

**JUST WHAT DO YOU MEAN**

# **“EZEKIEL’S MESSAGE”?**



**Will a German-led Europe rise to dominate the world?**

**By Craig M White  
Version 4.5**

# ***Just what do you mean ... “Ezekiel’s Message”***

## **Part one**

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**"Soft words and pretty speeches do not arouse people out of this  
pleasant dream. It takes a jolt!"**

(Herbert W Armstrong, "Personal from the Editor,"  
*Plain Truth*, September 1965)

## Contents

<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The Third Angel's Message.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>How the idea came to Mr Armstrong .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Defining Ezekiel's Message .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Final Thoughts: Back to the Future!.....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Typical "Ezekiel's Message" Articles.....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Index.....</b>	<b>24</b>

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Our purpose and desire is to foster Biblical, historical and related studies that strengthen the Church of God's message & mission and provides further support to its traditional doctrinal positions.

### Recommended readings:

Craig White (2025), "Will YOU Heed Ezekiel's Prophecies?" *Twenty-First Century Watch*, First Quarter, pp. 10-13.

Garner Ted Armstrong (1995), "Work of the Watchman," *Twentieth Century Watch*, Sept/Oct.

Herbert W Armstrong (1980), "America the Beautiful. America the Condemned", *Plain Truth*, August.

John LaBissoniere (2025), "God's Urgent Warning Message to You", *Beyond Today*, Jan-Feb, pp. 10-12.

## ***Introduction***

"Ezekiel"?! The very name conjures up thoughts of an Old Testament prophet railing against a sinful nation. A man whose message is studded with condemnations and wild visions unable to be understood. Warnings about lengthy periods of intense death causing diseases, famines, slavery. Mysterious visions about chariots, rods, Gog and Magog, a millennial temple. What do all these mean? Why should a Church of the twentieth century take the book seriously? Surely, many say, the book of Ezekiel was just a message for his time or are the ramblings of a very weird man.

But is this fair? Is this really the case or are these perceptions about Ezekiel unfounded? Can his prophecies be understood today? And do his writings have any relevance for us living in the midst of a pulsating, secular, humanistic and godless Western world?

To understand precisely what the Ezekiel Message really is, we need to:

- gain a knowledge of the historical roots of it;
- provide an adequate and precise definition of it by focusing on the subject matter;
- understanding of how it was presented over the years;
- examine the contents of the material we have access to which proclaims it; and
- and finally determine if (and perhaps how) it should be proclaimed again today.

Many years ago, a major branch of the sabbatarian Churches of God taught the 'Ezekiel Message' and believed that it had a 'Watchman Commission'. Yet it appears that few today remember it or have regard for this doctrine. Fewer still really understand the concept. What exactly is it?

Were Ezekiel Watchman proclamations the pronouncements by that Church's leader merely fanatical ravings? Did we give too much emphasis to it? Should it be proclaimed again today? before articulated and discussed in a formal way. The author also suggests a new title for this doctrine.

Let us now explore the historical background to this concept and its definition.

NB: this prophecy is of a **dual** nature: it had historical relevance and also an end-time message warning Israel that it will go into captivity again (cp Lev 26 and Deut 28). That is why I call it the 'Captivity Doctrine'.

Some commentaries do not seem to understand duality and the sequence of events/chapters that comprises Ezekiel (with inset chapters) that leads to the conclusion that captivity will happen again.

For example, Ezekiel 38 & 39 occurred historically in some sort of way as typological of what will occur again in a much greater fulfillment.

Many protestants believe in Jeremiads because they can see that Jeremiah has a message that is relevant to this day.

We can see that there are warning messages from many prophets that we can emulate or proclaim today and that includes Ezekiel's.

So logically, if Ezekiel is to be preached and proclaimed today, we can use every chapter including prophecies about Egypt, Edom et al – they all had historical relevance and fulfillment as well as future fulfillment. This the Church of God has always taught.

Why would Ezekiel 33 be in different? So, when we place a title to the captivity doctrine of 'Ezekiel's Message' we do not mean that it refers to all of the book and all its contents. We know that it contains other messages, hope etc. What we mean is that there was a very serious message to our peoples back then as a type of what is needed to be proclaimed today: a warning that if we do not repent, then eventually invasion and enslavement will ensue.

### ***The Third Angel's Message***

The person whom God raised up to lead a major branch of the end-time Church of God was Herbert W Armstrong. Mr Armstrong and his wife fervently searched through God's Word for many years, basing their belief system on the branch of the Church of God they fellowshiped with, the Church of God (seventh day).

In 1931 Mr Armstrong was ordained an elder of that Church by laying on of hands of the presbytery and members. He continued as an elder until his credentials were revoked in 1938 over two matters: holy day observance, and 'British-Israelism'. He maintained contact with them, but relationships dimmed until finally, in 1945, most contact between them ceased. However, many newer members of the Radio Church of God (which he founded in 1933) visited with and attended the Church of God (Seventh Day) in the early 1950s until this ceased sometime that decade.

From the earliest days of Mr Armstrong's ministry, he had an intense interest in Bible prophecy. He believed that the system used by Satan over the centuries was a revival of the Roman Empire, known as the Holy Roman Empire. He strongly warned for years before World War II of the darkening war clouds on the horizon, singling out Hitler and Mussolini for special attention.

Prophecy is indeed a major portion of the Bible. J Barton Payne in his famous and authoritative *Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy* states that the Bible is 27% predictive, including types. But he does not include many of the types and 'hidden' prophetic messages. So, at least 33% of the Bible is prophecy. Payne lists Ezekiel as the most predictive book in the Bible with 821 verses devoted to the subject.

Returning to Mr Armstrong's interest in prophecy: He was not cognizant of the unique message contained within the book of Ezekiel for the end-time House of Israel at that time.

However, he did have a deep sense of a calling to be a witness and warning to the House of Israel. Mr Armstrong read widely, included Judah's Sceptre and Joseph's Birthright by John Harden Allen and he also read *The Destiny of Britain and America* by Lt. Col. Mackendrick whom he wrote to:

"I am writing you for two reasons: I am going to point out what I believe to be a slight error in your argument ... and I feel that a great message based on this Israel truth has been revealed to me which must be powerfully broadcasted to the whole world without delay." (*Letter from HW Armstrong to Mr Mackendrick, 4 March 1929*).

