

COUNCIL MEETING, JANUARY 25, 1940

Attention was called to a postscript on a letter from President Roscoe C. Cox of the Hawaiian Mission, calling attention to a recommendation he had received for ordination of two boys to the office of Deacon, the mother of these boys having some Negro blood in her veins.

President Clark explained that this matter has come up at various times in the past, that is the question of what should be done with those people who are faithful in the Church who are supposed to have some Negro blood in their veins.

President Clark said at his request the clerk of the Council had copied from the old records of the Council discussions that have been had in the past on this subject. He said that he was positive that it was impossible with reference to the Brazilians to tell those who have Negro blood and those who have not, and we are baptizing these people into the Church. The question also arises pertaining to the people in South Africa where we are doing missionary work, and in the Southern States, also in the islands of the Pacific.

President Clark suggested that this matter be referred to the Twelve who might appoint a sub-committee to go into the matter with great care and make some ruling or re-affirm whatever ruling has been made on this question in the past as to whether or not one drop of negro blood deprives a man of the right to receive the priesthood.

Brother Widtsee moved the adoption of President Clark's suggestion.

Motion seconded and unanimously approved.

COUNCIL MEETING, THURSDAY, AUGUST 22, 1895

President Woodruff informed the Council that Sister Jane James, a negress of long standing in the Church, had asked him for permission to receive her endowments, and that he and his counselors had told her that they could see no way by which they could accede to her wishes; and they asked the brethren present if they had any ideas on the subject favorable to her race.

President Joseph F. Smith told of Brother Abel having been ordained a Seventy and afterwards a High Priest at Kirtland under the direction of the Prophet Joseph Smith.

President Cannon remarked that the Prophet Joseph taught this doctrine: That the seed of Cain could not receive the Priesthood nor act in any of the offices of the priesthood until the seed of Abel should come forward and take precedence over Cain's offspring; and that any white man who mingled his seed with that of Cain should be killed, and thus prevent any of the seed of Cain's coming into possession of the priesthood.

Brother George F. Gibbs, the secretary, reminded President Woodruff of a Sister Smith, whose first husband was a man named Berry, by whom she had two children -- girls -- who are now living, and it is held by those who knew Berry that he had negro blood in him. She separated from Berry and married a man named Smith who is not in the Church and by whom she had one child, a boy, that she now desires to be sealed to her second husband for whom her son will stand proxy, but that



COUNCIL MEETING, THURSDAY, AUGUST 22, 1895 - Continued

President Angus M. Cannon had refused to sign her recommend to the temple for the reason that she had married a man with negro blood in him and borne him children, and she had appealed to the First Presidency to have President Angus M. Cannon's action overruled, denying at the same time that her first husband was part negro.

It being understood that Mr. Berry was part negro, President Cannon raised the question: What would become of the girls? One at least of whom was in the Church, as they could not be admitted to the temple, and he thought it would be unfair to admit their mother and deny them this privilege. President Cannon thought too that to let down the bars in the least on this question would only tend to complications, and that it is perhaps better to let all such cases alone, believing, of course, that the Lord would deal fairly with them all.

President Woodruff assented to this.

COUNCIL MEETING, DECEMBER 15, 1897

A letter from Elder Francis M. Lyman was read, dated at Vanceburg, Kentucky, 5th Instant, enclosing a letter from Elder S. P. Oldham, who asked Brother Lyman the following question, and Brother Lyman forwarded it to be answered by the First Presidency:

"Can a man (white) be permitted to receive the priesthood, who has a wife who is either black or is tainted with negro blood?"

President Cannon said he had understood President Taylor to say that a man who had the priesthood who would marry a woman of the accursed seed, that if the law of the Lord were administered upon him, he would be killed, and his offspring, for the reason that the Lord had determined that the seed of Cain should not receive the priesthood in the flesh; and that this was the penalty put upon Cain, because if he had received the priesthood the seed of the murderer would get ahead of the seed of Abel who was murdered. The point, President Cannon said, which President Taylor sought to make was that if a white man who had received the priesthood should have children by a negro woman, he could go back and act for his dead ancestors on his wife's side, and he therefore thought it would be improper for a man, as for instance the case referred to, to receive the priesthood for the reasons assigned as being those given by President Taylor.

While there was no formal action taken, this seemed to be the mind of the Council, President Snow adding that the way might be opened for the man referred to in the case under consideration to get a divorce from his present wife and marry a white woman, and he would then be entitled to the priesthood.

COUNCIL MEETING, MARCH 11, 1900

Letter from Ira N. Hinckley read, stating that a man in Oasis named Church had received his patriarchal blessing in which he was told that he was of the lineage of Ephraim and that he should receive the priesthood and go on a mission. But it is understood that he inherits some negro blood in him through his mother, and questions were being asked about the right of this party to hold the priesthood, some holding that he might do so provided the white blood predominates.

President Snow, commenting on this subject, said that he asked President Brigham Young on one occasion why it was that millions and millions of people were cursed with a black skin, and when, if ever, this curse would be removed? President Young