

lent and I might say at the same time one of the greatest with which mankind is afflicted. The more the Lord blesses us the less we love him. That is the way men show their gratitude unto the Lord for his mercies and his blessings towards them!²⁴

THE DOCTRINE OF BLOOD ATONEMENT²⁵

CLEANSING POWER OF BLOOD OF CHRIST. The Latter-day Saints believe in the efficacy of the blood of Christ. They believe that through obedience to the laws and ordinances of the gospel they obtain a remission of sins; but this could not be if Christ had not died for *them*.²⁶ If you did believe in blood atonement, I might ask you *why* the blood of Christ was shed, and *in whose stead was it shed?* I might ask you to explain the words of Paul, "Without shedding of blood is no remission."²⁷

Are you aware that *there are certain sins that man may commit for which the atoning blood of Christ does not avail?* Do you not know, too, that this doctrine is taught in the *Book of Mormon*? And is not this further reason why you should discard the book as well as the name? Is it not safe for us to rely upon the scriptures for the solution of problems of this kind?²⁸

TRUE DOCTRINE OF BLOOD ATONEMENT. Just a word or two now, on the subject of blood atonement. *What is that doctrine?* Unadulterated, if you please, laying aside the pernicious insinuations and lying charges that have so often been made, it is simply this: Through the atonement of Christ all mankind *may* be saved, by

²⁴*Millennial Star*, vol. 94, p. 385; D. & C. 59:5-6; Matt. 22:36-40.

²⁵This material on "Blood Atonement" was first published some 50 years ago to refute the evil, false, and slanderous charges of the so-called elders of the "Reorganized" church, including one R. C. Evans, second counselor in the presidency of that sect. Similar false charges are made, even to this day, by some who choose to walk in darkness and fight the truth with lies. B. R. M.

²⁶1 Ne. 12:10; 2 Ne. 9:7; Mosiah 3:11, 15; Alma 21:9; Mark 14:22-25; D. & C. 29:1, 17; 45:4; 74:7; 76:39-41.

²⁷Heb. 9:22.

²⁸2 Ne. 9:35; Alma 1:13-14; 42:19; *Inspired Version*, Gen. 9:12-13; Luke 11:50; Heb. 9:22; 10:26-29; 1 John 3:15; 5:16; D. & C. 42:18-19, 79; 87:7; 101:80.

obedience to the laws and ordinances of the gospel. Salvation is twofold: *General*—that which comes to all men irrespective of a belief (in this life) in Christ—and, *Individual*—that which man merits through his own acts through life and by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the gospel.

But man may commit certain grievous sins—according to his light and knowledge—that will place him beyond the reach of the atoning blood of Christ. If then he would be saved he must make sacrifice of his own life to atone—so far as in his power lies—for that sin, for the blood of Christ alone under certain circumstances will not avail.

MURDERERS AND THE ATONEMENT. Do you believe this doctrine? If not, then I do say you do not believe in the *true doctrine of the atonement of Christ!* This is the doctrine you are pleased to call the “blood atonement of Brighamism.” This is the doctrine of Christ our Redeemer, who died for us. This is the doctrine of Joseph Smith, and I accept it.

In whose stead did Christ die? I wish your church members could be fair enough to discuss this subject on *its merits*.

I again recommend you to a careful reading of the quotations in my open letter. You will find them as follows: *Book of Mormon*—2 Nephi 9:35; Alma 1:13-14 and 42:19. *Bible—Inspired Version*, Genesis 9:12-13; Luke 11:50; Hebrews 9:22 and 10:26-29; 1 John 3:15 and 5:16. *Doctrine and Covenants* 42:18-19, 79; 87:7; 101:80.

To these I will add: “Whoso killeth any person, *the murderer shall be put to death* by the mouth of witnesses; but one witness shall not testify against any person to cause him to die. Moreover ye shall take no satisfaction for the life of a murderer, which is guilty of death; but *he shall be surely put to death*. . . . So ye shall not *pollute* the land wherein ye are; for blood it

defileth the land; and *the land cannot be cleansed of the blood that is shed therein, but by the blood of him that shed it.*”²⁹

ANCIENT MEN SLAIN TO ATONE FOR SINS. Do you want a few references of where *men were righteously slain to atone for their sins?* What about the death of Nehor?³⁰ Of Zemnarihah and his followers?³¹ What about Er and Onan, whom the Lord slew?³² Of Nadab and Abihu?³³ And the death of Achan?³⁴

Were not these righteously slain to atone for their sins? And it was of this class of cases that President Young referred in his discourse you *misquote*. He tells us so, in the same discourse in the portion which you *did not quote*. It is:

“Now take the wicked, and I can refer you to where the Lord had to slay every soul of the Israelites that went out of Egypt except Caleb and Joshua. He slew them by the hand of their enemies, by the plague and by the sword. Why? Because he loved them and promised Abraham he would save them.”³⁵

ATONEMENT AND SINS UNTO DEATH. *Joseph Smith taught that there were certain sins so grievous that man may commit, that they will place the transgressors beyond the power of the atonement of Christ. If these offenses are committed, then the blood of Christ will not cleanse them from their sins even though they repent. Therefore their only hope is to have their own blood shed to atone, as far as possible, in their behalf.* This is scriptural doctrine, and is taught in all the standard works of the Church. The doctrine was established in the beginning, that “Whoso sheddeth man’s blood, *by man shall his blood be shed*; for man shall not shed the blood of man. For a commandment I give, that every man’s brother

²⁹*Inspired Version*, Nu. 35:30-31, 33.

