

PREPARATION FOR LESSON: read the book of Haggai**BACKGROUND**

Author and Date: Written by Haggai from Jerusalem in 520 BC.

Theme: The rebuilding of the Temple

Purposes: To motivate the Jews to continue building the Temple
 To promise God's blessing because of their obedience
 To promise the Jews they will have a future King from the line of David

Scripture Background: Ezra 1 - 6; Zechariah 1

OUTLINE

- 1st Message - Reproof 1
- 2nd Message - Encouragement 2:1-9
- 3rd Message - Promise for the Present 2:10-19
- 4th Message - Promise for the Future 2:20-23

HISTORICAL SETTING: 500's BC Ezra 1-6

539 BC - Cyrus, general of the Medo-Persian army, conquers Babylon and takes 3 years to consolidate the empire.

536 BC - He takes over as the 1st king of the Medo-Persian empire.

536 BC - He gives the Jews permission to return to Jerusalem and rebuild their temple.

Only about 50,000 return under a Jewish man named Zerubbabel. After getting settled on their outlying properties, they come to Jerusalem, build the altar for sacrifices and celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles. After collecting the necessary building material, the people lay the foundation of the temple and rejoice at their progress. But then, for various reasons, they stop building and nothing more is done for 15 years.

520 BC - Because of this delay, God sends four messages thru the prophet Haggai.

Darius I (Darius the Great) is now king 522-486 BC; Darius the Mede of 539 BC was never considered a king.

EXPLANATION of Jewish Calendar

It is lunar, meaning it is based on the moon. Every new moon begins a new month of 30 days.

The Jews' religious year begins in our March; their civil year begins in our September.

Haggai uses the religious year for his dates because he is dealing with spiritual issues.

DEVELOPED OUTLINE**1st Message - Reproof** Aug. 520 BC

Reasons the Jews delayed in rebuilding the temple and said it was not the right time

Opposition from enemies; crop failure, so had to work long hours;

bigger families required bigger houses; cold winters required time to make warmer clothes

Reasons the Jews needed to have the Jerusalem temple in the Old Testament

It was the only place to formally receive forgiveness by means of the animal sacrifices.

It was the only place to formally worship God - it was God's House, the place where He lived among them.

By not building the temple, the people have said it is not important if God lives among them.

They are satisfied with ritual without worship.

They want God's blessing of forgiveness, but no longer value their relationship with Him.

They have gotten so busy with things, they have forgotten how to enjoy God.

Results when the Jews delayed: bad harvests; drought; severe weather.

2nd Message - Encouragement first week in Oct, 520 BC

The people: respond to Haggai's message; they repent and start rebuilding.

But then they become discouraged with another poor harvest and lack of beauty in their new Temple.

God encourages them by saying, *I am with you; I will provide you with food; I will provide My House with glory.*

The Hebrew text literally says: The *last* glory of this (My) house will be greater than the first.

The last glory will be the presence of Jesus in God's Temple in Jerusalem.

It will far surpass the glory of Solomon's temple.



DEVELOPED OUTLINE continued

3rd Message - Promise for the Present first week in Dec, 520 BC

The Jews thought their return to the *Holy Land* would automatically make their lives *holy*.

Instead, disobedience made them and their offerings *unholy*.

Their past disobedience brought consequences; their present obedience will bring blessing.

In this month of plowing and sowing, God will send the early rains, so they can have a good harvest.

4th Message - Promise for the Future to Zerubbabel Dec. 9, 520 BC

Zerubbabel is governor of Judah under the Persians; he is a direct descendant of David and the royal line

Former king Jehoiachin had 7 sons and one daughter. She married a man descended from David's son Nathan

Zerubbabel is the great grandson of the king thru that marriage.

Signet ring is picture language for power, leadership, kingship

Jehoiachin's sons were rejected to continue the royal line

"will pull you off" Jer. 22:24, 30

Zerubbabel is chosen to continue the royal line

"like my signet ring"

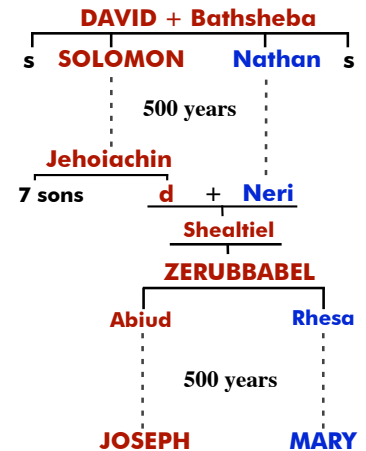
Zerubbabel is promised there will be another King for God's people

That King will come thru the line of **Zerubbabel**

Joseph, Jesus' legal father thru adoption, came from one of his sons

The Virgin Mary, Jesus' biological mother, came from the other son

Jesus descended from Zerubbabel; Jesus will be King in God's kingdom



APPLICATION

Priorities - Making time for God...

Means involving God in all our life

Decisions, relationships, attitudes, actions

Means enjoying short conversations with God thruout the day

We spontaneously thank Him for special things that happen.

We spontaneous ask for help in moments of need.

Means thinking about God - when our mind wanders, let it wander to think about God.

What He has done for us in the past

What He is like in His qualities

The importance of His love, justice, mercy and grace because they are absolute and perfect

What difference it makes because He is eternal, omnipresent, omnipotent and omniscient

Making time for God is not about literal minutes or hours, but *after* praying and reading Scripture,

do we practice what we have learned and been shown? Do we obey?

God's Instruction

Our part: Be strong and courageous and do what He puts in front of us.

His part: He gives us His presence - *I am with you*.

He is at our side, to hold our hand.

He is in back to support and hold us up.

He is in front to prepare the way and lead us.

He gives us His provisions - not all our wants, but all of our needs.

No matter how God works in your life,

God will never lead you where His grace cannot keep you!

