ADDRESS TO SEMINARY AND INSTITUTE FACULTY
BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY, PROVO, UTAH
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THE CHILDREN OF THE FIRST COVENANT
By Elder Spencer W. Kimball

My beloved brothers and sisters: I hope you have no difficulty in hearing me. As you know I have had some surgery, but the Lord has been very kind to give me a considerable restoration. He has made something out of practically nothing in my throat.

The subject that has been given to me today is very dear to my heart. Many of you know more about it than I do, but none of you loves the Indian more or could be more interested in his development, I am sure of that.

I have prepared a little brochure for you. It is a collection of items all related to the subject matter, but the items are not too well organized. The brochure is a collection of items that I ran on to when I was reviewing a little bit in preparation for this appointment, and as I turned the items over, I thought, "Now, some of the brethren might like some of those references which they might not have ready access to."

The first item in the brochure is the talk I gave to the general conference two years ago about the placement program wherein we have some three hundred Indian children in Utah homes. I probably will get back to this subject and discuss it in a little more detail later. And then, I have given some quotations from Wilford Woodruff and John Taylor and Brigham Young and Joseph Smith. I have given some which are not so easily found in the Journal of Discourses and in biographies and elsewhere. I have a few scriptures and a few rather interesting items concerning the legends and experiences and pertinent history. Again I say these items are not too well organized, but perhaps you may find something in them that will be of interest.

I should like to begin by quoting a paragraph from a talk I gave here five years ago. The conclusion of it was:

Have they (the Lamanites) not suffered long enough? Have they not starved enough? Have they not had unfulfilled dreams long enough? Have not enough of them died of malnutrition? Have they not sufficiently suffered without medicine, doctors, and nurses? Have they not paid the price for their transgressions and the transgressions of their fathers? My young brothers and sisters, I plead with you to accept the Lamanite as your brother. I ask not for your tolerance, your cold calculating tolerance; your haughty, contemptible tolerance; your scornful, arrogant tolerance; your pitying, coin-tossing tolerance. I ask you to give them what they want and need and deserve--opportunity and your fraternal, brotherliness and your understanding, your warm and glowing fellowship, your unstinted and beautiful love, your enthusiastic brotherhood.

Too often too many of us love the Lamanites at a distance, as long as we don't have to wait on them or teach them or wash them or feed them. We like them as long as we can just read about them in the Book of Mormon or elsewhere, or if we
can see them in their colorful costumes as a museum piece. I believe that one of the most important things that seminary and institute workers can do is to help toward the total acceptance of the Lamanite—Indian, Mexican, Hawaiian, or whatever the group may be—that means brotherhood.

In the back of my brochure I have given a bibliography of a number of addresses, my own and others of those who have served on the Indian program in years gone by. From one of those talks, the first one I gave after I received the appointment, I quote these lines from an unknown writer:

If my pen might have the gift of tears, I would write a book and call it The Indian, and I would make the whole world weep.

Well, we didn't come here to weep this morning, but there has been a great deal of weeping; there has been about fifteen hundred years or more of weeping, since the "children of the first covenant" began to lose the blessings of the Lord. And it seems to me, as I go into the matter, that they should have paid by this time. Maybe they have paid the penalty. For every sin there is a penalty, and we have to pay the uttermost farthing, but maybe they have paid it now; maybe it is time for the gospel and education and all things which are for their benefit to come to them.

Just a few words of background. When Columbus came to America in 1492 he found these aborigines he called the Indian. When he found them they had already been scattered. You remember from reading the last pages of the Book of Mormon and the record of the scattering of the Indian, how they had been divided into families and tribes. That was the condition that Columbus found them in—many many tribes covering the entire country. It is estimated by some—I can't verify the authenticity of it—that in the four hundred years of the "War of America" we lost about 10,000,000 Indians plus the increase. One author said there were 30,000,000 when Columbus came and that this population was reduced to a 20,000,000 total. Many of them, of course, were in Mexico, Canada, and elsewhere. The killing of an Indian was thought nothing more of than the killing of a jack rabbit or of a buffalo, except the bodies of the buffalo and the rabbit might have a use. The history has been an ugly one, but it was all according to prophecy, of course. The Lord said:

...I will afflict thy seed by the hand of the Gentiles; nevertheless, I will soften the hearts of the Gentiles, that they shall be like unto a father to them;

(2 Nephi 10:18.)