³⁰Alma 1:15.

³¹3 Ne. 4:27-28.

³²Gen. 38:7, 10.

³³Lev. 10:2.

³⁴Joshua 7:24-25.

³⁵*Blood Atonement and the Origin of Plural Marriage*, pp. 14, 47-48; *Journal of Discourses*, vol. 4, p. 220.

shall preserve the life of man, for in mine own image have I made man."³⁶

This was the law among the Nephites: "Wo unto the murderer who deliberately killeth, for *he shall die.*"³⁷

John says: "If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. *There is a sin unto death: I do not say that ye shall pray for it.*"³⁸

UNIVERSAL PRACTICE OF BLOOD ATONEMENT. *Every nation* since the world began has practiced blood atonement, at least in part, as that doctrine is based upon the scriptures. And men for certain crimes have had to atone as far as they could for their sins wherein they have placed themselves beyond the redeeming power of the blood of Christ.

*But that the Church practices "Blood Atonement" on apostates or any others, which is preached by ministers of the "Reorganization" is a damnable falsehood for which the accusers must answer.*³⁹

LAW OF CAPITAL PUNISHMENT. In pursuance of, and in harmony with this scriptural doctrine, which has been the righteous law from the days of Adam to the present time, the founders of Utah incorporated in the laws of the Territory provisions for the capital punishment of those who wilfully shed the blood of their fellow men. This law, which is now the law of the State, granted unto the condemned murderer the privilege of choosing for himself whether he die by hanging, or whether he be shot, and thus have his blood shed in harmony with the law of God; and thus atone, so far as it is in his power to atone, for the death of his victim. Almost without exception the condemned party chooses the latter death.

This is by the authority of the law of the land, not that of the Church. This law was placed on the statutes

³⁶Inspired Version, Gen. 9:12-13.

³⁷2 Ne. 9:35.

³⁸1 John 5:16.

³⁹Origin of the "Reorganized" Church, pp. 95-96.

through the efforts of the Mormon legislators, and grants to the accused the right of jury trial. It is from this that the vile charge, which you are pleased to repeat, has been maliciously misconstrued by the enemies of the Church, who prefer to believe a lie. When men accuse the Church of practicing "Blood Atonement" on those who deny the faith, or, for that matter, on any living creature, they know that they bear false witness, and they shall stand condemned before the judgment seat of God.⁴⁰

CHURCH NEVER PRACTICED BLOOD ATONEMENT. Your report says: "This doctrine was introduced by Brigham Young" and that it meant "death to anyone who left the Church . . . that the apostate whose throat was cut from ear to ear . . . saved his soul." Why you made this statement you best know; but were you not aware that it was but the repetition of the ravings of enemies of the Church, without one grain of truth?

Did you not know that *not a single individual was ever "blood atoned,"* as you are pleased to call it, *for apostasy or any other cause?* Were you not aware, in repeating this *false charge,* that *it was made by the most bitter enemies of the Church before the death of the Prophet Joseph Smith?* Do you know of anyone whose blood was ever shed by the command of the Church, or members thereof, to "save his soul?" Did you not know that you were embittering the people against the Mormon elders, and that just such malicious charges and false insinuations have made martyrs for the Church, whose blood does not "cease to come up into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth?"⁴¹

Never in the history of this people can the time be pointed to when the Church ever attempted to pass judgment on, or execute an apostate as per your statement. There are men living in Utah today who left the Church in the earliest history of our State who feel as secure, and are just as secure and free from molestation from

⁴⁰Blood Atonement and the Origin of "D. & C. 87:7. Plural Marriage, pp. 15-16.

their former associates as you or any other man could be.⁴²

INFINITE SCOPE OF ATONEMENT

NATURE OF THE ATONEMENT. In the *Compendium*, which was first published in a very early day, this is found: "*The word atonement signifies deliverance through the offering of a ransom, for the penalty of a broken law. The sense is expressed in Job 33:24: 'Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom.' As effected by Jesus Christ, it signifies the deliverance, through his death, and resurrection, of the earth and everything pertaining to it, from the power which death has obtained over them through the transgression of Adam.*"

On the following page, this: "These passages evidence that *redemption from death, through the suffering of Christ, is for all men, both the righteous and the wicked; for this earth, and all things created upon it.*"⁴³

ATONEMENT FOR EARTH AND ALL LIFE. I believe in Jesus Christ as the Son of God and the Only Begotten Son of the Father in the flesh: that he came into the world as the Redeemer, as the Savior; and through his death, through his ministry, the shedding of his blood, he has brought to pass redemption from death to *all men, to all creatures*—not alone to man, but to *every living thing, and even to this earth itself*, upon which we stand, for we are informed through the revelations that it too shall receive the resurrection and come forth to be crowned as a celestial body, and to be the abode of celestial beings eternally.⁴⁴

⁴²*Op. cit.*, pp. 13-14.

⁴³Pers. Corresp.; *Compendium*, pp. 8-9.

⁴⁴Conf. Rep., Oct. 6, 1934, pp. 64-65; D. & C. 29:23-25; 88:25-26.