

The Prophecies of Nostradamus



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Preface to Cesar Nostradamus

Preface by M. Nostradamus to His Prophecies

Greetings and happiness to Cesar Nostradamus my son. Your late arrival, Cesar Nostredame, my son, has made me spend much time in constant nightly reflection so that I could communicate with you by letter and leave you this reminder, after my death, for the benefit of all men, of which the divine spirit has vouchsafed me to know by means of astronomy. And since it was the Almighty's will that you were not born here in this region and I do not want to talk of years to come but of the months during which you will struggle to grasp and understand the work I shall be compelled to leave you after my death: assuming that it will not be possible for me to leave you such writing as may be destroyed through the injustice of the age. The key to the hidden prediction which you will inherit will be locked inside my heart. Also bear in mind that the events here described have not yet come to pass, and that all is ruled and governed by the power of Almighty God, inspiring us not by bacchic frenzy nor by enchantments but by astronomical assurances: predictions have been made through the inspiration of divine will alone and the spirit of prophecy in particular. On numerous occasions and over a long period of time I have predicted specific events far in advance, attributing all to the workings of divine power and inspiration, together with other fortunate or unfortunate happenings, foreseen in their full unexpectedness, which have already come to pass in various regions of the earth. Yet I have wished to remain silent and abandon my work because of the injustice not only of the present time but also for most of the future. I will not commit to writing.

Since governments, sects and countries will undergo such sweeping changes, diametrically opposed to what now obtains, that were I to relate events to come, those in power now - monarchs, leaders of sects and religions - would find these so different from their own imaginings that they would be led to condemn what later centuries will learn how to see and understand. Bear in mind also Our Saviour's words: "Do not give anything holy to the dogs, nor throw pearls in front of swine lest they trample them with their feet and turn on you and tear you apart." For this reason I withdrew my pen from the paper, because I wished to amplify my statement touching the Vulgar Advent by means of ambiguous and enigmatic comments about future causes, even those closest to us and those I have perceived, so that some human change which may come to pass shall not unduly scandalize delicate

sensibilities. The whole work is thus written in a nebulous rather than plainly prophetic form. So much so that, "You have hidden these things from the wise and the circumspect, that is from the mighty and the rulers, and you have purified those things for the small and the poor," and through Almighty God's will, revealed unto those prophets with the power to perceive what is distant and thereby to foretell things to come. For nothing can be accomplished without this faculty, whose power and goodness work so strongly in those to whom it is given that, while they contemplate within themselves, these powers are subject to other influences arising from the force of good. This warmth and strength of prophecy invests us with its influence as the sun's rays affect both animate and inanimate entities.

We human beings cannot through our natural consciousness and intelligence know anything of God the Creator's hidden secrets, For it is not for us to know the times or the instants, etc.

So much so that persons of future times may be seen in present ones, because God Almighty has wished to reveal them by means of images, together with various secrets of the future vouchsafed to orthodox astrology, as was the case in the past, so that a measure of power and divination passed through them, the flame of the spirit inspiring them to pronounce upon inspiration both human and divine. God may bring into being divine works, which are absolute; there is another level, that of angelic works; and a third way, that of the evildoers.

But my son, I address you here a little too obscurely. As regards the occult prophecies one is vouchsafed through the subtle spirit of fire, which the understanding sometimes stirs through contemplation of the distant stars as if in vigil, likewise by means of pronouncements, one finds oneself surprised at producing writings without fear of being stricken for such impudent loquacity. The reason is that all this proceeds from the divine power of Almighty God from whom all bounty proceeds.

And so once again, my son, if I have eschewed the word prophet, I do not wish to attribute to myself such lofty title at the present time, for whoever is called a prophet now was once called a seer; since a prophet, my son, is properly speaking one who sees distant things through a natural knowledge of all creatures. And it can happen that the prophet bringing about the perfect light of prophecy may make manifest things both human and divine, because this cannot be done otherwise, given that the effects of predicting the future extend far off into time.

God's mysteries are incomprehensible and the power to influence events is bound up with the great expanse of natural knowledge, having its nearest most immediate origin in free will and describing future events which cannot be understood simply through being revealed. Neither can they be grasped through men's interpretations nor through another mode of cognizance or occult power under the firmament, neither in the

present nor in the total eternity to come But bringing about such an indivisible eternity through Herculean efforts, things are revealed by the planetary movements.

I am not saying, my son - mark me well, here - that knowledge of such things cannot be implanted in your deficient mind, or that events in the distant future may not be within the understanding of any reasoning being. Nevertheless, if these things current or distant are brought to the awareness of this reasoning and intelligent being they will be neither too obscure nor too clearly revealed.

