

# It Rained Hailstones With Mother Mary's Picture-Impressions Thereon.

## A MIRACLE FROM THE ANNALS OF CHRISTIANITY.

*by Dosubaba*

**[Editorial Notes:** Every religion has miracles of its own. Some are attributed to the 'Paigamber' i.e. the divine Messenger or 'Avataar' or "Saoshyant", who founded or established the Religion. Some are attributed to the disciples of the Saoshyant; some are reported to have happened after him, some happen throughout the history of the Religion; some occur even in the present times as public events, and some in individual lives of the followers of the Religion.

A miracle is an event which is so much out of the ordinary that it seems to violate the normal laws of nature we come across in our daily life. It is therefore taken to be against common sense and there is a conservative thinking amongst scientists and more so in the science-inclined people that what is against "common sense" cannot happen. Therefore frantic efforts are made to find a "scientific explanation" of what is seen to be a miracle. But numerous events have occurred which have defied common sense.

The truth is that a miracle also follows natural laws, but they are beyond our experience. Nature has several sets of its laws, but we are conversant with only one set. We try to fit in all that happens around us, in that one rigid set and often do we fail, particularly when a miracle occurs. But our failure is not the non-proof of the miracle. The miraculous event in fact follows the laws of God, which are beyond the barrier of our experience, intellect and consciousness. Therefore a miracle is often taken as a divine act or intervention or interruption in the ordinary working of Nature. But Nature's machinery, which does it, is too much beyond us to offer an explanation within the narrow compass of our own experience. The better course is that once it is established that the event has happened in fact and truth, we try to see whether there is anything on our side of the intellectual barrier which can fully explain the event. If it does not so fit in on our standards of the observable universe, we have to conclude that some unknown forces and energies have caused the event, which can then be identified as supernatural.

If you really want to understand within your limited range of consciousness, as to what a miracle can be, read "**Autobiography of a Yogi**" by **Swami Yoganand**. You will find a miracle almost on every page.

Christianity also has numerous miracles from the time of Lord Jesus Christ to the present day. And most of such public miracles observed in Europe, have been subjected to very exerting so called 'scientific' and 'logical' and 'rational' tests. Many of them however have defied all such tests. Here is one that happened in Remiremont, a small French town on 26th May 1907. Dosubaba takes you into the miracle right from its origin. Read it. You will enjoy and wonder. - **Editor]**

Once upon a time there was a king. His name was Charlemagne. His time was 742-814 A.D. and he was a french. (That means this is a true story.) He had carried out some campaigns in Italy which became successful. As a thanks - giving he presented a cedarwood statue of Virgin Mary to a convent. In 910 A.D there was some invasion on the place and the nuns of the convent had to run away. They took the holy statue along with them and settled at a place which is the present day Remiremont. It is a french town about 60 miles from the German border. The statue was kept in the town's central church. It was and is called "**Notre Dame du Tresor**" ("**Our Lady of the Treasure.**")

Since inception, the villagers of Remiremont had developed a belief that the statue had some divine powers. If and when it was exposed to public view by taking it in processions, it brought good luck and protected the community from calamities. The belief was rooted in the residents since centuries. Then arrived a fateful day - 12th May 1682; the town was struck by a major earthquake. Several homes were shattered. Huge chasms opened up in the ground. The major quake was followed by several aftershocks. The villagers, terrified by the repeated shocks, ran to surrounding meadows. It seemed to them that the shocks would not

stop. Suddenly, a thought came to them. "Why are we not taking the help of Virgin Mary?" They ran to the church; it was also damaged. Not caring for the aftershocks, they took out the holy statue from the shrine and carried it in a revered procession through the half-wrecked streets. **The shocks stopped at once!** May be just a coincidence? But beware! In this ending 20th century, there is a science of coincidence, called "Synchronicity". Coincidences may be designs. But wait. Read further.

The villager's hearts were full of gratitude for the divine Mother. With tears of devotion in their eyes they decided - vowed – that on 12th May of every year thenceforth, they would take out the Notre Dame du Tresor - Our Lady of the Treasures - in procession and take it around in the village. They did so consistently for 224 years - right upto 1906. First, the Mass was offered; two ladies then sang the choir; they stood with the Holy Cross and Holy water at the entrance of the church. The procession, with the lady lifted up was led by the head priest and monks. A lady singer went on singing the holy song: "Te Deum", followed by Psalms. The statue - the Holy Mother, the divine Guide - was then taken around the town and then brought back to the church. (This account of the processions is recorded in a French booklet published in 1750, titled "Notre Dame du Tresor de Remiremont")

All along the period of 224 years the villagers had sustained their faith in the miraculous power of "Our lady of the Treasure". Arrived the 20th century. The previous "infidel half-century", as Bernard Shaw put it, had introduced godlessness and faithlessness in the Western thinking. This had arrived in Remiremont. There was a group - though small - of people who were knocking the doors of atheism. They created a problem for the town council.