Nine days later he wrote to a Mr Dailey:

"I deliberately risked my personal standing and favor with the Church of God in order to make an effort to do, in the only way I knew how to do, what I regard as absolutely necessary if the Church of God is to rise to the tremendous demands of the present hour...  
"I have become convinced that the Church of God is lacking, both in ability to present the Message in a manner that is convincing to all open-minded people, and in personal or rather, collective, power ... that SOMETHING IS WRONG!  
The Church of God is not delivering this message with a LOUD SHOUT!" (*Letter from Herbert W Armstrong to Mr Dailey, 13 March, p. 1*)

At that time Mr Armstrong and the Church of God (Seventh Day) believed in the Three Angel's Message doctrine – however, both he and that Church dropped that teaching some time later. This teaching. However, seemingly laid the groundwork.

In effect the three angels message taught the following: The first angel spread the Gospel across the world "for the hour of his judgement has come." (Rev 14:6). The second angel concerns Babylon the great and has fallen because the nations of the earth are drunk on her fornications and suffer God's wrath.

The third angel's message which concerned Mr Armstrong was the mark of the beast – those who worship the beast and receive the mark will drink the cup of the wrath of God. It was important to Mr Armstrong that this warning should now go forth. In fact, in 1928 he wrote the following:

"These men [Apostles], carrying the FIRST Angel's Message, had the faith to perform miracles of healing. These miracles...greatly aided in winning lost souls to Christ ...

Then, glance for a moment, at the men whom God raised up to carry the Second Angel's Message out to the world. Luther, Calvin, Wesley. Men who were filled with this wonderful power. Men who were heard around the world! Men who shook the world with their message and won millions to the side of Protestantism, out of the darkness and spiritual chaos of Roman Catholicism.

Now let us look frankly to the results being achieved by those who claim to be carrying the Third and last Angel's Message. The prophecy says this Third Angel's Message shall go forth "with a LOUD shout." ...

The average man and woman today is not aware of the fact the Message has been going forth ... Most folks, it is true, are passively aware that there has been some agitation over the Saturday-Sunday question. But the question has not gotten actively into their consciousness ...

The Third Message is no more unpopular than were the First and the Second. And we are blessed with facilities for spreading the message which never were so much as dreamed of in the days of the First and Second Messages. ("Have We Tarried for the Power to Carry the Third Angel's Message?" *The Bible Advocate*, 16 October 1928, p. 1)

His sense of urgency and pleading for a warning message to be broadcast continued over the years. Here are two more extracts from letters he wrote on the subject:

"... there is absolutely no purpose in organisation except to facilitate the carrying of the Gospel, and particularly now, in these last days, the last WARNING MESSAGE phase of it to the world." (p. 1)

"One added thought. It seems to me that our first and paramount duty now, is to shout the WARNING of impending judgments, plagues, and the coming of Christ, as a WITNESS – not the converting of the world, but the sounding of the last WARNING. That should be our FIRST duty, and secondly, the conversion of as many souls as possible, and thirdly, after that, the bringing of people into our spiritual organisation ..." (Herbert W Armstrong letter to Otto, 14 Nov 1934, p. 1)

On 7 July 1936 he wrote to Clarence Dodd:

"I believe thoroughly we are, as a church, far ahead of all other denominations, and the only one close enough to the real essential truth to be truly God's Church." (p. 1)

"I feel that the radio is destined to be the LOUD VOICE ... with which the Third Angel's Message is to go...

"I believe that when God's time is here, and He opens the way, that I can produce in the Plain Truth Magazine fully as attractive as the Adventists Sign of the Times, and even more interesting, and with real PUNCH, and INTEREST, and POWER ... I believe it will be preached over the air, and published by the printing press." (p. 2)

"I have fully believed, Bro. Dodd, that the Lord is going to make just such a broadcast as this possible. It cannot of course be financed in our Church. But God has ways of moving on men's minds and hearts, and in His own time, He will impress the proper ones to come forth with the means." (p. 2)

It seems that this Third Angel's Message doctrine laid the groundwork for the Ezekiel's

Message discussed below.

## ***How the idea came to Mr Armstrong***

Here is Mr Armstrong's own account of how he was later awakened by God to the incredible Ezekiel Message:

**In the January 1962 *Plain Truth* in installment 41 of "The Autobiography of Herbert W. Armstrong" he writes under the sub-heading "New Consciousness of Mission" (pages 12-13) which developed about May 1941:**

**"About this time God impressed on our mind His real meaning of the prophecies in Ezekiel 33:1-19, and 3:17-21. The true significance of the entire Book of Ezekiel had been revealed for some time. But now, suddenly it took on immediate, and specific and personal significance.**

**"I had seen that Ezekiel was a prophet with a message for the future. He himself was in the captivity of the House of Judah ... But he was not sent a prophet with a message to these people at all ...**

**"Ezekiel was made a prophet to [the House of Israel] ... His message was a warning of invasion and total destruction of the nation's cities. That invasion was for the future. That prophecy came more than 120 years after Israel already had been invaded and conquered ..."**

Note that the emphasis was on national invasion of the House of Israel and mass destruction of their civilization. This is the crux of the matter – here is the heart and core of the Message.

**"So now I saw Ezekiel was set a watchman – to watch international conditions as well as God's prophecies – and when this invasion is preparing, and near, shortly prior to Christ's coming to rule the world, he is to warn the people who had migrated, in Ezekiel's day, to northwestern Europe and the British Isles! But Ezekiel never carried that warning! It was not for his time! He was used primarily to *WRITE IT*! It now became plain to me that God was to use a modern 20th-century "Ezekiel" to shout this warning ..."**

Mr Armstrong continues:

**"I had no illusions that I was chosen to be the "modern Ezekiel" to proclaim this message. But I did know that no one was sounding this alarm. I did plainly see this sword of destruction and punishment coming. I knew the time was near. Perhaps, with World War II well under way, it was even then upon us. We could not, then, foresee that God would grant another recess period in the series of world wars before the final round to end at "Armageddon".**

**"And I did see plainly, that God said: "If the watchman see the sword come, and**



blow not the trumpet, and the people be not warned" that God would require the blood of the people – and now *whole peoples* - at the watchman's hand!