The first part of this prophecy has been fully fulfilled; the second part, we have hardly scratched the surface.

...the Lord God will raise up a mighty nation among the gentiles, yea, even upon the face of this land; and by them shall our seed be scattered.

And after our seed is scattered the Lord God will proceed to do a marvelous work among the Gentiles,...it is likened unto their (Lamanites') being nourished by the Gentiles and being carried in their arms and upon their shoulders.

(1 Nephi 22:7,8.)
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We've never picked them up yet; we have just begun to beckon to them a little in
the work that we are doing. We haven't begun to be "nursing fathers and mothers"
to them.

Columbus and the explorers were followed by other explorers and colonists who
began the great push. Beginning at the eastern seaboard, they crowded the Indians
back inch by inch, mile by mile, and that was the beginning of a further scattering
process which they had not already suffered. Of course, they had spread over the
entire country. The colonists pushed them on and on and on, and finally across
the Mississippi, and then to the reservations.

The story of this push, or this purge, or this scattering movement, is a
story that could make anybody weep if he had a heart in him at all. The story of
the Cherokees with which you are somewhat familiar, I am sure, is a story that
may have given the Missourians and the Illinois people ideas. At any rate, the
expulsion and the exodus of the Cherokee Indians from the east--from the Carolinas
and Georgia and Tennessee and that area--is a blood-curdling story and not less
perhaps in sorrow and distress than the story of the exodus of the Mormons from
Illinois to the valleys of the mountains. We lost on the trek 6,000 out of 60,000,
or about 10% of our people. The Cherokees lost 4,000 out of 16,000, or 25%, as
they were herded--literally herded--moved from their homes and their lands which
they had had from immemorial, moved up the Tennessee River to the Ohio, and
down it, and then down the Mississippi and up the Arkansas to a new swamp world
infested with mosquitoes and nearly every other wild thing--an area set apart by
the government of the United States, the gentile nation which was to come and
scatter them, and that nation had begun the scattering.

And so the Cherokees and the Choctaws and the other groups in that area in
the south were moved forcibly over to the new Indian territory set apart for and
which was already occupied by a few tribes, but now it became the home of many
tribes from all over the country. The eastern Indians, the northern Indians, the
southern Indians, the western Indians -- all found themselves gathered together
in very unfavorable circumstances in the new land of mosquitoes and swamps and
malaria.

When it was found that moving down the rivers on flat boats from Indian
territory was too slow, too hazardous, and that too many were lost, there was
organized an overland trek not unlike the one that followed them just a few years
later from Nauvoo to Salt Lake Valley. They went out to the Ohio, down the Ohio
River with their wagons; they suffered all kinds of terrors, hunger, disease,
sickness-everything. Then finally they came to the Mississippi, crossed it, and
went down through Arkansas and to the Indian territory to start a new land without
many facilities.

The President of the United States, Andrew Jackson, had been assisted by these
people when he was army commander in the last large Indian uprising in the South.
These Cherokee Indians had been on the side of the government as scouts and as
soldiers fighting with the government to preserve the nation against the rebellious
Indian foe--but Andrew Jackson who had called them to that service was the first
one to say as he came to be the President of the United States: "Well, the
Attorney General made the ruling. Let him enforce it." When these Indian people
went to Washington time and time again for redress, Andrew Jackson again said the
words you have heard quoted so often.
"Your cause is just, but I cannot do anything for you." And in effect, "My votes come from these greater number of whites. I cannot do anything for you Indians."

That was a very sad program. The Cherokees were divided. Part of them now are in North Carolina and part of them are in Oklahoma. That came about because of a particularly strong leader named Tsali, whose wife was prodded along and pricked with the bayonets of the Georgian soldiers. Tsali became so enraged he made up his mind he was going to do something about it. And so, with perfect control, they walked along. He didn’t raise his voice, but he talked Cherokee in an undertone just as if he were talking about the trees along the way. But he was saying to the other Cherokees, "When the signal is given, every man take a soldier." And so finally, when he had them all pretty well organized (he had been talking in Cherokee and the Georgian soldiers could not understand), he gave the sign. Every Indian grabbed the gun from the soldier nearest him and took things into his own hands. Inadvertently one gun went off and killed one soldier, and then of course the price was put on the heads of these Cherokees—not only Tsali, but also on all those who escaped with him and went back to the North Carolina mountains. They never were caught, but they were hunted. Finally, when they couldn’t build a fire, couldn’t buy any food, couldn’t do anything because they were "wanted" convicts or at least they had a price on their heads—finally, Tsali came down from the mountain with some of his boys, and they gave themselves up in order to save the balance of the Cherokees in the mountains. These leaders took all the blame for their escape and the soldier’s death, and they were promptly executed. I could tell you sad stories like this all day long if time would permit.

