Heluhelu Baibala/Scripture Reading

37 ʻI akula ʻo Iesū iā ia, E aloha aku ʻoe iā lēhova i kou Akua me kou naʻau a pau, a me kou ʻuhane a pau, a me kou manaʻo a pau.
38 ʻO ka mua kēia a me ke kauoha nui.
39 Ua like hoʻi ka lua me ia, E aloha aku ʻoe i kou hoalauna me ʻoe iā ʻoe iho.- Mataio 22:37-39

Jesus replied: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ 38 This is the first and greatest commandment. 39 And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’- Matthew 22:37-39

Manaʻo

Lent provides us a wonderful opportunity to bring our prayers to Ke Akua into focus as we prepare our hearts to celebrate and honor the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. On March 22, 1895, Queen Liliʻuokalani composed a hīmeni haipule (prayer hymn) entitled ʻO Kou Aloha Nō, commonly referred to as The Queen’s Prayer. In it she praises God’s holiness, talks about her own unfortunate station (physical and spiritual) and then she places a somewhat odd request before God’s throne. You see, two years prior, she was charged with treason and imprisoned in her own palace. At the bottom of the manuscript, she wrote, “Composed during my imprisonment at ʻIolani Palace by the Missionary party who overthrew my government.” In this prayer hymn, the queen expresses her great love for Ke Akua, a love great enough to ask… for the forgiveness of those who imprisoned her.

What could’ve possibly been the Queen’s motivation? The answer is KA MŌHAI ALOHA – the sacrifice of grace. Ka Mōʻī Wahine Liliʻuokalani truly understood the heart of Jesus by living out His command to love Ke Akua with all of her heart, soul and mind and to love others as she would herself (Matthew 22:37-39). The dictionary defines “sacrifice” as a surrendering of one’s possessions as an offering to God. One of the worst “possessions” that we have difficulty in giving up is our pride, yet when we release it, in its place, God cultivates a peace unknown to mankind. The ultimate sacrifice that one can possibly make is to love God and others more than one’s self. Queen Liliʻuokalani dedicated this himeni haipule to Princess Kaʻiulani, perhaps, with the intention to teach the young princess of the importance of Jesus’ sacrificial aloha. We too have much to learn about our own prayers as we bear witness to such gracious aloha by one of our very own aliʻi.

In John 17, we see that before Jesus went to the cross, He too prayed a very intentional prayer first to glorify His Father as well as Himself, then He prayed for the protection and safekeeping of His disciples and finally He prayed for those who would believe in Him someday. Jesus prayed on our behalf to become dedicated to Ke Akua as He was dedicated to Ke Akua. You see, although Jesus knew that soon He would die upon the cross for our sins, He continued to pray for us that we would
dwell in Him and He in us, thereby strengthening our trust in His righteousness and His goodness always.

Let’s work towards making our pule more intentionally full of aloha, sacrificing our own desires to fulfill the needs of those around us, especially those that we find a little or very pa‘akiki (difficult). You will find that the wider you can pray, the smaller your own pilikia will become and your love for Ke Akua will grow stronger and more viable. Let Ke Akua’s name be praised through our aloha for Him as well as those around us! E ho‘omaika‘i i Ke Akua!

Questions to Ponder

- Take a look in a mirror. What three things do you see that you like about yourself?
  - So often when we look in the mirror, we don’t like what we see. It’s hard to love someone if we don’t like ourselves. Be more accepting of what you see in yourself and others.
- What would it take to be able to pray the 3rd verse of ‘O Kou Aloha Nō (see below for the verses)?
- What would you be willing to sacrifice in order to spare the lives of others? Say a prayer of thanksgiving to God for what Jesus and Queen Lili‘uokalani were willing to surrender for our sake.

‘O Kou Aloha Nō

‘O kou aloha nō, Aia i ka lani
A ‘o Kou ‘oia ‘i’o, He hemolele ho‘i
Your loving mercy, Is as high as Heaven
And your truth, So perfect

Ko‘u noho mihi ‘ana, A pa‘ahao ‘ia
‘O ‘oe ku‘u lama, Kou nani ko‘u ko‘o
I live in sorrow, Imprisoned
You are my light, Your glory, my support

Mai nānā ‘ino‘ino, Nā hewa o kānaka
Akā e huikala, A ma‘ema‘e nō
Behold not with malevolence, The sins of man
But forgive, And cleanse

No laila e ka Haku, Ma lalo o kou
‘ēheu
And so, o Lord, Protect us beneath your wings

Kō mākou maluhia, A mau loa aku nō.
‘Āmene
And let peace be our portion, Now and forever more. Amen

Pule

Mahalo O kind and gracious God for the love that you shower us with. We confess that we don’t always love with your same intensity. Forgive us and help us to reach a point of true love. Let us live this out daily with all we come into contact with. Ma ka inoa o Iesū Kristo, ‘Āmene
Suggested Himeni

- “Ke Aloha A Ke Akua” (The Queen’s Prayer) No. 186 Nā Hīmeni o Ka ‘Ekalesia
- “Ho’oma’ema’e Mai ia’u” (Create in Me by Mary Rice Hopkins) No. 129 Nā Hīmeni o Ka ‘Ekalesia

Create in me a clean heart, Oh God,
That I might serve You;
Create in me a clean heart, Oh God,
That I might be renewed.

So fill me and heal me
And bring me back to You
Create in me a clean heart, Oh God
That I might serve You

Ho’oma’ema’e i ku’u pu‘u wai
I lawelawe aku iā ‘oe
Ho’oma’ema’e i ku’u pu‘u wai
A i hiki ke ho‘ala

Ho’opiha ia‘u ho‘ola ia‘u
A e ho‘iho‘i ia‘u iā ‘Oe
Ho’oma’ema’e i ku‘u pu‘u wai
I lawelawe aku iā ‘oe