden of proof with precise questions rather than a wall of verses. Here they are. I will be glad to hear the answers, and I will publish them alongside this if Pete gives them.

1. **Name one New Testament text in which an inspired writer identifies a New Testament fulfillment as a shadow of a later, greater fulfillment.** Every example in *Dynamic Prophecy* runs from the Old Testament to Christ. The principle needs one that runs from the first century to the end of the world. Which is it?
2. **In the Olivet Discourse, which verse describes the AD 70 "genuine covenantal coming in judgment" that you affirm (p. 43), if Matthew 24:30 is the final coming?** Jesus was asked about His coming (24:3). Where in His answer is the coming that you say happened?
3. **What does "this generation" mean in Matthew 24:34, if not what it means in Matthew 23:36 one chapter earlier?** And if it means the same thing, which of "all these things" in verses 4–31 does it not cover?

4. **What in Daniel 12 or Matthew 24 moves the time of trouble and the awakening of the dead past the point Daniel fixed, "when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people" (12:7)?** The holy people's power was scattered in AD 70. Daniel says all these things would be finished then. What text says otherwise?
5. **If "ye shall see the Son of man . . . coming in the clouds of heaven" in Matthew 26:64 means Caiaphas's generation would witness Christ's vindication and enthronement demonstrated, your reading, what in Matthew 24:30 requires "they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven" to mean a physical descent watched with the eyes?** The words are the same. The source text is the same. Where is the difference?
6. **Show any passage in which the Second Coming occurs at a different time than the resurrection and the judgment, and then show which of those three events Revelation 1:1–3 and 22:6–10 place outside "shortly" and "at hand."** If the coming, the resurrection, and the judgment converge, as you say they do (p. 42), and Revelation dates that convergence as near, then the whole cluster is dated. Which member of it is exempt, and by what text?

I would add a seventh that is not a question but an invitation. Pete's document says, rightly, that "Context, audience, covenant, language, genre, historical setting, and Apostolic interpretation all remain essential" (p. 5). I would ask him to write the chapter on *audience* and *Apostolic interpretation* of the time-texts that his study does not contain. If dynamic prophecy can survive Matthew 24:34, Luke 21:22, Hebrews 10:37, 1 Peter 4:7, and Revelation 22:10 read to their first audiences, then it can survive anything, and I will say so. If it cannot, then it is a pattern that lives only where the clocks are not looked at.

The last word to Scripture

Pete ends with a litany, "Christ reigns now. Christ will appear in glory. The saints are kings and priests now. The saints still await the redemption of the body." (p. 65), and I will end with a shorter one, all of it borrowed.

"Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." (Matthew 5:17–18)

"For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled." (Luke 21:22)

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

Jesus set the condition, named the day, and dated the generation. I did not put those three verses next to each other. He did. The only question is whether we will let Him.

Till all be fulfilled, and so it was...

Final Clarification: Full Preterism Is Not "Confining Prophecy to the Past"

Pete's study ends with a clarification of what Present Millennialism is not. Mine should too, because his document describes my position three times in words I would not use, and the description matters.

He says the error on my side is to "confine nearly every prophecy to the past, treating historical fulfillment as though it exhausts the whole meaning of the passage" (p. 2), to "force every prophecy entirely into the first century, as though all prophetic expectation ended with the destruction of Jerusalem" (p. 4), and to hold "as though all prophetic hope ended with the destruction of Jerusalem" (p. 64).

I do not believe prophetic hope ended in AD 70. I believe it was *fulfilled* in AD 70, which is the opposite of ending, in fact, I connect it with Proverbs 13:12 **"Hope deferred maketh the heart sick: but when the desire cometh, it is a tree of life."** (a connection I owe to Michael Sullivan). Hope fulfilled is a tree of life. Let me say what full preterism affirms, so that the disagreement is with what I hold and not with a caricature.

The Kingdom continues. "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end" (Isaiah 9:7). The kingdom that came in the days of Rome's kings is the kingdom that "shall never be destroyed" (Daniel 2:44). Christ reigns, and His reign grows. Pete and I say this in the same words.

The gospel continues. The gathering of the elect from the four winds did not stop when the messengers first went out; it is the church's ongoing commission (Matthew 28:18–20). The nations still walk in the light of the city and the kings still bring their glory into it (Revelation 21:24).