Just a word or two about three other groups of Indians that are rather outstanding. There was the north-central group in the Dakotas and in Nebraska who were given a reservation by the government in the western part of the Dakotas—a worthless land having almost no value. Their reservation was the Badlands, in other words. You know them. The Indians were just getting adjusted to having been reservationed in this place, when some soldiers going through kicked up a little dust and found gold, and the black gold fields in North and South Dakota were found. Immediately there was a gold rush and the Indians were pushed off again from that which had been given to them by treaties. But nearly all the treaties that have ever been written with the Indians were written "in water and in the air," they said, never on anything that could be preserved.

Then you remember the great story of the last stand of General Custer. You’ve seen this in pictures. Well, General Custer was sent with his army over to quell the uprising and to put down this rebellion of these people who were fighting for their own homes. You remember the great battle when Custer and two or three hundred white men were killed. I have been on the Little Big Horn River where there is a white picket fence around a big monument, and there are the graves and grave headstones of two hundred some odd, (as I remember) white soldiers who were killed. But there is not a single stone for any of the hundreds of Indians who were killed in the same battle and in the numerous other battles. That was over in southern Montana where the final battle was held, and that was perhaps the last great uprising.

Just a word about the Apaches down in Arizona and New Mexico and in Old Mexico. There were bad Apaches and good Apaches, but the Apaches were fighting for their own homes and they were crowded from one place to another, and finally, as
you know, were subjugated and put on reservations. (I lived near a reservation all my life and saw this subjugation.) They were given a blanket and a little piece of bacon and a little bit of flour, and they received doles all those many, many years. And there were uprisings. And old Geronimo, for whom we had a ward named and also a town in Southern Arizona -- old Geronimo was a reprobate, of course, but he became a reprobate fighting for what he thought was right, and then he became pretty vicious.

But that was about the last of the Apache resistance except that just about the time we went to Arizona when I was a child, there were still a few killings when old Geronimo, The Kid, and other of the leaders broke loose with bands of Indians. They cut the telephone wires and they stole horses. One of my neighbors was killed by the Indians just about the time I was a little fellow in Arizona. He was the father of an unborn babe still in the womb of its mother, and he was killed by the Apaches. That father's child was born later and was President of Maricopa Stake for long years. But the Apaches were fighting for their land when they made these killings. They were fighting for land given to them by God, but nobody else seemed to understand that.

A word about the Navajos--the same sad story. I think these stories may be important as an introduction here because unless you have the sympathetic interest in these people, then you don't understand their problem and you are not willing to fight so hard for them. The Navajos were scattered; their land was taken from them; they were pushed into small areas. They couldn't see the justice of it. They fought back. They killed white people; they were killed themselves. Their herds and flocks were stolen, and all this was done by the army. There were statements made--you will find some of them in your little brochure--where the government issued an order, "Kill every Indian you see." It wasn't a matter of surrender. The Indians didn't have a chance to surrender. "Kill every man and take the women and children captives." Well, that happened. If you have ever been down in Canyon de Shelley or Canyon del Muerto in northern Arizona, you will see something interesting--great high walls, like the walls of this building, with the river running through and down in that river bottom these good people, the Indians, were finally cornered and starved and finally had to give up. All their peach trees were cut down; all their cattle and their sheep were taken to support the army that was dispossessing them of all they owned. They all had to surrender because, when his wife and his children are starving, a man will do almost anything. Then these Indians had to make "the long walk." They were taken over to Bosque Redondo, down in central New Mexico, and for four years they had to meet the most terrible situation, comparable again to the Saints in their first three or four years. They couldn't raise a crop, couldn't find wood to burn, and they froze and starved. But after four years these Indians were subdued, totally subdued, and they never again raised their heads or their hands. Then they had "The long walk." Just like the handcart company carrying their things with them, they walked -- the husbands and wives and the children -- all the way from central New Mexico to northern Arizona, a long dry walk over a desolate desert country. They were given back a part of their original land, a most desolate part. But strangely enough, now this desolate land is producing oil and gas and uranium, and the Indians are getting some of the good things.

