

Begin forwarded message:

From: Church History Library Ask Us Service <askus@chl.libanswers.com>
Subject: [Ask Us] Would like to access a digital copy of the First Presidency 1949 and 1969 statements on Blacks and the Priesthood
Date: May 25, 2022 at 12:25:46 PM MDT
To: **

--# Type your reply above this line #--

Jeff Thompson

May 25 2022, 12:25pm via System

Dear **:

In regards to the 1949 statement, the First Presidency does not allow us to provide copies of their correspondence. However, we can confirm that the following text was used by the First Presidency in responses to inquiries about the priesthood restriction for several years beginning in 1949. The text was never issued publicly but, rather, was used as standard language in private correspondence. Below is the full text that was used:

“The attitude of the Church with reference to negroes remains as it has always stood. It is not a matter of the declaration of a policy but of direct commandment from the Lord, on which is founded the doctrine of the Church from the days of its organization, to the effect that negroes may become members of the Church but that they are not entitled to the priesthood at the present time. The prophets of the Lord have made several statements as to the operation of the principle. President Brigham Young said: ‘Why are so many of the inhabitants of the earth cursed with a skin of blackness? It comes in consequence of their fathers rejecting the power of the holy priesthood, and the law of God. They will go down to death. And when all the rest of the children have received their blessings in the holy priesthood, then that curse will be removed from the seed of Cain, and they will then come up and possess the priesthood, and receive all the blessings which we now are entitled to.’

“President Wilford Woodruff made the following statement: ‘The day will come when all that race will be redeemed and possess all the blessings which we now have.’

“The position of the Church regarding the negro may be understood when another doctrine of the Church is kept in mind, namely, that the conduct of spirits in the premortal existence has some determining effect upon the conditions and circumstances under which these spirits take on mortality, and that while the details of this principle have not been made known, the principle itself indicates that the coming to this earth and taking on mortality is a privilege that is given to those who maintain their first estate; and that the worth of the privilege is so great that spirits are willing to come to earth and take on bodies no matter what the handicap may be as to the kind of bodies they are to secure; and that among the handicaps, failure of the right to enjoy in mortality the blessings of the priesthood, is a handicap which spirits are willing to assume in order that they might come

to earth. Under this principle there is no injustice whatsoever involved in this deprivation as to the holding of the priesthood by the negroes.”

In regards to the 1969 statement, it was published in the Church Section of the Deseret News on January 10, 1970. I have attached a copy of that for you.

Please let me know if you have any other questions.

Attached Files

- [M205.1 C562 1931- 1970 January 10 item 11-1970 January 10.jpeg](#)
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