The invitation continues. "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come" (Revelation 22:17). The gates are never shut (21:25). There are still people outside the city (22:15), which is why the bride still says "Come."

The believer's hope continues. Every person who dies in Christ goes to be with Him (2 Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23). Death has no sting for the one in Christ, because the resurrection that took away its sting has happened. That is not a lesser hope than a future graveside. It is the hope the apostles described.

Christ's presence continues. "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Matthew 28:20), unto the end of the age, and the age ended, and He did not leave. The New Jerusalem is where "the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them" (Revelation 21:3). That is the present tense of the church.

What full preterism says is *past* is specific: the covenant transition. The old order that was "ready to vanish away" vanished. The coming of the Son of Man in judgment on the city that pierced Him happened. The resurrection that was Israel's hope was realized. The judgment of "the quick and the dead" that Peter said Christ was "ready" to render (1 Peter 4:5) was rendered. The last days of that age came to their last day, and then the age that has no end began.

Pete says dynamic prophecy is "the hermeneutical bridge by which the prophetic Scriptures may be read faithfully, without denying either the present reality of Christ's Kingdom or the future hope of His appearing" (p. 5). I would offer a different bridge, and it is the one the apostles built: the Scriptures are read faithfully when the shadows are allowed to give way to the substance and the substance is not turned back into a shadow; when the audience is allowed to be the audience; and when "shortly" is allowed to mean shortly. That bridge holds the present Kingdom and it holds the fulfilled hope, and it does not require a single verse in the New Testament to have meant something other than what it said to the people who first read it.

What I would concede, so the record is clean

I said I would mark refutations from readings. Here is my own scorecard.

I think the argument from the word "see" in Matthew 24:30 is refuted by Pete's own reading of Matthew 26:64. I think the claim that Isaiah 13:10's idiom means one thing in Isaiah and another in Matthew 24:29 is unsupported by anything in the document. I think the absence of Matthew 24:34 from a seventy-one-page study of the Olivet Discourse leaves the method, as presented, untested against the one verse that tests it. Those are the three places where I would say Pete's case, as written, does not stand.

Everything else in this response is a reading offered against a reading. My placement of the resurrection is a reading. My reading of Revelation 20 is a reading. My treatment of Matthew 24:36–25:46 and of Joel 3 is a reading, and I said so where I made it. Pete's questions about 2 Timothy 2:18, the believers who have died since AD 70, the spiritual body, Acts 1:11, and nineteen centuries of confession are the real questions, and I answered them as honestly as I could in Chapter 9 without claiming more than the texts give me. I'm admittedly exploring so much of these texts after having spent most of my life in the pre-trib, rapture believing, Dispensationalist background that I believe is in significant error.

If Pete's next document engages the time-statements, I will read it as carefully as I read this one, and I will say in public where it lands. That is the only kind of disagreement worth having about the Word of God.

Appendix A: The Concessions Ledger

What Pete affirms in *Dynamic Prophecy*, in his words, that full preterism also affirms, and the narrow strip where we part. This is here so no reader mistakes the size of the disagreement.

Pete affirms (with page)	Full preterism
The temple's destruction, the siege, the flight to the mountains were "a genuine fulfillment of many of Jesus' warnings" (p. 24)	Agreed
Luke 21:20 "was fulfilled in AD 70 when the Roman armies surrounded Jerusalem" (p. 24)	Agreed
"There was a genuine covenantal coming in judgment against Jerusalem in AD 70" (p. 43)	Agreed, and it is the coming of Matthew 24:30
Isaiah 13:10's cosmic language described Babylon's historical fall and "was fulfilled in history" (p. 14)	Agreed, and Jesus quotes it for Jerusalem's
Daniel 7:13–14 is enthronement; Christ "already exalted, already reigning" (p. 29)	Agreed
Pentecost was a genuine fulfillment of Joel: "Peter said, 'This is that'" (p. 20)	Agreed
"It is present now because the King reigns now" (p. 47)	Agreed
The millennium is "the symbolic period of Christ's present Kingdom rule," not a future earthly age (p. 48)	Agreed that it is symbolic and not future; we differ on its span
The church is "the holy nation, the royal priesthood, and the one body of Christ in which believing Jews and Gentiles are gathered together" (p. 41)	Agreed, this is the gathering of Matthew 24:31
No rebuilt temple, no restored sacrifices, no separate destiny for national Israel (pp. 38–41)	Agreed
"One Christ, one redemption, one Kingdom, one people of God, one resurrection hope, one gathering together of the saints, and one final consummation" (p. 38)	Agreed, one coming, not two
"The text itself never announces these divisions. They are imposed upon it by the prophetic system being brought to the passage" (p. 4)	Agreed, including the division at Matthew 24:29
"The prophetic pattern does not move backward. It moves forward" (p. 41)	Agreed, including for the coming and the resurrection
No pre-tribulation rapture; the saints endure the	Agreed, the first-century saints endured it

