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Scholastic Dishonesty - June 2012 Awake - Jewish Exile Timeline

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Scholastic Dishonesty - June 2012 Awake - Jewish Exile Timeline posted Thu, 22 Mar 2012 22:31:00 GMT (3/22/2012) 



The June 2012 Awake has another article on the exile of the Jews by the Babylonians. Once again the WT quotes dishonestly.

From Page 14:

"Did the Israelites remain captive in Babylon for 70 years as the Bible foretold? Note the comments of a leading Israeli archaeologist, Ephraim Stern. "From 604 B.C.E. to 538 B.C.E.—there is a complete gap in evidence suggesting occupation. In all that time, not a single town destroyed by the Babylonians was resettled." The so-called gap in which there was no occupation or resettling of conquered territory corresponds closely to Israel's exile in Babylon from from 607 to 537 B.C.E.—2 Chronicles 36:20, 21." - Awake, June 2012, p. 14

What the article fails to mention is that under the WT interpretation of the period's dating, all 'secular' dates get pushed back by 20 years. 604 BCE becomes 624 BCE. They are misusing the quote by Stern to bolster their chronological arguments by relying on the ignorance of the reader regarding both that period of history and the WT's method of calculating the dates -- which they do not disclose.

Futher, here is an excerpt from the opening of Stern's article:

"In 586 B.C.E., they [Babylon] burnt Jerusalem and destroyed the Temple, bringing an end to the southern Kingdom of Judah and 400 years of Davidic rule." - The Babylonian Gap, Ephraim Stern, *Biblical Archaeology Review*; Nov/Dec 2000

Obviously, Stern is yet another expert the WT is using who does not agree that the Temple was destroyed in 607

BCE. Further, the WT cannot honestly use secular dates from that period to 'prove' it's own conflicted interpretation.

[St George of England](#)

Re: Scholastic Dishonesty - June 2012 Awake - Jewish Exile Timeline posted Thu, 22 Mar 2012 22:40:00 GMT (3/22/2012) [edit](#)

Quoted from:

http://cojs.org/cojswiki/The_Babylonian_Gap,_Ephraim_Stern,_BAR_26:06,_Nov/Dec_2000.

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Since 3/22/2010

George

[LostGeneration](#) **Re: Scholastic Dishonesty - June 2012 Awake - Jewish Exile Timeline** posted Thu, 22 Mar 2012 22:50:00 GMT (3/22/2012) [edit](#)

Maybe we ought to e-mail Dr. Stern and see what he thinks of the WT using his quote this way...



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Since 11/24/2009

[diamondiiz](#) **Re: Scholastic Dishonesty - June 2012 Awake - Jewish Exile Timeline** posted Thu, 22 Mar 2012 23:16:00 GMT (3/22/2012) [edit](#)

They've used this quote in the past

[Watchtower 11/15/06 Did Judah remain desolate?](#)

The Babylonian Gap

The Assyrians and Babylonians both ravaged large parts of ancient Israel, yet the archaeological evidence from the aftermath of their respective conquests tells two very different stories. Why?

In 721 B.C.E., the Assyrians brought an end to the northern kingdom of Israel. A little more than a century later, the Assyrians themselves suffered defeat at the hands of the Babylonians, who became the world's new superpower. The Babylonians were no less bent on mayhem and destruction than the Assyrians had been: In 586 B.C.E., they burnt Jerusalem and destroyed the Temple, bringing an end to the southern kingdom of Judah and 400 years of Davidic rule.

As destroyers, the Assyrians and Babylonians had much in common. But the periods that followed their conquests could not be less alike. While the Assyrians left a clear imprint of their presence in Palestine, there is a strange gap after the Babylonian destruction. Call it an archaeological gap, if you wish.

The savage Babylonian destruction of Jerusalem is well documented both in the Bible (in the books of Jeremiah and Lamentations) and in the archaeological record. When Nebuchadnezzar first placed the city under siege in 597 B.C.E., the city quickly capitulated, thereby avoiding a general destruction. But in response to a revolt by Judah's King Zedekiah, Nebuchadnezzar dispatched an army that, after an 18-month siege, captured and destroyed the city in 586 B.C.E. The evidence of this destruction is widely confirmed in Jerusalem excavations.

On his first swing through Judah, Nebuchadnezzar had destroyed much of Philistia—Ekron, Tel Batash, Tell Jemmeh, Ruqeish and Tel Sera'. Particularly devastated was Ashkelon, which the Babylonians sacked in 604 B.C.E.

