

EVIDENCE THAT JESUS WAS ENGAGING IN LIES AND TRICKERY

JESUS' MOTHER AND FAMILY WERE SCEPTICAL OF HIM

Mary, Jesus' own mother, did not believe in Jesus' magic power even after he turned the water into wine at the Cana wedding. See John 3:32 where Jesus moaned to Nicodemus that that nobody believed his supernatural claim to have come from Heaven and to be infallible. If you make general remarks there will be sometimes obvious exceptions then to expressly omit them would not necessary. For example, if you say a family got drunk at Christmas you don't have to say that the babies were an exception for the listener would know that anyway. But what Jesus said to Nicodemus includes Mary for Nicodemus did not know her to be able to work out that she was an obvious exception. She knew what happened at Cana was not magical.

The people who knew him best, his own brothers did not believe in him (John 7:5; Mark 3:21). Their testimony is stronger than anybody else's. Christians say they did not believe in his message but they would have understood it and believed it for it was only an ethical thing at that stage. Their problem was with the claim to be the Son of Man and Son of God and to have the power to use God's power.

What supports the sceptical family even more is the fact that there were other reasons why they would have been right. One of these is that Jesus said that no sign would be granted to his generation but the sign of Jonah which would be the resurrection of the Son of Man (Matthew 12:39,40). This tells us that there were no other miracles. The miracles attributed to Jesus were really misunderstood natural events. Perhaps Jesus knew they, or some of them, were natural but did not know how to get this across or perhaps he didn't want to mention that.

Some say the other miracles were private ones and only the person who experienced them could understand them as miracles. But the resurrection was to be a general miracle for all. If this interpretation is right then it follows that Jesus did not expect his own resurrection but that of the whole human race who had died. His own resurrection was still too private.

What is the difference between twelve people seeing a vision at once and giving no details to prove that it was the same vision they all saw and twelve people being cured at different times? None. Perhaps the Church schemed to make it seem that Jesus only meant that he would rise and not that all would rise when it became evident that all would not rise. There is no point in private miracles – though the gospels claim that Jesus certainly did some of these. No sensible God would expect us to believe in an extraordinary claim just because somebody claimed it happened. Extraordinary claims require extraordinary evidence.

Jesus made the equivalent of nine hundred bottles of good wine at Cana when the guests were already drunk (page 6, A Christian Faith for Today, W Montgomery Watt, Routledge, London, 2002). The good wine that Jesus created from water was served at the end of the feast when usually the bad wine was given out at that point for the guests didn't know any different having had too much. This is reported in the gospel of John. The gospel says it was remarked by people how strange it was to be giving out good wine so late on at the wedding. This is a miracle blessing the sin of drunkenness. It sounds more like a hoax – the Devil will not help him with such a sin.

THE WITNESSES TO THE TRICKS

The Bible says that Jesus and his followers were held guilty of fraud and wickedness by the Jews. If so then there were far better grounds for disbelieving the Bible tale of a Jesus with magical gifts than there are for accepting it for there are hundreds of testimonies for the former and only five from the believers. These are the gospels and the Book of Acts. And only the gospel of John claims to be the work of an eyewitness which makes it worse. And things are worsened still when that gospels has a different Jesus from that of the other three gospels.

It is naïve to argue that the miracles were genuine because nobody criticised them as tricks in the early days. It stands to reason that they were even if we have no record of it. Doesn't the Matthew Gospel tell us that the Jews believed that there would be a fake resurrection to top off all the deceptions that Jesus had been into? It does not even say that the Jews really believed the soldiers who may have told them that there had been angels at the tomb. It does not even say if the body vanished miraculously or what happened to it. We just read that the soldiers were told to accuse the disciples of raiding the tomb. No responsible answer is given to the accusations of trickery which shows that the author himself knew or believed that the Jews were right.

The gospels indicate that everyone was a sceptic where Jesus was concerned when he supposedly died. If the sceptical Jews told the sceptical Romans to make the tomb of Jesus secure in case there would be a fake resurrection which would be

the zenith of Jesus' conjuring tricks as Matthew says then this is valuable. When sceptics say such things among themselves it proves that they are sure they are right. They did not say, "Let us act so as to discredit the resurrection of this man if he rises from the dead", which is what one would expect. When a supernatural story surfaces it is wiser and more logical to believe the persons who say nothing magical took place. The gospels lead one to think that they were so sure that Jesus was an incompetent miracle-man that the only miracle they envisaged taking place at the tomb would be a fake one. Instead of openly having the body removed and hiding the body in a secret place so that nobody would be impressed if it went missing, they let him be in his tomb and even had guards posted. That shows you they were totally sure no real resurrection would take place. They were even sure that no trick or Devil was going to help Jesus now. It speaks of their certainty that the man didn't have enough magical power to move a feather.