Pete affirms (with page)	Full preterism
tribulation (p. 42)	
"Context, audience, covenant, language, genre, historical setting, and Apostolic interpretation all remain essential" (p. 5)	Agreed, and the time-statements are part of all seven
Where we part: "The Kingdom itself is not future. Its consummation is future" (p. 47); "It was the shadow. The Second Coming is the substance" (p. 27)	The consummation of the old covenant age, the coming, the resurrection, the judgment, was placed by Jesus and the apostles within their generation, and it came

Fifteen rows of agreement. One of disagreement. The one is about *when* the events Pete lists on page 47 were to occur, and whether a fulfillment dated by Jesus can be reopened as a shadow of another.

Appendix B: Index of Quotations from Dynamic Prophecy

Every quotation from Pete's study used in this response, in page order, so that any reader can check the wording and the context. Page numbers follow the pagination printed in the PDF. Quotations from our Facebook thread are identified as such in the text and are not repeated here.

- **p. 2.** "confine nearly every prophecy to the past, treating historical fulfillment as though it exhausts the whole meaning of the passage" (*Final Clarification*)
- **p. 3.** "Here, dynamic prophecy refers to God's method of progressively revealing one prophetic truth through types, shadows, historical events, covenantal judgments, preliminary fulfillments, greater fulfil..." (*Introduction*)
- **p. 3.** "It is not an artificial method imposed upon the Bible from the outside, nor is it a theological device invented to rescue a preferred system. It is a pattern demonstrated within the Bible itself." (*Introduction*)
- **p. 3.** "It explains why Jesus could speak of the destruction of Jerusalem and, in the same prophetic discourse, point beyond that judgment to His visible and glorious return. The near fulfillment validates..." (*Introduction*)
- **p. 3.** "nor is it a theological device invented to rescue a preferred system" (*Chapter 1*)
- **p. 4.** "Some separate Matthew 24 between AD 70 and the Second Coming, then insert an unstated thousand-year interval into the same discourse and push much of Matthew 25 into a distant future millennium, cr..." (*Chapter 5*)
- **p. 4.** "This is especially important in Matthew 24 and 25" (*Chapter 5*)
- **p. 4.** "a connected prophetic revelation in which near and final fulfillment can exist within the same context" (*Chapter 5*)
- **p. 4.** "The text itself never announces these divisions. They are imposed upon it by the prophetic system being brought to the passage." (*Chapter 8*)
- **p. 4.** "force every prophecy entirely into the first century, as though all prophetic expectation ended with the destruction of Jerusalem" (*Final Clarification*)
- **p. 4.** "The text itself never announces these divisions. They are imposed upon it by the prophetic system being brought to the passage" (*Appendix A*)
- **p. 5.** "Context, audience, covenant, language, genre, historical setting, and Apostolic interpretation all remain essential" (*Introduction*)
- **p. 5.** "the hermeneutical bridge by which the prophetic Scriptures may be read faithfully, without denying either the present reality of Christ's Kingdom or the future hope of His appearing" (*Final Clarification*)

