

# Kingdom Report

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## The Jesuit Tares Among the Kingdom Wheat

Jesus warned us to expect the enemy to sow tares when the Lord was planting wheat. I want to trace for you how the fundamental teachings of Dispensational theology were founded on the writings of two Jesuit priests to deceive the Church and sidetrack the preaching of the Gospel of the Kingdom.

In the parable of the wheat and the tares found in Matthew 13:24-39 Jesus tells us of a man who sowed good seed in his field, but "while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way". When the wheat sprouted and produced fruit, the tares also appeared. The servants, alarmed by this contamination, asked their master if they should gather up the tares. But the master wisely replied, "No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest".

Notice the timing of the enemy's work: "while men slept". This is no coincidence. Satan's most effective work occurs when the church is spiritually asleep, when we are not vigilant, when we have let down our guard. The enemy doesn't attack when we are alert and watchful; he strikes in our moments of complacency and spiritual slumber.

It is time for the evangelical church to wake up to the tares that the Jesuits sowed to fight the Reformation and which today form the basis of Dispensational theology.

The core tenets of modern Dispensational eschatology—specifically a future individual Antichrist, a pre-Tribulation secret rapture, and a sharp distinction between Israel and the Church, a future 1000 year Millennium—are not isolated doctrines but the culmination of a traceable intellectual and historical lineage. This chain of transmission begins with a 16th-century Jesuit Counter-Reformation strategy, is filtered through the work of a controversial Chilean Jesuit, enters Protestantism via a charismatic Scottish preacher, is systematically architected by an Anglo-Irish theologian, and is ultimately popularized for a mass audience by an American lawyer-turned-pastor.

This is the chain of tares sowers in the field of the Kingdom while we slept...

The lineage can be summarized as follows:

1. **Francisco Ribera**, a Jesuit priest in a direct polemical response to the Protestant Reformation, conceived of the modern futurist framework. To defend the Papacy, he created a hermeneutic of prophetic

postponement, pushing the Antichrist and the Tribulation into a distant future and thereby creating the first "prophetic gap."

2. **Manuel Lacunza**, another Jesuit, built upon this futurist foundation, developing a detailed premillennial schema. His work, strategically published under a Jewish pseudonym and ironically legitimized by its condemnation from Rome, served as the critical bridge for these ideas to cross into Protestant thought.
3. **Edward Irving**, a charismatic Scottish preacher, acted as the Protestant conduit, translating and popularizing Lacunza's work. The fervent, speculative milieu surrounding Irving and the prophecy conferences of the 1820s and 30s provided the crucible in which the nascent idea of a separate "rapture" of the saints was forged.
4. **John Nelson Darby**, the great systematizer of the Plymouth Brethren, seized upon these developing concepts and architected them into a comprehensive theological system. His radical distinction between an earthly Israel and a heavenly Church became the foundational premise from which a pre-tribulational rapture was not merely an option, but a logical necessity.
5. **C.I. Scofield**, the master popularizer, took Darby's complex system and embedded it into the very pages of the Bible through his phenomenally successful *Scofield Reference Bible*. He made Dispensationalism accessible, authoritative, and the default eschatology for millions of American Christians.

The names of Irving, Darby and Scofield and their contribution to Dispensational theology are better known and I want to write more about them in future but in this blog I want to expose the Catholic Jesuit war of deception through Ribera and Lacunza which is hardly known at all. They formed the foundation deception of modern day Dispensational eschatology and it is time for us to realize that then enemy has been at work from the outset of our Protestant Reformation to deceive the church into selling out dominion inheritance.

As Jesus warned about prophecy and last days in Matthew 24....."let no man deceive you". Especially Jesuits whose job it is to deceive us.

### **Ribera's Innovation: The Birth of Modern Futurism**

The Reformation preachers such as Luther, Knox, Calvin, they all identified the Antichrist, the man of sin sitting in the temple of God as expounded by Paul in Thessalonians they declared the Pope and the Papal system to be the fulfilment of that deception in the church.

To counter this deadly accurate and damaging attack the Pope commissioned the Jesuits to formulate a counter attack. The Pope could not be the Antichrist, that was all still in the future.

