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***The Kingdom Divided: Historical Framework and
Doctrinal Summary***

This summary is meant to be a helpful memory jogger for review as well as key points for training of families in the historical framework methodology of God's word. Refer to Lessons #81-87 in the Biblical Framework series for detailed analysis.

Scriptural Texts

1 Kings 12-2 Kings 17

Historical Event of The Kingdom Divided

Solomon's Golden Era did not last. A Bible friendly culture depends upon continual use of divine wisdom applied to every area of life, not human wisdom. The spiritual rot that set in under Solomon spread causing Israel's culture to decay.

The first step in the decay occurred when Solomon's son, Rehoboam came to the throne. The elders of the northern kingdom petitioned that he lighten their load and the heavy taxation Solomon had put upon them. In response to this petition Rehoboam rejected the wisdom of the elders who had served with Solomon and in a moment of incredible stupidity, increased the burdens on the northern tribes accepting the advice of his young political buddies. In response the elders of the northern kingdom Rejected the Davidic Dynasty. This caused the formal division of the northern kingdom from the southern kingdom.

With two kingdoms and Rehoboam the King of the southern, there was need for a King of the northern. God chose Jeroboam I and promised him an everlasting dynasty if he would obey the laws of the Mosaic covenant. However, while there were two kingdoms there was only one religion centered at the Temple in Jerusalem. Jeroboam's people would have

to travel south of the border to worship YHWH. In lieu of this, because Jeroboam could not trust the Lord, he built two high places, one in Dan in the north and one in Bethel in the south and installed the golden calf to serve as worship places for his people. This was another step down as not only had the Davidic dynasty been rejected, but now the Temple Worship in Jerusalem had been rejected.

The third step down came during the reign of King Ahab. Ahab. Not only was his wife, Jezebel, an unbeliever, but she was the daughter of the pagan king priest of Tyre and Sidon. Whereas Solomon had married unbelievers and allowed an ecumenical mixture of biblical and pagan presuppositions to control the royal family, Ahab allowed Jezebel to make Baalism the supreme state religion over all others. Instead of a mixed apostasy like Solomon or a man-made counterfeit of biblical religion like Jeroboam I, Ahab completely rejected the word of God and capitulated to pagan religion. This was the third step down, they had rejected the Lord himself.

Doctrine of Divine Discipline

This section of history teaches how God rules over His people when they reject Him and live in constant disobedience. God's way of handling His people is to discipline them. Such discipline is a corollary of being "elect." God loves His children and wants them to respond positively to His authority, learning loyalty to Him.

This is an advance upon the prior teaching learned through David regarding the existential dimension of sanctification (being in and out of fellowship). What was already known was that there are three steps in this dimension: conviction of sin, confession of sin and restoration. We must first be convicted of sin, that is, be made aware that we have violated God's character. Then we must confess our sin, that is, stop with the excuses and blame shifting and personally take responsibility for the sin. Finally, at that point we are forgiven and restored, though temporal consequences are not necessarily removed.

The Work of Divine Chastening. In the Kingdom Divided a fourth component is added up front. If a situation develops where we continually sin and train our flesh in unrighteousness we can develop a life-dominating sin pattern. In this situation it is not a simple matter of stopping sinning. The flesh cannot stop sinning by itself. The sin pattern has distorted our view of who God is. Mental strongholds of idolatry have developed. This makes it almost

impossible to be convicted of our sin since a proper view of God's nature is essential as a backdrop for interpreting our sin correctly.

In this situation God puts us under divine discipline in order to shock us into looking once again at Him. Divine discipline has as its purpose the destruction of these idolatrous mental strongholds. After their destruction we can see properly who our God is and be in a position to be convicted of our sin, confess and be restored. God's purpose is always the same: to restore the sinner to fellowship once again. Discipline is the firm hand of the loving Shepherd.

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