

COMPETING CLAIMS REFUTE CHRISTIANITY

Christians make a huge deal about Jesus supposedly having risen from the dead. Miracles are really not that special except to propagandists.

Two contradicting but equally convincing miracles happening in two contradictory religions mean either that one is a fake or that both are. God would not be doing a sign to call on people to believe a false religion. But it clearly means that miracles and the evidence for them is not reliable or helpful. It would be proof that the evidence can verify a miracle that is false.

Interestingly the "Virgin Mary" at Medjugorje refutes all apparitions that are not directly Catholic: ""It is intentional that all apparitions are under the auspices of the Catholic Church." This refutes the claims of Muhammad and Joseph Smith and countless others.

Even today false Messiahs such as Reverend Moon and his wife are reported to have appeared over the years to Moonies all over the world. If apparitions happen, they are hardly that trustworthy. Yet people lap them up as communications from God.

The problem of competing claims and competing miracles to support these claims is an avenue that has been neglected considerably by sceptics of religion. This is sad for it is the avenue that leads the most rapidly to the showing up of religion as the bigoted farce it really is. Jesus himself accepted the Jewish law that two witnesses were enough before God to establish an allegation they make as the truth. So if people claimed a vision and there was no collusion that was found – many people are good at disguising or hiding collusion – then two people claiming that Jesus appeared to them and confessed that he was Satan all the time and not the Son of God then that is the reasons to believe in Jesus gone out the window. The point is that it is too easy to set up competing claims.

Christians boast that the resurrection of Jesus was true for it was so unique and believable. They boast that Satan could do any other miracle but not that one so it showed that God approved of Jesus and his message. God did it not to fix the mistake of letting Jesus die for that was not a mistake but to show that Jesus was his prophet and Son. The Christians are boasting about their great powers of perception that is what they are doing so that is why we should find this offensive. They might attribute their perception to the assistance of God but any other religion can say that too. God is used as an excuse for pride and intellectual arrogance.

Let us talk about the evidence for miracles that contradict the evidence for the resurrection of Jesus.

The Book of Mormon was a fraud and it had twelve witnesses including Joseph Smith. They were persecuted for their testimony to the Golden Plates that Smith translated. We know them better than the apostles so their testimony is greater and it testifies against Christ whose teaching was contradicted in the Book of Mormon. For example, the book says that the Bible including the Old Testament was changed and corrupted contrary to Jesus who said that not even an iota of the Old Testament text would pass away. Things like this cancel the trustworthiness of the apostles out.

You do not believe an account about people seeing ghosts especially when the account is a second hand source. You know that since such events are so rare and unnatural that you need stronger evidence than you would need even to convict somebody of murder because murder will happen more easily than a miracle. The gospels are just not good enough for they are not first-hand documents. And angel simply means messenger and a man can be a messenger and yet we read of men in white robes around the tomb at the time of Jesus' disappearance. This makes them ten times worse.

The Virgin of Fatima added to the apostles teaching though the Bible and the Catholic Church are clear that God has finished giving the revelation that bears full authority over lives. And Jesus and his early Church said that the resurrection would be the miracle of miracles and nothing else would be as good. The evidence for her is better than that for the resurrection so she refutes the resurrection and she accuses the apostles of fraud. She accuses herself of fraud for she supports the Catholic system with its belief in the resurrection.

To believe something you have to see all the evidence. There are hundreds of objections, many of which are better-attested miracles, to the resurrection miracle and so to believe you would have to work through them all. Nobody does this so Christianity manipulates people to think they believe in the resurrection and believe rationally.

The Bigfoot and Nessie witnesses face only ridicule and there is no doubt about this. The apostles of Jesus allegedly had a

bad time for what they said about Jesus. But there is absolutely no evidence that they underwent any more torment than most normal people taking up a controversial cause would. We don't even know if their faith was the prime reason they were martyred if they died under tragic circumstances at all.

Christians have all the pig-headedness of old women who think nobody is good for anything but their sons.

There are sects that believe in the resurrection of Jesus but have silenced the evidence for it by having better visions and miracles of their own. Its sort of cancelled out in practice. These sects are in exactly the same position as those who posit evidence that somebody else was the Son of God. They might as well drop the resurrection of Jesus! You see the truth when you scratch the surface. For example, take Catholics who run after visions and miracles. They will probably have never even read the resurrection stories in the Bible or thought about them. They just take it for granted that the resurrection really happened. The evidence for their wonders is an alternative to that for the resurrection. They use it instead of caring for the resurrection. If you study the cures at Lourdes and proclaim them miraculous and have no concern for the evidence that Jesus rose then in principle you might as well just drop the resurrection.

The believers might start saying that the cures at Lourdes are about showing that Jesus is alive or they show that he is alive. But it is not the proper evidence. It is like Anna refusing to look at the evidence that her boyfriend is a murderer and then having a dream in which her guardian angel tells her he is a murderer and her believing he is a murderer because of the angel. She ignores the proper evidence and so it is no good to her at all. Why does she even bother then with evidence?

And once a miracle of healing is reported, nobody really knows what supernatural entity was responsible. So attempts to see them as signs that Jesus is alive are tortured and far-fetched. No Lourdes cure is explicitly centred on the resurrection.

There was no point in Jesus rising from the dead to prove his claims if we cannot have solid and direct evidence. If in its absence, saints came along after doing miracles and having apparitions and giving predictions that seem to come true that destroys the whole point of the resurrection which was to provide unmistakable evidence from God that Jesus was his infallible prophet for Satan or some other force can replicate all miracles but that one.

