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**Lost Days,
The Rapture,
and the Jesuits**

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Throughout the thousands of years of our earth's history, has a day ever been lost? How do we really know today is Monday and not Wednesday? Is the Rapture going to happen soon? And what does the military branch of the Catholic Church, namely the Jesuits, have to do with any of this?

By Jeff Reich

Losing a day would be impossible. From the days of Creation to today, the weekly cycle has always been there.

Ever since *Laymen Ministries* released *The Days of Noah* DVD set, we are being asked quite frequently, "How do we know that the Sabbath is really the 7th day of the week? Maybe time was lost, or a few days were lost track of?"

Lost Days!

I get amused at the idea that somehow, we have lost track of the days. One factor that plays into this misinformed rationale is *time*. Time seems to have some kind of magical power to change the impossible! Have you heard the following?

Ask a man, "Can a monkey turn into a man?"

"Well, of course not!" he answers.

"Can a monkey turn into a man over a few million years?"

"Well, that might be possible!"

As Christians, we look back to the Creation week and see that:

"On the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made" (Genesis 2:2, 3).

And this was before sin entered the picture! And some people think that, given enough time, time could somehow be lost! But let's look at some simple reasons for why this is not possible.

From the very beginning, there was a week, and the 7th day of that week was the Sabbath. From that day to this, people have not only been keeping a 7-day week, but have kept the 7th day Sabbath, as well. All through recorded history there have been Jews, and they are sticklers for Sabbath-keeping. How could a day get lost? Impossible. Somehow a whole generation of people would have to get mixed up or duped into a change of the weekly cycle. How could a day get lost right in front of people's faces?

But someone will say, "Wasn't the calendar changed at one time? Maybe the days got mixed up then?" Time

has always been based on the movement of the earth and moon in our solar system. The year is based on the revolution of the earth around the sun, and the month is based on the cycles of the moon. The "week" is the only set of time that has its origin in the Creation week, established by God as seen in the Bible. The 7th day Sabbath was not only part of the Creation week, but was also part of the Ten Commandments in which the first word is "Remember"! Something to think about.

Using the sun to calculate time, it was soon realized hundreds of years ago that the math was off a little. There are two fundamental time cycles: one is the time it takes for the earth to rotate once on its axis (that's 24 hours, which is a day); second is the year, which is the time it takes the earth to orbit the sun (365.24 days). It was realized that time was getting off track. In order to compensate for these 365.24 days in a year, a "leap year" was added to keep everything on track.

In 43 B.C. Julius Caesar ordered a calendar consisting of twelve months based on a solar year. This became known as the Julian Calendar. The Julian Calendar wasn't accurate—over the centuries it had fallen behind the actual solar year. Nevertheless, people still got up every day, the sun came up and went down, and people kept the Sabbath, No days were lost, just the calendar was not precisely accurate. The Julian Calendar was gradually replaced around the globe by the Gregorian Calendar, due to changing the formula for more accurately calculating leap years. In America, 11 days were dropped from the month of September 1752. In the Catholic countries of Europe where the Gregorian Calendar was first adopted, people went to sleep on Thursday, October 4, 1582, and woke up the next day to a new date: Friday, October 15. But the weekly cycle didn't change—Friday still followed Thursday. The order of the days of the week stayed intact.

Losing a day would be impossible. From the days of Creation to today, the weekly cycle has always been there. From the start of time, the sun came up and the sun went down and the Sabbath has been there at the end of all those weeks. As long as there have been people, they have observed the week—especially the 7th day of that week—the Sabbath!



Francisco de Ribera (1537–1591) Spanish Jesuit theologians Futurist Theory

▲ The progression of “Rapture” theology (l to r): Jesuit doctor of theology, Francisco Ribera; militant founder of the Jesuit order, Ignatius Loyola; Cardinal Robert Bellarmine; English theologian, John Nelson Darby.

The Rapture and the Jesuits

Another question we are often asked, “Why doesn’t *The Days of Noah* series teach the Rapture?” I have limited space in this article to address a lot of the history regarding this subject, so I will keep this short and simple. Email me if you want more information.

The first thing I tell a person who has written into our Ministry and asks about the Rapture is this: “What I am going to share with you might be shocking, but it is true. Please do not throw what I am about to share out the window without first carefully examining this historical information. The Rapture has seated itself into a lot of the evangelical churches, and few church members question it, as they grew up with the idea. They have never studied its origin and trust leading evangelical pastors.”

And this is what I explain: What so many people in the modern evangelical world do not know is that the Rapture is actually a “new theology” which was not taught by Jesus or His disciples, the primitive early church, or by any of the Protestant reformers such as Luther, Tyndall, Wycliff, etc. In fact, this idea, which is referred to as “prophetic futurism,” was dreamed up by a Jesuit priest named Francisco Ribera.

Modern Christianity has largely forgotten the importance of the Protestant Reformation, which took place during the 1500s. The Protestants were “protesting” against the abuses and corruption of the Catholic Church. This time period was referred to as “The Dark Ages,” and it was a very dark age. Those who “protested” were often silenced by prison, torture, and death. Millions were martyred for their faith in “Sola Scriptura”—by Scripture alone.

