

BELIEF IN MIRACLES INVITES AND FEEDS BIGOTRY AGAINST SCEPTICS OF MIRACLES

What is a miracle?

Many religions of the world claim that God does miracles to draw us to the religion he has revealed, the only right religion.

An example of a miracle is when a statue of the Virgin Mary comes to life and starts talking to people.

A sceptic is?

A sceptic is not a scoffer but a checker. It just happens that the checking out shows nothing really supernatural happened or at least can be demonstrated. An alternative explanation [that takes account of all the data] for a miracle can be wrong maybe but it means nobody has the right to make out the miracle is believable.

Gullible Sceptics?

Not believing in miracles without good evidence that they are false or suspicious is said to be as bad as believing in miracles without good evidence.

Catholics and other miracle followers care about not what actually happened but about what they believe happened. This is worse than a sceptic being biased against miracles. The biased sceptic also does not care what really happened but about what he wants to believe happened. A biased sceptic who does not believe in any miracles would be harmless. The same cannot be said of those who take superstitious miraculous nonsense seriously. People are at risk of being led astray by charlatans and develop an unhealthy interest in the supernatural. Chances are they will mistake man-made religion as the holy religion of God if there is such a thing.

Plus, the sceptic might err but at least he is right that all things need to be challenged and questioned and he sees the importance of evidence. Better to have the right principles and do the wrong things with them than to have the wrong principles.

It is safer not to believe in miracles than to believe. If you deny this, then it follows that it is safer to believe in the first miracle working charlatan that comes along.

The view of a person who honours, seeks and carefully evaluates evidence is the one deserving of the most respect. The miracle beliefs of most Christians do not for they make no effort to reasonably substantiate the beliefs. They make serious allegations about miracles happening. You need excellent evidence if you are going to say a miracle is a true miracle. It is a matter of being respectful to the persons you invite to agree with you and a matter of respecting evidence and truth and its a matter of integrity.

Even if the miracles reported by the Church are true, that does not mean the belief of most Catholics deserves the same respect as that of the expert believers. They are superstitious in their attitude.

People say that believers and sceptics are like the rest of us who will believe or disbelieve whatever the facts. It is not true that all of us care little about facts. We are not all like that.

Sceptics will find the notion of a benign and kindly supernatural power doing miracles to be attractive. That proves that they disbelieve against their feelings. They want to believe but cannot. That is a sign of their integrity. And they are accused of being biased by the godly sectarians.

RELIGION SAYS: The unbelievers say that miracles are impossible or not credible if they do happen. They won't give miracles a chance. They let a prejudice dictate to them what to think. The unbelievers are so evil they say we believers are as bad except that we are believing in miracles but refusing to consider them fictitious. They assume miracles don't happen and they dismiss or ignore the evidence for miracles for the sake of this assumption. They complain that we assume miracles do happen and that we dismiss or ignore the evidence against our position that miracles are genuine.

COMMENT: We can assume, one, that the evidence says miracles happen or, two, we can ignore it or three dismiss it.

Which assumption is the most reasonable and easiest to make?

We can't go through life believing all the evidence we get. We have to dismiss and ignore some evidence and there will be times when evidence appears to conflict. You cannot be expected to go changing your mind even about who Jack the Ripper was with every new Ripper book. What is the most sensible approach? If you are going to choose evidence choose what directs you to the solution that is the most natural and the simple.

Which assumption is the most reasonable and easiest to make? The answer is obvious but let us go on.

Keep life simple so assume the second. Reason will be useless to us if we complicate things too much. And see how they condemn us while they assume too. And we deny that we assume. We will believe in miracles if the evidence is good enough.

We should not believe in miracles. When we hear a miracle report we should give the preference to assuming what is non-miraculous or assuming that there must be some natural explanation for the miracle. Even positing aliens with their super-science would do! Miracles, though interesting, are abhorrent for they serve religious rulers not God. It is not God but human interpretations of him and assumptions about him that get the service offered by religion. In other words, it is the men who are being served. The money you pay religion doesn't do God any good. It doesn't go into God's bank account.

The Church falsely accuses those who say the evidence for miracles is unsatisfactory of dogmatism - of having made their minds up before they look at the facts or the evidence. And the Church does not examine the evidence that all who it accuses may be mistaken or sincerely wrong. You need to talk to the sceptics to see if they are being dogmatists.

None of the genuinely sceptical approaches to miracles is unfair or biased against them. Be conscious of the fact that the believers bully unbelievers by saying, "They pretend to be open-minded but they actually oppose belief in miracles without looking at the evidence." That is not what we are advocating at all. Our points refuting the believability of miracles are all fair and unbiased and it would be unfair to divert from them. We have the right to find it offensive when people start setting up miracle shrines and running after wonder-working saints. By implication, they insult us. That would not be happening if we were not blackened.

The only thing you can absolutely prove is that you are aware now. And you can only prove it to yourself. Nothing else is as certain. Sceptics look at miracle reports that seem to have no evidence against them. They may say there is evidence that it is a real miracle but that the miraculous nature is still not proven. Evidence is not the same as proof. Evidence gives belief. Proof gives certainty.

Sometimes strong evidence or what people accept as proof cannot be obtained. Believers chant, "The evidence is sufficient and you sceptics still will not believe. You are not being fair or open minded". They really mean, "People disagree legitimately on what is sufficient evidence or otherwise, we will bully the sceptics. They must be pressured to agree with us." The fact is that if absolute proof isn't possible or if tip-top evidence is unattainable it does not mean we should make do with less than proof or less than terrific evidence. Belief in miracles and the supernatural is always based on an inclination to be unfair. The sceptic can distort the truth as much as a believer can. But the sceptic, not the believer, is the one who can be fair and unbiased.

The sceptic of miracles may have the kindness to say that witnesses of miracles are mistaken. The believer in miracles will be hard of heart and say that the sceptics are biased and stubborn. The believer not the sceptic necessarily gets personal. Belief in miracles then necessarily makes one a worse person. If one does lots of good, one still has a bad attitude underneath it all.

If you proclaim that any miracles should be believed then you set yourself against sceptics who think there is no case to be made for believing. In fairness, the sceptic is against the believer too. Which view is the fairest? We have answered that.

If you love Jesus and don't want a false miracle attributed to him for that empowers the deluded or lying witnesses and those who will gain from it then you will be more harsh against a miracle than an atheist.

Miracles, as even believers admit, are never proven but miracles in principle slander us sceptics so it is wrong of religion to put them forward for the belief of the people. Disbelieving harms nobody. Religion has no right to risk hurting or insulting anyone.