Perfect knowledge of such things cannot be acquired without divine inspiration, given that all prophetic inspiration derives its initial origin from God Almighty, then from chance and nature. Since all these portents are produced impartially, prophecy comes to pass partly as predicted. For understanding created by the intellect cannot be acquired by means of the occult, only by the aid of the zodiac, bringing forth that small flame by whose light part of the future may be discerned.

Also, my son, I beseech you not to exercise your mind upon such reveries and vanities as drain the body and incur the soul's perdition, and which trouble our feeble frames. Above all avoid the vanity of that most execrable magic formerly reproved by the Holy Scriptures - only excepting the use of official astrology.

For by the latter, with the help of inspiration and divine revelation, and continual calculations, I have set down my prophecies in writing. Fearing lest this occult philosophy be condemned, I did not therefore wish to make known its dire import; also fearful that several books which had lain hidden for long centuries might be discovered, and of what might become of them, after reading them I presented them to Vulcan. And while he devoured them, the flame licking the air gave out such an unexpected light, clearer than that of an ordinary flame and resembling fire from some flashing cataclysm, and suddenly illumined the house as if it were caught in a furnace. Which is why I reduced them to ashes then, so that none might be tempted to use occult labours in searching for the perfect transmutation, whether lunar or solar, of incorruptible metals.

But as to that discernment which can be achieved by the aid of planetary scrutiny, I should like to tell you this. Eschewing any fantastic imaginings, you may through good judgement have insight into the future if you keep to the specific names of places that accord with planetary configurations, and with inspiration places and aspects yield up hidden properties, namely that power in whose presence the three times are understood as Eternity whose unfolding contains them all: for all things are naked and open.

That is why, my son, you can easily, despite your young brain, understand that events can be foretold naturally by the heavenly bodies

and by the spirit of prophecy: I do not wish to ascribe to myself the title and role of prophet, but emphasize inspiration revealed to a mortal man whose perception is no further from heaven than the feet are from the earth. I cannot fail, err or be deceived, although I may be as great a sinner as anyone else upon this earth and subject to all human afflictions.

But after being surprised sometimes by day while in a trance, and having long fallen into the habit of agreeable nocturnal studies, I have composed books of prophecies, each containing one hundred astronomical quatrains, which I want to condense somewhat obscurely. The work comprises prophecies from today to the year 3797.

This may perturb some, when they see such a long timespan, and this will occur and be understood in all the fullness of the Republic; these things will be universally understood upon earth, my son. If you live the normal lifetime of man you will know upon your own soil, under your native sky, how future events are to turn out.

For only Eternal God knows the eternity of His light which proceeds from Him, and I speak frankly to those to whom His immeasurable, immense and incomprehensible greatness has been disposed to grant revelations through long, melancholy inspiration, that with the aid of this hidden element manifested by God, there are two principal factors which make up the prophet's intelligence.

The first is when the supernatural light fills and illuminates the person who predicts by astral science, while the second allows him to prophesy through inspired revelation, which is only a part of the divine eternity, whereby the prophet comes to assess what his divinatory power has given him through the grace of God and by a natural gift, namely, that what is foretold is true and ethereal in origin.

And such a light and small flame is of great efficacy and scope, and nothing less than the clarity of nature itself. The light of human nature makes the philosophers so sure of themselves that with the principles of the first cause they reach the loftiest doctrines and the deepest abysses. But my son, lest I venture too far for your future perception, be aware that men of letters shall make grand and usually boastful claims about the way I interpreted the world, before the worldwide conflagration which is to bring so many catastrophes and such revolutions that scarcely any lands will not be covered by water, and this will last until all has perished save history and geography themselves. This is why, before and after these revolutions in various countries, the rains will be so diminished and such abundance of fire and fiery missiles shall fall from the heavens that nothing shall escape the holocaust. And this will occur before the last conflagration.

For before war ends the century and in its final stages it will hold the century under its sway. Some countries will be in the grip of revolution for several years, and others ruined for a still longer period. And now

that we are in a republican era, with Almighty God's aid, and before completing its full cycle, the monarchy will return, then the Golden Age. For according to the celestial signs, the Golden Age shall return, and after all calculations, with the world near to an all-encompassing revolution - from the time of writing 177 years 3 months 11 days - plague, long famine and wars, and still more floods from now until the stated time. Before and after these, humanity shall several times be so severely diminished that scarcely anyone shall be found who wishes to take over the fields, which shall become free where they had previously been tied.