Similar evidence of Babylonian destruction can be found throughout the Beersheba Valley, in the Aravah (the valley south of the Dead Sea) and in the Jordan River valley. From south to north, we can trace the effects of Babylonian might—at Tell el-Kheleifeh on the coast of the Red Sea, at Ein Gedi on the shore of the Dead Sea, and further north at Dan, the source of the Jordan River. The same is true in excavations at major northern sites—Hazor; Megiddo,

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overlooking the Jezreel Valley; and Dor, on the Mediterranean coast—and in central Judah, where, in addition to Jerusalem, we may look at Ramat Rahel and Lachish, among other sites.

But the strange thing is that above the remains left by these destructions, we find no evidence of occupation until the Persian period, which began in about 538 B.C.E. For roughly half a century—from 604 B.C.E. to 538 B.C.E.—there is a complete gap in evidence suggesting occupation. In all that time, not a single town destroyed by the Babylonians was resettled. This is true even of the old Assyrian fortresses along the Way of the Sea (the Via Maris); they were reoccupied only in the Persian period, as shown by the recently excavated fort at Rishon le-Zion.

Re: Scholastic Dishonesty - June 2012 Awake - Jewish Exile Timeline posted Thu, 22 Mar 2012 23:27:00 GMT (3/22/2012) [edit](#)

Thats pretty bad. Thanks for tracking down the quote, I appreciate it!

[simon17](#)



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Since 7/25/2009

Re: Scholastic Dishonesty - June 2012 Awake - Jewish Exile Timeline posted Thu, 22 Mar 2012 23:37:00 GMT (3/22/2012) [edit](#)

I Love this Paragraph Under "What History Reveals"

The Bible identifies Nebuchadnezzar as being the king of Babylon about the time of Jerusalem's destruction. Archaeological evidence supports the Bible's testimony about his existence. A cameo made of onyx stone is on display in Florence, Italy. It bears an inscription that says in part: "In honour of Merodach, his lord, Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, in his life-time had this made." Nebuchadnezzar ruled from 624 to 582 BCE.

Lol... lets show that history agrees with us.

Step 1: Say that archaeology agrees with us

Step 2: Give an unrelated quote

Step 3: Reiterate our unsupported conclusion directly after it. Maybe by being next to a real quote will make people think the nonsense conclusion is also real.

Re: Scholastic Dishonesty - June 2012 Awake - Jewish Exile Timeline posted Thu, 22 Mar 2012 23:41:00 GMT (3/22/2012) [edit](#)

@diamondiiz -- Thanks for posting that link. I guess they just keep recycling the same non-sense.

[Ultimate Reality](#)



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Since 1/23/2008

Re: Scholastic Dishonesty - June 2012 Awake - Jewish Exile Timeline posted Thu, 22 Mar 2012 23:50:00 GMT (3/22/2012) [edit](#)

[Momma-Tossed-Me](#)

there is probably various factions within the writing dept that can only use watchtower publications



[United States](#) Florida

Post **358** of **368**
Since **7/11/2008**

[Leolaia](#)



Re: Scholastic Dishonesty - June 2012 Awake - Jewish Exile Timeline posted **Fri, 23 Mar 2012 03:34:00 GMT**
(3/23/2012) [edit](#)

Ultimate Reality....The quote is more dishonest than you realize. Ephraim Stern doesn't believe *at all* that the kingdom of Judah was uninhabited during the Babylonian exile. There were towns (such as Mizpah) that the Babylonians did not destroy which continued to be inhabited throughout the Neo-Babylonian period. I posted his views when the original *Awake!* article was published in 2006:

<http://www.jehovahs-witness.net/watchtower/bible/121323/1/Back-Cover-of-Nov15-WT-Did-Judah-Remain-Desolate>

And here is the relevant part:

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Since **9/1/2002**

Ephraim Stern does *not* believe that Judah as a whole was "desolate" and (as a JW would read the phrase) without inhabitant during the exilic period. In a recent article "The Babylonian Gap: The Archaeological Reality" (*JSOT* 2004:273-277), he makes the following claims which he says are fairly secure:

