Missionary’s address to the Chiefs of the Six Nations of Indians and their response.

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An Indian Speech

In the summer of 1805, a number of the principal chiefs and warriors of the six Nations of Indians, principally the Senecas, assembled at Buffalo Creek in the state of New York, at the particular request of a Gentleman Missionary from the state of Massachusetts.

The Missionary being furnished with an Interpreter and accompanied by the Agent of the U.S. for Indian affairs, met the Indians in Council, when the following talk took place:

First by the Agent

Brothers of the six Nations, I rejoice to meet you at this time, and thank the Great Spirit that hath preserved you in health, and given me another opportunity of making you by the hand.

Brother, the person who now sits by me is a friend who has come a great distance to hold a talk with you, he will inform you what his business is, and it is only required that you should listen with attention. To his words.

Missionary

My friends, I am thankful for the opportunity afforded me in meeting together at this time. I have a great desire to see you and enquire into your state and welfare. For this purpose I have traveled a great distance being sent by your old friends the Boston Missionary Society, you will recollect they formerly sent Missionaries amongst you, to instruct you in religion and lead you to good, although they have not heard from you for a long time yet they have not forgotten that Brothers of the six Nations, and are still anxious to do you good.

Brothers I have not come to get your lands or money but to enlighten your minds and to instruct you how to worship the Great Spirit agreeable.
An Indian Speech

In the summer of 1805, a number of the principal Chiefs and warriors of the six Nations of Indians principally Seneca assembled at Buffaloe Creek in the state of New York, at the particular request of a Gentleman Missionary from the state of Massachusetts. The Missionary being furnished with an Interpreter and accompanied by an Agent of the U States for Indian affairs, met the Indians in council, when the following talk took place:

First by the Agent of the six Nations, I rejoice to meet you at this time, and thank the Great Spirit that he hath preserved you in health, and given me another opportunity of taking you by the hand. The person who now sits by me is a friend who has come a great distance to hold a talk with you, he will inform you what his business is, and it is my request that you should listen with attention to his words. Missionary My friends I am thankful for the opportunity afforded us in meeting together at this time, I had a great desire to see you and enquire into your state and welfare, for this purpose I have traveled a great distance being sent by your old friends the Boston Missionary society; you will recollect they formerly sent Missionaries amongst you, to instruct you in Religion and I abound for your good, Altho they have not heard from you for a long time yet they have not forgotten there Brothers of the six Nations, and are still anxious to do you good. Brothers I have not come to get your lands or Money but to enlighten your minds, and to instruct you how to worship the Great Spirit agreeable.
agreeable to his mind, and will, and to preach to you
the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. There is but one God,
and one way to seek God, and if you do not embrace the
right way you cannot be happy; therefore you have
never worshiped the Great Spirit in a manner acceptable
to him but have all your lives been in great errors and
darkness, to induce but to remove these errors, and open
your eyes, so that you might see clearly in my比分ing
with you.

Brothers, I wish to talk with you, as one friend to the
other another, and if you have any objections to remove
the religion which I preach, I shall try to state them
and I will endeavor to satisfy your minds
and remove the objections.

Brothers, I want you to speak your minds freely: I
wish to reason with you on the subject and if possible
to remove all doubts in their minds on this subject.
The subject is an important one and it is of common
sense, that you give it an early attention while the offer
is made you. Our Friend, the Boston Missionary Society
will continue to send you good and faithful Ministers
to instruct and strengthen you in Religion, if you give
yourself you are willing to receive them.

Brothers, since I have been in this part of the country,
I have visited some of your small Villages, and talked
with your people, they appear willing to receive instruc-
tion, but as they look up to you as your Father
in Council, the want first to know your opinion on
the subject, you have now heard what I have to pro-
pose at present, I hope you will take it into considera-
tion, and give me an answer before we part.

