

GOOD FRUITS AND THE LIFE TRANSFORMING AND VIRTUE INDUCING DOCTRINE OF DIVINE GRACE

Jesus said that it is by their fruits you know the true prophets from the false. Just in case we end up seeing a prophet as good for he seems okay he said the prophet needs to get figs where there are thorns. So ordinary views of goodness will not do.

He implicitly denies that one religion is as good as another.

For him, the biggest miracle is how God fixes hearts and does for people what they cannot do for themselves.

Miracles of the other kind - vanishing cancers ladies in white appearing in holy grottoes are not doing a good thing for they attract people to a faith that they would not believe in if they knew it properly which few people do.

If Jesus had thought, he would have noticed how the miracle of bad people becoming good is what matters and not attempts to exorcise demons or rise from the dead!

People apply his test of getting figs from thorns to miracle claims.

A miracle is an event that is not naturally possible. That does not mean it is necessarily impossible. There could be a power greater than nature such as a god that can do it. A miracle is supernatural. Its really magic and superstition under a different name. If a power can instantly remove an incurable terminal disease, then it can guarantee bad luck for those who walk under ladders.

Christianity claims that God shows his love by doing miracles. The biggest one is when he raised Jesus from the dead to be our saviour and to give us hope of resurrection. But many miracles contradict each other. A god appears in one religion condemning the god of another. So religion argues that not all miracle stories are true and we know what miracles are real from God when we see amazing good fruits such as conversion and joy and peace.

Religion says God will do miracles only to help make it easier for people to see the truth he has given to them that will make them better people. But when God decides what way miracles will be done and when and why we cannot really know all his reasons. We might even mistake the side-effects that are good as being intended by him. You cannot say that God did a miracle without being able to give evidence why he must have done it. It is not for you to judge that the good is a good fruit and not just a side-effect. Its like, "Oh I'm so special that God went to all that trouble for me!"

A person who sees a miracle says it opened him or her up to the grace of conversion. This is not true. God is said to bring people to himself by grace or his undeserved favour. The person sees a miracle. God calls the person to convert. It is their response to that that changes them not the miracle. Miracles never convert anyone. So it follows that they are totally unnecessary. They are just showing off. It is how people choose to respond to a miracle that effects the positive changes – not the miracle.

Miracles produce bad fruit if they support bad or false doctrine. No God would raise Jesus who was so evil that he claimed that sinners who die will go to Hell forever. God sends them there according to the Bible and we are to believe God for believing what he has allegedly said is an act of worship towards him. We see and touch one another and we cannot be as sure as that that God exists and yet we are expected to have faith that people we know can go to Hell and this should be approved of all for the sake of this God.

When Christian miracles verify error it is clear that miracles are not signs and should not be considered as such.

Naturally, modern miracles would be more credible than ones that happened centuries ago for people know human nature better and know science better these days.

Prayer is not about trying to change anything but to unite to God and opening yourself up to being like him. If miracles emphasised that doctrine they would not have as many fans. A handful would have been there the day the sun spun at Fatima. The attraction about miracles is not God but human craving for idolatrous worship and its love of sectarianism and man-made religion.

Many believers say prayer has good fruits so it is from God. When miracles have plenty of concern for calling us to prayer

and none for the sanctimonious nonsense. It is better to save animals from suffering than to pray. Yet the teaching of prayer says no. A clear example that faith comes first for Christians and people don't matter in comparison. If you needed to hurt an animal to believe, you would therefore be obligated to do that.

A good God will be satisfied with one brief prayer for it is quality not quantity that matters. Prayers offered when you are sinning or unrepented which is a sin in itself are worthless and trying to take God for a fool. "God reward me with an answer to my prayer and I will not reward you with obedience."

The fruits people call good fruits mean the people are putting themselves in the place of judges. It is not that easy to judge. They say they know what the good fruits are which is quite an arrogant boast for the fruits might be unintended by God.

The Christian God is praised for doing nothing miraculous about the Holocaust while the Christian thinks that finding a dollar on the street that he needs to buy some bread is a miraculous response to his prayer. There is appalling arrogance in that. The Christian thinks his dollar is more important than stopping the Holocaust. He thinks the dollar is a good fruit of his prayer. It is far from it.

To say, "God sent the dollar to me which was a miracle sign that he is looking after me", is a refusal to admit that if it is, then the Holocaust is a sign that he does not look after people. The believer ends up being concerned not about evidence but about wanting to feel looked after. I'd not take such a person's word for it if they report seeing miracles or claim that God cured them of cancer.

Jesus used the fruits argument when talking about prophets. These seem to be the prophets sent by God whose utterances are scripture or to be taken as being devoid of error for God does not err. The Catholic Church holds that since the prophets produced the Bible, today's prophets do not have the same rank. You do not have to believe in them. So the fruits argument then only applies to authorised revelation for the whole Church. It does not apply to private revelations.