- **p. 6.** "The Passover lamb was a real sacrifice offered in Egypt, yet it also pointed forward to Jesus Christ, 'the Lamb of God.' The Exodus was a real historical deliverance, yet it foreshadowed our redemp..." (*Chapter 1*)
- **p. 7.** "This principle applies not only to people, ceremonies, sacrifices, and institutions. It also applies to prophecy itself." (*Chapter 1*)
- **p. 7.** "The Day of the Lord comes upon individual nations throughout the Old Testament, yet those historical judgments point forward to the final Day of the Lord that will encompass the entire world." (*Chapter 3*)
- **p. 9.** "one of the clearest examples of dynamic prophecy" (*Chapter 2*)
- **p. 10.** "Joshua never sat upon a throne. He was a high priest, not a king. Under the Law of Moses, the offices of king and priest were deliberately kept separate. Joshua had no authority to reign as king ov..." (*Chapter 2*)
- **p. 11.** "Jesus Christ perfectly fulfills every detail. He is the Branch. He builds the true temple of God, not merely a building made with hands, but His Church, a spiritual house built of living stones." (*Chapter 2*)
- **p. 11.** "The first fulfillment was real. The greater fulfillment was greater. The final fulfillment belonged to Christ." (*Chapter 2*)
- **p. 11.** "Joshua was the sign. Jesus is the substance." (*Chapter 2*)
- **p. 12.** "God's prophetic word may begin in a present historical circumstance while reaching forward to something far greater." (*Chapter 2*)
- **p. 13.** "Initial fulfillments often become controversial precisely because they do not always line up with every detail in a final or exhaustive way. The problem is not that the prophecy failed, nor that th..." (*Chapter 1*)
- **pp. 13–14.** "Consider Isaiah's prophecy against Babylon: 'For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not..." (*Chapter 3*)
- **p. 15.** "The first error is to assume that because a prophecy had a genuine historical fulfillment, it can have no greater fulfillment beyond that event. This often leads to partial preterism, where many pr..." (*Chapter 3*)
- **p. 15.** "the historical judgment is not the complete fulfillment. . . . It is the shadow. The final Day of the Lord is the substance." (*Chapter 3*)
- **p. 16.** "the same prophetic pattern may appear in more than one historical setting, growing in significance until it reaches its final fulfillment" (*Chapter 3*)

- **p. 16.** "It moves forward toward the final and terrible Day of the Lord, when Jesus Christ will appear in glory, the dead will be raised, the saints will be gathered, the wicked will be judged." (*Chapter 3*)
- **p. 17.** "beautifully demonstrates the principle of dynamic prophecy" (*Chapter 4*)
- **p. 20.** "Peter's words are decisive. Pentecost was not merely similar to Joel's prophecy. It was not only an illustration or application. Peter said, 'This is that.' The outpouring of the Holy Ghost was a g..." (*Chapter 4*)
- **p. 21.** "Those events were not exhausted on the Day of Pentecost. The sun was not finally turned into darkness. The moon was not finally turned into blood. The great and terrible Day of the LORD did not arr..." (*Chapter 4*)
- **p. 21.** "The scope has widened dramatically. The judgment now involves 'all nations.'" (*Chapter 4*)
- **p. 23.** "If Pentecost was a real fulfillment, but not the final fulfillment, then prophecy cannot be collapsed into the first century alone. That undermines Preterism." (*Chapter 4*)
- **p. 24.** "The destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 was not an accidental historical event. It was a genuine fulfillment of many of Jesus' warnings. Jerusalem was surrounded by armies. The temple was destroyed...." (*Chapter 5*)
- **pp. 24–25.** "As the discourse progresses, Jesus speaks of events that clearly reach beyond the destruction of Jerusalem. He declares: 'Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened,...' (*Chapter 5*)
- **p. 24.** "Historically, this was fulfilled in AD 70 when the Roman armies surrounded Jerusalem and destroyed both the city and the temple." (*Chapter 5*)
- **p. 24.** "was fulfilled in AD 70 when the Roman armies surrounded Jerusalem" (*Chapter 6*)
- **p. 24.** "a genuine fulfillment of many of Jesus' warnings" (*Appendix A*)
- **p. 25.** "extend[s] beyond anything that occurred in AD 70" (*Chapter 3*)
- **p. 25.** "The trumpet did not sound for the final gathering of the saints" (*Chapter 5*)
- **p. 25.** "the Son of man did not visibly appear in power and great glory before all nations" (*Chapter 11*)
- **p. 26.** "This same principle is seen when Jesus stood in the synagogue and read from the prophet Isaiah. . . . Then He closed the book and said: 'This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.' — Luke..." (*Chapter 5*)
- **p. 27.** "It was the shadow. The Second Coming is the substance" (*Appendix A*)