This will be after the visible judgement of heaven, before we reach the millennium which shall complete all. In the firmament of the eighth sphere, a dimension whereon Almighty God will complete the revolution, and where the constellations will resume their motion which will render the earth stable and firm, but only if He will remain unchanged for ever until His will be done.

This is in spite of all the ambiguous opinions surpassing all natural reason, expressed by Mahomet; which is why God the Creator, through the ministry of his fiery agents with their flames, will come to propose to our perceptions as well as our eyes the reasons for future predictions. Signs of events to come must be manifested to whomever prophesies. For prophecy which stems from exterior illumination is part of that light and seeks to ally with it and bring it into being so that the part which seems to possess the faculty of understanding is not subject to a sickness of the mind.

Reason is only too evident. Everything is predicted by divine afflatus and thanks to an angelic spirit inspiring the one prophesying, consecrating his predictions through divine unction. It also divests him of all fantasies by means of various nocturnal apparitions, while with daily certainty he prophesies through the science of astronomy, with the aid of sacred prophecy, his only consideration being his courage in freedom.

So come, my son, strive to understand what I have found out through my calculations which accord with revealed inspiration, because now the sword of death approaches us, with pestilence and war more horrible than there has ever been - because of three men's work - and famine. And this sword shall smite the earth and return to it often, for the stars confirm this upheaval and it is also written: "I shall punish their injustices with iron rods, and shall strike them with blows."

For God's mercy will be poured forth only for a certain time, my son, until the majority of my prophecies are fulfilled and this fulfillment is complete. Then several times in the course of the doleful tempests the Lord shall say: Therefore I shall crush and destroy and show no mercy; and many other circumstances shall result from floods and continual rain of which I have written more fully in my other prophecies,

composed at some length, not in a chronological sequence, in prose, limiting the places and times and exact dates so that future generations will see, while experiencing these inevitable events, how I have listed others in clearer language, so that despite their obscurities these things shall be understood: When the time comes for the removal of ignorance, the matter will be clearer still.

So in conclusion, my son, take this gift from your father M. Nostradamus, who hopes you will understand each prophecy in every quatrain herein. May Immortal God grant you a long life of good and prosperous happiness.

Salon, 1 March 1555

Epistle to Henry II

EPISTLE TO HENRY II

TO THE MOST INVINCIBLE MOST POWERFUL AND MOST CHRISTIAN HENRY, KING OF FRANCE THE SECOND: MICHEL NOSTRADAMUS, HIS VERY HUMBLE AND VERY OBEDIENT SERVANT AND SUBJECT, WISHES VICTORY AND HAPPINESS

Ever since my long-beclouded face first presented itself before the immeasurable deity of your Majesty, O Most Christian and Most Victorious King, I have remained perpetually dazzled by that sovereign sight. I have never ceased to honor and venerate properly that date when I presented myself before a Majesty so singular and so humane. I have searched for some occasion on which to manifest high heart and stout courage, and thereby obtain even greater recognition of Your Most Serene Majesty. But I saw how obviously impossible it was for me to declare myself.

While I was seized with this singular desire to be transported suddenly from my long-beclouded obscurity to the illuminating presence of the first monarch of the universe, I was also long in doubt as to whom I would dedicate these last three Centuries of my prophecies, making up the thousand. After having meditated for a long time on an act of such rash audacity, I have ventured to address Your Majesty. I have not been daunted like those mentioned by that most grave author Plutarch, in his Life of Lycurgus, who were so astounded at the expense of the offerings and gifts brought as sacrifices to the temples of the immortal gods of that age, that they did not dare to present anything at all. Seeing your royal splendor to be accompanied by such an incomparable humanity, I have paid my address to it and not as those Kings of Persia whom one could neither stand before nor approach.

It is to a most prudent and most wise Prince that I have dedicated my nocturnal and prophetic calculations, which are composed rather out of a natural instinct, accompanied by a poetic furor, than according to the strict rules of poetry. Most of them have been integrated with astronomical calculations corresponding to the years, months and weeks of the regions, countries and most of the towns and cities of all Europe, including Africa and part of Asia, where most of all these coming events are to transpire. They are composed in a natural manner. Indeed, someone, who would do well to blow his nose, may reply that the rhythm is as easy as the sense is difficult. That, O Most Humane king, is because most of the prophetic quatrains are so ticklish that there is no making way through them, nor is there any interpreting of them. Nevertheless, I wanted to leave a record in writing of the years, towns, cities and regions in which most of the events will come to pass, even

those of the year 1585 and of the year 1606, reckoning from the present time, which is March 14, 1557, and going far beyond to the events which will take place at the beginning of the seventh millenary, when, so far as my profound astronomical calculations and other knowledge have been able to make out, the adversaries of Jesus Christ and his Church will begin to multiply greatly.

