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## Cornerstone Church OF KNOXVILLE

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### **Main Point: What is the purpose of a “Frowning Providence”?**

1. Frowning or dark providences test your faith
2. Frowning or dark providences urge us to seek our all in God
3. Frowning or dark providences produce spiritual fruit in your life and make you useful

#### **#1:**

“Sufferings can bring a new dimension of fruitfulness into our lives. It can produce a new gentleness and a tenderness. This was evident in the life of Dr Martyn Lloyd-Jones and never more so than in his later years. During his own suffering he remembered others who suffered. In the last year of his life our daughter became seriously ill and died at the age of thirteen. As soon as he heard he wrote us a most comforting letter. Within three months he himself entered glory. Mrs. Lloyd-Jones later shared with us the tenderness of his concern: ‘I wish you could have heard his prayers for your little daughter’s illness and death. He never forgot and had such tender concern for her and for you all in your sorrow and mourning. It is a glorious thing to belong to the family of God. We really feel for each other.’”

**John J. Murray**

Behind a Frowning Providence

#### **#2:**

“Providence is an old-fashioned word and has a strange ring to modern ears. Yet when we break it down into its parts the meaning becomes clear. It comes from the Latin video ‘to see’ and pro ‘before’, meaning ‘to see beforehand’. In our lives we plan beforehand but we do not see what is going to happen. God has planned everything for His creation and because He is the sovereign God everything will come to pass as He purposed. Providence is that marvelous working of God by which all the events and happenings in His universe accomplish the purpose He has in mind.”

**John J. Murray**

Behind a Frowning Providence

**#3:**

Matthew 10:29

Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? And not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. But even the hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not, therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.

**#4:**

“We do not know why God allowed the enemies of His people to prevail at one time and restrained them at another. It is enough to know that God can and does restrain the harmful acts of others toward us when that is His sovereign will. Furthermore, God, in His infinite wisdom and love, intends that good ultimately come from those harmful acts. The classic, oft-quoted story of Joseph illustrates this truth so well...God was orchestrating the wicked acts of people exactly as He planned in order to accomplish His purpose through Joseph. In the end, Joseph could look back over all the difficult events and say to his brothers, ‘You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives’”

**Jerry Bridges**

Is God Really in Control? Trusting God in a World of Hurt

**#5:**

“A family of seven, barely scraping along on the meager salary of a blue-collar worker in this inflationary era, is suddenly plunged into disaster by the closing down of the plant at which he works and his inability to obtain other work. They face the problem of survival amidst the uncertainties of a volatile world economy poorly managed by greedy and godless men. How can the family survive this blow when a gallon of gasoline strikes a low of 54 cents and it is a bargain to buy three loaves of bread for a dollar? On what basis do they try to go on? Is there any use? Is there any meaning to it all? Any hope? To help them understand and cope with this dilemma, what does their pastor tell them? To what bottom-line truth should he point? There is but one – the sovereignty of God. Knowing that God knows, that God cares, that God hears their prayers, and that God can and will act in His time and way to work even in this for good to His own...that, and nothing less than that conviction, can carry them through. And what that hope may be reduced to is: a confident assurance that God is sovereign...Nothing less than this great truth can satisfy the longing heart or calm the troubled soul.”

**Jay Adams**

Counseling and the Sovereignty of God

**#6**

“Suffering forces us to declare our god; it surfaces our true image of God. Luther found that this image was often distorted...Luther affirmed that, according to reason alone, ‘our God is always in the wrong, no matter what he does.’ When we think about God and see what happens in this world, without faith, we conclude that either God is very weak and cannot stop suffering, or he is very wicked and delights in suffering. In suffering, doubt about God’s goodness and grace is the core problem preventing consolation. Luther’s personal and pastoral solution to this problem was to rest in God as a loving heavenly Father. He believed Father was the central image of God that was necessary in all of the Christian life, especially in suffering.”

**Bob Kellemen**

Counseling Under the Cross: How Martin Luther Applied  
the Gospel to Daily Life

**#7:**

When through fiery trials thy pathway shall lie  
My grace all-sufficient shall be thy supply;  
The flame shall not hurt thee; I only design  
Thy dross to consume, and thy gold to refine

**John Newton**

**#8:**

Hebrews 11:22

By faith Joseph, at the end of his life, made mention of the exodus of the Israelites and gave directions concerning his bones.