

We spent the evening in conversation, with the Priest and Chiefs, on religious topics.

The Priest appeared a very sensible man, so far as his light extended. He spoke of having communication with the Atua of New Zealand; and that he answered him when he prayed to him. I told him, that I had never heard the Atua of New Zealand; nor could I believe that he had unless I could hear him myself; and I wished him to pray while I was there, that I might hear him. He replied, that when he came to see me at Ranghee heo, I should hear him. He believed that all the New Zealand Chiefs went to a place of happiness when they died.

The Power of their Chiefs, the Rites and Ceremonies of their Religion, and the Glory of Wao, are the Grand subjects of their conversation. Their memories are very strong, and they shew much anxiety to increase their Knowledge. They are great and enterprising travellers in their own country. Many of them are absent on their journeys ten or twelve months at a time. We learned from them a more particular account of a river, called Whycotec, about the centre of the Island, where the great body of the inhabitants appear to reside. They described them as innumerable.

The Chiefs and Priests wished to know what our business was. We informed them that our first object was to examine the mouth of the harbour, to see if any vessel could get on. They asked us if we had mentioned our coming to see them, to Shunghee; for they feared that the Chiefs on the east side would not be pleased, if any ship should visit them. I told them I had acquainted Shunghee with our intention & that he had sent his son to show us the way. They were much pleased.