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Strange and Remarkable

# Prophecies and Predictions

Of the holy, learned and excellent

## JAMES USHER.

Late Archbishop of *Armaugh*, and Primate of *Ireland*.

Giving an Account of his foretelling,

- I. The Rebellion in *Ireland*, Forty Years before it came to pass.
- II. The Confusions and Miseries of *England* in *Church* and *State*.
- III. The Death of King *CHARLES I.*
- IV. His own Poverty and Want.
- V. The Divisions in *England* in Matters of Religion.
- VI. Of a great and terrible Persecution which shall fall upon the reformed Churches by the *Papists*, wherein the then Pope should be chiefly concerned.

Written by the Person who heard it from this excellent Person's own Mouth; and now publish'd, earnestly to perswade us to that Repentance and Reformation which only can prevent our Ruin and Destruction.

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*And the Lord said, Shall I hide from Abraham the Thing which I do? Gen. xviii. 17.*

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Strange and remarkable PREDICTIONS  
of that holy, learned and excellent  
<sup>r</sup> Bishop, JAMES USHER late  
Primate of Ireland.

**T**HE Author of the Life of this excellent and worthy Primate and Archbishop, gives an Account, That, among other extraordinary Gifts and Graces which it pleased the Almighty to bestow upon him, he was wonderfully endued with a Spirit of Prophecy, whereby he gave out several true Predictions and Prophecies of Things a great While before they came to pass, whereof some we have seen fulfilled, and others remain yet to be accomplished: And tho' he was one that abhorred Enthusiastick Notions, being too learned, rational and knowing, to admit of such idle Freaks and Whimsies; yet he profess, "That several Times in his Life he had  
" many Things impress'd upon his Mind, concerning fu-  
" true Events, with so much Warmness and Importu-  
" nity, that he was not able to keep them secret, but  
" lay under an unavoidable Necessity to make them  
" known."

From which Spirit he foretold the *Irish* Rebellion Forty Years before it came to pass, with the very Time when it should break forth, in a Sermon preached at *Dublin* in 1601, where, from *Ezek. 4. 6.* discoursing concerning the Prophet's bearing the Iniquity of *Judah* Forty Days, the Lord therein appointed a Day for a Year; He made this direct Application in relation to the Connivance at Popery at that Time; *From this Year* (says he) *will I reckon the Sin of Ireland, that those whom you now embrace shall be your Ruin, and you shall bear this Iniquity.* Which Prediction proved exactly

actly true; for from that Time 1601, to the Year 1641, was just Forty Years, in which it is notoriously known that the Rebellion and Destruction of *Ireland* happened; which was acted by those Popish Priests, and other Papists which were then connived at. And of this Sermon the Bishop reserved the Notes, and put a Note thereof in the Margent of his Bible; and, for Twenty Years before, he still lived in the Expectation of the fulfilling thereof: And the nearer the Time was, the more confident he was that it was near Accomplishment, tho' there was no visible Appearance of any such Thing. And (says Dr. *Bernard*) the Year before the Rebellion broke forth, the Bishop taking his Leave of me, being then going from *Ireland* to *England*, he advised me to a serious Preparation, for I should see heavy Sorrows and Miseries before I saw him again; which he delivered with as great Confidence as if he had seen it with his Eyes: Which seems to verify that of the Prophet, *Amos 3. 7. Surely the Lord will do nothing, but he will reveal it to his Servants the Prophets.* From this Spirit of Prophecy, he foresaw the Changes and Miseries of *England* in Church and State. For having in one of his Books (called, *De prim. Eccl. Brit.*) given a large Account of the Destruction of the Church and State of the *Britons* by the *Saxons*, about 550 Years after Christ; he gives this among other Reasons why he insisted so largely upon it, That he foresaw that a like Judgment was yet behind, if timely Repentance and Reformation did not prevent it. And he would often mourn upon the Foresight of this, long before it came.

From this Spirit he gave mournful Intimations of the Death of our late Sovereign *Charles I.* of whom he would be often speaking with Fear and Trembling, even when the King had the greatest Success; and would therefore constantly pray, and give all Advices possible, to prevent any such Thing.

