

ONLY HARD EVIDENCE WILL DO FOR SOME CLAIMS

A miracle is what is not naturally possible. It is a supernatural occurrence. It is paranormal. It's an act of God.

Religion uses alleged miracles as evidence for the truth of its claims.

There is no hard evidence for miracles - just people testifying that they happened.

Only miracles armed with hard evidence should be taken seriously.

DAVID HUME SAYS TESTIMONY TO MIRACLES IS AUTOMATICALLY SUSPECT

So we know a miracle is a magical event that cannot be explained by natural causes or coincidence. It is a supernatural event.

David Hume the philosopher said that its more likely that a miracle claim is false for it is easier to make a mistake or tell a lie than see a real miracle. He did not say it is definitely false - he is only cautioning us not to give it much credibility. He and his followers say the evidence for miracles is always insufficient for it is more likely that a person has lied or made a mistake than that they have seen a miracle for they are so uncommon.

David Hume said we could believe in a miracle only if the people lying or being wrong would presuppose a bigger miracle for it is easier for people to lie or make mistakes than for a miracle to really happen. People who don't believe in miracles say that it has never been known for it to be more miraculous for people to be lying or mistaken than for them to have experienced what they said they experienced.

It seems that the argument is biased against miracles. It is not. "I believe Jesus rose from the dead for it would be a bigger miracle if everybody lied so well about it." It is about using a miracle as an explanation when needed. You don't need a bigger miracle to explain a miracle.

Believers always want you to believe in "their" miracles. The Catholic hopes you will believe Jesus returned from the dead after three days but not that you will believe God gave the Koran to Muhammad as in dictation. Believers cannot think Hume was completely wrong to say what he said. They will compromise by holding that out of say 100 claimed miracles or 2 are real. They will point out that there will be times that nobody is lying or making a mistake. But that is no good for directing anybody to believe in SPECIFIC miracles. You end up with no right to say Jesus rose from the dead and people should accept that. What happens is, "I have my miracle that I believe and you have yours." Miracles do not really help confirm a religion. It is the manipulations around them that do that such as social pressure to belong. Miracles should lead to chaotic religions and religious claims. It is only that believers testify to their own secret skepticism by not letting that happen that it has not happened. Who said testimony is just words and speeches and affidavits?

IT IS EVIDENCE ABOUT TESTIMONY THAT SAYS TESTIMONY IS NOT ENOUGH

Superstition starts with the spiritual or magical or miraculous conclusion you want to believe and then you work back to the evidence picking and choosing and reinterpreting. Then you proceed to trick others into thinking you really care about evidence. Superstition broadly speaking can be that kind of attitude. With miracle testimony it involves just dismissing or ignoring any testimony that undermines the desired account.

We must adhere to the general principle that any specific miraculous claim must overcome the strong presumption that it didn't occur based on the overwhelming cumulative evidence that people have lied about miracles and their content if the miracle was portrayed as a message from above.

You need really good evidence for miracles to avoid enabling fake miracle workers who may hurt people. You don't want to make their job easier by encouraging people to accept miracle beliefs too easily.

People who care about what they want to believe not what they want to know pollute everything including history. In court, we get people to swear to tell the truth but what we mean is not that they can tell the truth but tell the facts as they see them which is why we must examine what they say. We really ask for the best honesty they can produce. You can trust people except in supernatural claims. As long as you place enough trust to be able to function in society who cares? And you don't need to trust in supernatural claims to achieve that.

HARD EVIDENCE

Belief in supernatural events, is based on testimony. There is no hard evidence. We demand hard evidence for many things so it is irrational to NOT demand it for miracles. It is that simple.

CONSISTENCY IN WITNESS(ES)

Consistency in a witness or among witnesses is a negative test not a positive one. It does not mean that what they say is probably true. It only says, "No problems with consistency so we must now look to see if the reason for the consistency is that the tale is true. That involves looking for new data."

ARGUMENT THAT NO TESTIMONY IS ANY GOOD IF MIRACLE TESTIMONY ISN'T

The argument that if we reject miracle testimony then we have no reason to trust anybody's testimony is incorrect. They say you trust people in this life if they are okay but that does not mean you think they are perfectly reliable or all their views are right. You have the right to regard the testimony of a class witness as wrong. It is only a bad thing to do this if you do it too much.

MIRACLE TESTIMONY HAS AN INHERENTLY UNFAIR ADVANTAGE

A supernatural claim cannot be examined in the same way as a natural one can. The reason is that there is no method for cross-examination for the supernatural could be making the person perceive a miracle when there is none.

Miracles put themselves beyond testing. Testimony means I ask you to be willing to test what I say. A testimony is a request to be checked if possible. A testimony that puts itself beyond testing is not a testimony at all but a scam even if the speaker does not realise. A testimony to a miracle is a contradiction. The person who says that somebody naturally seemed to rise from the dead is saying what can be tested but one who says magic did it is denying it can be tested or checked. The miracle puts itself beyond testing but more importantly you do that too. It is more that what you are saying is made untestable than that the miracle is untestable.

SCIENCE

You would not expect science to change its theories over testimonies. The stress on testimonies pits miracles (and miracle based religion such as Christianity, Islam, Mormonism etc) against science. A testimony and an assertion are not the same thing. A person X who gives evidence that a car is stolen is doing something different from a person Y who merely says it was stolen. X is giving a testimony. Y is merely asserting. You do not need a testimony if somebody says they bought a newspaper last Sunday. You just need them to assert it. You need somebody to testify if the newspaper they got came from Martians or the Virgin Mary. If miracles are so normal as some seem to think, then they lose their importance.

Believers in principle do not take seriously the testimony to a miracle of a man unless he is impeccably honest. This proves that it is not the miracle that they really value but the testimony. It is not the event they want but what the witness says. Science and honesty care about the event full stop.

If testimony is so important that its enough to defend belief in an occurrence that seems naturally impossible - it follows that if science contradicts it then science should not be taken as seriously as it. And if science can be ignored or not taken very seriously then we cannot what is a miracle and what is not.

CONCLUSION

Science of any kind even the senses cannot be treated as able to confirm themselves if you start regarding magic or miracle as true. You may be sure you went through the front door but what if a miracle made you think you did and you actually passed through the wall? This is not about evidence and truth only but about you. You have the right to trust your experience. Trusting your experience that things are normal justifies dismissing an experience that seems miraculous. Give nature the benefit of the doubt.