Around 1590, Ribera published a 500-page commentary on the Book of Revelation. The commentary by Francisco Ribera was titled *In Sacrum Beati Ioannis Apostoli, & Evangelistiae Apocalypsin Commentarii*. He began writing it in 1585 and it was published around 1590.

He proposed a radical re-reading of the text. His system strategically disarmed the Protestant historicist argument through several key innovations :

1. **Bifurcation of Revelation:** Ribera assigned the first few chapters of Revelation to the past, specifically to ancient pagan Rome in the apostle John's own time.
2. **The Great Prophetic Leap:** He then argued that the vast majority of the book's prophecies (from Revelation 4 onwards) did not apply to the intervening centuries of church history—the very period of papal dominance—but instead leaped over this entire era to a brief, still-future period at the very end of time.
3. **A Future, Individual Antichrist:** The Antichrist, according to Ribera, was not a system like the Papacy that existed throughout history. Instead, he would be a single, evil, infidel individual who would appear in the last days.<sup>1</sup>
4. **A Literal 3.5-Year Tribulation:** This future Antichrist would persecute the saints and reign for a literal three and a half years (equivalent to 42 months or 1260 days), directly rejecting the Protestant year-day principle which interpreted these prophetic time periods as 1260 years of papal supremacy.<sup>1</sup>
5. **Specific Jewish-Centric Actions:** Ribera taught that this individual would make a covenant with the Jews, rebuild the physical temple in Jerusalem, abolish the Christian religion, deny Christ, be received by the Jewish people, and conquer the world—all within this short 3.5-year window.

This interpretive framework was a masterstroke of polemical theology. By making the Antichrist an exclusively future figure, Ribera's system effectively exonerated the entire history of the Papacy. If the Antichrist was yet to come, he could not be the Pope in Rome.

## **Analysis of Ribera's Enduring Legacy**

While Ribera's immediate goal was defensive, his work established critical hermeneutical precedents that would have profound and unforeseen consequences centuries later, forming the bedrock of modern dispensational thought.

First, Ribera's work created a strategic polemical shift that successfully countered the Protestant historicist argument. By constructing a narrative that "overleaped the immense era of papal dominance", his futurism provided an alternative explanation that removed the prophetic spotlight from Rome. This Jesuit-forged interpretive key would eventually be picked up and used by Protestants themselves, long after the original polemical context was forgotten.

Second, and more structurally significant, Ribera's method introduced the concept of a prophetic "gap" or "parenthesis" into biblical interpretation. To make his system work, he had to sever the continuous timeline of the historicists. By separating the early chapters of Revelation from the later ones

and inserting the entire Church Age into the resulting chasm, he created a model of prophetic postponement. This very concept of a long, unprophesied gap in God's prophetic program became the essential architectural tool for later dispensational theologians. John Nelson Darby would adapt this exact hermeneutical maneuver and apply it to the 70 weeks of Daniel 9, inserting the "Church Age parenthesis" between the 69th and 70th week. Thus, a 16th-century Counter-Reformation tactic designed to defend the Papacy laid the foundational structure for a core 19th-century Protestant doctrine.

Third, Ribera's teachings inadvertently planted the seeds of what would become Christian Zionism. By re-centering key end-times events on a physical temple in Jerusalem and the role of the Jewish people ("rebuild the temple in Jerusalem," "be received by the Jews"), he brought ethnic Israel and its geography back to the forefront of eschatology. While his intention was not philo-Semitic, this renewed focus on literal Jewish elements in prophecy—as opposed to the Reformers' tendency to spiritualize Israel as the Church—created a foundational plank for the later dispensational insistence on a separate and distinct future for national Israel, a hallmark of modern Christian Zionism. The chain of influence is clear: a Jesuit effort to defend the Pope led to a hermeneutic that would later be used to advocate for the modern state of Israel.