- **p. 28.** "The beasts are not literal monsters. They represent kings and kingdoms" (*Chapter 6*)
- **p. 29.** "Daniel 7 gives the same truth from another angle. The beast kingdoms arise out of the earth, but their dominion is not final. Daniel sees the Son of man brought near before the Ancient of days, and..." (*Chapter 5*)
- **p. 29.** "Daniel 7 gives the same truth from another angle. The beast kingdoms arise out of the earth, but their dominion is not final. Daniel sees the Son of man brought near before the Ancient of days, and..." (*Chapter 6*)
- **p. 29.** "comes from God. It strikes the kingdoms of men, outlasts them, and grows into a mountain that fills the earth" (*Chapter 6*)
- **p. 29.** "The saints are given the Kingdom. These truths harmonize with the New Testament declaration that . . . His people have already been made kings and priests unto God" (*Chapter 6*)
- **p. 31.** "continues to appear throughout history until it reaches its final form" (*Chapter 6*)
- **p. 31.** "Daniel gives us the pattern. The New Testament carries it forward. Revelation brings it to completion." (*Chapter 6*)
- **p. 32.** "The Book of Revelation does not introduce an entirely new prophetic system. It does the exact opposite." (*Chapter 7*)
- **p. 32.** "in Revelation, Babylon becomes far more than one ancient city or empire. Babylon becomes the prophetic symbol of the worldwide false religious system united with political power in opposition to Go..." (*Chapter 7*)
- **p. 33.** "Revelation finally presents the New Jerusalem, the eternal dwelling place of God's redeemed people" (*Chapter 10*)
- **p. 35.** "Revelation cannot be rightly interpreted apart from the rest of Scripture" (*Chapter 7*)
- **p. 36.** "Revelation does not replace the prophetic witness of Scripture. It completes it." (*Chapter 7*)
- **p. 37.** "takes the unified prophetic pattern of Scripture and divides it into separate programs, separate peoples, separate hopes, separate comings, separate resurrections, and separate kingdoms" (*Chapter 8*)
- **p. 38.** "Scripture reveals one Christ, one redemption, one Kingdom, one people of God, one resurrection hope, one gathering together of the saints, and one final consummation at the appearing of Jesus Chris..." (*Chapter 8*)

- **p. 38.** "One Christ, one redemption, one Kingdom, one people of God, one resurrection hope, one gathering together of the saints, and one final consummation" (*Appendix A*)
- **p. 41.** "When a system insists that the prophetic hope requires a return to those shadows, it moves against the direction of biblical revelation. Scripture does not move from Christ back to animal sacrifice..." (*Chapter 8*)
- **p. 41.** "a return to earthly shadows: a rebuilt temple, renewed temple focus, Jewish-centered prophetic separation" (*Chapter 8*)
- **p. 41.** "The Church is not a parenthesis. The Church is not an accident. The Church is the blood-bought people of God, the temple of the Holy Ghost, the holy nation, the royal priesthood, and the one body o..." (*Chapter 8*)
- **p. 41.** "the holy nation, the royal priesthood, and the one body of Christ in which believing Jews and Gentiles are gathered together" (*Appendix A*)
- **p. 41.** "The prophetic pattern does not move backward. It moves forward" (*Appendix A*)
- **p. 42.** "a final time of trouble, a final conflict, and a final testing of God's people before the coming of the Lord" (*Chapter 8*)
- **p. 43.** "Dynamic prophecy preserves this unity. There have been historical comings of God in judgment. There was a genuine covenantal coming in judgment against Jerusalem in AD 70. But these historical judg..." (*Chapter 8*)
- **p. 43.** "There was a genuine covenantal coming in judgment against Jerusalem in AD 70." (*Chapter 5*)
- **p. 43.** "It divides the coming of Christ where Scripture presents one glorious appearing" (*Chapter 8*)
- **p. 43.** "fragments the resurrection where Scripture points to the last day" (*Chapter 8*)
- **p. 43.** "There was a genuine covenantal coming in judgment against Jerusalem in AD 70" (*Appendix A*)
- **p. 45.** "When Jesus came, He did not announce a kingdom that had no present reality. He did not preach a kingdom that had been postponed. He did not tell His disciples that the Kingdom would remain absent u..." (*Chapter 9*)
- **p. 46.** "The outpouring of the Holy Ghost was not evidence that the Kingdom had failed to arrive. It was evidence that Christ had been exalted. The King had ascended. The King had received the promise. The..." (*Chapter 9*)
- **p. 47.** "The Kingdom, therefore, is not absent. It is not waiting for a future earthly age in order to begin. It is present now because the King reigns now." (*Chapter 9*)
- **p. 47.** "The Kingdom itself is not future. Its consummation is future." (*Chapter 9*)