That's what makes you weep--when you realize the injustices.

Well, enough for that, but the scattering was complete. Apache's Geronimo was taken to Florida, and then he died in Oklahoma, and many of the Apaches were there.
And if you go to Wisconsin you will find the New York Indians there, having been moved from New York to Wisconsin; you will find the plains Indians and the western Indians and others, many of whom had their habitats in Oklahoma. They kept moving until there was no place else to move. And then we originated the term that we have used so much in the last wars, "concentration camps." Why we just didn't use that word, but we had concentration camps before any of us were ever born. Andrew Jackson made a statement in 1836: "It is interesting now to note that the removal of the Indians from the lands now peopled by the whites has been practically completed, peaceably." He never did remember the 4,000 Cherokees the victims of the Trail of Tears which was approved in sentiment at least by the majority of the people.

Now a word about the history of the Church program. As you know, the very first thing before the Church was organized, Joseph Smith caught the vision of this work. He sent Oliver Cowdery, Ziba Peterson, and Parley P. Pratt and Peter Whitmer to the Indians immediately. They didn't do very much. The brethren had their hands full; there were persecutions and the expulsions and the exodus and the settlement of this country. So missionary work with the Indians was limited in the Church to whom the great responsibility came.

Then we have the period here in Utah. Well, everybody had his hands full. He didn't have much time to proselyte, though from the beginning we were commanded to bring the gospel to the Indian. The Saints hardly had a chance to catch their breath in Salt Lake before they were sent to Utah Valley and down farther south to Sanpete Valley and elsewhere to settle the country. So they had all they could handle just to find food and sago roots and game and things to feed their families and to get started and to get a crop planted. We can't blame them that they didn't do more Indian proselyting.

Brigham Young gave a good example. He immediately set out specific missions: to Carson City, Nevada; to Moab; up to Salmon River, Idaho; on the Muddy, and to the Indian territories as early as 1850. My father was one of the missionaries in the Indian territory. My father records that he was the first missionary from 1850 to 1857 that ever came home from his mission having filled a full-term mission, missionaries suffered from malaria to that extent. They were in the land that was given to these Indians when they were driven away from their rich lands in the east, north, south, and west. Many of the missionaries died and were buried on the banks of rivers down in Indian Territory; many others had to come home after the first few months because they just couldn't take it. But by 1887 they were getting quinine and other things, and they were able to immunize themselves. But when Johnston's Army came into this area, some of these missions were discontinued; the missionaries were called back from these areas.

Then we have Jacob Hamblin and all of his fine associates in southern Utah. They did a marvelous work. There were many hundreds of Indians converted even among the Navajos and the Hopis and the Zunis way down in Arizona, and New Mexico. This effort was a new effort of proselyting energy among the Indians. But Jacob Hamblin died, and his associates died; and the Edmunds Tucker Law was passed, and the persecution so intense that they just had to forget the Indians again. And the work was dormant for long long years—just a little sporadic effort here and there once in a while by some wonderful people, but not a big movement.
From that day I know of no other real movement until one decade ago when President George Albert Smith revived this work. He went to President Grant and said, "President Grant, would you mind if some of us would start to work with the Indians again?" He was given permission, and he took Brother Hardy and Brother Ivins and his committee and went to work. I came up a few years later and was put on the committee, and later when President Smith became President of the Church he asked me to look after this Indian program "in all the Church and in all the world and in the islands of the sea" as he expressed it. The work had been going on, but not nearly well enough. There are so few people who are interested.

I set apart two missionaries this week, a man and his wife, to go to the Southwest Indian Mission. I said, "Are you happy about this call?" And he said, "Yes," but the woman as I put my hands on her head, demurred with some question, "Well--". That's the spirit we find. And you find in many places a great deal of discrimination and prejudice.

One of the talks I gave about three years ago was based upon a letter that had just come. It was anonymous and it said, "Dear Brother: I never dreamed that the day would ever come when I would have to sit in a congregation and have an old 'squaw' in the same congregation, and when we would have to sit in stake conference and listen to an Indian stand at the pulpit and bear his testimony." Well, that of course raised my ire. I said a lot of things that ought to be said ought to be repeated many, many times. There is no justification for our prejudice. The Lord is displeased with it.