- Even before the Babylonian campaigns of 605 BC onward, Judah had experienced ongoing devastations by the Assyrian and Egyptian armies and there were also regional conflicts between Judah and Edom and Judah and Philistia which led to devastation at sites.
- Before the Babylonian campaigns in the Levant there were a total of ten kingdoms in the land: Two were controlled by Assyria (Samaria and Megiddo), and the rest were independent (Judah, Ammon, Edom, Moab, and the four kingdoms of the Philistines). All these kingdoms had ceased to exist by the Persian period, as indicated by discontinuities in material culture.
- In Judah, Philistia and Edom, most Iron Age II sites end at destruction levels of the Babylonian conquest (e.g. Babylonian arrowheads embedded at destruction levels in Tel Malhata in Edom, Jerusalem in Judah, and En-Gedi) and are immediately followed with Persian levels. Some cities that had been devastated in the seventh century BC in Assyrian campaigns, such as Megiddo III, Dothan, Beth-shean, Tel Rehov, etc. were resettled and rebuilt in the Assyrian period (and thus have Assyrian pottery), but these levels are similarly followed by dramatically different Persian levels. The Assyrians appeared to have tried to rebuild and resettle cities in conquered territories, while the Babylonian military strategy was the destroy them and not rebuild.
- In the Persian levels, there is evidence that Phoenicians had moved into the previous Philistine cities and Edomites had moved into previous Judean cities. In the Babylonian conquest, "the land was not 'emptied' but its great harbor cities in the north and south were totally destroyed, and the population, some of which was killed and some deported by the Babylonians was sharply reduced" (p. 274). Substantial resettlement did not occur until the Persian period, and then largely by non-Judeans.
- There is however a **notable exception**: the land of Benjamin in Judah, which shows evidence of continuity throughout the Babylonian period to the Persian period, and Rabat Ammon and central Samaria (p. 276). These are areas where Judean and Samaritan/Israelite culture continued. The Society neglects to mention this point in Stern's work....it may have been mentioned in the *BAR* article, I would have to check my back issues to be sure.

Last November I went to a talk by Oded Lipschits at the SBL conference that was explicitly devoted to archaeological evidence of continued life in the land of Judah during the time of the exile.

[Leolaia](#)

Re: Scholastic Dishonesty - June 2012 Awake - Jewish Exile Timeline posted **Fri, 23 Mar 2012 03:47:00 GMT**
(3/23/2012) [edit](#)

So here is the fuller portion that the Society quotes:

But the strange thing is that above the remains left by these destructions, we find no evidence of occupation until the Persian period, which began in about 538 B.C.E. For roughly half a century—from 604 B.C.E. to 538 B.C.E.—there is a complete gap in evidence suggesting occupation. In all that time, not a single town destroyed by the Babylonians was resettled.

Notice that this concerns the cities that the Babylonians destroyed. What the Society doesn't quote is this:

I do not mean to imply that the country was uninhabited during the period between the Babylonian destruction and the Persian period. There were undoubtedly some settlements, but the population was very small. Many towns and villages were either completely or partly destroyed. The rest were barely functioning. International trade virtually ceased. **Only two regions appear to have been spared this fate—the northern part of Judah (the region of Benjamin) and probably the land of Ammon,** although the latter region awaits further investigation.

Not only does Stern deny that the country was uninhabited but he indicates that the land of Benjamin was spared the fate of the rest of the country.



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Since 9/1/2002

Re: Scholastic Dishonesty - June 2012 Awake - Jewish Exile Timeline posted Fri, 23 Mar 2012 15:09:00 GMT (3/23/2012) [edit](#)

marking

[Justitia Themis](#)



Uzbekistan

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Since 2/21/2006

Re: Scholastic Dishonesty - June 2012 Awake - Jewish Exile Timeline posted Fri, 23 Mar 2012 16:02:00 GMT (3/23/2012) [edit](#)

marking

[undercover](#)



[Morocco](#)

Post 13406 of 13417
Since 9/25/2002

Re: Scholastic Dishonesty - June 2012 Awake - Jewish Exile Timeline posted Fri, 23 Mar 2012 19:29:00 GMT (3/23/2012) [edit](#)

@LostGeneration:

My thoughts exactly, maybe he'll sue for copy write infringement and defamation.

Wouldn't it be grand if his suit demanded a letter of apology and retraction to go out to all who received a copy of this? (Oh how I dare to dream.)

Post 323 of 411
Since 2/3/2012

Re: Scholastic Dishonesty - June 2012 Awake - Jewish Exile Timeline posted Fri, 23 Mar 2012 19:57:00 GMT (3/23/2012) [edit](#)

[AnnOMaly](#)



A JW on another forum wheeled out this quote too - no doubt prompted by the *Awake!* although he didn't disclose this. What passes most JWs by is that the period in question related to *Nebuchadnezzar's 1st year (604 BCE) to Cyrus's 1st year (538 BCE)*, and NOT the period from Jerusalem's destruction to 537 BCE.

And as the source article **St. George** links to and **Leolaia**'s summary of Prof. Stern's views make very plain, the quote does *not* corroborate the WTS's position of the land being totally devoid of inhabitants!

Yugoslavia

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Since **8/11/2003**

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