I have calculated and composed all during choice hours of well-disposed days, and as accurately as I could, all when Minerva was free and not unfavorable. I have made computations for events over almost as long a period to come as that which has already passed, and by these they will know in all regions what is to happen in the course of time, just as it is written, with nothing superfluous added, although some may say, There can be no truth entirely determined concerning the future.

It is quite true, Sire, that my natural instinct has been inherited from my forebears, who did not believe in predicting, and that this is natural instinct has been adjusted and integrated with long calculations. At the same time, I freed my soul, mind and heart of all care, solicitude and vexation. All of these prerequisites for presaging I achieved in part by means of the brazen tripod.

There are some who would attribute to me that which is not mine at all. The eternal God alone, who is the thorough searcher of humane hearts, pious, just and merciful, is the true judge, and it is to him I pray to defend me from the calumny of evil men. These evil ones, in their slanderous way, would likewise want to inquire how all your most ancient progenitors, the Kings of France, have cured the scrofula, how those of other nations have cured the bite of snakes, how those of yet other nations have had a certain instinct for the art of divination and still others which would be too long to recite here.

Notwithstanding those who cannot contain the malignity of the evil spirit, as time elapses after my death, my writings will have more weight than during my lifetime. Should I, however, have made any errors in my calculation of dates, or prove unable to please everybody, I beg that your more than Imperial Majesty will forgive me. I protest before God and his Saints that I do not propose to insert any writings in this present Epistle that will be contrary to the true Catholic faith, whilst consulting the astronomical calculations to the best of my ability.

Such is the extent of time past, subject to correction by the most learned judgment, that the first man, Adam, came 1,242 years before Noah (not reckoning by such Gentile calculations as Varro used, but simply by the Holy Scriptures, as best my weak understanding and astronomical calculations can interpret them.) About 1,080 years after Noah and the universal flood came Abraham, who, according to some, was a first-rate astrologer and invented the Chaldean alphabet. About 515 or 516 years later came Moses, and from his time to that of David about 570 years elapsed. From the time of David to that of our Savior and Redeemer,

Jesus Christ, born of the unique Virgin, 1,350 year elapsed, according to some chronographs. Some may object that this calculation cannot be true, because it differs from that of Eusebius. From the time of the human redemption to the detestable heresy of the Saracens about 621 years elapsed. From this one can easily add up the amount of time gone by.

Although my calculations may not hold good for all nations, they have, however, been determined by the celestial movements, combined with the emotion, handed down to me by my forebears, which comes over me at certain hours. But the danger of the times, O Most Serene King, requires that such secrets should not be bared except in enigmatic sentences having, however, only one sense and meaning, and nothing ambiguous or amphibological inserted. Rather they are under a cloudy obscurity, with a natural infusion not unlike the creation of the world, according to the calculation and Punic Chronicle of Joel: I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh and your sons and daughters will prophesy. But such Prophecy proceeded from the mouth of the Holy Ghost who was the sovereign and eternal power, together with the heavens, and caused some of them to predict great and marvelous events.

As for myself, I would never claim such a title, never, please God. I readily admit that all proceeds from God and render to Him thanks, honor and immortal praise. I have mixed therewith no divination coming from fate. All from God and nature, and for the most part integrated with celestial movements. It is much like seeing in a burning mirror, with clouded vision, the great events, sad, prodigious and calamitous events that in due time will fall upon the principal worshippers. First, upon the temples of God; secondly, upon those who, sustained by the earth, approach such a decadence. Also a thousand other calamitous events which will be known to happen in due time. For God will take notice of the long barrenness of the great dame, who thereupon will conceive two principal children. But she will be in danger, and the female to whom she will have given birth will also, because of the temerity of the age, be in danger of death in her eighteenth year, and will be unable to live beyond her thirty-sixth year. She will leave three males, and one female, and of these two will not have had the same father.

There will be great differences between the three brothers, and then there will be such great cooperation and agreement between them that the three and four parts of Europe will tremble. The youngest of them will sustain and augment the Christian monarchy, and under him sects will be elevated, and suddenly cast down, Arabs will be driven back, kingdoms united and new laws promulgated.

The oldest one will rule the land whose escutcheon is that of the furious crowned lions with their paws resting upon intrepid arms.

