

## Free Will - Is it a Miracle?

The Debate: Free will is a miracle or supernatural claim for nobody can explain what faculty does it and how it does it. Maybe it's a natural thing we misunderstand or don't know or can't know enough about to explain it naturally and scientifically? It may be that even those of us who say miracles are not real ever are in fact saying free will is a miracle without realising it.

Three reasons why free will should be classed a miracle claim:

One is that we have a maybe and maybe here means maybe natural or maybe supernatural. We reject the supernatural for it implies we are magical beings or God is putting magic in our will so we can be free. A person who needs a leg up to get over a fence is unfit and it is not really them getting them over the fence. The notion of God making all that is around us from nothing really means our actions are actually not ours but God's. So if there is doubt then class it as a miracle. It may as well be. It makes no difference.

The second is that the only explanation we need is if the will is down to purely physical causes then it is not free. The choice is not literally a choice - it is programming that works in an organised way so there is no real free will. So we have to treat the idea of free will as a miracle. You don't need to blame Jesus' magic for breaking your video game. So if you reject the straightforward natural explanation then you are saying it is a miracle. You may not realise it or admit it but that is what you are doing.

The third is that once you assume the miraculous or supernatural is real you never know if it is imitating the natural. When that happens the natural is not the natural. You have no free will to understand what you are actually doing when you make a choice. You have no free will to prove to yourself or to just know that the action is from you and part of you and created by you and not down to any programming. It is like your eyes working but not knowing if what you see is there so what use is that? Knowledge gives personal responsibility so if you don't know then you cannot have free will. There is no way you can collect evidence to make a reasonable if not certain case. So only a miracle can tell you if you have free will and not only have it but use it. You can have free will but a miracle may make you think or make it look like you are using it. Having free will does not mean that any action of yours is really free! Free will as a faculty is only an assumption. Even if you were sometimes free you can never know if any particular act was a free one. So you may as well discard the concept of free will entirely. Its no good except as a discussion point. Only a miracle can make it any good.

In a nutshell, there is no reason to deny free will is a miracle claim, it is something that is claimed to override physical causes so by definition it is a miracle. And there are reasons for saying that free will and being able to use it would have to be miracles.

We cannot just assume I have the free will power to kill John now or save him (libertarian free will). That is accusing everybody of being potential even if unlikely murderers! Free will is not really about choosing to be good if that is the price. It is not really free will in that way. You need a miracle or magic to make it about choosing to be a good agent or an evil one.

So free will is a magical or supernatural or miracle claim. It is that in itself and it is that in other ways. Its a collection of explicit and implicit, direct and indirect miracle claims.

Analysis:

Do we have free will? Are our choices really choices? Are we responsible for the choices we make? Are we programmed by inner forces and therefore not responsible at all? Do we only imagine we are not programmed but free?

Most people would say that computer doesn't program itself - a person programs it. They say we are more complicated than all the computers in the world put together. They conclude that we are free agents. We are not programmed.

Free will is not easy to understand. It is not obvious that it makes sense. The illusion of making sense comes from how familiar we are with the idea. Free will is a mystery if it is real.

Suppose we have free will. It is a miracle each one of us has free will and how it works. Nobody can explain how it works. Some think it is an illusion. We cannot understand how the flower comes from the seed. It is experience not reason that tells us that we exist. Therefore we experience our free will and that is sufficient for us.

Some say we are both programmed and free. We may be taking the programming forces and turning them into freedom. It may not be an act of making something out of nothing but an act of turning what already exists into something new. It is a miracle of transformation. But even then we are creating something out of nothing - we are creating the transforming power.

Suppose the free will miracle is true. Your power to work the miracle of free will certainly indicates that you alone are your god. Even if there is a God that does not matter - you are in some way apart and even he cannot intrude or intervene. To that extent you are more than god you are God. A miracle you work yourself is your testimony to yourself that you are divine. What you experience yourself has more weight than anything outside of you saying it. It tells you more than any miracle worked by any god. You are a god. You are a goddess. You are both for every person is a combination of male and female.

This being the case, free will is not truly about respecting the real God. It pretends it is.

Why it is incorrect to believe in the miracle of free will-----

The doctrine that we have free will is the basis of what is called the free will defence which claims we are ultimately responsible for evil not God who is too good to hurt anyone. So freedom cannot be interfered with even by God. But experience shows that a lot of forces, predominately subtle ones, show a lot of interference happens. And any respect for free will as a doctrine is blown apart by the fact that we cannot blame humanity for evil for the sake of defending free will as a doctrine. That is mercenary and if we have to do that to have free will and use it then free will is not about choosing good versus evil but hypocrisy versus evil.

How reliable is our experience of the miracle of free will? We do not experience the miracle only the end product so we cannot be sure that there is a miracle or be sure that we have free will. The experience is not reliable just as the experience of touching solid objects is not real for everything is really nearly all empty space. Physics tells us that. And the experience is stronger when you take mind-altering drugs!