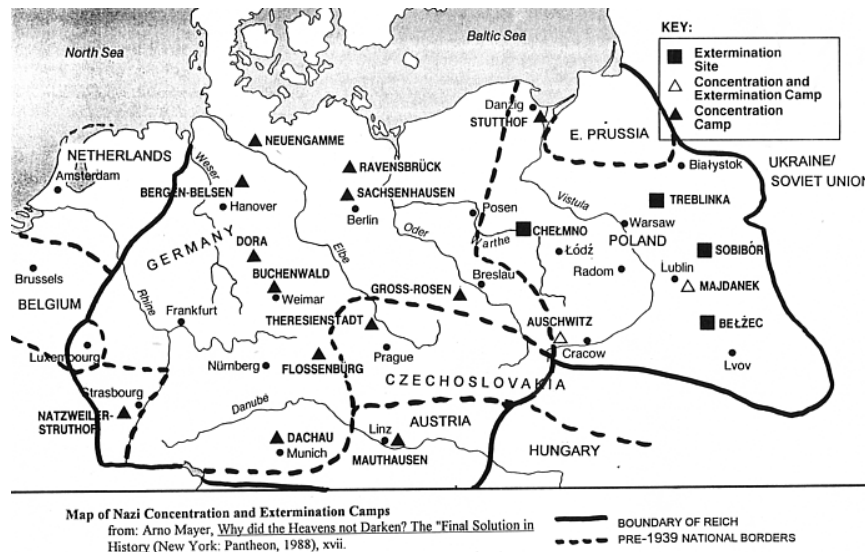
"That was a stern warning to *me*. At least I was *one* of the watchmen who *did see* it coming! God had already placed the broadcasting facilities of three radio stations at my disposal."

The above account of how the Ezekiel Message came to Mr Armstrong provides us with a fascinating insight into the historical background to this doctrine and exactly what it is: a warning to the House of Israel of impending doom with the Church's function today being not unlike that of the prophets of old.

Mr Armstrong's use of the term "Ezekiel's Message", was not to refer to the entire message of the book, but a particular feature or aspect of it – specifically warnings of soon-coming invasions (with consequent death camps which will be set up by invading hostile enemy armies) bent on wiping out the House of Israel.

In the late 1950s and early 1960s, for a short period in 1973 and again from about 1979-82, Ezekiel's Message became the 'right arm' of the Worldwide Church of God's mission and message, (apart from proclaiming of the Good News of the Kingdom of God). Please note: the Ezekiel Message is not (in fact never has been) a replacement for the True Gospel. During this end-time it is a tool to warn our peoples, wake up the nation and bring the repentant into the Church of God. Here they can securely practice their religion and keep God's Laws in accordance with the repeated efforts of the prophets to Israel to repent and turn to God's Law.

A list of many of the articles used over the years in the mould of the Ezekiel Message appear at the end of this paper.



#### Distribution of WW2 concentration camps in the modern lands of Assyria and Elam

The Ezekiel Message doctrine also found itself expressed in the Radio Church of God's

*Fundamentals of Belief*, no. 18:

"18. We believe the Church is merely that body of believers who have, and are being led by the Holy Spirit; that the true Church of God is not a denomination; that the inspired name for this spiritual organism is "THE CHURCH OF GOD;" that the Bible name for each local assembly is "THE CHURCH OF GOD," and, considered collectively, "The Churches of God;" that the mission of the Church in this time is to preach the Gospel (Good News) of the coming KINGDOM OF GOD, **(with special stress on the warning to America and Britain of the prophecies pertaining to them)**, into all nations as a witness, reaching the vast multitudes with power and conviction; to reconcile to God, and to save, thru Christ, such people as are now called; and to minister to the Church of God, strengthening strengthening and edifying the brethren in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

In a riveting article published in 1977, Mr Armstrong wrote about "How I came to be going to Kings and Heads of Government" (*Plain Truth*, March 1977). This article reveals how God was dealing with the Church in different phases this century. In the article he writes:

"In those early days I was especially interested in the book of Ezekiel. A special reason was that I saw Ezekiel was first given God's message in prophecy, while he was a Jewish slave ... Now this was close to 120 years *after* the House of Israel had been taken captive to Assyria ... [many] were, by Ezekiel's time, in Britain and Western Europe.

"There is no reason to think his message was ever delivered to the House of Israel in Ezekiel's time. This message in fact is for today – and contained a warning of things to happen to Britain, America and the Western European nations now in our day.

"I saw clearly, back in those early days, **that Ezekiel's prophecy was a message to be taken by some modern twentieth century servant of God – a "modern Ezekiel" to America, Britain, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa.**

"I dwelt in hundreds of broadcasts on this book of Ezekiel and its warning of things ... to happen to Britain, the United States and Western Europe ... and so it was that Christ ... caused me to put special emphasis on Ezekiel's warning to our people, in our day."

We see how this Ezekiel warning to our peoples was emphasized at that time. Mr Armstrong then relates the parallels between Revelation 10:8-10 with Ezekiel 2:5-10; 3:1-3 which possibly indicates that the first part of his ministry was to proclaim the Message. While Rev 10:11 indicates that Mr Armstrong would thereafter preach the Gospel to heads of government – which he did in a very diplomatic fashion. After this the spiritual temple would be weighed in the balance, so to speak (and might one add "found wanting").

But note the original Greek wording in Rev 10:11: "again" in the Greek is "palin" which

"carries through the idea of oscillatory repetition", "anew", "once again", "once more" (Strong's #3825). From it comes the word "paliggonesia" (#3824) which means "rebirth", "spiritual renovation", "regeneration" (ibid). Thayer's lexicon shows it to mean "that restoration of the primal and perfect condition of things" (page 475). There may be a hint here of a repetition of the Work by various Churches of God (who may combine their resources to thunder out Ezekiel's Message in the same dynamic fashion as Mr Armstrong did).