After about two hours conversation amongst
themselves, the Chiefs Commonly Called Red Jackets
by the white people arose and spoke as follows:

Friend and Brother, if we are the will of the great
Spirit that we should meet together this day,
agreeable to his mind, and will, and to preach to you
ytf the Gospyle of his son Jesus Christ, there is but one Religion
and one wayytf to serve God, and if you do not embrace the
right way you cannot be happyytf hereafter; you have
never worshiped the Great Spirit in a manner acceptableytf
to him but have all your lives been in great errors and
darkness, toytf endeavour to remove these errors, and open
your eyes, so that you mightytf see clearly is my business
with you ytf Brothers
I wish to talk with you as one friend talks
with another,ytf and if you have any objections to recieve
the Religion which I preach Iytf wish you to take them
ytf and I will, and I will endeaver to satisfy your minds
 andytf remove the the objections ytf ytf Brothers
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part you areytf willing to receive themytf ytf Brothers
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I have visitedytf some of your small Villages, and talked
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tion, but as they look up to you as your Olderytf Brother
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by the white people arose and spoke as followsytf ytf Friend and Brother
It was the will of the great
spirit that we should meetytf together this day,
In order all things and have given us a fine day for our
Council. He has taken his garment from before the
fire, and caused it to shine with brightness upon us,
our eyes are open that we see clearly, our ears have
been unstuffed that we have been able to hear distinctly
the words you have spoken, for all these favours we
thank the great Spirit, and him only.

Brothers, this council fire was kindled by you, it
was at your request that we came together at this
time, we have listened with attention to what you have
said, you requested us to speak our minds freely.
This gives us great joy, for we now consider that we
stand upright before you, and can speak what we
think, all have heard your voice and all speak to
you now as one Man, our minds are agreed.

Brother, you say you want an answer to your talk
before you left this place; it is right you should have
one, as you are a great distance from home, and
we don't wish to detain you, but we will first look
back a little, and tell you what our Fathers have
told us, and what we have heard from the white people
Brothers, listen to what we say. There was a time
when our forefathers owned this great land, their
lands extended from the rising to the setting sun, the Great
Spirit had made it for the use of Indians, he had cre-
ated the Buffalo, the Deer, and other animals for
food, he made the Bear, the Beaver, their skins served
us for clothing, he had scattered them over the Country
and taught us how to use them, he had caused the
earth to produce Corn for bread, all this he had done
for his red children because he loved them; if we had
some disputes about hunting ground they were generally
settled without the shedding of much blood; but an
Evil day came upon us, your forefathers crossed the
great water and landed on this Island; their number
were
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council. He has taken his garment from before the
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yf back a little, and tell you what our fathers have
told us, and what we have heard from the white people
Brother listen to what we say. There was a time
when our forefathers owned this great Land, their seats
yf Extended from the rising to the setting sun, the Great
spirit had made it for the use of Indians he had cre
ated the Buffaloe, the Deer, and other animals for
food, he made the Bear & the Beaver, their skins served
us for clothing, he had scattered them over the country
and taught us how to take them, he had caused the
earth to produce corn for bread, yf all this he had done
for his red children because he loved them; if we had
some disputes about hunting ground they were generally
settled without the shedding of much blood; but an
Evil day came upon us your forefathers crossed the
great water and landed on this Island; their number were
were small, they found friends and not enemies, they
told us they had fled from their own country for fear of
wicked men, and had come here to enjoy their religion.
They asked for a small seat, we took pity on them,
granted their request, and they sat down amongst us,
we gave them corn and meat, they gave us poison (calling
it as supposed to adorn spirits) in return. The white people
had now found our country, tidings were carried back,
and more came amongst us, yet we did not fear them,
we took them to be friends, they called us brothers, we
believed them, and gave them a larger seat, at length
their numbers had greatly increased, they wanted
more land, they wanted our country, our eyes were
opened and our minds became uneasy, wars took place.
Indians were hired to fight against Indians, and
many of our people were destroyed. They also brought
strong liquors amongst us, it was strong and power-
ful, and has taken thousands.
Brother, our people were once a large body.
You say, you have now become a great people,
and we have scarcely a place left to spread our
families, you have got our country, but are not
satisfied, you want to force your religion upon us.
Brother, continues to listen. You say you are sent
to instruct us how to worship the Great Spirit according to
his mind, and if we do not take hold of religion which you
teach, we shall be unhappy hereafter, you say that you
are right, and we are lost, how do you know this to be
true? I understand that your religion is written in a
book, if it was written for us as well as you, why has
not the Great Spirit given to us, and not only to us,
but why did he not give to our forefathers the know-
ledge of that book, with the means of understanding
it rightly? We only know what you tell us about it,
how shall we know when to believe, having so often
decided by the white people?
Brother, you say there is but one way to worship
and serve the Great Spirit, is there is but one Religion
were small, they found friends and not enemies, they
ytf told us they had fled from their own country for fear of
wicked men, andytf had come here to enjoy their religion,
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believed them, and gave them aytf large seat, at length
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true;ytf we understand that your religion is written in a
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not the great spirit given to us, and notytf only to us,
but why did he not give to our forefathers the know
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it rightly; we onlyytf know what you tell us about
it, how shall we know what to believe, beingytf so often
deciev’d by the white people ytf ytf Brother, you say there is but one way to worship
and serve the Greatytf spirit, if there is but one Religion
Religion, why do you white people differ so much about it? Why not all agree, as you can all read the Book?