But no matter how hard the inquisition tried to silence the voice of these protestors, the Protestant movement continued to grow. Something had to be done

to take the heat off the pope and the Catholic Church. In 1545, the Catholic Church convened in a place north of Rome in a city called Trent. This meeting became known as “The Council of Trent”. One of the main purposes of this council was for Catholics to plan a counterattack against Martin Luther and the Protestants. Thus, the Council of Trent became a center for Rome’s Counter-Reformation. Up to this point, Rome’s main method of attack had been the burning of Bibles and of heretics. Now they were going to try a new approach by spreading false ideas through a theological attack.

Some eleven years before the Council of Trent, on August 15, 1534, Ignatius Loyola founded a secretive Catholic order called the Society of Jesus, also known as the Jesuits. The Jesuits definitely have a dark history of intrigue and sedition—that’s why they were expelled from Portugal (1759), France (1764), Spain (1767), Naples (1767), and Russia (1820). They were, in a sense, the military arm of the church.

At the Council of Trent, the Jesuits were commissioned by the pope to develop a new interpretation of Scripture that would counteract the Protestant application of the Bible’s Antichrist prophecies to the Roman Catholic Church. Francisco Ribera (1537 - 1591), a brilliant Jesuit priest and doctor of theology, accepted the task. In 1590, just five years after Trent, Ribera published a commentary on the book of Revelation as a counter-interpretation to the prevailing view among Protestants, which identified the Papacy with the Antichrist.

Another brilliant Jesuit scholar, Cardinal Robert Bellarmine (1542 - 1621) of Rome, also got on the bandwagon. Agreeing with Ribera, both began a counter-interpretation putting all Bible prophecies in the books of Daniel and Revelation way off into the future. This interpretation was later referred to as “prophetic futurism”.

If you do your own research, you will find out a lot



▲ “Rapture” theology moves to the mainstream (l to r): American theologian, Cyrus Ingerson Scofield; American evangelist and TV host, Hal Lindsey and his popular books and movies; the popular fictional movie series, Left Behind.

in regards to these historical facts. The problem the Catholics had was getting the Protestants to swallow this “new theology”. It took a while, but modified versions of this Jesuit-inspired prophetic futurism were introduced into the Protestant world by a man named John Nelson Darby, an Anglo-Irish Bible teacher. He was the first Protestant to bite the hook of this Catholic Counter-Reformation teaching.

Dispensationalism and Futurism

John Nelson Darby infused this “new theology” into the Protestant world in the mid-1800s. The Rapture was not accepted in America at that time, even though the idea was spreading across parts of England. The great and famous evangelical Charles Spurgeon rejected Darby’s “new theology” and convinced the American evangelical world of his day that it was heresy.

One of the most important figures in this whole drama is Cyrus Ingerson Scofield (1843 - 1921), a Kansas lawyer who was greatly influenced by the writings of Darby. In 1909 Scofield published the first edition of his famous Scofield Reference Bible which adopted this new theology in his study guides and footnotes found in that Bible. Little by little, futurism was making inroads in America.

It was not until the late 1960s and into the early 1970s that Hal Lindsey started propagating this Rapture theology by introducing it at the Dallas Theological Seminary. I remember as a teen reading his book entitled, *The Late Great Planet Earth*. This, plain and simple, was nothing but prophetic futurism. In 1976 I watched a movie by the same title, which was narrated by Orson Welles, at a large Assembly of God church. This was the big dupe to the evangelical world in accepting this new theology called the Rapture.

Years later, in the 1990s, *the Left Behind* movie series became a big hit among evangelical Christians. Tim

LaHaye and Jerry Jenkins took the future one-man Antichrist idea of Hal Lindsey, Scofield, Darby, Irving, Newman, Todd, Maitland, Bellarmine, and Ribera, and turned it into “the most successful Christian-fiction series ever” (Publishers Weekly). Amazing how after so many years, Protestants finally swallowed the Jesuit-inspired teachings of prophetic futurism! This is why you will not find *The Rapture* in *The Days of Noah* series!

HERE ARE SOME SUMMARY THOUGHTS ABOUT THIS TEACHING:

1. The Rapture doctrine is one of the most recent “new doctrines” in the history of the church. The only doctrine more recent is the invention of the the sinner’s prayer, presented by Billy Sunday in 1930, and made popular by Billy Graham beginning in the mid 1940s.
2. The fact that John Nelson Darby invented the pre-tribulation rapture doctrine around 1830 AD is unquestionably true. All attempts to find evidence of this wild doctrine before 1830 have failed, with a single exception: Morgan Edwards wrote a short essay as a college paper for Bristol Baptist College in Bristol, England, in 1744 where he described a “pre-tribulation” rapture. However, Edwards’ ideas, which he admitted were brand new and never before taught, had no influence in the modern population of the false doctrine. That prize goes to Darby.
3. Prior to 1830, no church taught the Rapture in their creed, catechism, or statement of faith.
4. Darby has had a profound impact on religion today, since Darby’s “secret rapture” false doctrine has infected most conservative evangelical churches. While the official creeds and statements of faith of many churches either reject or are silent about the Rapture, they also do not openly condemn this doctrine. 