This reminds me of the scripture:

"O Lord, I have heard Thy speech and was afraid: O Lord, **revive** Thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy" (Habbakuk 3:2).

Bullinger in his *Companion Bible* notes that "revive = renew, in the sense of repeating, doing over again" (page 1269). Strong's *Concordance* states "quicken, recover, repair, restore (to life) ... save" (#2421). While Gesenius' lexicon has this interpretation: "to live again, to revive ... to recover health, to be healed ... to call back to life, to restore life" (page 274).

Will Ezekiel's Message by the Churches of God be repeated? I think it is a moot point – **it has to be!** This world cannot be left without a strong prophetic warning in these last days.

Over the centuries God's scattered Church has taught the True Gospel, but also alongside that message we find that they emphasized other important matters pertinent to their generation. Today we must warn our peoples again of impending captivity and enslavement in foreign lands.

That is why I believe that "Ezekiel's Message" could also be called **"The Captivity Doctrine"**.



A united Germany – backbone to a United fascist Europe!

Finally, let us understand what Ezekiel's Message is not and what it is: it is not the Gospel; it does not replace the Gospel. It is not an angry 'fire and brimstone' proclamation, and it is not just plain prophecy: it is a certain aspect of prophecy relevant to our day. It is specific to a people, a time and has an application: the House of Israel, the end-times and impending slavery for disobedience respectively. And it is trumpeted by Watchmen which we interpret as the Churches of God.

## ***Defining Ezekiel's Message***

By calling Ezekiel's Message **The Captivity Doctrine**, it may be understood by those unfamiliar with the concept. It also succinctly portrays this truth in a manner easily grasped. Let us take a brief look at some of the material on the subject and carefully analyse some of the relevant material to assist us to ascertain how they were written which would enable us to write similar articles today.

The booklet *1975 in Prophecy* has been misunderstood and misinterpreted by many for decades. It may be viewed as the ultimate condensation of the Ezekiel Message. This energetic booklet shocked people out of their complacency. Its unfortunate title has been a major reason for derision being brought upon this doctrine from certain quarters. Yet it contains vital information for us in a brazen way and a style which is becoming more and more acceptable to the community at large today (the type of graphic details portrayed by Basil Wolverton are a part of our mass culture today).

In many ways it was a work ahead of its time. Many other booklets have been published which are also very strong and useful, but are not Ezekiel Message type material as such: *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse*; *Is this the End Time?*; *Are we Living in the Last Days?*; *The Mark of the Beast*; *The Middle East in Prophecy*; *Who is the Beast?*; *The Book of Revelation Unveiled at Last!*; *The Modern Romans* and *How to Understand Prophecy*.

The *1975 in Prophecy* booklet was by far the most stunning and startling. Its title has led to the assumption that Mr Armstrong taught 1975 as the date of Christ's return. Rather, the booklet was trying to catch people's attention with a sensational title. I have before me a book *Famine 1975!* by William and Paul Paddock which used similar tactics. Another is *The Coming Plague, or Newly Emerging Diseases in a World out of balance* by Laurie Garrett and of course George Orwell's *1984*.

The booklet took the following outline:

- an introduction
- Good news of the coming Utopia
- trends toward German resurgence
- The prophesied US of Europe (under German control and leadership)
- Coming Drastic Weather Changes
- World War III
- The great National Calamity and **WHY** our peoples will be punished

- Why all life will not be annihilated
- Americans and Britons to be made slaves
- The Day of the Lord
- Divine intervention
- Satan put away
- the Millennium

What is so wrong with the above? However, from the above we can deduce the following:

- criticism of the booklet has been unjustified as focus has been on the negative aspects rather than the majority positive aspects of it
- the booklet is not just full of doom and gloom
- it addresses a subject others did not
- it discusses the Day of the Lord as a literal event which few works by this world's groups do
- the title was unfortunate, but most of the booklet was accurate, pulsating, exciting and Biblically sound
- no apology is required

The booklet was laced with startling graphics portraying the end times, tribulation, Day of the Lord and the Wonderful World Tomorrow. It woke up many people and led them to Christ. Let us now attend to another article.



**Are concentration camps coming back?**

In true Ezekiel Message fashion, Herbert Armstrong wrote:

“What is this abomination? This refers to Daniel 11:31 and Matthew 24:15...That will be a time when the UNITED Europe shall appear—the revival of the medieval “Holy Roman Empire.” We shall then be warned, and readied to be taken to a place of refuge and safety from the Great Tribulation. Forty-five days later “the beasts

armies" will surround Jerusalem. Thirty days later the Great Tribulation will probably start with a nuclear attack on London and Britain—and possibly the same day or immediately after, on the United States and Canadian cities. The GREAT TRIBULATION, we shall fully then realize, is the time of "Jacob's Trouble," spoken of in Jeremiah 30:7. And Jacob's name was named on Joseph's sons, Ephraim and Manasseh (Gen. 48:16). At that time a third of the people in our nations will die, or shall have died, by famine and disease epidemics; another third will die of the war—our cities being destroyed (Ezek. 6:6), and the remaining third will be carried to the land of our enemies as slaves (Ezek. 5:12)." ("The Time We Are In, Now," *Pastor General's Report*, Vol. 1, No. 15, November 20, 1979, p. 2).

#### Note what commentators write:

"As a whole, the small numbers support the notion that the myth of an empty land is indeed a myth — the land was by no means emptied..." (John Goldingay, *The Book of Jeremiah. New International Commentary of the Old Testament*, p. 967).<sup>1</sup>

It may be that one third did not go into captivity at *that* time, but most were scattered in some form though some fled south and dwelt with Judah. This period did portray the final future captivity, when one third exactly will be taken captive:

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<sup>1</sup> Adam Clark's commentary online explains that more went into captivity than many scholars would want you to believe: "On these verses Dr. Blayney has some sensible remarks; I will extract the substance. These verses are not inserted in 2 Kings 25. **Are we to conclude from these verses that the whole number of the Jews which Nebuchadnezzar, in all his expeditions, carried away, was no more than four thousand six hundred? This cannot be true; for he carried away more than twice that number at one time and this is expressly said to have been in the eighth year of his reign, 2Ki 24:12-16.** Before that time he had carried off a number of captives from Jerusalem, in the first year of his reign, among whom were Daniel and his companions, Dan 1:3-6. These are confessedly not noticed here. And as the taking and burning of Jerusalem is in this very chapter said to have been in the fourth and fifth months of the nineteenth year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, those who were carried into captivity at the date of those events cannot possibly be the same with those that are said to be carried away either in the eighteenth or twenty-third year of that prince. Nor, indeed, is it credible that the number carried away at the time that the city was taken, and the whole country reduced, could be so few as eight hundred and thirty-two, (see Jer 52:29); supposing a mistake in the date of the year, which some are willing to do without sufficient grounds.

