

Are Miracles Impossible?

The common objection that “miracles are impossible” quite likely betrays ones’ philosophical assumption that the natural world is all there is. In order to properly address the question, it is therefore necessary to establish the reasonability of theism over and against atheism, or metaphysical naturalism. If theism is true or at least rationally maintained, then the objection is overcome. If atheism is true and the natural world is all that there is, then the assertion that miracles are impossible has no home, for in such a worldview reason and logic, being by definition non physical, are unreliable as a means for deciding truth, and the claim is therefore self refuting. If theism is at least as likely as atheism, and if reports of miracles are supported by empirical evidence, then the argument that miracles are impossible should be vacated. As it is, the arguments for theism are compelling, and the resurrection of Jesus Christ is a well-attested historical miracle.

The universe had a beginning and was caused by a non-contingent personal agent that transcends the physical universe. Science and philosophy confirm the proposition. The Second Law of Thermodynamics includes the rule that universe is cooling off from a very hot beginning. Also, the net amount of available energy in the universe is declining and that trend cannot be reversed, based on the same law. If the universe is running out of energy and yet is infinite with respect to time, then the energy should have already been entirely depleted. In other words, we would not be here. We are of course, here. The universe also evidences design in both the laws that regulate the interrelationships of matter, and in the specificity and fine-tuning that renders chance explanations void of statistical probability. We infer design quite regularly in our daily lives. There is a profound difference for example between a random rock

formation that assumes nearly human facial characteristics from a particular perspective, and the human activity that forged the faces of four American presidents on Mount Rushmore. Design with that level of complexity abounds in the universe from the behemoth stellar to the microscopic.

Universal laws and constants require an explanation that science cannot offer. Whoever or whatever caused the universe to begin transcends the matter, space and time that constitute the universe and would be an "uncaused cause" with the power of choice. It is most reasonable to describe that cause as a "whoever", a free agent that chose to bring about a certain event.

Science therefore affirms our philosophical intuitions about the impossibility of an infinitely "old" universe. In order to arrive at this present moment, it was necessary to traverse a succession of finite previous moments. Like a row of falling dominoes subject to the tipping of the first one, each moment requires a preceding moment to come about. In a universe of eternal moments, no moment is differentiated from any other moment, and whether one adds to or removes moments (hypothetically) the number of moments remains infinite. One could not therefore traverse an infinite set of moments to arrive at the present. A beginning is required.