

# Believing in God based on miracles

## Abstract

We can classify miraculous phenomena as type I (within the bounds of natural law) and type II (far beyond the limits of natural law). If miracles are genuinely part of this earth life, we expect to see evidence of type II miracles. Given that we only ever observe type I miracles, we are logically compelled to conclude that we should not believe in the existence of a higher power due to type I miracles alone: either 1) there is no higher power through which type II miracles are performed 2) the higher power does not intervene *at all*, or 3) The higher power does not want us to believe in it based on its ability to supercede natural law.

## Type I Miracles:

Type I miracles are characterized as involving one or more of these phenomena:

1. **Manifestations produced by the human mind** – the brain is complex and doesn't always represent reality one-to-one; auditory and visual hallucinations are relatively common.
2. **Natural, but rare, occurrences** – for instance, people sometimes spontaneously come back to life after being dead a short period of time.
3. **Coincidence + confirmation bias (related to #2)** – we remember all the extremely improbable coincidences but forget all the times when the ordinary happened. Events that are highly unlikely will still happen *some* of the time to *some* people (following their likelihood).

In a universe where miracles do not exist we would still expect phenomena that *appear to be miracles*, but are limited to the type I variety. Examples include:

- a person reports the visitation of a “heavenly being” who behaves according to their expectations (with no external evidence to support the visitation)
- an extremely lucky kid gets run over by a truck but is somehow okay after the community's faith healer blesses him and the initial trauma wears off
- a person naturally begins breathing again after being “dead” for a few hours or a couple days
- a person who is blind starts seeing again
- a person meets a friend on a path at *exactly* the moment they felt they needed someone to be there.
- a cancer remits after a blessing by an ecclesiastical leader

## Type II Miracles:

In a universe where miracles are real, we would also expect these kinds phenomena to occur:

- Well-documented (i.e., video recording) of heavenly manifestations where the heavenly being displays multiple highly extraordinary capabilities.
- People who had been dead for *years* come back to life
- A person who had been *incinerated* came back to life
- Someone who *had no eyeballs instantly* grew a pair of eyeballs and could see again
- Someone whose limb had been severed *instantly* grew a new limb, etc.
- Someone literally moves *an entire mountain* at their command, as suggested in the BoM and JST.

In this universe, we *also* expect to see type I miracles and these would be of two varieties: type I miracles that are merely natural phenomena and misinterpreted as divine intervention and type I miracles that are genuinely the result of divine intervention (but are not especially extraordinary).

## The evidence

To my knowledge we have no modern claims of type II miracles, hence we tentatively conclude that we live in a universe where only type I miracles occur. If you have good evidence that a type II miracle has occurred, please let me know at your earliest convenience.

## The higher power that doesn't want to be detected

We cannot distinguish between a universe where miracles exist from one where an omnipotent and omniscient being can and does perform miracles (i.e., it *could* do type II miracles) but ensures that all miracles **look** like type I miracles to prevent the unworthy from being convinced of its existence. However, we can then conclude that if we are not convinced of the existence of God via type I miracles, then we are merely following the will of God (i.e., if God really wanted to convince us through miracles, he could easily do so with type II miracles).

Therefore, the only logical position is to *not* believe in the existence of God based on type I miracles (whether God exists and is behind type I miracles or not).