

Revivals And Church History :: Robert Fleming - 1630 -1694

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Robert Fleming was born at Bathans in 1630, the son of a minister of the gospel, James Fleming. He studied under Samuel Rutherford, one of the appointees to the committee that produced the Westminster Confession of Faith.

By the time he was 23, he was a pastor at Cambuslang, in Clydesdale until after the restoration of King Charles II. He had seven children by Christina Hamilton. He lived at Edinburgh until September of 1673 when "all the ministers in and about Edinburgh were called to appear before the Council to hear their sentence, and repair to the places of their confinement." He and other Protestant teachers were being persecuted for their beliefs contrary to the Catholic Church. He chose not to appear. As a result, he was pursued, eventually apprehended, and imprisoned in the Tolbooth of Edinburgh. After his release he went to Holland. He had a custom established from sometime around his sixteenth or seventeenth year of age "to set apart the first day of every year for renewing his covenant with God; and if interrupted that day, to take the next day following." Following is a sample taken from his journal.

1691. In the entry of this new year, as I have now done for many years most solemnly, I desire again to renew my personal engaging of myself to the Lord my God, and for Him, and with my whole heart and desire to enter myself into His service, and take on His blessed yoke, and humbly to lay claim, take, and embrace Him (O Him!) To be my God, my all, my light, and my salvation, my shield, and exceeding great reward." ("The Scots Worthies," by John Howie, of Lochgoin. Edinburgh and London: Oliphant, Anderson, & Ferrier, 1870, page 574)

He produced many works: Confirming Work of Religion, Epistolary Discourse, and The Fulfilling of the Scriptures. He left behind a writing called, A Short Index of some of the Great Appearances of the Lord in the Dispensations of His Providence to His Poor Servant." Apparently, the Lord moved miraculously upon Robert Fleming.

Following are excerpts taken from that work and recording in Scots Worthies on pages 578 - 560.

The strange and extraordinary impression I had of an audible voice in the church at night, when, being a child, I had got up to the pulpit, calling me to make haste.

The extraordinary dream and marvelous vision I had, twice repeated, with the inexpressible joy after the same.

The dream at Boussay, wherein I got such express warning as to my wife's removal, with the Lord's marvelous appearance and presence the Thursday after, at St. Johnston's.

Those great and signal confirmations give me at my wife's death, and that great extraordinary voice, so distinct and clear, which I heard a few nights after her death.

The remarkable warning I was forced to give, that some present should be taken away by death before next Lord's-day.

If, as the Reformed camp generally maintains, the spiritual gifts have ceased, then how could such a strong Calvinist have visions and dreams prophetic in nature, hear audible voices, an "appearance" of the Lord, and prophecy, all, of which, came true? Apparently, this Calvinist was not a cessationist.