

Miracle - the testimony of logic has more weight than the testimony of evidence

A miracle is what is not naturally possible. It is a supernatural occurrence. It is paranormal. Miracles are events that seem to be against nature or the way natural law usually runs. In other words, they cannot be explained by nature. Examples are the Blessed Virgin Mary appearing to children, the unexplained cure of incurable illness, blood coming out of nowhere on Catholic communion wafers, the sun spinning at Fatima in Portugal in 1917 and most importantly Jesus Christ coming back to life after being dead nearly three days. It is thought that only God can do these things.

The bigger the claim then the bigger the evidence that is needed. Miracles are so rare and seem to be exceptions to nature so you need exceptionally good evidence that they take place.

People testify as to what logic says. People testify to what experience says.

If twelve men testify to a miracle say of a man rising from the dead they are testifying to an experience they allegedly had. They claim they saw the man, they perhaps touched him and perhaps they heard him.

If twelve men more educated than they testify that logic says this miracle though it may have happened is not believable then that is a testimony about logic.

The latter testimony has the most weight. There is less bias in one who reasons than in one who is using sense-data. We can see what we want to see. We can twist our reasoning too to believe what we want to believe. But that is not a refutation of the point that one who reasons is more objective and fair. We are not saying he is perfectly fair.

You have people testifying to what they believe and saying it is down to reason or logic or thinking coherently. You have people testifying to what they have sensed as in seen or heard etc. The testimony of most of the world's best philosophers that it is unreasonable to believe in miracles outweighs the testimony of twelve men that Jesus rose. (We do not have that amount of testimony - for example, only Paul gave a direct testimony about Jesus appearing after his death - but Christians say we do so we are just going along with that.) I can test and prove or disprove what the philosophers say for I can think for myself. But all the thinking in the world will not prove that the apostles were right that Jesus rose. The evidence can only say they believed Jesus rose but not that he did rise.

Logic must take priority over evidence when considering the truth of reported miracles. If logic says miracles don't happen then evidence for them must be ignored or explained otherwise. If logic does not tell us one way or the other, then our acceptance of the evidence for miracles is conditional. "I only accept the evidence for miracles because I am not sure if they are logical or not. If I could be sure I would reject them." It is not like our unconditional acceptance for the evidence for non-supernatural things: "The evidence says John stole my wallet. No ifs and no buts." Clearly natural explanations for alleged miracles take priority over supernatural.

There is no logical reason why most things are the way they are - that we know of. Logic is about how man thinks and man needs it so it is no concern of ours if God has the logic.

LOGIC APPLIED TO MIRACLES

Religion says there is no logical objection to belief in miracles. It argues that logic gives not arguments that are necessarily true but arguments that are valid. So it says that belief in miracles could be wrong but it could be valid logically. Let us test that.

If God does a miracle and God inspires faith then it follows that you have to sense that God is guiding you to assess the evidence. But that leads to bias and thus if you think the miracle truly happened then you are too biased and your investigation is suspect.

COMMENT: Logic says that an argument is not about what you want to think so a biased argument is a sense is not an argument at all.

Big claims need big evidence. Big magic claims need bigger evidence. This is not refusing to believe in miracles regardless of the strength of the evidence for them. It is refusing to believe in miracles so as to be able to believe in evidence. Honouring miracles without expert investigation and understanding would be showing a bias. It shows you are letting yourself act as a fantasist. You prefer what you want to be true to the truth.

COMMENT: If a miracle demands evidence then you need good evidence. Weak evidence for a huge claim is not enough. Logic says the whole cannot be bigger than the part so belief in a miracle cannot matter more than the evidence.

Miracles are such huge claims and so contrary to our natural experience of the universe that we would expect the evidence for them to be exceptionally good and straightforward. No properly supported miracles exist. No wonder all you see is experts bickering over the evidence for and against any miracle you can mention. Some claims have to be unbelievable and if miracles and magic are not in that category then nothing is.

COMMENT: Logic says that human opinion cannot make a miracle believable or true.

The Christian accuses sceptics of miracles (those who simply see no reason to believe they are supernatural) of not looking at the evidence for them or taking it seriously. But they are the ones who do that for they do not care about the evidence that the miracles are more likely to be based on errors or lies than real magical events.

COMMENT: This is the logical error of attacking the person not their argument while pretending that it is the argument you have refuted.

If a person says a miracle is so unlikely that it is more likely to be an error or a lie or a freak of nature the Christians say, "She is just assuming the evidence is not good enough. She has no right to do that - it is unfair." This is the only objection they can have and the only one they do have. But in fact she need not be assuming - she may be basing her view that miracles are too improbable to be believed on the basis of evidence. Thus she is the one who should be listened to and she also needs to answer the Christian slurs and misrepresentation of her position. Miracles are hardly a good thing if belief in them requires you to smear those who say they do not happen or are not believable even if they do.

COMMENT: Again the person is attacked for saying something instead of attacking what they said.

Evidence has to be assessed by human authority. It is not true that if God reveals what we are to believe then we believe on his authority. No it is those who assess the evidence and stamp it with their authority whom we believe. Miracles by definition are unbelievable because they dismiss divine authority while claiming that they don't. They do not solve the problem that it is man who interprets God and that is what people worship not God even if God exists.

COMMENT: If man says something on his authority then you cannot claim that you are following God by believing what that man says about God. It is illogical.

Those who hold that a magical or miraculous event has really happened need to base the belief on good evidence but not testimony. And they all fall back on testimony and can be quite nasty if you question that testimony which shows they know they are on shaky ground. We have and seek good and excellent evidence for many things we believe and that sets the bar for what we need for something as incredible as a miracle. Do not be fooled - belief in miracles is superstition.

COMMENT: Logic is about protecting you from being misled by testimony. It wants all things tested.

The way miracles are checked for being miracles invokes evidence and logic has something to say about evidence and about the evidence specifically for the supernatural. Thus the claim that miracles do not defy logic is just a lie. They do for it is more of a question of evidence being logically used than of miracles directly.

