

**File No. 75**

## **II CHRONICLES 17:1 — 18:34**

I Kings 22:1–40

### **GOOD KING JEHOShAPHAT**

(SBS Bk 3 Story No. 15)

*Story Notes*

#### **Background Information**

*Jehoshaphat, king of Judah was a good king to his people and yet we will see that there were times he did not seek the Lord. Early in his reign he made sure the cities were protected and had some Levites and priests teach the people the law of God. He refused to follow the Baals, which Israel had chosen to worship.*

*Although Jehoshaphat 'set his heart to seek God' (2 Chron. 19:3) there were times when he acted unwisely. He made an alliance with wicked king Ahab by the marriage of his son to Ahab's daughter. Then in chapter 18, he was impressed with Ahab and joined him in battle. To get a bigger picture of Jehoshaphat it is helpful to know that in chapter 19 Jehoshaphat was confronted with an enemy and went to the Lord for help and was told 'this battle is not for you to fight; take your position, stand still, and see the victory of the Lord on you behalf, O Judah and Jerusalem. Do not fear . . . the Lord will be with you.' (20:17)*

*Later, Jehoshaphat foolishly joined with another wicked king in building a fleet of ships, and the Lord sent a prophet to tell him the ships would be destroyed.*

*In Jehoshaphat we see the blessings of seeking the Lord and the dangers of associating with the wicked.*

#### **Main Lesson**

Ahab had witnessed God's power at Mt Carmel, but his repentance, three years later, did not translate into listening to God's true prophets.

The nature of false worship in the North appeared through the visit of Jehoshaphat from the South. Jehoshaphat was ready to go with Ahab into war, and his request for a word from the Lord was granted.

Ahab had 400 prophets (not the prophets of Baal but compliant so-called prophets of the Lord) who would prophesy pleasing things for him, but one prophet remained faithful. Micaiah pretended to be compliant as the others were and provoked Ahab to demand a true word. But Ahab had no intention of listening to a true word from God.

Micaiah could explain the contrary prophecies of his colleagues. God could use them as well as true prophets if his purpose was to bring Ahab down. Naturally, the false prophets were not happy to be exposed. (Chenaanah, who struck Micaiah, would soon retreat in embarrassment.) As for Micaiah, he would languish in gaol waiting for a king who could never return, but his word would burn in the memories of all who heard him.

Israel and Judah's enemy, Aram, only had Ahab in their sights, and he could not escape the word of God spoken against him. Jehoshaphat's cry, when he was mistaken for Ahab, may have been for help, or to identify himself, but a later history says it was the Lord who heard and helped him (II Chron. 18:31).

What then of Jehoshaphat? He was a good man and, with some exceptions, kept the covenant of the Lord. His peace with Israel had come at a price however.

