

providence is that of ruling, directing, and overruling all things -- in a word, His government.

2. God's Providence is concerned with the execution of His decrees, with the executive phase of His determinative will.

By way of review and clarification, the following is an outline of God's determinative will:

determinative will (whatever God determined would occur)

decretive phase (whatever God foreordained in eternity past)

causative aspect (what God decreed to cause)

permissive aspect (what God decreed to permit)

executive phase (whatever God ordains in time space history)

causative aspect (what God causes)

permissive aspect (what God permits)

In His decrees God formulates His Plan for the history of the universe, of unfallen angels, of human beings, and of fallen angels. In His providence God carries out His Plan and executes it.

3. God's Providence may be classified into ordinary providence and extraordinary providence, but should be distinguished from miracle.

The difference between these three categories lies in the degree of directness of God's involvement, and in the means employed to achieve the results.

In ordinary providence God's involvement is least direct. At creation, God established a system of physical, biological, moral, and spiritual laws intended to facilitate the accomplishment of His purposes, which system He preserves, upholds, and rules according to His good pleasure. The means God employs to achieve the intended results are thus ordinary, natural, usual, and non-interventional.

In extraordinary providence God's involvement is more direct than in ordinary providence, but is not as direct as in miracle. God works with natural and spiritual phenomena, and intervenes in the normal course of the outworking of His system of laws (frequently in response to the interplay of revealed promise and believing prayer), but not in a supernatural or miraculous manner. The means God employs to achieve the intended results are extraordinary, special, uncommon, and interventional, but not supernatural.