- **p. 47.** "the visible return of Jesus Christ, the resurrection of the dead, the gathering together of the saints, the final judgment, the destruction of death, or the consummation of all things" (*Chapter 9*)
- **p. 47.** "The Church is the temple of God now, but Revelation still points forward to the New Jerusalem and the eternal dwelling of God with His people" (*Chapter 10*)
- **p. 47.** "Revelation still points forward to the New Jerusalem" (*Chapter 10*)
- **p. 47.** "It is present now because the King reigns now" (*Appendix A*)
- **p. 47.** "The Kingdom itself is not future. Its consummation is future" (*Appendix A*)
- **p. 53.** "the prophetic patterns already revealed in Scripture may be applied by Christ to real spiritual conditions among His people" (*Chapter 10*)
- **p. 62.** "reach backward into Old Testament imagery and forward into final consummation" (*Chapter 10*)
- **p. 62.** "The same Christ who holds the key of David also knocks at the door" (*Chapter 10*)
- **p. 63.** "The Great Tribulation was not encapsulated in 70 AD, nor is it the doorway into a future earthly millennium; it is the final crisis at the end of the present millennial reign" (*Chapter 6*)
- **p. 63.** "final crisis at the end of the present millennial reign" (*Chapter 8*)
- **p. 63.** "This is not a theory imposed upon the Bible from the outside. It is the Bible's own method of revealing prophecy." (*Chapter 11*)
- **p. 64.** "It does not force every prophecy entirely into the first century, as though all prophetic hope ended with the destruction of Jerusalem. It does not postpone the Kingdom entirely into the future, as..." (*Chapter 11*)
- **p. 64.** "as though all prophetic hope ended with the destruction of Jerusalem" (*Final Clarification*)
- **p. 65.** "Christ reigns now. Christ will appear in glory. The saints are kings and priests now. The saints still await the redemption of the body." (*Chapter 11*)
- **p. 68.** "Present Millennialism is not amillennialism" (*Chapter 9*)
- **p. 68.** "While amillennialists would also affirm most of this, the label is misleading" (*Chapter 9*)
- **p. 68.** "built upon the principle of dynamic prophecy" (*Chapter 9*)

Appendix C: Sources Cited

Scripture quotations are from the King James Version throughout, matching Pete's usage. Greek and Hebrew terms are transliterated.

The document under review

- Pete Wierzbicki, *Dynamic Prophecy: The Hermeneutical Foundation of Apostolic Eschatology and The Key to Understanding the Last Days* (Restoring Oneness Apostolic Truth, Comprehensive Study Guide Series), 71 pp. Posted as the "Dynamic Prophecy Release Edition" at <https://presentkingdom.com/share/dynamic-prophecy-release/> (accessed September 20th, 2026). Page numbers cited follow the PDF's printed pagination as of that date.
- Pete Wierzbicki, *A Scriptural and Historical Refutation of Preterism* (Restoring Oneness Apostolic Truth, Comprehensive Study Guide Series), Release Version 05/26/2025, 15 pp., <https://files.thepresentkingdom.com/bible-studies/a-scriptural-and-historical-refutation-of-preterism.pdf> (accessed September 20th, 2026). See Appendix D.
- The Present Kingdom (Pete Wierzbicki's ministry site), <https://thepresentkingdom.com/> (accessed September 20th, 2026), including the "Present Kingdom Essentials" statement: "We are not preterist, partial preterist, dispensational, or premillennial. We affirm the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ, His future Second Coming, the resurrection of the dead, final judgment, and the eternal state."
- Facebook thread between Pete Wierzbicki and The Heretical Horseman, September 2026 (quotations from the thread are identified as such in the text).

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- David A. Green, "2 Timothy 2:16–18: Strimple vs. Green, Part 1," FullPreterism.com.

