

When to Receive Your Patriarchal Blessing

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When you receive your blessing, you will realize and feel how Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ love you and how They focus on you individually.

Yesterday my dear friend Elder Randall K. Bennett talked about patriarchal blessings. It was a great message and inspired us all. My dear brothers and sisters, may I talk about patriarchal blessings as well? Patriarchs, as requests for patriarchal blessings may increase, I pray that the Lord will bless you as you continue to magnify your calling.

As I go to stake conferences, I always visit with the stake patriarch and his spouse. Patriarchs are gentle, obedient, and incredible leaders called of God. They tell me many wonderful spiritual experiences. I ask them the age of the youngest and the oldest person to whom they have given a blessing. So far the youngest was 11, and the oldest was 93.

I received my patriarchal blessing as a new member of the Church, at age 19, two years after I was baptized. My patriarch was incredibly old. He joined the Church in 1916 and was a pioneer of the Church in Japan. It was my great honor to receive my patriarchal blessing from that remarkable disciple of the Lord. His Japanese was a bit difficult for me to understand, but it was powerful.

The patriarchs I have met tell me that many individuals receive their patriarchal blessings just before serving a mission. My dear young men, young women, parents, and bishops, patriarchal blessings are not only for preparation to serve a mission. Worthy baptized members may receive their patriarchal blessing when the time is right for them.¹

Dear adult members, some of you have not yet received your patriarchal blessings. Remember, there is no maximum age.

My mother-in-law was a very active Church member, serving as a Relief Society teacher until she passed away at age 91. I was sad to learn that she did not receive a patriarchal blessing. She experienced many difficulties in her life, and because she did not have a priesthood holder in the home, she did not receive many priesthood blessings. A

patriarchal blessing may have given her comfort when she needed it most.

Adults, if you have not yet received a patriarchal blessing, please do not worry! Everyone's spiritual timeline is different. If you are 35 or 85 and you have a desire, talk to your bishop about receiving your blessing.

New members of the Church, have you heard of patriarchal blessings? I didn't know about the opportunity to receive one when I joined the Church, but my beloved bishop told me about patriarchal blessings and encouraged me to prepare to receive mine after I was baptized. My dear new members, you can receive a patriarchal blessing as well. The Lord will help you prepare for this sacred opportunity.

Let's consider two purposes for a patriarchal blessing:

1. A patriarchal blessing contains personal counsel from the Lord to you.²
2. A patriarchal blessing declares your lineage in the house of Israel.

Your patriarchal blessing is a message from your Heavenly Father and will likely include promises and inspired counsel to guide you throughout your life. A patriarchal blessing is not going to map out your life or answer all your questions. If it doesn't mention an important life event, do not take that to mean you won't have that opportunity. Likewise, there is no guarantee everything in your blessing will come to pass in this life. A patriarchal blessing is eternal, and if you live worthy, promises that are not fulfilled in this life will be granted in the next.³

As you receive a declaration of lineage, you will come to know that you are of the house of Israel and the seed of Abraham.⁴ To understand the significance of this, focus on the promises the Lord made to the house of Israel through Abraham.

Those promises include:

- "His posterity would be numerous (see Genesis 17:5–6; Abraham 2:9; 3:14).
- "His seed, or descendants, would receive the gospel and bear the priesthood (see Abraham 2:9).
- "Through the ministry of his seed, 'all the families of the earth [would] be blessed, even with the blessings of the Gospel, which are the blessings of salvation, even of life eternal' (Abraham 2:11)."⁵

As members of the Church, we are children of the covenant.⁶ We receive the blessings of the Abrahamic covenant as we obey the laws and ordinances of the gospel.

Preparation for your patriarchal blessing will help you increase your faith in Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ. And when you receive your patriarchal blessing and read and ponder it, you can focus on Them more often.

President Thomas S. Monson explained, “The same Lord who provided a Liahona for Lehi provides for you and for me today a rare and valuable gift to give direction to our lives, to mark the hazards to our safety, and to chart the way, even safe passage—not to a promised land, but to our heavenly home.”⁷

My dear bishops, parents, elders quorum and Relief Society presidents, ward mission leaders, ministering brothers and sisters, please encourage those young men and young women, adult members, and new members who have not yet received their patriarchal blessing to seek the Lord’s direction and help in preparing themselves to do so.

I frequently and prayerfully read my patriarchal blessing; it always gives me encouragement. I recognize what the Lord expects of me, and it has helped me to repent and be humble. When I read and ponder it, I desire to live worthy of receiving its promised blessings.

Just as scriptures we have read many times have new meaning to us later, our patriarchal blessing will have a different meaning to us at different times. Mine has a different meaning now than it did when I was 30 and when I was 50. It is not that the words change, but we see them in a different way.

President Dallin H. Oaks declared that a patriarchal blessing “is given under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and should be read and interpreted under the influence of that same Spirit. The meaning and significance of a patriarchal blessing will be taught line upon line in the course of time by the power of the same Spirit that inspired [it].”⁸

Brothers and sisters, I bear my witness that Heavenly Father and His Beloved and Only Begotten Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, live. They love us. Patriarchal blessings are sacred gifts from Them. When you receive your blessing, you will realize and feel how They love you and how They focus on you individually.

The Book of Mormon is another testament of Jesus Christ. And I am grateful to be led by a living prophet, President Russell M. Nelson.

I am so grateful for our Savior, Jesus Christ. This Easter Sunday I will focus on Him and His Resurrection and worship Him and give thanks for His sacrifice. I know He suffered so deeply because He loves us so deeply. I know He was resurrected because of His love for us. He is real. I so testify in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

Notes

1. See *General Handbook: Serving in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 18.17, ChurchofJesusChrist.org.
2. See “Patriarchal Blessings,” in *True to the Faith* (2004), 112.
3. See “Patriarchal Blessings,” in *True to the Faith*, 113.
4. See Abraham 2:10.
5. “Abrahamic Covenant,” in *True to the Faith*, 5.
6. See 3 Nephi 20:25–26.
7. Thomas S. Monson, “Your Patriarchal Blessing: A Liahona of Light,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1986, 65.
8. Dallin H. Oaks, “Patriarchal Blessings,” *Worldwide Leadership Training Meeting: The Patriarch*, Jan. 8, 2005, 10.