You brethren and sisters teaching these youth of the Church can do a tremendous service, and I think one of the major services, if you can, purge from their systems all prejudice. Then you will have done a great service. Now the Church is making an effort--a little effort; we are not doing all we could. We have converted several thousands; we have about 6,000 members down in the Southwest Indian Mission; other thousands in other areas. We have a few in Utah in Kanosh and St. George, and Cedar City and up in the north. We have a few in nearly every state--little groups--but they are deprived and they are not treated like brothers. They are treated like servants, like inferior animals. If I seem to be exaggerating, you will forgive it because of my love for them and interest in them.

The government did too little. It has spent hundreds of millions of dollars for the Indians the last hundred years, but has never clearly seen the picture. Reports indicate they have had one white man on high salary for every fifteen Indians. These millions of dollars have largely gone to the bureaus and to their employees, and but a small part to the Indians. The government has given too little attention, and no wonder. You could hardly expect politicians to cater to the Indians who couldn't vote. It's been within this last decade that the Indians generally, are voting. They have had the right to vote a long, long time, since back in the twenties, but nobody ever saw that they did vote. But today politicians go down in the reservation and they slap backs and kiss babies just like they do elsewhere.

I tell you brothers and sisters, it's a sad commentary. The government has spent much money. But not until about twelve years ago did there come the awakening. You may remember the winter that was hard down there and many Indians were starving. Through the Deseret News we started the campaign as did the Phoenix
and the Los Angeles papers particularly, and the campaign spread through the nation. There were headlines and whole pages of pictures of starving Indians in almost every paper in the nation. From that day the blessings of the Indians have begun. In that day very few Indians had adequate schooling and many had no school at all. It's only been six or eight years since the great majority of the Indians in the Navajo tribe, which is the largest in the United States, had real opportunity for education. In that effort we sent from our welfare stores truck loads of food and clothing and bedding down to the Indians, as did many other good Christian peoples from Arizona and California and elsewhere. But that was just a drop in the bucket. It was only a beginning, but it stirred the nation. And now the politicians are paying a little attention to the Indians. There is a school, I think, for every Indian child now. Some of them are very poor schools; some are not standard; not accredited. The Indian child coming to the BYU, having finished twelve years of schooling in some schools, thinks he is ready for college and he is devastated to find out he isn't ready for college at all. But we are grateful for every Indian school on and off the reservations. The trailer houses go right out to the Indians. There is the day school where the Indian children come to school and then go back to their homes daily. We have the reservation schools where the Indian children come in and are taken care of night and day in dormitory schools. We have the periphery schools like at Richfield, Snowflake and Holbrook, where the Indian children are domiciled in town by the government and go to state schools, and they are receiving good schooling. We also have the off-reservation schools in California, Nevada, Kansas, Oregon, Utah and in Oklahoma, where the youth goes for the whole year. We have the Intermountain Indian School, an off-reservation school limited to the Navajos, where we have about 2200 Navajo youth receiving their total schooling, food, clothing, and everything else while they are there. Brother Boyd Packer here was a great champion up there and loved those good folk.

Now I'd like to say a word or two about the placement program in Utah which we hope, confidently, later to expand to California and Arizona and Idaho. We started with just a few Indians -- 10, 20, 40, 60, 80 -- but now the program has in it more than 300. Our case workers go down into the reservation, find the Indian children of members of the Church who want their children to come. (The Placement program is covered in the first article in the brochure, so I will just hit a few high spots.) Then the case workers return to Utah and find the good Latter-day Saint members of the Church who want to take care of an Indian child. And then we have a reception center. It will be held on the BYU campus this year. At this center we receive the children and process them and X-ray them, and check all phases of their health. Then we take these children into the white homes in Utah. We are working under a state license in social work, and the children stay there the eight months. Then we take them back to the reservation to their natural parents for four months. Our case workers study the program all the time, work with the homes, see that there are no conflicts, see that the Indian child is fitting into the home, and that the white people are taking care of him properly. It's the most marvelous program that has ever been devised. The government tried it a hundred years ago and couldn't succeed because they didn't find the unselfish devotion that we find in this Church. Out in the world people want to be paid for everything they do; in this Church they want to serve for the love of the work.

