

**SERMONS AND PRAYERS:
DELIVERED IN THE
CITY OF PHILADELPHIA**

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Sermons and Prayers: Delivered in the City of Philadelphia by Joseph John Gurney

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JOSEPH JOHN GURNEY

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Use as a subject.

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DELIVERED IN THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA,

BY

JOSEPH JOHN GURNEY.

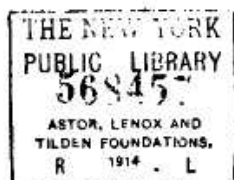
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NOTE.

In reporting the following Discourses, great care has been taken to preserve the precise language in which they were delivered; but it is due to their distinguished author, to state, that they have not had the benefit of his revision, having been published without his knowledge.

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SERMON I.

DELIVERED AT ARCH STREET MEETING-HOUSE, FIRST-DAY EVENING, SECOND MONTH, FOURTH, 1838.

“Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand before you whole.” “And his name, through faith in his name, hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know; yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.”

Such, or nearly such, was the language of the apostle Peter, in company with his anointed brother John, when he was examined, before the rulers of the Jews, touching the notable miracle which they had been instrumental in performing at the beautiful gate of the temple. And it seems to me, that it may be worthy of remark, that this remarkable miracle was distinguished like the other miracles of the New Testament, therein described, by certain circumstances which greatly enhance the value of the evidence thereof, as a credential of the divine authority

of our holy religion, considered as a message from the Supreme Governor of the universe. That miracle was wrought in the presence of many witnesses in public. The change produced in the poor believing cripple was immediate, and could not possibly be accounted for by any secondary cause, for he had been a cripple from his very birth; and moreover, the fact was afterwards tested by a close public examination, and the rulers of the Jews were totally unable to find the least flaw in it. And I believe it would be well for some skeptical minds to observe the difference between the miracles of christianity, and those false wonders wrought as it were, in secret corners, as some people assert, which have disgraced the annals of some modern religious professors.

Now, my dear friends, the more we examine the recorded history of our Lord Jesus Christ, and his apostles, the more we shall find that the evidence of the direct divine authority of the christian religion, rests on very sober, and very solid grounds; satisfactory to the most enlightened and profound of reasoners, satisfactory also to the simple in heart, who perhaps are the very best judges of plain truth. And I have been led during the very solemn silence which has prevailed in the early part of this meeting, to dwell a little upon this confession made by the apostle; and it seems right for me to remark that, not only have we here an evidence palpable and very plain, of the divine authority of the message of life and salvation

which the apostles communicated to their fellowmen,—their words being confirmed by their works, as the words of truth—but it seems to me impossible to take a calm and fair view of this memorable event, without perceiving in it, one evidence among many others, of the true and proper divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ; of the omnipotent power in him, by which he controlled and suspended the very laws of nature according to his own will; because we plainly find that the marvellous change wrought upon that poor decrepit one, was not produced by any power whatever in the apostles; they were bare instruments of the introduction, as it were, of that event; it was by the name of Jesus Christ, even by him, that the poor cripple stood before the admiring multitude, whole; and not only stood, but walked, and leaped, and praised God. And it was by faith in the name of the Saviour, that he was restored to that perfect state of bodily strength in the presence of them all; just as the leper was, before many witnesses also, when he came in the true faith to Jesus, “and worshipped, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.” And Jesus answered, “I will; be thou clean.” So there was first an expression of the sovereign will or purpose, and then the act of divine power immediately follows. And we are expressly informed, that when the apostles went forth on their high, holy, and truly pre-eminent mission of promulgating the great truths of the gospel, in all their full-