

# THE LONG-PROMISE

Additional context behind excerpts from Official Declaration 2

1

## AWARE OF THE PROMISES

With the help of others, President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985) carefully studied the scriptures and statements made by Church leaders in addresses, journals, meetings, and other sources since the days of the Prophet Joseph Smith, including the following:



President Brigham Young (1801–77)

1852

“That time will come . . . [when] they [black members of the

Church] will come and have the privilege of all we have the privilege and more.”<sup>1</sup>



President David O. McKay (1873–1970)

1947

“Sometime in God’s eternal plan, the Negro will be given the right to hold the priesthood. In the meantime, those of that race who receive the testimony of the

restored gospel may have their family ties protected and other blessings made secure, for in the justice and mercy of the Lord they will possess all the blessings to which they are entitled in the eternal plan of salvation and exaltation.”<sup>2</sup>

## Excerpt from Official Declaration 2

“Aware of the promises made by the prophets and presidents of the Church who have preceded us that at some time, in God’s eternal plan, all of our brethren who are worthy may receive the priesthood, and witnessing the faithfulness of those from whom the priesthood has been withheld, we have pleaded long and earnestly in behalf of these, our faithful brethren, spending many hours in the Upper Room of the Temple supplicating the Lord for divine guidance.”

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President Harold B. Lee (1899–1973)

1972

“It’s only a matter of time before the black achieves full status in the Church. We must believe in the justice of God. The black will achieve full status, we’re just waiting for that time.”<sup>3</sup>

# ED DAY



## 3

### MANY HOURS ... SUPPLICATING



**President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985)**

1978

“I remember very vividly the day after day that I walked over to the temple.

... I knelt and prayed. And I prayed with such a fervency, I tell you! I knew that something was before us that was extremely important to many of the children of God.”<sup>4</sup>

In 1979, President Kimball further explained: “I want you to know, as a special witness of the Savior, how close I have felt to him and to our Heavenly Father as I have made numerous visits to the upper rooms in the temple, going on some days several times by myself. The Lord made it very clear to me what was to be done.”<sup>5</sup>

## 2

### WITNESSING THE FAITHFULNESS

Read the powerful experiences of faithful black members around the world who joined the Church before the 1978 revelation and experienced the announcement of the long-promised day:

- Charlotte and William Acquah (Ghana), Helvécio and Rudá Martins (Brazil), and Joseph and Toe Freeman (USA) in “Witnessing the Faithfulness: Official Declaration 2” at [lds.org/go/061820a](https://www.lds.org/go/061820a).

- George Rickford (England) in “I Will Take It in Faith” at [lds.org/go/061820b](https://www.lds.org/go/061820b).
- Victor Nugent (Jamaica) in “It Was the Truth!” at [lds.org/go/061820c](https://www.lds.org/go/061820c).
- Joseph William Billy Johnson (Ghana) in “A People Prepared” at [lds.org/go/061820d](https://www.lds.org/go/061820d).
- Anthony Obinna (Nigeria) in “You Have Come at Last” at [lds.org/go/061820e](https://www.lds.org/go/061820e).

4

## HE HAS HEARD OUR PRAYERS



President Thomas S. Monson (1927–2018)

1978

“At the conclusion of the meeting with the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve, we had a special prayer at the altar [in the temple] where President [Spencer W.] Kimball was voice. He implored the Lord for light and knowledge on this issue which has such far-reaching consequences. It was a source of great comfort to the Brethren to hear his humble pleadings as he sought guidance in his lofty calling.”<sup>6</sup>

In 1985, reflecting on the direction from God that followed this prayer, President Monson wrote, “It was a moment of exultation, for we had heard the Lord’s prophet declare the Lord’s revelation for this time.”<sup>7</sup>

### DISCOVER MORE ONLINE

Watch a video that includes President Kimball’s and President Hinckley’s recollections about their experience with the 1978 priesthood revelation: [lds.org/go/061816](https://www.lds.org/go/061816).

4

### Excerpt from Official Declaration 2

“He has heard our prayers, and by revelation has confirmed that the long-promised day has come when every faithful, worthy man in the Church may receive the holy priesthood, with power to exercise its divine authority, and enjoy with his loved ones every blessing that flows therefrom, including the blessings of the temple.”

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## BY REVELATION ... CONFIRMED



President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008)

1988

“There was a hallowed and sanctified atmosphere in the room. For me, it felt as if a conduit opened between the heavenly throne and the kneeling, pleading prophet of God who was joined by his Brethren. The Spirit of God was there. And by the power of the Holy Ghost there came to that prophet an assurance that the thing for which he prayed was right, that the time had come, and that now the wondrous blessings of the priesthood should be extended to worthy men everywhere regardless of lineage.

“Every man in that circle, by the power of the Holy Ghost, knew the same thing.”<sup>8</sup>



# 6

## EVERY BLESSING

The revelation was about more than just ordination to the priesthood. Men, women, and children were blessed by access to all priesthood ordinances, including the blessings of the temple.



**Elder Bruce R. McConkie (1915–85)**

1981

“The time had now come to offer the fulness of the everlasting gospel, including celestial marriage, and the priesthood, and the blessings of the temple, to all men, without reference to race or color, solely on the basis of personal worthiness.”<sup>9</sup> ■

Editors’ note: This article is not meant to be a comprehensive explanation of Official Declaration 2, only a starting point for your own study.

### NOTES

1. Brigham Young, speech given on Feb. 5, 1852; see “Race and the Priesthood,” *Gospel Topics*, topics.lds.org.
2. David O. McKay, in Llewelyn R. McKay, *Home Memories of President David O. McKay* (1956), 231.
3. Harold B. Lee, in L. Brent Goates, *Harold B. Lee: Prophet and Seer* (1985), 506.
4. Spencer W. Kimball, in Edward L. Kimball, “Spencer W. Kimball and the Revelation on Priesthood,” *BYU Studies*, vol. 47, no. 2 (2008), 52.
5. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Spencer W. Kimball* (2006), 239.
6. Thomas S. Monson, in Heidi S. Swinton, *To the Rescue: The Biography of Thomas S. Monson* (2010), 393.
7. Thomas S. Monson, in Swinton, *To the Rescue*, 394.
8. Gordon B. Hinckley, “Priesthood Restoration,” *Ensign*, Oct. 1988, 70.
9. Bruce R. McConkie, “The New Revelation on Priesthood,” in *Priesthood* (1981), 128.