



THOMAS HOG OF KILTEARN

Thomas Hog was a faithful minister in the Scottish Highlands. The faithful ministers of this time were called Covenanters. This is because they would not break the promise or Covenant that they had made to God, even though it meant suffering.

As a boy, Thomas worked hard at school. More importantly, he was careful to live according to God's Word. When he went to university, he wanted to be with people who loved God. He loved the things of God. This was a very good thing but it did not make him a true believer from the heart. He had not yet been born again.

It was not enough to do the right things and say the right things, Thomas needed a new heart. He came to see that all his good deeds were no better than filthy rags. They would not save him. He saw that his sins were terrible in the sight of God. He felt this very, very deeply. He came to see that he could only trust in the life that the Lord Jesus had lived and

the death he had died. "He is my life, my heaven and my all!" One special promise from the Bible told him that God would never leave him. He was going to need this promise in difficult times.

He became a chaplain to a nobleman in the Highlands. He had to teach and instruct the family and servants but he learned many spiritual lessons himself from the nobleman's godly wife. Then he became a minister in a Highland village. He was faithful in visiting people in their homes, praying with them, and teaching them from the Bible. People had many superstitious ideas that he had to correct. He preached the Gospel of Jesus Christ faithfully. Many were converted.

But this time was coming to an end. Thomas Hog was one of the many ministers who had to leave their congregations because they would not disobey the Lord Jesus. His people were sad because they loved him. In his last

sermon to them he warned them not to forget and go away from the truths he had taught. He said that the hard times would be like a storm that lasted for a long time. But the sky would clear and the troubles would come to an end.

Thomas Hog went to live in a farmhouse in another part of the Highlands. He preached in the farmhouse but then the services had to be held in the barns because the house was too small for everyone who came. Then the barns were too small for everyone to get in. They now had their services in the woods and in a field where there was a little dip in the ground. Hog used a big boulder as a pulpit.

When the authorities heard about it they sent soldiers to arrest Hog, and they put him in prison. Even in prison he spoke to everyone about the Lord Jesus and some were converted. When he was released, he went back to carry on with the secret meetings. The soldiers came to arrest him a few times but God kept him safe so that they did not find out where he was hiding. Later on he was again arrested and put in prison.

The first prison was bad enough but then they sent him to the Bass Rock. This was a small island in the sea which was a very high rock. The government bought it so that they could have a horrible prison for the faithful ministers. It was a scary place in the storms, and food and water often ran out. Here he was kept in one of the terrible dungeons. He was getting very ill and his doctor pleaded with the government to set him free or he would die. Instead of listening to this the government ordered him to be put in the

worst dungeon possible on the Bass Rock. It was damp and filthy, and the sea water often splashed in through the window.

But instead of dying, Thomas Hog actually got better! It was a very strange sort of medicine that did him good! After some time he was released and went back to carry on his work. He was arrested and put in prison another time but now the government said he must leave Scotland altogether. He went to England and then Holland.

When a new king called William of Orange came, the faithful ministers were able to go back to their churches without being forced into wrong beliefs. Hog could go back to his old congregation once again. But Thomas Hog was much older and very weak in his body. It was not long before he would leave this world.

But his faith had not become weak; he showed this at the time of his death. "Never did the sun shine more brightly to the eyes of my body", he said to a friend who visited him, "than Christ, the Sun of Righteousness hath shined on my soul". He described the strength of his faith to someone else, "I cannot give a look to the Lord but I am fully persuaded of his eternal love. He has assured me a hundred times that I shall be with Him forever." The old promise received all those years before had never been broken; God had never left him in all of his troubles. He said that "the unchangeableness of my God is my rock." Now he could face death knowing that, even in this, God would be with him. His last words were, "Now he is come, my Lord is come; praise, praise him for evermore."

KEY DATES



1628

Born in Tain, Ross-shire.



1638

National Covenant signed.

1654

Becomes minister of Kiltearn, Ross-shire.



1660

Charles II becomes king.

1662

Forced out of his parish, he moves to Auldearn near Nairn.



1668

Imprisoned for preaching at "illegal" services but afterwards released.



1677

Imprisoned on Bass Rock and later released.



1679

Imprisoned in Edinburgh for a short time.



1684

Sentenced to be banished from Scotland and arrested in London.



1684

After release Hog went to Holland.



1688

Returned to Scotland.



1691

Appointed chaplain to King William III and returned to parish of Kiltearn, Ross-shire.



1692

Thomas Hog dies.



THOMAS HOG WORD SEARCH

Hog asked for these words to be carved on a stone at Kiltearn church: *"This stone shall bear witness against the parishioners of Kiltearn if they bring an ungodly minister in here."*

C E L E E N I C I D E M I F I Y N V I W
 L P Z Y I L L D O K W C W X M Z L E E V
 A R H L P O A D J R F T A T J W N O A V
 B O M W R R E L C E D H M A X A C Q O F
 H M E S I F S R V D N I N Q M D W Q C Z
 E I Q B S T X H P L A R N E N T M P D Y
 N S M P O D A U T U L Z L Y W F B P T A
 N E B W N N O F S O L B L T A J S Q G K
 A I T R J I K Y H B O Y S R U Y T A J Y
 W R M U R A E Y V N H A M P P Z W T Q H
 T N P H C L G T J L E H L H P E O P E P
 N I V K N P N I Q P O F T K A Z R D U P
 G A B P T A N S O U X R Z H K C Y H P E
 R T G V N H M R S V Q R Y K I V G H Q B
 S F S E Y C K E A J H C C H M G G T O D
 E K V I A V R V Z I L L E G A L R I K G
 Z O R J A S F I A W B C Q S J H J L O D
 C O C I W U G N J W R H G M G V A D M R
 I G O N V N Y U C P S W V T K N D H W D
 R B I K G L H Z K W T E O L S X Z K V S



COVENANT
BOULDER
UNIVERSITY
HOLLAND

PROMISE
FARMHOUSE
NOBLEMAN
PRISON

TAIN
ILLEGAL
CHAPLAIN
MEDICINE