Here again, you who have these young people in your classes (300 of them in Utah) you who teach in Utah--you must not pass them by. There should be discrimination in their favor. Go to all lengths; go "all out." Bring them in. Interview
them, counsel them, help them find their way. Many Indians know little of how to take care of money. Many spend it as fast as they get it. They have no idea of saving. Why should they save? They have never been taught to save in a thousand years. There were always the fish in the water, the game in the mountains, the buffalo on the range. There were berries in the forest. There was always something for them to eat. Why should they save? And so they have had a thousand years of that kind of training. They can't be blamed too much. They are like children. They know little about budgeting, saving. They love each other devotedly, but they have many weaknesses. Many like to drink just like the white man does. White man has liquor in his refrigerator and he drinks a little, and many of them, the social drinkers, never get drunk. But for the Indian, liquor has been against the law so when he got some liquor he drank it all at once before the policeman saw him and threw him in jail. And so he got drunk and lay in the gutter, and so we hate him; but we don't hate the white man who carries his liquor a little more easily. Indians do like liquor; it is a curse—and peyote is used by some which, as you probably know, is another curse. Peyote is a little cactus bulb they get down in Texas and in Old Mexico. They chew this or make a tea from it, and it gives them hallucinations and affects them something like opium. A great church of the devil has taken this as its symbol, so to speak. They use it as a sacrament. Congress has done nothing about it because it would be interpreted as depriving people of their proper worship. But that church would take the Indians into it, charge them so much a head to get into their church, and then use peyote as part of the religious services. Sex orgies are reported and everything else that is abominable and ugly when they get into these peyote parties. So anything in the world you can do to discourage peyote liquor, and all the other abominable things—there's a place where you can do a great deal of good.

These people are probably not more immoral than your own boys and girls. I think they are crude about it. The girls more often get pregnant and they marry or they have children out of wedlock more than your white girls. The white youth are more subtle in all the sin and transgression, and they don't get caught nearly so often. I don't think they are less moral than your white boys and girls. And I interview hundreds of our own boys and girls. But the Indians are crude about it, and it is less hidden, more obvious. So you people in the seminaries and institutes can do a tremendous thing with these 300. Someday it will be 1,000 or 3,000, I hope while you are still teaching. Get into their lives. Counsel and advise them. Warn them. Love them! Teach them chastity and honor and integrity. Protect them against themselves.

I am going very rapidly and have not covered many of the things. But there is one thing that I must mention, and that is the inter-racial marriages. When I said you must teach your people to overcome their prejudices and accept the Indians, I did not mean that you would encourage intermarriage. I mean that they should be brothers, to worship together and to work together and to play together; but we must discourage intermarriage, not because it is sin. I would like to make this very emphatic. A couple has not committed sin if an Indian boy and a white girl are married, or vice versa. It isn't a transgression like the transgressions of which many are guilty. But it is not expedient. Marriage statistics and our general experience convince us that marriage is not easy. It is difficult when all factors are favorable. The divorces increase constantly, even where the spouses have the same general background of race, religion, finances, education and otherwise.
Problems often arise when the very wealthy marry with the very poor; where the highly educated marry the uncultured. Numerous serious problems arise when people of different faiths marry. And likewise there are many hurdles for the two people of different races who marry and this difficulty extends to their children. Even though the two contracting parties may have overcome their own racial prejudices, society in general has not. Until there is a total acceptance of races and a total demolition of race barriers, it will probably be unwise to encourage inter-racial marriages.

This discouragement of such marriages is not on the basis of worthiness or superiority, for the Lamanite spouse might be superior to the American or Anglo partner. They might be better trained, better adjusted to life, more worthy, yet the differences in background and the non-acceptance by the people make the marriage more difficult. We are most anxious that all our people be happy and would have them avoid any situations which could damage or lessen that happiness. We are sure that the Oriental should marry the Oriental, the Lamanite should marry the Lamanite, for their own happiness and all others would do well to seriously consider this matter and marry within their own groups to increase the possibility of happy and successful marriage. So, in discouraging inter-racial marriage we are not trying to protect one group against another; we are trying to insure the happiness of all of them.

Now I'm wondering if in these next two or three minutes there might be any questions we can answer quickly. I know I have hardly covered the subject; I have just hit a few highlights, but time has gotten away from me.

QUESTION: How many members of the Church do we have among the Lamanites?

ANSWER: I'd have to guess because it is a very difficult thing to keep track of them. They are in little groups, and the stake missionaries are working with them all the time. A rough guess would be maybe 15,000 Indians. That may be too high. And, of course, we have tens of thousands of other Lamanites down in New Zealand and in Hawaii and Samoa and elsewhere.

QUESTION: Brother Kimball, what do you suggest to help us get teaching helps and materials?