What happened was this. In 1907 an elderly town priest Rev Archdeacon Vuillemin sent a petition to Pope Pius X that the veneration of the Lady by the villagers must get the official approval by the Pope. After some bickerings and due to the persistence of Rev. Vuillemin, Pope Pius granted the petition. He sent his personal delegate to Remiremont with a costly crown for the holy statute. The faithful in the town were overjoyed. The official priests decided that the statue would be crowned at a public ceremony in the church after the usual procession on 12th May (1907). The plans were made accordingly. The villagers were looking forward for the great event with tremendous zeal. **To commemorate the occasion, a medal was made with the picture of Mary and the child-Christ.**

But suddenly on the very day, 12th May, the mayor and the town council refused to allow the procession. The reason they gave was that the opposing atheist group might clash with the faithful villagers and a riot might erupt. Local churches and the devotees were outraged. Meetings were held condemning the decision. But to no avail. The council ordered that a procession could be held in the church but not in the streets. For the first time after 224 years, the procession was not taken out in the village. The villagers were boiling with anger. Some prayed to Virgin Mary: **"Show them your divine love, Mother!"**

14 days passed. In the afternoon of 26th May, suddenly a wind started blowing from southeast. A storm arrived. It rained. At first the rain fell with small hailstones. But from about 5-30 p.m., the falling hailstones were larger and many of them did not disintegrate on dashing with the ground, as the previous smaller stones did. They were oval in shape but with one side flat, and had the size of good normal tomatoes. They went on falling from 5-30 to 6-15. Some villagers collected the stones. They were extremely amazed to observe that **the stones were impressed with a picture of Virgin Mary! And the picture was identical with the one on the commemorative medal made for the crowning of the holy statue!!**

But was it mother Mary's divine love or anger? Several villagers reported that the stones had not fallen from the sky in the normal way. **They seemed to float to the ground very gradually as if they were not meant to hurt any garden or field as they fell! Mother's Love indeed!** No person complained of the stone falling on his or her head. Some knowledgeable villagers declared that the hail storm followed the same course which the nuns bringing the statue in 910 AD had taken!

No doubt, a commotion was caused in the high-brow communities of France. Paris newspapers wrote out their non-belief and criticised the gullibility of the villagers. Some news papers even alleged that this was a politically manufactured story. One M. Sage was sent by the Society of Psychical Research to report. He gave a negative report that nothing unusual had happened. But it was later found that this was a biased report.

Villagers had not testified to him. They had remained silent sensing the pre-formed prejudice of M. Sage. One villager asked him to get out of his house or "I'll throw you out". It is now established that Mr. Sage's report was not only heavily biased but self-contradictory. As against that, there was Father Vuillemin's report which provided consistent materials, data, testimonies and other evidence to show that all this did happen. It did rain stones with Mother's picture impressed on them.

Some people tried to explain away the divinity of the miracle by saying that the stones were the result of a massive thought force emanating from the devoted villagers. This was a mass poltergeist effect. But, here, this explanation raises many more problems than the explanation of divine intervention or divine sign. And in any case, is such a mass effect of devotion flowing from human hearts not itself a miracle? Would it not be more reasonable to think that such fervent devotion brought down the grace of Virgin Mary in the form of loving stones with her presence imprinted on them? This so called scientific psyche would go to any extent to dismiss the divine. They must explain everything without God and without going beyond the limited consciousness of a non-saintly mind.

Several of us have experienced that a fervent cry of devotion do invoke divine mystical forces and energies.

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## THE GOAL

All roads that lead to God are good;  
What matters it, your faith or mine?  
Both center at goal divine  
Of love's eternal brotherhood.

A thousand creeds have come and gone  
But what is that to you and me?  
Creeds are but branches of a tree,  
The root of love lives on and on.

Though branch by branch withered wood,  
The root is warm with precious wine,  
Then keep your faith and leave me mine;  
All roads that lead to God are good.

- *Ella Wheeler Wilcox*

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