The one second in age, accompanied by the Latins, will penetrate far, until a second furious and trembling path has been beaten to the Great St. Bernard Pass. From there he will descend to mount the Pyrenees, which will not, however, be transferred to the French crown. And this third one will cause a great inundation of human blood, and for a long time Lent will not include March.

The daughter will be given for the preservation of the Christian Church. Her lord will fall into the pagan sect of the new infidels. Of her two children, one will be faithful to the Catholic Church, the other an infidel. The unfaithful son, who, to his great confusion and later repentance, will want to ruin her, will have three widely scattered regions, namely, the Roman, Germany and Spain, which will set up diverse sects by armed force. The 50th to the 52th degree of latitude will be left behind. And all will render the homage of ancient religions to the region of Europe north of the 48th parallel. The latter will have trembled first in vain timidity but afterwards the regions to its west, south and east will tremble. But the nature of their power will be such that what has been brought about by concord and union will prove insuperable by warlike conquests.

In nature they will be equal, but very different in faith.

After this the barren Dame, of greater power than the second, will be received by two of the nations. First, by them made obstinate by the onetime masters of the universe. Second, by the latter themselves. The third people will extend their forces towards the circuit of the East of Europe where, in the Pannonias, they will be overwhelmed and slaughtered. By sea they will extend their Myrmidons and Germans to Adriatic Sicily. But they will succumb wholly and the Barbarian sect will be greatly afflicted and driven out by all the Latins.

Then the great Empire of the Antichrist will begin where once was Attila's empire and the new Xerxes will descend with great and countless numbers, so that the coming of the Holy Ghost, proceeding from the 48th degree, will make a transmigration, chasing out the abomination of the Christian Church, and whose reign will be for a time and to the end of time.

This will be preceded by a solar eclipse more dark and gloomy than any since the creation of the world, except that after the death and passion of Jesus Christ. And it will be in the month of October than the great translation will be made and it will be such that one will think the gravity of the earth has lost its natural movement and that it is to be plunged into the abyss of perpetual darkness.

In the spring there will be omens, and thereafter extreme changes, reversals of realms and mighty earthquakes. These will be accompanied by the procreation of the new Babylon, miserable daughter enlarged by the abomination of the first holocaust. It will last for only seventy-three years and seven months.

Then there will issue from the stock which had remained barren for so long, proceeding from the 50th degree, one who will renew the whole Christian Church. A great place will be established, with union and concord between some of the children of opposite ideas, who have been separated by diverse realms. And such will be the peace that the instigator and promoter of military factions, born of the diversity of religions, will remain chained to the deepest pit. And the kingdom of the Furious One, who counterfeits the sage, will be united.

The countries, towns, cities, realms and provinces which will have abandoned their old customs to gain liberty, but which will in fact have enthralled themselves even more, will secretly have wearied of their liberty. Faith lost in their perfect religion, they will begin to strike to the left, only to return to the right. Holiness, for a long time overcome, will be replaced in accordance with the earliest writings.

Thereafter the great dog, the biggest of curs, will go forth and destroy all, the same old crimes being perpetrated again. Temples will be set up again as in ancient times, and the priest will be restored to his original position and he will begin his whoring and luxury, and will commit a thousand crimes.

At the eve of another desolation, when she is atop her most high and sublime dignity, some potentates and warlords will confront her, and take away her two swords, and leave her only the insignia, whose curvature attracts them. The people will make him go to the right and will not wish to submit themselves to those of the opposite extreme with the hand in acute position, who touch the ground, and want to drive spurs into them.

The people of the world from this benevolent slavery to which they had voluntarily submitted. He will put himself under the protection of Mars, stripping Jupiter of all his honors and dignities, and establish himself in the free city in another scant Mesopotamia. The chief and governor will be cast out from the middle and hung up, ignorant of the conspiracy of one of the conspirators with the second Thrasibulus, who for a long time will have directed all this.

Then the impurities and abominations, with a great shame, will be brought out and manifested in the shadows of the veiled light, and will cease towards the end of the change in reign. The chiefs of the Church will be backward in the love of God, and several of them will apostatize from the true faith. Of the three sects, that which is in the middle, because of its own partisans, will be thrown a bit into decadence. The first one will be exterminated throughout all Europe and most of Africa by the third one, making use of the poor in spirit who, led by madmen to libidinous luxury, will adulterate.

The supporting common people will rise up and chase out the adherents of the legislators. From the way realms will have been weakened by the Easterners, it will seem that God the Creator has loosed Satan from the