

being blessed for it.”⁸² Many people reported to him that they had wept tears of joy and gratitude upon hearing of the revelation. Some wept anew in the retelling.⁸³

When reporters in Hawaii asked about the revelation, Spencer answered, “It is a different world than it was twenty or twenty-five years ago. The world is ready for it.” The reporters also asked him for details about receiving the revelation, but the president described it as “a personal thing.” He sidestepped further questions on the subject, saying he was there to rededicate the temple.⁸⁴

Although he felt the subject inappropriate for a press conference, Spencer willingly talked about the revelation in a personal conversation with his son, expressing the view that this revelation was “the most important thing to happen in the Church since the Manifesto” in 1890, yet he felt great concern lest some people sensationalize it. He particularly stressed that it had not come in an open vision. “Some people would try to figure it out that I had a personal visitation from the Almighty as in the First Vision. I would not want to make the revelation different from what it was. When I meet little children they sometimes look up at me and say, ‘Do you talk to Jesus?’ It sets my heart in a whirl, because their simple expectations are so high.” Still, he had no doubts that he had received a revelation and that its source was divine. The strong, distinct, sacred impression he experienced banished for him even the thought of questioning its source.⁸⁵

Elder McConkie, speaking to seminary and institute teachers a few months after the revelation, described the events in poetic language that some misunderstood. He said of the experience:

From the midst of Eternity, the voice of God, conveyed by the power of the Spirit, spoke to his prophet. . . . And we all heard the same voice, received the same message, and became personal witnesses that the word received was the mind and will and voice of the Lord.

President Kimball’s prayer was answered and our prayers were answered.

He heard the voice and we heard the same voice.

His phrasing left some with the mistaken impression that the group had heard a voice speaking specific words. When President Kimball read the talk as published in 1981, he asked Elder McConkie to revise the statement to avoid possible misunderstanding. Elder McConkie agreed that he meant only that “God’s will was made known,”⁸⁶ pointing out that in the same talk he said, “The Lord could have sent messengers from the other side to deliver it but he did not. He gave the revelation by the power of the Holy Ghost. . . . [T]he Brethren involved, the thirteen

82. Golden A. Buchmiller, “President Kimball Inspires Members to Improve Their Lives,” *Church News*, December 19, 1981, 6.

83. Spencer W. Kimball, *Journal*, June 11, 1978.

84. Phillip Colton Smith (high councilor who was present at the press conference) to author, January 11, 1994.

85. 1978 Draft.

86. Bruce R. McConkie, “The New Revelation on Priesthood,” in Spencer W. Kimball et al., *Priesthood* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1981), 128; Edward L. Kimball, *Journal*, April 25, 1982, and May 12, 1982. Alexander B. Morrison, *The Dawning of a Brighter Day* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1990), 63–64, quotes Elders McConkie using the phrase “voice of the Lord” and Hinckley using “voice of the Spirit” and equates that with Enos’s experience, but Elder McConkie said he did not experience a “voice in the mind” as Enos did. Edward L. Kimball, *Journal*, May 12, 1982.

who were present, are independent personal witnesses of the truth and divinity of what occurred.” He said he would clarify his meaning in future printings of the book, but he did not.⁸⁷

For the Twelve, their respect for President Kimball was augmented by the revelatory process. Elder Perry commented, “This is an example of President Kimball’s willingness to take on himself the prophetic calling. It was not a result of a ‘policy decision,’ but of his going to the Lord. He has the courage to be a prophet.”⁸⁸

And Elder Hinckley said, “It is a tremendous thing. It came as a result of great effort and prayer, anxious seeking and pleading. Anyone who does not think that is a part of receiving revelation does not understand the process.”⁸⁹

A few weeks after the event, Elder Packer said, “I have feared we might lose him, now that this great work is done. I hope there is something else only he can do, to keep him here. No one else could have done this; there is none so innocent and open, so sensitive.”⁹⁰

87. See Edward L. Kimball, *Journal*, May 12, 1982. Elder McConkie died in April 1985. The book is still in print, and its language remains unchanged.

88. 1978 Draft. Gene Dalton, interview by author, June 1978.

89. Gordon B. Hinckley, interview by author, July 12, 1978.

90. Boyd K. Packer, interview by author, July 12, 1978.