

## MY NEWSPAPER COMMENTS REGARDING MIRACLES

### MOVING STATUES

Reply to a poster about the moving statues in Ireland who asserted that powers bigger than nature could cause statues to move.

<http://www.thejournal.ie/ballinspittle-moving-statues-2230433-Jul2015/>

Believers in miracles deny that miracles are magic.

But the distinction between the two is arbitrary. Many miracle tales are no different from fairy stories of magic and spells.

The honest believer will say that if there is evidence that something supernatural has happened he has to tell people that magic/miracle may have happened for he cannot know which. If there is evidence then it is not evidence for a miracle but evidence for MIRACLE OR MAGIC.

Magic is detested as a concept by the Church for it implies that the universe could have been magicked into existence without needing a creator. Many say the Church needs to admit that it believes God made the universe by magic anyway for he didn't really make it from anything but just told it to exist.

Leicester: Police to lift lid on murky world of bogus faith healers who promise cures for huge sums of money

If I sell aspirin claiming it will cure cancer in a month, I go to jail for fraud. But if I sell the aspirin saying it is how a priest blessed it that does the curing I don't. That is giving a religious claim special treatment. It is not right. It does not help to say that it is superstition not religion for what is religion to one person is superstition to another. And the Catholic Church is happy to give cancer patients false hope by having them blessed by St Padre Pio's mitten - that is superstition to a Mormon. I think faith healers who really think they have hard evidence should get mercy but those who don't care about evidence should be treated as frauds. Justice Jackson in the US versus Ballard case thought that prosecuting faith healers is like the courts deciding what faith claims are true or false. The problem with that is that the state becomes a religious persecutor. But he missed the point. The point is that healing claims made without regard for evidence and proof are fraud.

Re: Nigerians using a miracle river full of sewage and infection in search of miracle healing in 2014

Miracle is just another name for magic. It is a strange kind of God who needs to instantly cure sick people and raise Jesus from the dead as a sign when he can work in peoples' hearts to make them more loving. Religion uses miracles to brag, "Hey we have the truth for God does signs to show that". They are about doctrine not love. Miracle religions encourage a mentality open to miracles that leads vulnerable people into danger. Miracles are intrinsically superstitious and disgusting.

Re Belfast Telegraph on Joshua and his miraculous healing 2015 and his mother stated she always knew he would recover from cancer because of prayer

It is encouraging to read all the sceptical comments. It would be worrying if this story led to other mothers being as confident as Joshua's that he would be miraculously cured. What about the poor mothers with even stronger faith than hers who end up disappointed? His mother should not be using her happy experience of her son getting better to dish out false hope to others. It is irresponsible. If your child is better, would you really care why he has got better? Why does it have to matter that it was God? The Telegraph is being very irresponsible with this story and feeding the fanaticism of the church.

And it could be said that God having odd ways is one thing but people saying he has odd ways is another. Why is one child cured and another left to suffer and die? Are people just rationalising? Are they more interested in condoning what probably should not be condoned than in the will of God?

Former Miss Ireland claims miracle cure from cancer in Belfast Telegraph

Okay she says her cure was a miracle. But she expects and has the cheek to ask us to take her word for it. We all know people who like to claim they were supernaturally cured. You need evidence - where is it? Christ said that if you won't believe in him then believe in the works he does. This is a clear rejection of merely taking somebody's word for it that they have experienced the supernatural. It is not on. He tells us to look at the evidence. This woman gives none. She doesn't quote any doctors even. Her article is arrogant and self-promoting. It is about a woman who wants to imagine that God did her a special favour while others were left to die. If it is okay to be so convinced that God cured you, surely then it is okay

to be convinced that you will be cured and have no need to go to hospital or seek medical help? She cannot have it just the one way. It has to be the two ways. People defend her by saying that she did not ask people to think that faith in God and healers is enough and you don't need hospitals. They say she did not say you must count on prayer to do modern medicine's job. But she stands for a principle that does ask that! And if God uses a hospital to heal you it follows that the hospital is just an accessory and strictly speaking only looked like it was doing anything. It was all God. It was not prayer and God and also the hospital. There is no also properly speaking and strictly speaking. The hospital is good for nothing for God used it to cure you so it was all God. This idea says it is prayer that cures and prayer alone. It is only a baby step away from arguing that it does not matter if you go to the hospital or not. If you make a mistake and we all make mistakes is it a big deal if you think God does not want you to go to the hospital? If God wants you to live, then you will live if you stay away from the hospital. I think she only wants publicity. Even if you believe in God, you can believe that God uses natural processes and never bothers doing miracles. A proper God can run the universe without them. No loving God would ask you to believe in a religion because he allegedly does miracles as signs that the religion is true for that gives too much power to human testimony. It means that if good liars invent a religion and miracles then they will get away with it and have people maybe sacrificing their lives and happiness on fiction.

Quote "Rachelle saw negative reactions to Joshua's story on social media and decided to speak out." Does she really think that her story is going to convince people who have problems believing the Joshua healing story?

Quote: "During prayer, when the hand of a Christian faith healer was laid on my head, I could feel my fingertips and legs and toes tingle with pins and needles. I believe this was the cancer exiting my body. I believe I was truly touched by the hand of God that evening. After this, everything in my life changed."

That is a disgraceful endorsement of faith healers and to be fair most Christians do not encourage going to such healers.

Shame on the Belfast Telegraph for putting that appalling tale on its front page.