

I know the feelings of the leaders of the Church—Presidents Taylor, Cannon and Smith—and other authorities of the Church. They have a horror, a repugnance to the shedding of blood. They have no desire in their hearts to inflict any penalty of that kind upon any individual. And as to transgressors who are not of our faith, they want nothing to do with them. All we claim the right to do in this respect is to defend ourselves against our enemies, and we have the law of God on that question. We are told in the book of Doctrine and Covenants that if our enemies come against us and they repent, we are to forgive them. And if they come again the second time, they are to be forgiven; also the third time they are to be forgiven; and if they still persist and seek our lives, we have the right to defend ourselves to the last extremity. But if we then forgive them we shall be rewarded for our righteousness. All this shows that the Lord does not delight in the shedding of blood, neither do His servants. We are told that we shall not be blood shedders. We are to be temple builders. David of old was not allowed to build the temple because he was not clean from the blood of his generation. And the people called Latter-day Saints, from the heads of the Church down to the humblest member, have a horror of the shedding of human blood. They are not a bloody-minded people. They are a forbearing people, as our cowardly persecutors are well aware. And yet there is a point where forbearance ceases to be a virtue.

These are some of the ideas entertained by the Latter-day Saints on the subject of blood atonement. After baptized persons have made sacred covenants with God and then commit deadly sins, the only atonement they can make is the shedding of their blood. At

the same time, because of the laws of the land, and the prejudices of the nation, and the ignorance of the world, this law cannot be carried out. But when the time comes that the law of God shall be in full force upon the earth, then this penalty will be inflicted for those crimes committed by persons under covenant not to commit them.

There is one passage I read from Prest. Young's discourse that may need a little explanation. We will let him explain himself. I read to you just now that Prest. Young said he had known of many instances where men had been righteously slain to atone for their sins. Let me read it again:

"I could refer you to plenty of instances where men have been righteously slain in order to atone for their sins."

That sentence is copied and scattered broadcast throughout the nation, coupled with some other little bits, here and there, from his sayings. Our opponents tack them together, sometimes giving the first part of a sentence and leaving the latter part out; at others, giving the latter part, but omitting the former, making the quotation have a different meaning to that which was intended; after the fashion of joining these two scraps of scripture:

"And Judas went out and hanged himself."

"Go thou and do likewise."

They tack portions of sentences together and send them forth as the veritable utterances of the "Mormon" leaders. I will read to you what Brigham Young really meant and said in regard to those who had been "righteously slain for their sins." I read from the same page