

*Can you say science and religion fit when science can never call a real miracle a miracle?*

It would call it something that nature cannot explain and which needs further information. That is having two disciplines and saying they fit. But you cannot know that. It is science of the gaps - if there is a gap you suppose a miracle may fill it.

Science ignores the supernatural. To say something has come from nothing - that is has been created - is supernatural. It is not naturally possible. The Bible teaches that only God can create or make from nothing. The Bible sees creation as a miracle endorsing a supernatural worldview. The conflict is fatal - to religion.

Religion responds that though science does not deal with the supernatural it doesn't refute it. But that is confessing there is no scientific evidence for the supernatural. So why suppose there is a supernatural then? Why take it seriously? And there are liars who claim that science has proven the Turin Shroud and the Eucharistic Miracle of Lanciano to be real miracles and really supernatural! That is all they are - liars.

The claim that science tells us how things came to be; the Bible (or religious faith) tells us why is untruthful. The Bible does say how things came to be. Jesus did not rise from the dead so we could simply wonder why he did it. The answer to the how of the resurrection is that God, the master of life, raised Jesus. Acts 2:32 God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of it. The how is inseparable from the why because if God was not the cause of the resurrection then the why does not matter.

Miracles are supernatural events. Science will be limited to showing that there is no natural explanation. It cannot do experiments on the supernatural so it can say no more than that.

The view advocated by Mark Vernon that a miracle is any event strange or otherwise that makes a person feel they have just encountered God Vernon, M. *The Big Questions, God*, (Quercus, 2012), p. 77 is inadequate. It is too subjective because some people believing their cow is God, feel they have experienced it. We would be unable to take such miracles seriously. Scripture tells us to live by faith and not feeling so that we might take faith very seriously - 2 Corinthians 5:7 For we live by faith, not by sight.

A miracle is to be defined as something God does to inspire us to be holier people that does not have a natural explanation. For example, Jesus dying a cruel death and being alive and well a few after days is naturally impossible. It is however, according to Christianity, supernaturally possible. God has the power to do that. The Bible speaks of the resurrection of Jesus as a supernatural sign from God verifying the claims Jesus made to be our God and Saviour.

Mt 12:39,40 Jesus answered, A wicked and adulterous generation asks for a sign! But none will be given it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

Religion say that science will be limited to showing that there is no natural explanation. It cannot do experiments on the supernatural so it can say no more than that. But is that true? No. SCIENCE CAN ONLY SAY THERE IS NO KNOWN NATURAL EXPLANATION WHILE ADMITTING THERE MAY BE ERRORS IN THE INVESTIGATION SO THAT THERE MIGHT BE A KNOWN NATURAL EXPLANATION AFTER ALL.

Most Christians accept the scientific doctrines that all things including space and time began at the big bang and that there wasn't anything until then. Stannard, R. *Science & Belief, The Big Issues* (Lion, 2012), p. 55. They think there is no conflict between miracles and science primarily because the greatest miracle of all is creation from nothing and both science and Christianity concur with that. Materialistic scientists tend to ignore this assertion. Science has never accepted that the big bang was a creation from nothing. Something had to be there to explode.

Christians argue the following in bold.

**Unbelieving science may refuse to deal with the agreement between faith and science that all was made from nothing. It may focus on the following line of thought to deny that miracles are possible or believable.**

**1 Science says dead men stay dead.**

**2 Jesus was claimed to have risen from the dead according to the New Testament evidence.**

**3 The claim is untrue for dead men stay dead.**

**Line 3 should be,**

**The claim is probably true for the evidence that Jesus rose is sufficient.**

**That version of the argument honours science. Science is fundamentally concerned about evidence. The previous version of the argument only pays lip-service to science.**

But 1 is saying that the evidence is that dead men stay dead. The new version says that there is sufficient evidence that Jesus was an exception. Fair enough but the quality and quantity of the evidence for both would need to be equal on the balancing scales. Otherwise you end up making Jesus an exception against the heavier evidence that dead men stay dead. The fact remains is that the New Testament evidence is not enough.

Mc Grath approvingly puts forward Pannenberg's conviction that "The decisive factor in determining what happened ... is the evidence contained in the New Testament". McGrath, A. *Bridge-Building* (Inter-Varsity Press, 1954), p. 164. This teaching appears in scripture. John 20:30 Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

Science is about external ways of checking things out. For example, equipment is used to measure and test. The Christian encounters the risen Jesus in her or his heart. John 6:56 "lives in me and I live in him". The Christian does not test the relationship that he experiences. He just experiences it and that is better than using any experiment or test. What is more scientific than that?

My reply to all that is that it assumes that the weak New Testament evidence is very convincing and it is not. And if the same evidence appeared to suggest that Nero was a living statue the Christians would ignore it.

And as for the argument that you experience Jesus in your heart and that is better than any science experiment then why not tell scientists to throw away the machines and listen to their inner experiences instead? Why can't scientists feel that there is no God and conclude that this is scientific proof?

Christians sometimes say that religious experience is only enough when it is verified by and checked out against the Bible which itself must be checked out to see if it is probably true. This attitude would demand respect for science and investigation.

Science is Based on Faith too!

Some believers in Christ argue that what we call science is really just taking the testimony of some scientists on faith. Usually people believe what Stephen Hawking says even if they don't read his books or think it through. That is really an abuse of science. Science demands that you try to check them out in your own head.

