David Hume?S ?Of Miracles? Essay, Research Paper

In David Hume’s paper “Of Miracles,” Hume presents a various number of arguments concerning why people ought not to believe in any miracles. Hume does not think that miracles do not exist it is just that we should not believe in them because they have no rational background. One of his arguments is just by definition miracles are unbelievable. And have no rational means in believing miracles. Another argument is that most miracles tend to come from uncivilized countries and the witnesses typically have conflicts of interest and counterdict each others experiences. Both of these arguments are valid however they tend to be weak. I think that Hume’s strongest argument is that he claims there is no credibility to the testimony behind the miracles.

In Hume’s argument he says “that there is no testimony for any, even those which have not been expressly detected, that is not opposed by an infinite number of witnesses; so that not only the miracle destroys the credit of the testimony, but the testimony destroys itself.” To make this clear Hume uses religious matters. Many religions use miracles as a foundation. “Every miracle, therefor, pretended to have been wrought in any of these religions as its direct scope is to establish the particular system to which it is attributed; so has it the same force, though bore indirectly, to overthrow every other system.” If the miracles try to destroy a system, a religion, it destroys the credit of the miracles themselves, and the system in which they were established. Since most religions are based on miracles and try to destroy each other with contrary miracles and then we as humans have no reasoning on which miracle to believe in. Therefore what I think that Hume is trying to say is that for a religion to be credible it must not be based on miracles. This argument is seen by society to be far fetched, because most people have a certain belief in a certain religion and have somewhat a belief in miracles, but Hume has a good argument. He says that people should not believe in religions that are based on miracles because they have no credibility. Miracles themselves are thought to have weak credibility because the majority of the people in the society think that they are false. However there are many people that believe in miracles in one way or another. Either directly or indirectly. If you affiliate yourself with a religion that is based on miracles then you are indirectly a believer in miracles. This is what Hume would think and also he would say that you should not believe in the miracles because they are the basis of your religion and have no credibility due to the fact that the religion is trying to destroy another religion and their miracles.

Even though Hume has a good argument, one could make an argument that Hume is wrongly saying that we ought not to believe in religions based on miracles. Religion is a major part of society. The majority of the world has faith in a religion and it thought to believe in miracles. Also religion has helped the world grow to where it is today and if Hume says that we should not have even believed in religion, then society would not have grown and developed into various civilizations. Religion brings mass amount of people together, and most of the time they believe in the same miracle. In history the church was the main government and also in charge of the education. Now if the miracle that brought all these people together never were believed in we would never have had any basis for government or any basis for education.

Due to the church educating the people, eventhough it was few at first, there would not have been many sciences developed or maybe philosophy would not have come about. Since the church united the people and educated them, then indirectly the miracles on which they all believed in helped the education process. David Hume says that we ought not believe in miracles, but if people did not believe in them, like Hume says to do, then the world would not have grown and developed. Education helped the world grow and develop and if it was not for religion and miracle based religion then we may not have any education system. We have to believe in miracles to help the world grow. Believing in miracles today may not lead to such an important development, but look at what happened in the past who know what might happen. Society just has to believe in miracles even though there may not be any rationality behind the miracles its just something mankind must do.

I do not know what Hume’s reaction would be to this kind of an argument but I am sure he would find something wrong about it and lead us to believe that miracles are still something that people ought not believe in.

Miracles do happen. They have happened in the past and will remain occurring in the future. The question is not whether or not miracles exist, but whether we should believe in them or not. Hume discusses, in “Of Miracles,” many reasons why we should not believe in such miracles for various reasons. However I have made a counter argument of Hume’s in saying that we must believe in miracles and if we do not have any faith that they are true then society would fail and not develop. Miracles are something that exist and are something that we have to believe in.