I could pick out some character who I said lived thousands of years ago and get somebody to fake a comeback from the dead so that that person gets the credit for it and his power is demonstrated. It would be easier creating a false Messiah or incarnate God that way than to get anybody to pose as a sinless person for a few years who dies tragically and then rises from the dead. The potential for claims that match and outdo Jesus' is enough to prove that Jesus was not God or the Saviour and that the apostles were impostors for making pretensions to inspiration from God that they never had.

The Book of Mormon claims that the Bible has been altered. The Book of Mormon does not confess that if that is really true then the Bible cannot really be used as evidence for the resurrection of Jesus. It cherry-picks Bible evidence! No honest scripture appeals to an allegedly bastardised scripture. The Book of Mormon proclaims Jesus the Son of God and to have been resurrected. The Book reaffirms Jesus after destroying the backing for the claims that he gave. When the evidence is squashed like that it might as well proclaim somebody else to be Son of God and risen from the dead.

This happening is just as serious as evidence presenting somebody other than Jesus Christ as the Son of God and the Messiah.

What if the Book of Mormon said that Jesus never died on the cross but only seemed to and revived in the tomb? There was nothing stopping it from doing that. It destroyed the evidence for Jesus' resurrection and so it was free.

Mormons will respond that the Book of Mormon does back up the Bible and shows us where the Bible is right. But this brings us back to what we learned about Jesus doing a big sign and leaving no evidence for it but saints doing miracles later to provide evidence. It doesn't work for we need the Bible to be true and to be able to hold its own against scepticism. The evidence that Jesus gave two thousand years ago was intended to be easily understood and interpreted because anything that is hard to interpret is not worth doing and will only lead to schisms and dissent and confusion. You would have to do an awful lot of research and refuting before you would have the right to believe in the resurrection of Jesus according to the terms he has established. No reasonable God would ask that of you meaning that no reasonable God would have inspired the apostles to make the claims they made for Jesus so we can question their claims as much as we wish without any qualms of conscience.

Miracles, if real at all, can only come from a conniving and evil source. Extreme Satanism taught that you had to be as depraved as could be to work miracles by black magic so miracles are defending that view. Better to assume that all miracles are hoaxes than to end up bolstering up that belief. Better no belief in miracles at all as losing one human life over them.

St Paul warned against the worship of another Jesus. He meant that some people have such a wrong interpretation of Jesus

that it is really another Jesus they adore. The Mormon Jesus is not the Christian Jesus. The Mormon Jesus is as much his rival as he would be if Krishna was presented as the Book of Mormon saviour.

Both Old and New Testaments have God teaching that two witnesses are necessary for establishing any claim. Jesus himself supported it. Also Jesus was supposed to have made Moses and Elijah appear with him on the mount of Transfiguration. The doctrine that at least two witnesses are enough is a doctrine that was supposedly verified when Jesus said that the word of Peter and James and John was enough entitlement to believe that he had achieved this miracle. That means that you could take any pseudo-Messiah at all and he will always have some followers that will swear to his divine authority and authenticity and as long as you can get two testimonies that is enough to believe in that Messiah.

The two witnesses principle was supposedly verified when the testimony of a few women were considered enough to get the apostles to believe that Jesus rose from the dead. The story supports the principle rather than the resurrection and we know for a fact that the principle is dangerous and irresponsible. It is no good when witnesses that should be there and speaking out are not there or speaking out.

Religious cranks such as Rhoda Wiseman and Jemima Wilkinson said they rose from the dead. That is better evidence for resurrection than Jesus' for there is no evidence only hearsay to indicate that Jesus said he rose. At least we know they said it.

Evangelical Christianity ignores miracles except the biblical ones. It just simply assumes that the Catholic miracles are not from God or are hoaxes. That is simply just choosing to believe in some miracles which is a totally underhand approach for people who claim that miracles are evidence from heaven about where the true gospel is. When such a huge body of Christians whose zeal far surpasses that of the Catholics it is a warning that human nature intends to lie about miracles so we are entitled to be sceptical no matter how devout and holy the witnesses seem to be.

While Catholicism parades the cures at Lourdes as evidence that God works through the Catholic faith, the Shinto faith does that too. Sakae Kezuka had an incurable degenerative eye disease miodesopsias but got her cure at the Shinto Temple of Yokohama and doctors claimed her cure was inexplicable [Martigli, 2009, pp. 133-134].

Religion is a load of old cobbles for there is no reason why we should favour one system of belief over another. Every time religion gives you reasons to believe all it is doing is manipulating you. Jesus was destroyed by the claims of rival Messiahs.

There is a load of stuff that could be used as a foundation for a resurrection claim. A sect could appear saying the traditional doctrine that Moses wrote the first five books of the Bible which means he recorded his own death as a past event (Deuteronomy 34:7). Resurrection then? What about people saying Brigham Young the Mormon Prophet could morph into Joseph Smith the dead Prophet?

Until we do the impossible task of refuting all rival claims which nobody can do we cannot say we should believe in the miracle powers of Jesus Christ. If you say that a statue is bleeding miraculously, the burden of proof is on you to prove it. You have to refute every expert in the world who says it is impossible on scientific or rational or philosophical or ethical or religious grounds. When it is right to give you a lot of trouble if you slander, it is right to do that too.

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