

## Spotting miracles that are really conjuring tricks

A miracle is what is not naturally possible. It is a supernatural occurrence. It is paranormal.

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

David Hume said that the witnesses to miracles are no good because their intelligence is often wanting or not verified. Many find the demand that your testimony to a miracle can be ignored unless your intelligence is investigated to be objectionable. I would change it to, "The only miracle testimonies worth thinking about are those that have been witnessed by independent persons who would have the experience and perception to spot magic tricks." Intelligence is not enough - you need a specific kind of intelligence. Even a scientist or a genius can be fooled by what they think they have observed. And it happens too often for comfort. Remember Uri Geller!

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.

When should you assume that a magic act is really a magic trick?

- 1 When you see the magician doing strange or unnecessary things. For example, if a magician is really able to cut a lady in half he wouldn't need her to lie in a box.
- 2 When the act is done for the sake of a performance.
- 3 When nobody is encouraged to check it out correctly.

Examples of magic tricks in the Bible follow.

Christians say that Jesus rose from the dead leaving his tomb opened. They say his body was transformed so that it could transcend the way nature works. Eg it could pass out of the tomb without making an exit door. So the tomb being open then is unnecessary if they are right. That is a sign of a trick. And especially when the tomb was found unattended and unguarded with the stone rolled back. If the stone rolled by itself Jesus could easily have been stolen. Nobody was encouraged to investigate this correctly.

Jesus appearing to two men on the way to Emmaus to tell them how the Jewish Bible supposedly predicted the resurrection was unnecessary. The Holy Spirit should have been able to help them reach that understanding on their own.

Jesus sending angels to tell people he rose was unnecessary. Why couldn't he do it himself? Why waste miracles?

To believe in Christianity actually implies that if magicians do tricks and tell you they are miracles then you should believe. We will not demean ourselves with such credulity.