Here then we have three deportations, and those the most considerable ones, in the first, in the eighth, and nineteenth years of Nebuchadnezzar, sufficiently distinguished from those in the seventh, eighteenth, and twenty-third years. So that it seems most reasonable to conclude with Abp. Usher, in *Chronologia Sacra*, that by the latter three the historian meant to point out deportations of a minor kind, not elsewhere noticed in direct terms in Scripture.

The first of these, said to have been in the seventh year of Nebuchadnezzar, was one of those that had been picked up in several parts of Judah by the band of Chaldeans, Syrians, and others, whom the king of Babylon sent against the land previously to his own coming, 2Ki 24:2.

That in the eighteenth year corresponds with the time when the Chaldean army broke off the siege before Jerusalem, and marched to meet the Egyptian army, at which time they might think it proper to send off the prisoners that were in camp, under a guard to Babylon.

And the last, in the twenty-third year of Nebuchadnezzar, was when that monarch, being engaged in the siege of Tyre, sent off Nebuzaradan against the Moabites, Ammonites, and other neighboring nations, who at the same time carried away the gleanings of Jews that remained in their own land, amounting in all to no more than seven hundred and forty-five.

Josephus speaks of this expedition against the Moabites and Ammonites, which he places in the twenty-third year or Nebuchadnezzar; but mentions nothing done in the land of Israel at that time. Only he says that after the conquest of those nations, Nebuchadnezzar carried his victorious arms against Egypt, which he in some measure reduced, and carried the Jews whom he found there captives to Babylon. But the Egyptian expedition was not till the twenty-seventh year of Jehoiachin's captivity, i.e., the thirty-fifth of Nebuchadnezzar, as may be collected from Eze 29:17; so that those who were carried away in the twenty-third year were not from Egypt, but were, as before observed, the few Jews that remained in the land of Judah." [emphasis mine]

"Zechariah takes Ezekiel's prophetic description of what did happen, in 587 BCE, as **paradigmatic of what will happen in the future**. However, he modifies the image..." (Ben Ollenburger, *The Book of Zechariah. New Interpreter's Bible. A Commentary in Twelve Volumes*, Vol. 7, p. 833). [emphasis mine]

Kenneth Barker explains Zechariah 14:2 as follows:

"... v.2 delineates some of the horrors that still await Jerusalem and its people. Chambers (p.110) correctly observes "only a part of the inhabitants are to be driven into exile, the rest remain. It was different at the Chaldean conquest of Jerusalem, for then the greater portion were carried away, and afterwards even the remnant that was left (2 Kings xxv. 11). The verse cannot therefore refer to that subjugation. Nor can it be applied to the overthrow of the holy city by Titus, who neither had all nations under his banner, nor left half of the population in possession of their homes." The fulfillment, then, must still lie in the future. At that time all this will happen to fulfill the curses pronounced against covenant disobedience (Deut 28:30)" (Kenneth Barker, *Zechariah. The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 689).

In 1980 Mr Armstrong wrote one of the last articles on the subject which was published in the *Plain Truth* "America the Beautiful. America the Condemned". Mr Armstrong commences the article by stating:

"This is the most seriously in-earnest article I have ever written for *The Plain Truth*. Our beloved country – yours and mine – now faces total destruction.

"... A third of our people – white English-speaking people and minorities with us – will die in a disease epidemic such as the world never experienced ... I do not know whether in two or three years – or in another decade or more – but sooner than people think!" [so much for Mr Armstrong supposedly setting dates]

"Wake up! Readers of *The Plain Truth*! If they [religious leaders of this world] have not the courage to tell you, I have!"

In the article Mr Armstrong provides an intense and strong warning to the USA, drawing heavily upon the prophecies of Ezekiel. He stresses that while Ezekiel wrote the prophecies, Israel was already in captivity. It stands to reason then that these prophecies are for our day, today. There must be Ezekiel Watchmen who take the warning message to the House of Israel.

"The lamentations and woes of the message to be carried to Israel never occurred in Ezekiel's time or later. They are to strike America and Britain in our time." The watchman "is to watch events as they fulfill prophecies leading up to what Ezekiel is to warn the "lost" 10-tribed Israel about ... and warn the 20<sup>th</sup> century house of Israel when such military invasion is reasonably imminent."

Mr Armstrong then addresses the central core of the warning message:

"Now what is the very crux of Ezekiel's warning? It is found in chapters 5 and 6."

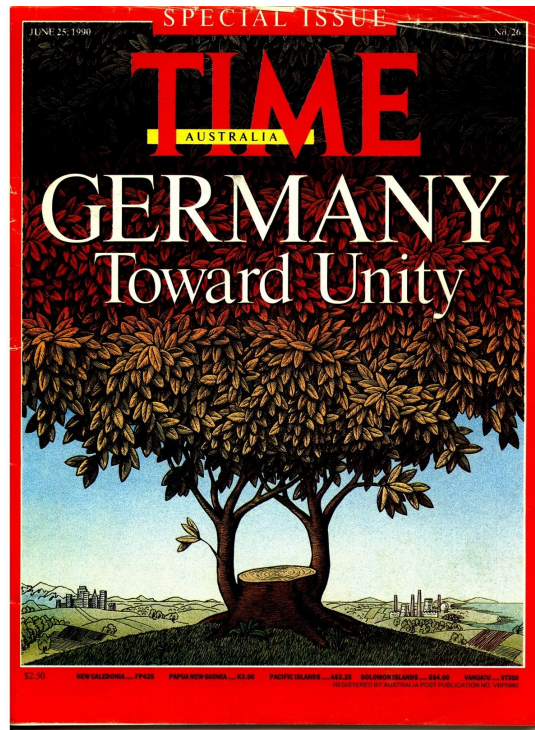
In brief, it provides a warning to Israel of impending slavery due to their false doctrines and false religions (so-called Christianity and other sins such as humanism, liberalism and so on) and that God will not spare His wrath: one third of Israel will die from horrible disease epidemics, one third from warfare and invasion and the final third will be taken captive and placed in slave labor camps (including captivity in strange lands).