### **The Millennial Vision of "Ben-Ezra": The Contribution of Manuel Lacunza**

The intellectual bridge over which futurist ideas crossed from the Catholic Counter-Reformation into the Protestant world was largely constructed by another Jesuit, Manuel de Lacunza y Díaz (1731-1801). A Chilean by birth, Lacunza was expelled from all Spanish dominions along with the rest of the Jesuit order in 1767 and spent the remainder of his life in exile in Italy. During this period, he devoted himself to writing *La venida del Mesías en gloria y majestad* (*The Coming of the Messiah in Glory and Majesty*), completed around 1790.

Aware of the intense anti-Jesuit sentiment prevalent in the Protestant world, Lacunza made a brilliant strategic decision. He published his work not under his own name, but under the pseudonym "Juan Josafat Ben-Ezra," styling himself a converted Hebrew-Christian. This was a deliberate tactic to bypass Protestant prejudice and make his futurist ideas more "palatable" and appealing.<sup>3</sup> To enhance the ruse, he borrowed the name of a respected 12th-century Spanish rabbi, Aben Ezra, lending his work a veneer of ancient and scholarly Jewish exegesis. The strategy proved remarkably effective, allowing his ideas to be considered on their merits without the immediate dismissal that his Jesuit identity would have invited.

### **Lacunza's Theological Developments**

Building on Ribera's futurist framework, Lacunza introduced several key developments that would prove highly influential:

- **A Premillennial Earthly Kingdom:** Lacunza was a staunch premillennialist, directly challenging the Augustinian amillennialism that

had dominated both Catholic and Reformed theology for over a thousand years.<sup>1</sup> He argued for a literal, 1000-year reign of Christ on earth.<sup>3</sup>

- **"End of the Age" vs. "End of the World":** He made a crucial distinction between two future events. He taught that the "day of the Lord" or "end of the age" was not the final consummation, but the end of the current phase of human history. This event would be marked by Christ's return, the judgment of the living, and the conversion of the Jews, ushering in the Millennial Kingdom.<sup>3</sup> The "end of the world," encompassing the final resurrection and Last Judgment, would only occur *after* this thousand-year reign.
- **The Rapture of the Saints:** While not articulating a "secret" or "pre-tribulation" rapture in the modern sense, Lacunza's work clearly described a resurrection and gathering of the saints at the beginning of the millennium. He wrote that "Jesus Christ himself with all his saints now risen, ought actually to reign in Jerusalem over the whole orb of the earth, and that for a thousand years". This emphasis on a coming of Christ *with his saints* to establish the kingdom was a critical step toward separating the resurrection of believers from the final judgment of the wicked.

### Analysis of Lacunza's Influence

Lacunza's work served as the primary, albeit clandestine, conduit for futurist and premillennial ideas to penetrate 19th-century Protestant thought. His book, circulated secretly at first, was eventually published in Spanish, Italian, Latin, French, and English, stirring discussion across Europe and the Americas. Irving translated his work and published it in English and it became a key text for study and debate at the influential prophecy conferences at Albury Park and Powerscourt House, where the foundational ideas of the Brethren movement and Dispensationalism were being forged.

A fascinating paradox fueled the acceptance of his work. While Lacunza was a Jesuit advancing a fundamentally Catholic Counter-Reformation interpretive system (futurism), his sharp critique of the institutional Church for apostasy and his premillennialism ran contrary to official Catholic doctrine of the time.

Ultimately, Lacunza's most significant long-term contribution was his role in shifting the millennial paradigm. By popularizing and exhaustively arguing for a literal, earthly, 1000-year kingdom, it created the necessary theological space for a future, distinct, and earthly program for national Israel—a concept that John Nelson Darby would soon seize upon and develop into the absolute cornerstone of his dispensational system.

And then came Cyrus Schofield and deep Anglo-Zionist cabal to finance the Oxford University Press publication of the Schofield Bible and its Darby-Jesuit theology to the emerging Pentecostal revival of Azusa street. The new sowing of Jesuit tares just as God was sowing the seeds of the Pentecostal church.

But that is a story for another time. For now consider this reality. If the roots be unholy so is the fruit. We have been infiltrated by Jesuit tares to sidetrack

the Gospel of the Kingdom into a dead end of one day maybe the Kingdom of God.