Some complain, "Why do so many people today insist on adopting a literal approach to Genesis - one that inevitably puts them on a collision course with science?" Stannard, R. *Science & Belief, The Big Issues* (Lion, 2012), p. 19. The reason is that they are getting away with it and when they get support they feel their opposition to truth is being validated and supported.

Christians say that the fact that the scriptures give evidence that God has spoken doesn't make them unscientific. We put faith in what the scientists tell us and trust that they conducted experiments honestly. We just cannot get away from faith and faith is scientific. The Bible like science requires faith. The importance of the Bible is that it gives us a way to 'divinise' science and fill it with light and life so that it is not a source of insipid and dry facts. This leads logically to the outrageous conclusion: science is based on testimony, surely the person who grounds himself on divine testimony is the most scientific person of all? God is in a better position to tell us than anybody else. Matthew 6:4, Your Father, who sees what is done in secret ...

Again we know from earlier that the testimony of science will always be more dependable than the testimony of the Bible. This is not to say that science is always right. It is because science isn't always right and is self-correcting that it should be taken the most seriously.

Significance of the Bible

God's word is said to be significant to the people of Bible times for it developed their knowledge and thus science was able to develop. Christians think that God saved us from pre-scientific forms of dangerous and blasphemous religion - for example, the worship of human type gods. Ex 20:4-6 You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments.

The Christians are saying that since statues for example are not even alive we cannot make gods of them. They argue that God opposing idolatry was scientific. That is a stretch!

It contradicts the Christian claim that science and religion are two separate fields and that science cannot disprove anything religious and cannot prove that a statue is not a god.

The believers go as far as to make out that the Bible is the foundation of modern science! Not true! There is no record even of the apostles conducting a commission of investigation to satisfy the sceptics and the scientifically minded that Jesus really rose.

Evaluation: If Bible religion was an improvement on paganism, that is a very weak argument in its favour. Many forms of paganism were civilised and humanistic.

Finally

The Bible was written by ordinary and often poorly educated people and it shows. Faith in the Bible is anti-science. We are told that faith in science and in Christ are complementary. That is an untruth.

If the Bible is not from a higher being then it should contradict science. To argue that it is from somebody who knows better than science is to interpret science through the Bible prism. It is to oppose science while making it look like you do not.

The Bible should contradict science. And it does. It does it in attitude more than it does in specific scientific detail. Such vital truths as evolution are not even mentioned. We read about the Virgin Mary having not known man and the most important truth of all is not even considered worthy of mention. Nobody can say that the Bible approves of evolution. That is only guessing for it never gives any hint that the fact of evolution is a fact.

Christians may say there is no conflict between religion and science. Surely they know that there are forms of Christianity that differ hugely from one another and are we to think that there is no conflict between any of these and science? The following has to be shouted for it is so important. CHRISTIANS SAY THERE IS NO CONFLICT BETWEEN SCIENCE AND CHRISTIANITY. THEY SAY THEY FIT TOGETHER AND COMPLEMENT EACH OTHER. BUT IT IS NOT UP TO CHRISTIANS TO SAY THAT BUT SCIENTISTS WHO ARE CHRISTIANS (AND THE FEW THAT ARE DON'T THINK ABOUT RELIGION MUCH OR UNDERSTAND IT CORRECTLY). THAT YOU HAVE POPES AND THEOLOGIAN SAYING IT PROVES THAT THEY ARE ARROGANT AND UNTRUTHFUL.

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2 Timothy 3:16, All Scripture is God-breathed (All Scripture Quotations except where stated otherwise: New International Version, Study Version (Zondervan, 2011)

Matthew 19:26, Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

Numbers 23:19, God is not human, that he should lie, not a human being, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and not fulfill?

Psalms 18:2, The LORD is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer; my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.

Newman, R. Questioning Evangelism (Kregel Publications, 2007), p. 27

John 14:26 "Holy Spirit ... will teach you all things"

John 14:6, Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

Ephesians 4:14, Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming.

Rom 3:7,8 Someone might argue, "If my falsehood enhances God's truthfulness and so increases his glory, why am I still condemned as a sinner?" Why not say—as some slanderously claim that we say—"Let us do evil that good may result?" Their condemnation is just!

and Proverbs 29: 27 The righteous detest the dishonest; the wicked detest the upright.

John 4:24 "God is spirit"

Hebrews 11:3 (KJV)

Vernon, M. The Big Questions, God, (Quercus, 2012), p. 29

Acts 2:32 God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of it.

Mt 12:39,40 He answered, A wicked and adulterous generation asks for a sign! But none will be given it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

Vernon, M. The Big Questions, God, (Quercus, 2012), p. 77

2 Corinthians 5:7 For we live by faith, not by sight.

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John 20:30 Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

John 6:56 "lives in me and I live in him"

Stannard, R. Science & Belief, The Big Issues (Lion, 2012), p. 19

Matthew 6:4, Your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

Job 26:7,

Genesis 2:7 "the Lord God formed a man from the dust of the ground"

Ex 20:4-6 You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments.

Reid, A. Apologetics (Moore Theological College, 1996), p. 105

Matthew 10:29

Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father's care.

1 John 3:1

See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him.

1 John 4:8

Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.

Mt 12:12

Mark 15:33

At noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon.

Matthew 10:29

Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father's care.

Psalms 147:8,9 He covers the sky with clouds; he supplies the earth with rain and makes grass grow on the hills. He provides food for the cattle and for the young ravens when they call.

Matthew 1:20

But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.

Hebrews 2:17 he had to be made like them, fully human in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest

1 Cor 15:3-4, For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures,

Genesis 1:31 it was very good