From this Spirit he foresaw his own Poverty in worldly Things; and this he would often speak of with Admiration to the Hearers, when he was in his

greatest Prosperity : Which the Event did most certainly verify.

From this Spirit he predicted the Divisions and Confusions in *England* in Matters of Religion, and the sad Consequences thereof ; some of which we have seen fulfilled : And I pray God, the rest which he feared may not also be accomplished upon us.

*Lastly*, From this Spirit he foretold, That the greatest Stroke upon the Reformed Churches was yet to come, and that the Time of the utter Ruin of the See of *Rome* should be when she thought herself most secure. And as to this last, I shall add a brief Account from the Person's own Hand who was concerned therein ; which followeth in these Words.

The Year before this learned and holy Primate Archbishop *Usher* died, I went to him, and earnestly desired him to give me in Writing his Apprehensions concerning Justification and Sanctification by Christ ; because I had formerly heard him preach upon these Points, wherein he seemed to make those great Mysteries more intelligible to my mean Capacity, than any Thing which I had ever heard from any other. But, because I had but an imperfect and confused Remembrance of the Particulars, I took the Boldness to importune him, That he would please to give a brief Account of them in Writing, whereby I might the better imprint them in my Memory : Of which he would willingly have excused himself, by declaring his Intentions of not writing any more ; Adding, That, if he did write any Thing, it should not exceed above a Sheet or two. But, upon my continued Importunity, I at last obtained his Promise.

He coming to Town some Time after, was pleased to give me a Visit at my House, where I failed not to challenge the Benefit of the Promise he had made me. *He replied*, [ That he had not writ ; and yet he could not charge himself with any Breach of Promise : For (*said he*) I did begin to write ; but when I came to write of Sanctification, that is, of the New Creature which God formeth by his Spirit in every Soul which

he doth truly regenerate, I found so little of it wrought in myself, that I could speak of it only as Parrots by Rote, and without the Knowledge and Understanding of what I might have exprest; and therefore I durst not presume to proceed any further upon it.]

And when I seemed to stand amaz'd to hear such an humble Confession from so great and experienced a Christian, he added, [I must tell you, We do not well understand what Sanctification and the New Creature are: It is no less than for a Man to be brought to an intire Resignation of his Will to the Will of God, and to live in the Offering up of his Soul continually in the Flames of Love, as a whole Burnt-offering to Christ; and how little (*says he*) are many of those who profess Christianity experimentally acquainted with this Work on their Souls?]

By this Discourse, I conceived he had very excellently and clearly discovered to me that Part of Sanctification which he was unwilling to write.

I then presumed to enquire of him what his present Apprehensions were concerning a very great Persecution which should fall upon the Church of God in these Nations of *England, Scotland and Ireland*, of which this Reverend Primate had spoken with great Confidence, many Years before, when we were in the highest and fullest State of outward Peace and Settlement. I asked him, Whether he did believe those sad Times to be past, or that they were yet to come? To which he answered, *That they were yet to come; and that he did as confidently expect it as ever he had done:* Adding, *That this sad Persecution would fall upon all the Protestant Churches of Europe.* I replied, That I did hope it might have been past as to these Nations of ours, since I thought, that tho' we, who were the People thereof, have been punished much less than our Sins have deserved; and that our late Wars had made far less Devastations, than War commonly brings upon these Countries where it pleaseth God in Judgment to suffer it; yet we must needs acknowledge, that many great Houses had been burnt, ruined, and left without  
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Inhabitants, many great Families impoverished and undone, and many thousand Lives also had been lost in that bloody War; and that *Ireland* and *Scotland*, as well as *England*, had drunk very deep of the Cup of God's Anger, even to the Overthrow of the Government, and the utter Desolation almost of a very great Part of those Countries.

