

reveling in blasphemy. (Rev. 13:1-8.) When our Lord performed healings (Matt. 9:3) and announced himself as the Son of God, he was accused by the Jews of blasphemy (Matt. 26:63-65; Mark 14:61-64; John 10:22-38)—charges that would have been true, if his witness had not been true and his power divine.

In ancient Israel blasphemy against the name of the Lord was an offense punishable with death by stoning. (Lev. 24:16.) Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost—which is falsely denying Christ after receiving a perfect revelation of him from the Holy Ghost—is the unpardonable sin. (Matt. 12:31-32; Mark 3:28-29; D. & C. 132:27.)

Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. See UNPARDONABLE SIN.

Blessing of Children. See ORDINANCES, SALVATION OF CHILDREN. "Every member of the church of Christ having children is to bring them unto the elders before the church, who are to lay their hands upon them in the name of Jesus Christ, and bless them in his name." (D. & C. 20:70.) Ordinarily this command is complied with through the ordinance of *blessing of children*, although it might also be complied with in connection with confirmation and bestowal of the Holy Ghost. It is the practice of the Church to perform the ordinance of the blessing of children in fast meetings a few weeks after the birth of the child. At that

time the child is formally and officially given a name, and the proper church records are made so that the necessary genealogical data will be preserved.

The blessing of children is not an ordinance of salvation; children are saved through the atoning sacrifice of Christ without ordinances. This was fully understood by the ancient apostles, for when the people brought "little children" to Jesus, "that he should put his hands on them and pray, . . . the disciples rebuked them, saying, *There is no need, for Jesus hath said, Such shall be saved.* But Jesus said, *Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven. And he laid hands on them.*" (*Inspired Version*, Matt. 19:13-15.)

Blessing on the Food. See PRAYER.

Blindness. See DEAFNESS.

Block Teachers. SEE WARD TEACHERS.

Blood. See FLESH AND BLOOD.

Blood Atonement Doctrine. See ATONEMENT OF CHRIST, CALLING AND ELECTION SURE, CAPITAL PUNISHMENT, CHRIST, FLESH AND BLOOD. From the days of Joseph Smith to the present, wicked and evilly-disposed persons have fabricated false and slanderous stories to the effect that the Church, in the early days of this dispensation, engaged in a practice of *blood atonement* whereun-

der the blood of apostates and others was shed by the Church as an atonement for their sins. These claims are false and were known by their originators to be false. There is not one historical instance of so-called blood atonement in this dispensation, nor has there been one event or occurrence whatever, of any nature, from which the slightest inference arises that any such practice either existed or was taught.

There are, however, in the sermons of some of the early church leaders some statements about the true doctrine of blood atonement and of its practice in past dispensations, for instance, in the days of Moses. By taking one sentence on one page and another from a succeeding page and even by taking a part of a sentence on one page and a part of another found several pages away—all wholly torn from context—dishonest persons have attempted to make it appear that Brigham Young and others taught things just the opposite of what they really believed and taught.

Raising the curtain of truth on this false and slanderous bluster of enemies of the Church who have thus wilfully chosen to fight the truth with outright lies of the basest sort, the true doctrine of blood atonement is simply this:

1. Jesus Christ worked out the infinite and eternal atonement by the shedding of his own blood. He came into the world for the purpose of dying on the cross for the sins of the world. By virtue of that atoning sac-

rifice immortality came as a free gift to all men, and all who would believe and obey his laws would in addition be cleansed from sin through his blood. (Mosiah 3:16-19; 3 Ne. 27:19-21; 1 John 1:7; Rev. 5:9-10.)

2. But under certain circumstances there are some serious sins for which the cleansing of Christ does not operate, and the law of God is that men must then have their own blood shed to atone for their sins. Murder, for instance, is one of these sins; hence we find the Lord commanding capital punishment. Thus, also, if a person has so progressed in righteousness that his calling and election has been made sure, if he has come to that position where he knows "by revelation and the spirit of prophecy, through the power of the Holy Priesthood" that he is sealed up unto eternal life (D. & C. 131:5), then if he gains forgiveness for certain grievous sins, he must "be destroyed in the flesh," and "delivered unto the buffetings of Satan unto the day of redemption, saith the Lord God." (D. & C. 132:19-27.)

President Joseph Fielding Smith has written: "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 his power lies—for that sin, for the blood of Christ alone under certain circumstances will not avail. . . . Joseph Smith taught that there were certain sins so grievous

ous 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." (*Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 1, pp. 133-138.)

This doctrine can only be practiced in its fulness in a day when the civil and ecclesiastical laws are administered in the same hands. It was, for instance, practiced in the days of Moses, but it was not and could not be practiced in this dispensation, except that persons who understood its provisions could and did use their influence to get a form of capital punishment written into the laws of the various states of the union so that the blood of murderers could be shed.

Blood of Israel. See BELIEVING BLOOD.

Boasting. See PRIDE, REJOICING, SIGNS OF THE TIMES, VAINGLORY, VANITY. *Boasting* is of two kinds: either righteous, or unrighteous; either in the arm of flesh, or in the Lord and his gracious goodness and power. "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord," Paul said in summing up a sermon on boasting, "For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth." (2 Cor. 10:7-18; Ps. 44:8.) Ammon spoke similarly: "I do not boast in

my own strength, nor in my own wisdom; but behold, my joy is full, yea, my heart is brim with joy, and I will rejoice in my God. Yea, I know that I am nothing; as to my strength I am weak; therefore I will not boast of myself, but I will boast of my God, for in his strength I can do all things. . . . Therefore, let us glory, yea, we will glory in the Lord; yea, we will rejoice, for our joy is full; yea, we will praise our God forever. Behold, *who can glory too much in the Lord?*" (Alma 26:8-16, 35.)

Boasting in the arm of flesh, one of the commonest of all sins among worldly people, is a gross evil; it is a sin born of pride, a sin that creates a frame of mind which keeps men from turning to the Lord and accepting his saving grace. When a man engages in self exultation because of his riches, his political power, his worldly learning, his physical prowess, his business acumen, or even his works of righteousness, he is not in tune with the Spirit of the Lord. Salvation itself comes by the grace of God, "Not of works," that is not of the performances and outward display of the law, "lest any man should boast." (Eph. 2:4-22; Rom. 3:27.) As King Benjamin asked, after explaining the goodness of God and the comparative nothingness of men, "Of what have ye to boast?" (Mosiah 2:17-26.)

Even when the righteous glory in the Lord, certain very definite restrictions attend their godly boasting. The elders are to proclaim against