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- David Chilton, *The Days of Vengeance: An Exposition of the Book of Revelation* (Dominion Press, 1987), pp. 205, 214, 357, 537, 540, 543 (including Chilton's quotation of John Owen on 2 Peter 3 and Isaiah 65).
- Kenneth L. Gentry, Jr., *Before Jerusalem Fell: Dating the Book of Revelation* (Institute for Christian Economics, 1989), pp. 18 n. 4, 31, 34, 127–128, 141. Gentry has published against full preterism and is cited here only for positions he holds.
- Gary DeMar, *Last Days Madness: Obsession of the Modern Church*, 4th ed. (American Vision, 1999), pp. 32–34, 36–37, 123, 129–132, 144 (including DeMar's quotations of C. S. Lewis, Henry Hammond, Ed Hindson, R. V. G. Tasker, and John Lightfoot).
- Gary DeMar, "Commenting on Commentaries: R. T. France's Commentaries on Matthew and Mark," American Vision (September 11, 2007).
- R. C. Sproul, Foreword to *And It Came to Pass: Third Annual CEF Symposium: Preterism* (Canon Press, 1993), pp. vi–vii. Sproul affirms partial preterism and rejects "radical preterism" in the same foreword.

Other scholars (cited for the specific point quoted, not for preterism)

- R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, New International Commentary on the New Testament (Eerdmans, 2007), p. 930, as quoted in DeMar's review above. France reads Matthew 24:4–35 as fulfilled in that generation and locates the parousia from 24:36 onward.
- C. S. Lewis, "The World's Last Night," in *The World's Last Night and Other Essays* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1960), pp. 97–99.
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- Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Holy Bible*, on Revelation 1:7, as quoted in Gentry, *Before Jerusalem Fell*, p. 127.
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Historical sources

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- Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* 3.5, on the Jerusalem church's withdrawal to Pella; 3.7, on the fulfillment of Christ's predictions in the siege of Jerusalem.
- Jan Willem Drijvers, "Ammianus Marcellinus 23.1.2–3: The Rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem," on Ephrem the Syrian's use of Daniel 9:26–27 after Julian's failed rebuilding of AD 363.

Appendix D: Pete's Companion Study, A Scriptural and Historical Refutation of Preterism

Pete's website carries a second study aimed directly at my position: *A Scriptural and Historical Refutation of Preterism* (Release Version 05/26/2025, 15 pages). This response was written to *Dynamic Prophecy*, because Pete told us the position rests on that hermeneutic (p. 68), but I have read the companion study too, and I do not want anyone to say I answered the method and dodged the polemic, so here is what it argues, where this response already answers it, and what it shares with the main study.

Its argument, in its own words

The preface states the thesis: "if Jesus returned in A.D. 70 as Preterists claim, it went completely unnoticed," and "No one saw it, recorded it, or even mentioned it until 1600 years later" (*Refutation*, p. 2). Thirteen numbered sections follow. The table maps them to this response.

Pete's section (<i>Refutation</i>)	Where this response addresses it
1. The visible return was not AD 70 (Matt. 24:30; Rev. 1:7; Acts 1:11)	Ch. 5 (Matt. 24:30 and 26:64; Dan. 7:13), Ch. 7 (Rev. 1:7), Ch. 9 (Acts 1:11 acknowledged as the strongest futurist text)
2. The historical silence is fatal	Ch. 5 and 11: the "silence" assumes the visible-descent expectation the texts must first establish; Josephus and Tacitus record what the texts actually predicted, the city's fall and portents in the heavens (Ch. 4)
3. 2 Peter 3 is a literal cosmic dissolution	Ch. 10 (Chilton and Owen on 2 Peter 3 and Isaiah 65); Ch. 4 on "heaven and earth" as covenant language
4. A literal "last day" (John 6; 11:24)	Ch. 8, "at whose 'last day'?"
5–5.5. The resurrection is bodily and future (1 Cor. 15; 1 Thess. 4; Rom. 8; 2 Tim. 2:18)	Ch. 9, "what I believe, what it rests on, what it costs," including 2 Timothy 2:18 conceded as the hardest text
6. The final judgment is universal (Matt. 25; Rev. 20)	Ch. 5 (Matt. 25:31 as the same coming as 16:27), Ch. 9 (Rev. 20 inside "at hand")
7. Creation still groans (Rom. 8)	Ch. 9 (Rom. 8:18, "the glory about to be revealed"); not developed further here
8. Satan's destruction has not occurred	Ch. 9 (Rom. 16:20, "bruise Satan under your feet shortly")
9. The Great Tribulation was not exhausted in AD 70 (Matt. 24:9, 21, 29, 31; Rev. 11, 13; 2 Thess. 2;	Ch. 6 (Dan. 12:1, 7), Ch. 8 (Rev. 1:9; 7:3–14; 14:4; firstfruits), Ch. 5 (24:29, 31). On "hated of all

