

You talk of the doings of different governments, the United States if you please. What do they do with traitors?—what mode do they adopt to punish traitors? Do traitors to that Government forfeit their lives? Examine also the doings of other earthly governments upon this point, and you find the same practice universal; I am not aware that there are any exceptions. But people will look into books of theology, and argue that the people of God have a right to try people for fellowship, but they have no right to try them on property or life. That makes the devil laugh, saying, I have got them on a hook now; they can cut them off, and I will put eight or ten splints, worse than they are, into their tabernacles, and send them back to mob them. What a fine thing it was that I got Oliver Cowdery to write that piece on law, and introduce it into the Book of Doctrine and Covenants!

But if the Government of God on earth, and Eternal Priesthood, with the sanction of High Heaven, in the midst of all his people, has passed sentence on certain sins when they appear in a person, has not the people of God a right to carry out that part of his law as well as any other portion of it? It is their right to baptize a sinner to save him, and it is also their right to kill a sinner to save him, when he commits those crimes that can only be atoned for by shedding his blood. If the Lord God forgives sins by baptism, and there is another law that certain sins cannot be atoned for by baptism, but by the shedding of the blood of the sinner, query, whether the people of God be overreaching the mark, if they should execute the law to save such? They used to do it anciently. We would not kill a man, of course, unless we killed him to save him. We would not baptize a man unless we baptized him to save him. We would not lay hands upon a man that he might receive the Holy Spirit, only for the salvation of the man. And every act of men having the priesthood upon the earth, should be for the salvation of the people.