But this holy Man turning to me, and fixing his Eyes upon me with that serious and ireful Look which he usually had when he spake God's Word and not his own, and when the Power of God seemed to be upon him; and to constrain him to speak, which I could easily discern much to differ from the Countenance wherewith he usually spake to me; he said thus:

[ Fool not yourself with such Hopes; for I tell you, All you have yet seen, hath been but the Beginning of Sorrows, in respect of what is yet to come upon the *Protestant* Churches of Christ, who will ere long, fall under a sharper Persecution than ever yet has been upon them; and therefore (said he to me) look you be not found in the outward Court, but a Worshipper in the Temple before the Altar: For Christ will measure all those that profess his Name, and call themselves his People; and the outward Worshippers he will leave out, to be troden down by the *Gentiles*. The outward Court (*says he*) is the formal Christian, whose Religion lies in performing the outside Duties of Christianity, without having an inward Life and Power of Faith and Love uniting them to Christ; and these God will leave to be troden down and swept away by the *Gentiles*. But the Worshipers within the Temple, and before the Altar, are these who indeed worship God in Spirit and in Truth, whose Souls are made his Temple; and he is honoured and adored in the most inward Thoughts of their Hearts, and they sacrifice their Lusts and vile Affections, yea, and their own Wills to him: And these God will hide in the Hollow of his Hand, and under the Shadow of his Wings. And this shall be one great Difference between this last and all other preceding Persecutions: For, in the former, the most eminent

ment and spiritual Ministers and Christians did generally suffer most, and were most violently fallen upon; but, in this last Persecution, these shall be preserved by God as a Seed to partake of that Glory which shall immediately follow and come upon the Church as soon as ever this Storm shall be over: For as it shall be the sharpest, so it shall be the shortest Persecution of them all; and shall only take away the gross Hypocrites and formal Professors, but the true spiritual Believers shall be preserved till the Calamity be overpast.]

I then asked him, By what Means or Instruments this great Trial should be brought on? He answered, By the *Papists*. I replied, That it seemed to me very improbable they should be able to do it, since they were now little-countenanced, and but few in these Nations; and that the Hearts of the People were more set against them than ever, since the Reformation. He answered again, "That it would be by the Hands of *Papists*, and in the Way of a sudden Massacre; and that the then *Pope* should be the chief Instrument of it."

All this he spake with so great Assurance, and with the same serious and concerned Countenance which I have before observed him to have when I have heard him foretel some Things which in all human Appearance were very unlikely to come to pass, which yet I myself have lived to see happen according to his Prediction; and this made me give the more earnest Attention to what he then uttered.

He then added, "That the *Papists* were, in his Opinion, the *Gentiles* spoken of in the 11th of the *Revelation*, to whom the outward Court should be left that they might tread it under Foot; they having received the *Gentile* Worship in their adoring Images and Saints departed, and in taking to themselves many Mediators: And this (*said he*) the *Papists* are now designing among themselves, and therefore be sure you be ready."

This was the Substance, and I think (for the greatest part) the very same Words which this holy Man spake

to me at the Time before-mentioned, not long before his Death, and which I writ down, that so great and notable a Prediction might not be lost and forgotten by myself nor others.

This gracious Man repeated the same Things in Substance to his only Daughter the Lady *Tyrril*, and that with many Tears, and much about the same Time that he had exprest what is aforesaid to me; and which the Lady *Tyrril* assured me of with her own Mouth, to this Purpose:

That, opening the Door of his Chamber, she found him with his Eyes lift up to Heaven, and the Tears running apace down his Checks; and that he seemed to be in an Extasy, wherein he continued for about Half an Hour, not taking the least Notice of her, tho' she came into the Room: But at last, turning to her, he told her, That his Thoughts had been taken up about the Miseries and Persecutions that were coming upon the Churches of Christ, which would be so sharp and bitter, that the Contemplation of them had fetched those Tears from his Eyes; and that he hoped he should not live to see it, but possibly she might, for it was even at the Door: *Therefore take heed* (says he) *that you be not found sleeping.*

The same Things he also repeated to the Lady *Bisse* Wife to the present Lord Chief Baron of Ireland; but with adding this Circumstance, That, if they brought back the King, it might be delayed a little longer: *But* (said he) *it will suely come, therefore be sure to look that ye be not found unprepared for it.*

To conclude in the Words of Dr. *Bernard*, speaking of this excellent Person; "Now, howsoever I am  
" as far from heeding of Prophecies this Way as any,  
" yet with me it is not improbable, that so great a  
" Prophet, so sanctified from his Youth, so knowing  
" and eminent throughout the universal Church,  
" might have at some special Times more than ordi-  
" nary Motions and Impulses in doing the Watch-  
" man's Part, of giving Warning of Judgments ap-  
" proaching."