There are of course many other articles I would like to analyse, but one has to keep the article within manageable limits. Brilliant articles such as "Now God Speaks to You Ministers", "Slave Labour Camps are Coming Back!", "What will the "Tribulation" Really be Like?", "Uncovering a 2500 year old Time Capsule", are all worthy re-reading.

Cruel slaughters on entire populations are foretold in the Scriptures. Terrifying events are on the horizon. Or as Mr Armstrong stated in the aforementioned article, "This is to be the most terrible fate ever to happen to any people".

He continues to castigate the house of Israel, showing how we inherited the promises to Abraham via the British Empire and the awesome might which is America's. But the warning is simple: empires come and go. Yet citizens of those empires sometimes think that they last forever. They don't. The British Empire has already disappeared into the mists of history. The USA is structurally in decline, yet she sees it not. Our nations are gradually being weakened to such an extent that other nations (particularly Germany heading up a US of Europe and Japan) will fill the vacuum. They will eventually sense an opportunity to strike at the Anglo-Saxon Powers. And strike they will! Indeed, with such sudden devastation that we will not be prepared for it.





Germany is united! Compare this graphic with Daniel 4:14-16, 23, 26.

Our leaders think that their salvation is in some kind of an international superstructure – a New World Order of free trade and the mixing of religions and races to eventually produce one world. Yet such policies serve to weaken us day-by-day. The Anglo-Saxon Powers are at the helm of the push toward a world superstructure which they hope will produce a world of peace and plenty. Yet there are other nations who do not share the same vision for a New World Order. Their Order is far more dictatorial and one which preserves their identity, culture and religious heritage. They will eventually stand up and galvanise world opinion against the current trends. They will wish to dominate a New World Order and eventually come into ethnic, ideological and religious conflict with the Americans and British.

Several prophecies indicate that the House of Israel will be divided up among her enemies – a concept written about in other material by myself and History Research Projects. One in Joel 3:2b speaks of the scattering of Israel and the parting or dividing of Israel amongst her enemies. Amos 7:17; Mic 2:4 and Dan 11:39 seem to tell a similar tale.

Australia itself may be divided up by secret agreement between India, Japan and Indonesia. For instance, Japan may take the Eastern States; Indonesia Northern Territory and South Australia; and India Western Australia. Similarly, Russia may have Alaska returned to her by Europe if she keeps out of the crisis; the Caribbeans may be given the South-east USA; Mexico the South-West; Japan may take Hawaii and Europe will divide up the rest of the continent.

Our nations are heading for the most shocking and terrible times of trial never before experienced by any people. National captivity is prophesied in our Bible!

Yet, as Mr Armstrong reveals, some will be worthy of escaping. He also warns at the very end of the article:

"I have not overestimated the seriousness of this! The time has now come for this serious warning to go forth in mighty power! Millions will see this warning in *The Plain Truth!*"

**So, what is the Ezekiel Message/Captivity Doctrine in a nutshell? It is a very serious and potent warning to the House of Israel of impending invasion, military collapse, captivity and slavery. It is NOT a general, broad prophetic message. It is very serious, hard-hitting and potent.**

Finally, many authors and commentators know that there is to be a future tribulation on Israel in which she will be purified and cleansed, led to the Holy Land in a second Exodus, and then rule the world under Christ, the Messiah. For example, in regard to Zechariah 13:

"The process of purification is described in verses 8-9 as the community is divided into thirds (cf. Ezek. 5, where the prophets hair is divided into thirds, with a third burnt [representing those who die in the plague or perish by famine in the city], a third struck with the sword [representing those who fall by the sword outside the city], and a third scattered to the wind [representing those exiled]). Both passages reveal that the majority of the flock will be eliminated from the outset as two-thirds "will be struck down and perish."

**"The final third in both cases survive but then undergoes further discipline.** In Ezekiel 5 a sword pursues this final third. In Zechariah 13:9, this final third is refined using terminology from the practice of metallurgy, a common image in prophetic literature (e.g., Isa. 1:25; Jer. 6:27-30; Eze. 22:18-22). The process involves the powerful agent of "fire," will "refine ... test" (Ps. 17:3; 26:2; 66:10; Jer. 9:7) as "silver" and "gold." Such a process removes the impurities from deposits containing these precious metals.

"The second half of Zechariah 13:9 reveals the result of this process..." (Mark Boda, *Haggai, Zechariah, NIV Application Commentary*, p. 513). [emphasis mine]

Punishment and cleansing come before He can work with Israel and save them during the second Exodus.

"The closing words of the poem [Zech 13:7-9] echo the classical way in which the covenant relationship between God and Israel was expressed in the law of Moses: 'I will walk among you and be your God, and you will be my people.' Historically that relationship turned out to be a very troubled one, constantly marred - especially in idolatry and false prophecy on Israel's part. But this poem ends on a note of tremendous confidence. **Out of the suffering that will usher in the kingdom of God will emerge a new, cleansed, people of God, who will truly know him. Out of the last battle will a renewal, the restoration at last of God's covenant with Israel.** So looking back we can now see how fittingly the poem concludes the whole of chapters 12 and 13. It picks up the themes of battle (12:2-9) and cleansing (13:1-6), and **weaves them together under the heading of covenant renewal**" (Barry Web, *The Message of Zechariah*, BST, p.169)<sup>2</sup>. [emphasis mine]

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<sup>2</sup> "The existence of a remnant guarantees the continuation of God's ancient promise to Abraham" (Thomas McComiskey, *The Minor Prophets. An Exegetical and Expository Commentary*, Vol. 3, p. 1224).