Why do you seem to act free? You shouldn't take a supernatural explanation when a natural one would do. People in Africa abandon twins for they think they magically bring them bad luck. So it is safer to keep to nature. If you don't know or cannot know what the natural explanation is, it does not mean there is no natural explanation.

The supposition accuses unbelievers in the supernatural of knowing miracles happen for their free will is a miracle. So the unbelievers are really liars. The supposition is sectarian.

If our free will is magical we have magical power. Then why do we not use this power to draw good luck into our lives? If there is supernatural power that can be used in the universe for good, then why do we suffer? Why does it not tell us the cures for diseases, ageing and death? How can it be good when it is able to stop suffering and does not? Suffering proves that free will is either fiction or non-magical.

Some say, "It is necessary to believe in magic to be happy. It is necessary to believe that there is no God in your life or over your life but you. You will not be free if you believe you need a God to do the magic for you for he is the boss not you. Do it yourself." I think that belief in God is belief in magic - believers fear people who have magical powers so they deny people have them. Instead they worship a God who has them. Belief in God expresses a fondness for the occult and can lead to people starting to hope they are the gods with the powers.

It is interesting how believers in God blame us for evil and not him and say we misused our free will while they fail to admit that free will means each person is God unto himself or herself. Free will to be really ours must be our magic and nobody else's. So we see that if free will is real, it opposes belief in God.

Free will is impossible and impossible to explain if we are merely material beings. So religion says the faculty of free will comes from the soul. Free will is one of the powers of the soul. This is incomprehensible and sounds like sophistry for the soul cannot have free will as it has no components. If it is not material then it has no parts. The soul is a mind or impersonal intelligence that has no body.

Some define free will only in spiritual or unspiritual terms - it is just about pleasing or displeasing God. That is not the kind of free will we want and it will bear no importance to most people. Even believers do not consciously make all their actions about God all the time or much of the time! And often free will is held to come from your soul or spirit meaning that as far as your body and brain are concerned anything resembling a will is programmed. So the soul idea is hauled in to avoid the programming thing. That appalling idea infers that even if it is proven you are programmed to murder somebody - say by mental illness - it still blames you for your soul somehow was still freely choosing to murder!

If free will magic explains evil then evil is black magic. If free will is magic then it could be that you have the power to use your free will to change nature or control it in magical ways. A demon supposedly has that kind of free will. If magic is about manipulation - unfair advantage over the universe, people or events - then free will is not a nice doctrine. Even if the magic is limited to your will it is about manipulation. Just because your manipulation targets you does not make it any less bad.

If free will is a miracle then whose miracle is it?

Am I alone the miracle worker?

Is some kind of spirit doing it? Any spirit would do. It doesn't have to amount to a god.

Is God as in creator of all from nothing doing it?

Is it some kind of joint effort where God and me both do the miracle?

Occam's Razor says that if you need one being to explain an effect then stick with that. One is all you need.

So given that free will is for me and a miracle then it should be assumed that if I have no other miracle power I have that one!

Incredibly for religion, even supernaturalists, they do not realise that free will only really fits a worldview that denies there is a God. No other miracle can compare to the miracle of free will. A miracle I do and that is part of me is more convincing than any report of a man rising from the dead. What I see has more force than somebody else seeing it for me!

Other considerations...

**Only the miracle of free will can recognise a miracle such as Jesus rising from the dead. What do I mean? A miracle is a supernatural event. A programmed creature cannot truly recognise a miracle for it is the programming doing the recognising. But what is the difference between me recognising that flowers bloom and that a dead man now alive?**

Freedom of will is not freedom of action. Quadriplegics may have no power to move from the neck down but yet they are supposed to have free will. They can will things they cannot do like the rest of us. A person can choose to kill even though she or he cannot get the chance to do it or is forcibly stopped. I can choose to kill John but I cannot choose the best way to do it in practice. I can hit him with a brick and aim badly. Some say that we should have this freedom of action so that we can either hurt or heal. They cannot give any evidence for this so their sentiment is just an assumption. The freedom of action defence is mingled with the free will defence to the extent that the free will defence is really a freedom of action defence. You need another miracle if you want to say that the two are the same thing and it is a mystery!

The divine "gift" of free will makes sin possible but it does not need to lead to suffering. The notion of free will alone making it right for God to leave us to suffer is not right at all. Freedom of will and freedom of action are two separate things. If we should suffer then the reason for it is another one altogether.

If we suffer we cannot say that it is because we have to be able to hurt. All suffering must be punishment if the defence is true and nobody likes that lethal idea.

Believing in free will in order to blame people not God would be uncharitable. Its like framing. That is what believers in God encourage - they are hypocrites. Free will then if it is meant to turn us to God cannot work and you'd need a miracle to make it work!

Free will as a bare notion is a miracle. Bring God in the miracles are compounded. It gets more bizarre and inconsistent.