Pete's section (<i>Refutation</i>)	Where this response addresses it
the 42 months)	nations" (24:9): the same discourse says the gospel would be preached "in all the world" before the end (24:14), and Paul says it had been, "to every creature which is under heaven" (Col. 1:23), "made known to all nations" (Rom. 16:26), so "all nations" in Jesus' mouth is the same scope Paul said had been reached by the 60s
10. For seventeen centuries no one taught preterism	Ch. 9, "nineteen centuries," conceded as a real burden. One correction below
11. Systematic preterism began with the Jesuit Alcázar	See below
12. Symbolism does not eliminate substance	Ch. 3 and 5: agreed, and the substance the idiom communicates is decided by its Old Testament use, which Pete grants for Isaiah 13
13. Present Millennialism preserves inauguration and consummation	Ch. 9 and Final Clarification

What the companion study has in common with the main one

It also never cites Matthew 24:34, 23:36, 16:28, or 26:64. It never cites Revelation 1:1, 1:3, or 22:10. It never cites 1 Peter 4:7, the verse Pete's own website prints in its footer: "But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer." Between the two studies there are eighty-six pages on the fulfillment of prophecy, and not one New Testament time-statement is engaged in either. That is not a point about Pete's sincerity. It is a point about the method, and it is the same point this whole response has made.

It also concedes what *Dynamic Prophecy* concedes: "The old covenant ended in A.D. 70" and "The old covenant order was judged in A.D. 70" (*Refutation*, pp. 8, 12). Add that to the ledger in Appendix A. If the old covenant ended in AD 70, then Hebrews 8:13's "ready to vanish away" vanished then, and the question of what else the same generation's time-texts covered is exactly the question the two studies do not ask.

Two historical corrections

First, the claim that the fulfillment was "neither seen, recorded, nor even mentioned by anyone at the time" (*Refutation*, p. 2) is not accurate as stated. Eusebius, writing about AD 325, devoted a chapter of his *Ecclesiastical History* (3.7) to showing that Christ's Olivet predictions were fulfilled in the siege of Jerusalem, setting Josephus's account beside the words of Matthew 24 and Luke 21. The church has read the destruction of Jerusalem as the fulfillment of Jesus' prophecy

since the fourth century; what did not appear until the seventeenth was the reading of the *coming* of Matthew 24:30 itself as AD 70. That is the burden I acknowledged in Chapter 9, stated precisely.

Second, the seventeenth-century preterist reading was not a Jesuit possession. Luis de Alcázar's commentary on Revelation (1614) is the usual starting point for a systematic past-fulfillment reading of that book, but Gentry's own catalogue of early-date Revelation scholars sets the Protestants Hugo Grotius (1644) and Henry Hammond (1653) right beside him (Gentry, *Before Jerusalem Fell*, pp. 18 n. 4, 31, 34). On the Olivet Discourse, Hammond harmonized Matthew 16:27–28 and Matthew 24 as Christ's coming "to work vengeance on his enemies" (quoted in Chapter 5; DeMar, *Last Days Madness*, pp. 33–34), and John Lightfoot wrote that "the discourse is of the day of the destruction of Jerusalem" so evidently, "both by the disciples' question, and by the whole thread of Christ's discourse, that it is a wonder any should understand these words of the day and hour of the last judgment" (Lightfoot, *Commentary on the New Testament from the Talmud and Hebraica*, 2:442, as quoted in DeMar, *Last Days Madness*, p. 144). None of them were writing to shield Rome. The pedigree is mixed, and a doctrine's pedigree is not its proof in either direction; the text is.

What I would say to the companion study as a whole

Its argument is one argument, repeated thirteen ways: the events did not happen *in the form I expect*, therefore they did not happen. That is the Ferrari argument of Chapter 5, and the answer is the same. The form is the question, not the premise. The texts Jesus quoted, Isaiah 13, Isaiah 19, Daniel 7, Isaiah 27, Deuteronomy 30, Zechariah 12, define the form, and the time-statements define the date. A study that never opens either set of texts has not refuted preterism. It has restated the expectation preterism is questioning.

The Heretical Horseman : Till all be fulfilled. (Matthew 5:18)