## ***Final Thoughts: Back to the Future!***

Today few seem to be interested in representing the true thrust of this doctrine. Sometimes there seems to be a lack of focus and attention given to this truth which is a vital part of our spiritual roots. Note the poem of F.R.A. Glover of England, 1861:

"When a Land [read Church] rejects its legends [read 'Ezekiel's Message'],  
Sees but falsehoods in the past [read 'waters down the full truth'],  
And its People [read Church members] view their sires [read 'the deceased leader']  
In the light of fools and liars,  
'Tis a sign of its decline,  
And its splendours cannot last.  
Branches [read the end-time Churches of God] that but blight their roots,  
Yield no sap for lasting fruits" [ie there will be no growth].

So, will the Ezekiel Message/Captivity Doctrine be proclaimed again in a powerful way to the house of Israel? Undoubtedly so! But it may well come from a resurgence in interest for the writings of Herbert W Armstrong within the various Churches of God. Indeed, there may come a nostalgia for the strong meat and truths he taught which are being watered-down today.

But there are those who are trying to undermine our truths. Allow me to quote from Cicero who wrote this of fifth columnists in 42 BC:

"A nation [read Church] can survive its fools and even the ambitious [and there are plenty of those again]. But it cannot survive treason from within [like those who water-down the truth]. An enemy at the gates is less formidable, for he is known and he carries his banners openly. But the traitor [like a leader who pretends to be a shepherd] moves among those within the gate freely, his sly whispers rustling through all the alleys, heard in the very halls of government itself. For the traitor appears not traitor! He speaks in the accent familiar to his victims and he appeals to the baseness that lies deep in the hearts of all men. He rots the soul of a nation [or Church]. He works secretly and unknown in the night to undermine the pillars of a city; He infects the body politic so that it can no longer resist. A murderer is less to be feared".

One could get the impression of a 'don't care' attitude today. Or a 'the two witnesses will do the Work' so 'we can have a nice social club each Sabbath' approach. We, of all people, **have a duty of care** and should have a burning desire to warn our peoples. Otherwise, our indifference will be noted by God and we will pay the consequences. Matthew Henry's *Commentary*, written in the 18th century has an excellent message for us in this regard:

"Lukewarmness [something Herbert Armstrong warned us against] or indifference in religion is the worst temper in the world. If [true] religion is a real thing, it is the most excellent thing, and therefore we should be in good earnest in it ... If religion is worth anything, it is worth every thing; an indifference here is inexcusable: Why halt you between two opinions? If God be God, follow him; if Baal (be God), follow him ... Christ

expects that men should declare themselves in earnest either for him or against him"  
(*A Commentary on the Whole Bible*, Vol. 6, p. 1135).

We need to be earnest as Matthew Henry declares – fired up with real **ZEAL** to reach out to warn our peoples before it is too late! We should not be jealous of the zealous ones and denounce them – but supportive of them. The big question is whether we have love for our national brethren or a lukewarm and lazy attitude wanting to hide our light under a bushel. Do we want to reach out or protect our hides? Do we have a give or a get attitude? Remember what our Bible warns us about: those who wish to save their lives will inevitably lose it.



The double-headed eagle – symbol of western and eastern Europe operating as one.

Now is indeed the time for a thorough and proper **EZEKIEL MESSAGE/CAPTIVITY DOCTRINE** to go forth again to this world, together with the Good News of the soon-coming return of our Messiah, Jesus Christ, to establish the Kingdom of God on earth. It is this God-given duty which must be trumpeted by the end-time Churches of God collectively, fulfilling the role of the Ezekiel Watchman (it is not a commission given to any individual today but to the collective Body of Christ).



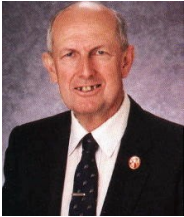


One final thought: the book of Ezekiel itself warns us of the consequences for not proclaiming this warning message (Ezek 33:6).

The war cry of the End Time Church of God sabbatarians must now be, as we attempt to revive our roots and truths long buried under the rubble of misunderstandings, overreactions, lack of knowledge and gradual watering-down: **"BACK TO THE FUTURE!"**

One ought never to turn one's back on a threatened danger and try to run away from it. If you do that, you will double the danger. But if you meet it promptly and without flinching, you will reduce the danger by half. Never run away from anything. Never!

**Ralph Waldo Emerson 1803-1882, American Poet, Essayist**

**These men faithfully proclaimed the Ezekiel Message for decades. Let us follow their example!**

				
<b>Herbert W Armstrong</b>	<b>Garner T Armstrong</b>	<b>Herman L Hoeh</b>	<b>Raymond F McNair</b>	<b>Roderick C Meredith</b>

## Typical "Ezekiel's Message" Articles

(Please note that I do not necessarily agree with every detail in these articles. Sometimes a writer may be a little too enthusiastic for the return of Christ. But I think it is necessary to gain insight into the general thrust and purpose of these articles).

