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 from New York, met at the particular request of a Gentleman from Massachusetts, the Missionary being furnished with an Interpreter and accompanied by the Agent of the U.S. for Indian affairs, and 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 you 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 requisite 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 health and welfare. For this purpose I have traveled a great distance being sent by your old friends, the Boston Missionary Society, you will recollect you have not heard from your 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 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 United States 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 Great spirit that he hath preserved you in health, and given me another opportunity of takeing you by the hand 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 aboud 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 Religion, and one way to seek God, and if you do not embrace the right way, you cannot be happy; therefore you have never worshipped the Great Spirit in manners acceptable to him, but have all your lives been in great errors and darkness, to inordinate to remove those errors, and open your eyes, so that you might see clearly in my visiting with you.

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

Brothers, I want you to express your minds freely. I wish to reason with you on the subject and if possible to remove all doubts in your minds. The subject is an important one, and it is of common sense that you give it early attention. While the subject is made up, your doing so. The Boston Missionary Society will continue to send you good and faithful Ministers to instruct and strengthen you in religion. If you are willing, I 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 instruction, but as they lack up to you as your elders. In council, the want first to know your opinion on the subject; you have now heard what I have to propose. At present, I hope you will take it into consideration, and give me an answer before we part.

After about two hours consultation amongst themselves, the Chief Commonly Called Red Jacket by the white people arose and spoke as follows—

Friend and Brother, if was 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 Gosple 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 maner acceptableytf
to him but have all your lives been in great errors and
darkness, toytf indeavour to remove these errors, and open
your eyes, so that you mighttyf 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 endeavours to satisfy your minds
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ence that you give it an early attention, while the offer
is madeytf you; you find the Boston Missionary society ytf
will continue to send you good and faithful Ministers
to instructytf and strength you in Religion, if on your
part you areytf willing to receive themytf Brothers
Since I have been in the part of the country
I have visitedytf some of your small Villages, and talked
with your people, they appearytf willing to receive instruc
tion, but as they look up to you as your Olderytf Brother
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at present, I hope youytf will take it into consideration,
and give me an answer before we partyf ytf After about two hours consultation amongst
themselves, the Cheif commonlyytf called Red Jacketytf
by the white people arose and spoke as followsytf Friend and Brother
It was the will of the great
spirit that we should meetytf together this day,
in order all things and how gives 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 untied 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.

Brother, 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 leave this place, it is right you should have one, as you are a great distance from home, and we do not 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.

Brother, listen to what we say. There was a time when our forefathers owned this great land, their souls extended from the rising to the setting sun, the Great Spirit had made it for the use of humanity, he had created 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 take 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...
he orders all things and has given us a fine Da\textsuperscript{y}tf for our
council. He has taken his garment from before the
Sun, and ytf caused it to shine with brightness upon us,
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told us, and what weytf have heard from the white people
Brother listen to what we say. There wasytf a time
when our forefathers owned this great Land, their seats
ytf Extended from the rising to the setting sun, the Great
spirit had made itytf for the use of Indians he had cre-
ated the Buffaloe, the Deer, and otherytf animals for
food, he made the Bear & the Beaver, their skins servedytf
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and taughtytf us how to take them, he had caused the
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for his red children because he loved them; if we hadytf
some disputes about hunting ground they were generally
settledytf without the shedding of much blood; but an
Evil day came upon us yourytf forefathers crossed the
great watter and landed on this Island; theirytf number were
were small, they found friends and not enemies, they
told us they had fleed 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 is supposed to arenl 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 liquor amongst us, it was strong and power-
ful, and has slain thousands.

Brother, we have been in great numbers,
were small, you have now become a great people;
and we have scarcely a place left to spread our
Mantles, you have got our Country, but are not
satisfied, you want to force your Religion upon us.
Brother, continue 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 not, how do you know this to be
true? we understand that your religion is written in a
book, if it was intended 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, being so often
decided by the white people.

Brother, you say there is but one way to worship
and serve the Great Spirits, if there is but one Religi-
were small, they found friends and not enemies, they
ytf told us they had fled from their own country for fear of
wicked men, and ytf had come here to enjoy their religion,
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Graned their request, and they sat down amongst us ytf
we gave them corn & meat, they gave us poison ytf (alluding
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and more came amongst us, yet we did not fear them
we took them to ytf be friends they called us Brothers, we
believed them, and gave them a ytf large seat, at length
their numbers had greatly increased, they wanted ytf
more land, they wanted our country, our eyes were
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were small, you have now ytf become a great people;
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his mind, and if we do not take holde ytf of the Religion which you
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are right and we are lost, how do you know this to be
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it, how shall we know what to believe, being ytf so often
deciev'd by the white people ytf ytf Brother, you say there is but one way to worship
and serve the Great ytf 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 and Red children, he has given us different Compositions, 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 we find it does them good, makes them honest and like the 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 white people differ so much about it? why not all agreed, as you can all used the Book that your religion was given to your forefathers, and how 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 Recieve, 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 honors 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. We are our neighbours, we are acquainted with them, we will wait a little while and see what effect your preaching has upon them, if we find it does them good, makes them honest and less disposed 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.
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 works of the Devil, thus being interpreted to the Indians, they smiled, and retired in a courteous 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 acceded to them as a token, that he was joined to what they had said, being otherwise informed, he said he was sorry for the expression.

The missionary's address 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 peaceful 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 wou'd be receiv'd by them as a token, that he assented to what they had said, being otherways inform'd he said he was sorry for the expression.