Brother, we do not understand these things, we are told that your religion was given to your forefathers, and has been handed down from father to son; we also have a Religion, which was given to our forefathers, and has been handed down to us their Children, we worship in that way, it teaches us to be thankful for all the favours we receive, to love each other and to be united, we never quarrel about Religion.

Brother, the Great Spirit has made us all, but he has made a great difference between his white & Red children; he has given us different Complexions & different Customs, to you he has given the arts, to these he has not opened our eyes, we know these things to be true; since he has made so great a difference between us in other things, why may we not conclude that he has given us a different Religion according to our understandings? The Great Spirit does right, he knows what is best for his Children, we are satisfied.

Brother, we do not wish to destroy your Religion, or take it from you, we only want to enjoy our own.

Brother, we are told that you have been preaching to the white people in this place, these people are our neighbours, we are acquainted with them, we will wait a little while and see what effect your preaching has upon them, if you find it does them good, makes them honest and life defensive to cheat Indians, we will then consider again what you have said.

Brother, you have now heard our answer to your talk, and this is all we have to say at present, as we are going to part we will come and take you by the hand and hope the Great Spirit will protect you on your journey and return you safe to your friends.
Religion, why do you whiteytf people differ so much about it? why not all agreed, as you can all usedytf the Book?ytf that your religionytf was given to your forefathers, and how been handed down from father toytf son, we also have a Religion, which was given to our forefathers, and hasytf been handed down to us their Children, we worship in that way, itytf teaches us to be thankful for all the favours we Recieve, to love eachytf other and to be united, we never quarrel about Religion.ytf ytf Brother, the Great spirit has made us all, but he has made a greatytf difference between his white & Red children, he has given us differentytf complexions & different customs, to you he hasytf given the arts, to these he has not opened our eyes, we know these thingytf to be true; since he has made so great a differenc between us inytf other things, why may we not conclude that he has given us a differentytf Religion according to our understandings; The Great spirit does right, heytf honors what is best for his children, we are satisfied. ytf or take it from you, wetytf only want to enjoy our own. ytf your preaching hasytf upon them, if we find it does them good, makes them honest and lessytf dispos'd to cheat Indians, we will then consider again what you haveytf said. ytf ytf Brother You have now heard our answer to your talk, and this is all wetytf have to say at present, as we are going to part we will come and take youytf by the hand and hope the Great spirit will protect you on your ytf journey and return you safe to your friends.
At the Indians began to approach the missionary, he rose hastily from his seat, and replied, he could not take them by the hand, that there was no fellowship between the Religion of God and the works of the Devil; this being interpreted to the Indians, they smiled, and retired in a pacable manner.

It being afterwards suggested to the Missionary that his reply to the Indians was rather indiscreet, he observed, that he supposed the ceremony of shaking hands would be acciected by them as a token, that he was appointed to what they had said, being otherwise informed, he said he was sorry for the disagreement.

The Missionary's answer to the Chief of the Six Nation Indians:

Their answer—
As the Indians began to approach the missionary, he rose hastily from his seat and replied, he could not take them by the hand, that there was no fellowship between the Religion of God and the words of the Devil, this being interpreted to the Indians, they smiled, and retired in a peaceable manner. It being afterwards suggested to the Missionary that his Reply to the Indians was rather indiscreet, he observ'd that he supposed the ceremony of shaking hands would be receiv'd by them as a token, that he assented to what they had said, being otherwise inform'd he said he was sorry for the expression.