Armstrong, GT	"And they Worshipped the Beast", 1991.
Armstrong, GT	"And when you see the ABOMINATION ...", <i>Plain Truth</i> , July 1963.
Armstrong, GT	"Australia's Deadly Peril", <i>Plain Truth</i> , February 1963.
Armstrong, GT	"Great National Tribulation Coming on America and Britain – But Why?", <i>The International News</i> , January 1991.
Armstrong, GT	"How Dictators will Seize Power in Europe", <i>Twentieth Century Watch</i> , Dec 1992.
Armstrong, GT	"Is America In Decline?" <i>Twentieth Century Watch</i> , August 1992.
Armstrong, GT	"Is Naziism Dead?" <i>Plain Truth</i> , April 1960.
Armstrong, GT	"Japan. Supergiant of the Orient, <i>Twentieth Century Watch</i> , March 1995.
Armstrong, GT	"Just Where are we Now in Prophecy?" <i>Twentieth Century Watch</i> , Sept 1994.
Armstrong, GT	"New Order Coming in GERMANY," <i>Twentieth Century Watch</i> , Dec/Jan 1990.
Armstrong, GT	"Slave Labor Camps are Coming Back!" <i>Plain Truth</i> , June 1958.
Armstrong, GT	"The Birth of the Beast," <i>Plain Truth</i> , August 1959.
Armstrong, GT	"The New Germany – Friend ... or Frankenstein Monster?" <i>Plain Truth</i> , December 1963.
Armstrong, GT	"The New Germany – is it Dangerous?" <i>Plain Truth</i> , April 1963.
Armstrong, GT	"Where are we, Now, in Prophecy?" <i>Twentieth Century Watch</i> , Sept 1994.
Armstrong, GT	"Work of the Watchman," <i>Twentieth Century Watch</i> , Sept/Oct 1995.
Armstrong, GT	<i>Who, What is the "Beast" of Revelation?</i> 1985.
Armstrong, H.W.	<i>Letter from HW Armstrong to Mackendrick</i> , 4 March 1929.
Armstrong, H.W.	<i>What Lies Ahead NOW in Prophecy?</i> (article reprint).
Armstrong, HW	"America the Beautiful. America the Condemned", <i>Plain Truth</i> , August 1980.
Armstrong, HW	"Biggest World News Happening in Germany", <i>Plain Truth</i> , August 1959
Armstrong, HW	"Hitler's Thousand-Year Plan versus God's", <i>Plain Truth</i> , May-June 1941.
Armstrong, HW	"Now God Speaks to you Ministers", <i>The Good News</i> , Oct/Nov 1979.
Armstrong, HW	"The Time We Are In, Now," <i>Pastor General's Report</i> . Vol. 1, No. 15, November 20, 1979, p. 2
Armstrong, HW	"USA Riding to Total Collapse", <i>Plain Truth</i> , February 1956.
Armstrong, HW	"What is Armageddon?" <i>Plain Truth</i> , Nov-Dec 1955.
Armstrong, HW	Britain's Doom Prophesied for Seeking Common Market Membership! <i>Plain Truth</i> , July 1962.
Armstrong, HW	<i>Co-worker Letter</i> , 11 Nov 1985.
Armstrong, HW	Have We Tarried for the Power to Carry the Third Angel's Message?" <i>The Bible Advocate</i> , 16 October 1928.
Boraker, R.C.	"Nazis Plotting World War III", <i>Plain Truth</i> , November 1962.
Boraker, R.C.	"Papacy Answers Red Threat", <i>Plain Truth</i> , October 1960.
Hill, D.J.	"Christ or Antichrist", <i>Plain Truth</i> , April 1961.
Hill, D.J.	"What is Germany's Destiny?", <i>Plain Truth</i> , March 1962.
Hoeh, H.L.	"Are Christians again to be Martyred?", <i>Plain Truth</i> , November 1956.
Hoeh, H.L.	"Germany in Prophecy (pt.1)", <i>Plain Truth</i> , December 1962.

Hoeh, H.L.	"Germany in Prophecy (pt.2)", <i>Plain Truth</i> , January 1963.
Hoeh, H.L.	"If World War III Comes – There is a Way of Escape", <i>Plain Truth</i> , June 1963.
Hogberg, G.H.	"Coming: Greatest Economic Crash Ever!", <i>Plain Truth</i> , September 1963.
LaBissoniere, J.	"God's Urgent Warning Message to You," <i>Beyond Today</i> , Jan-Feb 2025, pp. 10-12.
McNair, R.F.	"The Decline and Fall of the British Commonwealth! <i>Plain Truth</i> , April 1963.
Meredith, R.C.	"I Remember", <i>Plain Truth</i> , January 1961.
Meredith, R.C.	"Now Revealed – The False Prophet of Revelation", <i>Plain Truth</i> , July 1963.
Meredith, R.C.	"Ten Reasons Why Christ MUST Return!", <i>Plain Truth</i> , December 1963.
Meredith, R.C.	"The Beast of Revelation Rears its Head!", <i>Plain Truth</i> , June 1963.
Neff, L.L.	"Sins of "Modern" Babylon Exposed", <i>The Good News</i> , January 1964.
Neff, L.L.	"You May NOT Escape the Tribulation!", <i>The Good News</i> , January 1962.
Stump, K.W.	"Ahead! Japanese Rearmament", <i>Plain Truth</i> , March 1981.
Stump, K.W.	"Uncovering a 2500 year old Time Capsule", <i>Plain Truth</i> , March 1981.
Torrance, L.E.	"What will the "Tribulation" Really be Like?", <i>Good News</i> , August 1961.
White, C.M.	"A Warning to Our Readers. Will YOU Heed Ezekiel's prophecies?" <i>Twenty-First Century Watch</i> , Jan-March 2025, pp. 10-13.

## ***Index***

America, 10, 11, 16, 17, 22  
Assyria, 10  
Australia, 11, 18, 22  
Britain, 10, 11, 16, 22  
Bullinger, 11  
Captivity, 12, 18, 19  
Christ, 8, 10, 11, 13, 14, 20, 21, 22, 23  
Church of God, 5, 9, 10, 21  
Church of God (seventh day), 5  
*Companion Bible*, 11  
Ezekiel, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 16, 18, 19, 21  
Garner T Armstrong, 21  
Germany, 12, 17, 22, 23  
God, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 16, 19, 20, 21, 22  
*Good News*, 9, 10, 21, 22, 23  
Herbert Armstrong, 20  
**Herbert W Armstrong**, 5, 19, 21  
Hoeh, 21, 23  
Israel, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 16, 17, 18, 19  
Jesus, 21  
Kingdom of God, 9, 21  
McNair, 21, 23  
Meredith, 21, 23  
Middle East, 13  
Neff, 23  
*Plain Truth*, 8, 10, 16, 18, 22, 23  
Prophecy, 5, 12, 13, 22, 23  
Radio Church of God, 5, 10  
Roman, 5  
Satan, 5, 13  
slavery, 4, 12, 16, 18  
Tribulation, 16, 22, 23  
US of Europe, 13, 17  
Worldwide Church of God, 9

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## JUST WHAT DO YOU MEAN "EZEKIEL'S MESSAGE?"

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