Jesus would not have been crucified had he possessed abilities not of this world. The Jews would have preferred to kill him without anybody knowing in case he would rise if they were going to kill him at all. He spent enough time on his own praying for the opportunity to arise. And they would have tried exiling him or jailing him before they would have tried killing him. We have the testimony of the actions of the Jews and not just their words that Jesus could do no miracles. And they did it though the people wanted no Jew however bad handed over to the Romans and crucified and though Jesus was supposed to be popular. What stronger testimony against Jesus could there be? The apostles would have known soon after getting involved with Jesus if they could get away with following him and deceiving for him so their testimony is weaker and we do not know why they died decades later or how many of these deaths were not natural. But what use is a handful against the educated Jews who had everything to lose by making a mistake and did it because they were sure it was not a mistake? There is too much of an effort made in the gospels to show the Jews in a bad light. That trick, attacking the person so that nobody will believe the person though the person is telling the truth, is as old as Eden.

Christians will reply that after Pentecost many Jews converted to Christianity showing that the disbelief of the leaders was just a refusal to admit the fact that Jesus did have magic power. But the records never state that it was the words and works of Jesus that persuaded them but the message of salvation. And besides where is it said that they were very theologically competent Jews?

The Jews accused Jesus of doing miracles by the power of Satan (Matthew 27:64). They might have thought that Jesus was just doing tricks and Satan was manipulating the witnesses through nature to see them as miracles just like he manipulates people to steal or murder and to see these sins as good (in actual fact, you need to be insane in the first place to even listen to the Devil so the Devil tempting you to sin is an absurdity for you can only tempt yourself for when you are insane to start you don't need a Devil to make you insane).

There had to be witnesses who were bribed to give a natural explanation if Jesus did miracles. The Jews had plenty of money and power to get them and train and coach them to boot. But we will never know if these witnesses were telling the truth or not. Witnesses appeared at Jesus' trial to give evidence that he was a fake and a false prophet who failed to predict the future and taught absurdities. We read that the Jews were desperate to have Jesus found guilty and put to death so they would have chosen better false witnesses. This suggests that they were real witnesses and due to nerves and fear of the fans of Jesus they messed it all up. Or did they? The gospels simply say their testimony couldn't agree but the gospels were not in any position to judge that. No evidence is given only hearsay that their testimony was useless. They were probably witnesses who knew that Jesus was a fraud.

The apostles were not forced by the hostile Jews to be silent on Jesus' works according to the Book of Acts. This suggests that the miracles were too well known as natural, too well known as tricks or never happened. Any one of these could be the reason they did not bother silencing them. Nobody takes cranks seriously.

The gopellers never give enough detail for us to be sure that magic trickery was impossible and that the supernatural was the only explanation. Perhaps they did not know themselves how much trickery Jesus pulled off. It is more reasonable to hold that the accusation of trickery is the truth than to claim that Jesus did have miracle powers and especially when the gospels admit that the Jewish leaders who knew Jesus rejected his powers. When in a bit of doubt you have to deny that a miracle happened otherwise you will find yourself believing anything. It is more reasonable to believe that the anti-miracle witnesses were right for they were not answered than to believe that he did miracles. The gospels merely report and do not refute. They do not attack the testimony of persons who made allegations against Christ or show that they are untrustworthy. They only say they were worth watching but what use is saying for we have no evidence that they knew what they were talking about?

The Jewish debunkers of Jesus were more educated than Jesus or his entourage so their word comes first. Christians will reply that we listen to the testimony of uneducated people and it is as good as that of the intelligent. We do listen but the smarter a person is the more reliable they can be and the more acceptable the testimony is. The smarter people will see through miracles better than the stupid ones provided they are smart the right way which the Jewish debunkers were for they had to be theologically competent in handling religious cranks. It will not do to accuse the Jews of lying for what evidence do we have that they were? The leaders were habitually slandered by the gopellers to stop anybody taking them seriously.