ANSWER: Up to this moment I have always urged that the teachers of Indians use the Book of Mormon a very great deal, and I believe that any good teacher who is alive and alert can take the Book of Mormon and adapt it to college professors or kindergarten children or to Indians who are schooled or Indians who are unschooled. But right now there are agencies working on study courses. What they will come up with, I don't know, but I hope there will be something very constructive come out of the work that is now being done. Maybe we'll have something for you in a little while that will be more specific. It has been very difficult to get courses of study for Indians because, unlike your own sons and daughters where nearly all the twelve-year-olds are in a certain grade in school and all the sixteen-year-olds are in high school and all the nineteen-year-olds are in college, the Indian boy or girl at sixteen or eighteen may range intellectually anywhere from kindergarten to Ph. D. So it has been very difficult to adapt study courses.

QUESTION: In the advancement of their problems in the gospel, what percentage?
Children of the First Covenant -11-

ANSWER: A very small percentage, but the memberships of these boys who are coming to Utah in this placement program are being transferred to Richfield and Nephi and Manti, and so on. The boys become members of the wards; they will be baptized at eight, ordained at twelve and fourteen and sixteen. In this way, Indian participation is increasing. It hasn't been much in the past. But we do have Indian branches where Indians do everything--administer the Sacrament, do the preaching, bear their testimonies, lead the singing, play the piano. These developments have come only in the last few years. It hasn't been like that before. Indians that used to stand like a post and give no sign of interest now are personable. Yesterday I sealed a four-year-old Indian child from the east to a bishop and his wife here in this area. We asked the little fellow questions, and he answered every one. Then he came to the altar, put his hand where it should be in the right way, and wasn't inhibited in the slightest. I picked him up and he put his head over on my shoulder and put his arms around me--a little four-year-old Indian boy. The times are changing. It's tremendous if you can just stand on the sidelines and watch them. The Indians are making much faster progress relatively than we are, because they had so far to go, of course.

QUESTION: I understand that Indian children are easily adoptable. How about that?

ANSWER: They are not easily adoptable. It is almost as hard to get an Indian child as it is to get a white child. I think we could place five hundred Indian children in Utah and in the surrounding area here in adoptions if we had the children. There is no reason why you should not adopt an Indian child if you are fortunate enough to find one and if you are not taking it away from parents who want it.

QUESTION: When is it best for a group?

ANSWER: I don't believe that I made clear before that we have a group of people right now working on courses in the stake and in the General Board of the Sunday School and in this Church school organization. I hope that within a few weeks or months--certainly not more than a year or two--we might have many offerings for you. We don't have a great deal now, but I have always maintained that you can take whatever the Sunday School, Primary, or Relief Society give you, and if you are a good teacher you can adapt it to the status of the Indian in your teaching.

QUESTION: I was just wondering, Brother Kimball, what age-group Indians are available, and is there any limit to the number of Indian children available for this program?

ANSWER: There seems to be almost no limit of Indian children that we can get. We have parents begging us all the time. Letters come from parents all over--New York, Wisconsin, Montana, North Dakota--begging, begging us to take their children into our homes and do for them what we are doing for these in the placement program. But we haven't found it possible. We are expanding gradually so that we won't make any serious errors. We have a lot of enemies. Others are watching us. They are jealous. They can't do it, but they would like to destroy our program. We have to be very careful and work properly under the state license. The program is limited, but we are growing every year a little--fifty last year, maybe fifty this year. So far we haven't lacked for homes, but we have more children than we have had homes, and these children are in the best homes in Utah, the homes of stake presidents, bishops, high councilmen and others. Those are the
kind of people who are the foster parents of our three hundred plus Indian children. In such a home a child learns to pray, goes to seminary; he takes part with the family in everything they do. At the Intermountain and all the other schools, the Indian child eats and sleeps and plays in Indian, but study in English. But in our Church placement program, the Indian is learning all of the good things and none of the bad things in our culture, and at the same time he is retaining all the good things he has.

God bless you, brethren and sisters. I hope that I could convey to you my feelings in the matter. If I can be of help to you at any time, I will be very happy to do what I can. God bless you. We love you for the tremendous service you are giving to our youth. You are about the most important group in the whole Church. Your influence is almost limitless. We of the General Authorities talk to the old folks. I am going to a stake conference now and will talk to the old folks who never budge. They like our sermons, but they never budge. Your people move, feel. You can do something with the young people. God bless you. In the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.