It is believed that if a miracle results in conversions and repentance that these good fruits prove that God was behind it. The very fact that all believers hold that fruits show this, proves that the miracles promote the bad fruit of deception for it is wrong and self-righteous to appeal to the fruits.

And Jesus said that sincere people do their good works in private so if miracles result in the good fruit of good works that means the people are disobeying this rule and showing off. So the good fruits are really bad fruits.

Good fruits follow even fraudulent miracle claims. The fruits argument puts pressure on the fraudster not to come clean. The argument causes a bias in favour of the fraudster as well. Good fruits may be as unhelpful for determining if something is good and true as they are helpful. The good fruits argument is popular but very toxic. It is the number one reason why people were sexually abused by priests and felt unable to speak out about it. The reasoning was, "The priest brings people to God. People see he is a good man. I am bad for thinking he is bad for hurting me. It is my fault."

All false miracles have seemingly good fruits – even the fraudulent apparitions of Bayside which claimed that Paul VI had been kidnapped and replaced by an impostor! The Hare Krishna would tell you about the good fruits of chanting a mantra. They feel they experience union with a fictitious Hindu god. And a god that taught immorality in the Gita, their gospel.

When an event happens there are good direct consequences and bad direct ones and the same holds true for the bad and neutral consequences – therefore to boast that a miracle was from Heaven because of its fruits is just sheer madness and arrogance and deceptiveness for nobody can really know for it is too complicated. Suppose something has fruits that are equally good or bad. People may just ignore the bad. Such fruits are not good fruits but kind of neither. If something is both it is also neither.

The failure of the fruits argument to help show miracles are a good thing and maybe from a good God is a deep one. It is a complete disaster. You cannot show that a miracle was really a force for sufficient good so you cannot repose your faith on it. Its failure shows that the goodness is just as bad as the goodness that comes from taking a e-tablet. The fruit is mostly bad.

When so many people find the attraction to religion that results from miracles disturbing it shows that believers just care about their spiritual thrills and not about whether miracles might be harmful. When most of us live without seeing miracles and so without the fruits it is clear that it is best to assume they are bad. What is so special about miracle mongers that we should take their claims seriously? Who do they think they are?

The most important test of a miracle that really came from God would be the truth of its message. Truth would be the main fruit for without truth we cannot see what good is or what is right so all the good results in the world cannot justify belief in a miracle that is either a hoax or from the Devil but was taken for a miracle from God.

There can be no doubt that the big attraction about miracles is the good fruits but this itself is a mistake. It is a mistake that proves that no miracle can be from God for no miracle seeks to correct this mistake. It is the fruit we want not the miracle and who made us like that? God. It is selfish to value good from a miracle more than good for itself. Miracles result in vice that looks like virtue.

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You cannot judge a person as good without being open to the possibility of judging and perceiving them as bad. What use would being thought good be if everybody judged nobody bad? Your mental health would not last if you thought people were judging you good not because of your good deeds but because they have that attitude towards everybody by default. Judging must be kept to the minimum as its a necessary evil. If we judge a holy miracle by its fruits - the positive spiritual effect it has on people - then we are forced to judge people over religion. That is wrong. If I judge a man for hurting his baby, I judge him as having harmed the baby and himself by behaving like a monster. But if I believe in religion, I will also judge him for disobeying his religion and his God. That is extra judging and it does nobody any good. Its going too far. Whatever encourages belief in God may do short-term good but it sanctions judging and in that it is bad. Its enough to condemn it.

Religion argues that we can consider a reported miracle of God to be authentic if it has good fruits of joy and so on. God is good so he supposedly does good things. The fact that he makes nasty viruses is conveniently forgotten. He has, according to Catholicism, even rigged nature so that babies are supposedly born in a state that makes them unfit to enter his presence and enjoy an eternal love relationship with him. If miracles are really good then how can they be if they encourage such beliefs?

You need seriously good evidence to back up a miracle claim. If miracles are signs from God, then it follows that we must ask on God's behalf that people believe in them. The more extraordinary the claim you make, the more extraordinary the evidence must be.

In the light of the good fruits notion, extraordinary evidence will primarily or solely consist of extraordinary spiritual and moral heroism in the person touched by the miracle. The person then becomes the miracle. But this hardly ever happens. We have no evidence even that the apostles of Jesus were amazing saints for there is so little known about them. So that does not say much for their proclamation that they witnessed the resurrected Jesus.

To say that the verified miracles of another religion are from Satan is to admit that Satan does miracles that make people live what seem to be better lives and happier. He sees and hears things we don't so his miracles will do undetectable evil or evil that cannot be directly traced back to the miracle so you cannot tell the difference between a miracle from God or him. The miracle of exorcising demons who are tormenting people they control or possess is a definite hoax because no sane Devil would let a person show the signs of possession in an obvious way.

We conclude that the good fruits argument is only helpful when it describes how God fixed a person and that any other kind of miracle does not have the same strength. That includes the resurrection of Jesus and Jesus risen seemed to have less interest in teaching people and fixing their souls than the pre-resurrection did! We should not even be interested in such miracles!