



KA LAUNA ALOHA O KE AKUA THE GRACIOUS/LOVING FELLOWSHIP OF GOD

*“E Ho’olono Mai I Ke Akua”
Listening To God*

Heluhelu Baibala / Scripture Reading

Halelu (Psalms) 85:8

E ho’olohe aku nō au i ka mea a ke Akua a lehova e ‘ōlelo mai ai;

No ka mea, e ha’i mai nō ‘o ia i ka malu no kona po’e kanaka, a me kona po’e haipule:

Mai ho’i hou na’e lākou i ka mea lapuwale.

I will listen to what God the Lord says; he promises peace to his people, his faithful servants— but let them not turn to folly.

Mana’o / Thoughts

Listening to God

By Kevin Cockett, Vice President of Communications

Someone recently asked me, “How do you hear from God?” God is such a creative Father and His ways of communicating with us are numerous, at least in my experience. There’s His divine word, as spoken in the Bible. Although written thousands of years ago, His word is still alive and relevant for today. There have been many times in which I’ve read a scripture at random but then realize it’s not random at all. Instead, the scripture provides me with Godly wisdom and timely perspective on issues or challenges that I’m currently journeying. I know many people have had this same experience.

Sometimes God speaks to me through others, although they may not even realize God is using him or her as a messenger. There have been countless times when a friend or co-worker's personal story or testimony has spoken volumes to me, leaving no doubt that the Lord is conveying a message to me, often a message of hope.

Similarly, He often communicates through a pastor's message in church on Sunday. Have you ever been inspired by a pastor's teaching on David, the shepherd boy who ran toward Goliath with complete trust in God, slaying the giant in an instant? Have you ever heard such a message at a time in your life when it seemed like you were facing an insurmountable challenge (giant) but then had new inspiration to run *toward* it instead of *from* it?

My favorite way of hearing from the Lord is the most intimate – spending quiet time with Him, sometimes praying, sometimes just talking or venting, and then listening for His response – not necessarily His audible voice but often just a clear, concise thought that brings clarity and/or certainty in a way that my own thoughts don't. And the Lord never speaks words of fear, discouragement or anger, nor does He speak negatively of others. Never. Just words of wisdom, exaltation, encouragement, comfort, truth, and good ideas that bring me peace and clarity. Indeed, Psalm 138:8 says "the Lord will perfect that which concerns me." I also know that "God has not given me a spirit of fear but of power and love and a sound mind" (II Timothy).

So what has God been saying to me in this Lenten Season? As I contemplate that question, three themes emerge: *grace*, *trust* and *humility*. In the Hawaiian Baibala, you may find these concepts to be ka lokomaika'i, ka hilina'i and ka ha'aha'a. He has "spoken" these themes in all the manners described above, so I know there's real weight in them, that God wants me to ho'olohe pono – listen up.

Ka Lokomaika'i – Grace

God's grace is immeasurable and never ending. His grace on my life is more than I deserve. And I know I'm called to model the Lord. So do I have grace for others – my wife, my children, my co-workers, my staff, my friends, strangers, politicians, celebrities, those in authority – just as the Lord has for me?

Ka Hilina'i - Trust

God is calling on me to trust Him more than ever before. Can I trust Him? Do I trust Him in the most difficult circumstances – the challenges at home, at work, in the future? I can choose to worry without end or trust that the Lord will use this challenge to grow my faith and make me stronger.

Ka Ha'aha'a - Humility

If I want to be entrusted with big kuleana, do I have the humility to pursue excellence in the smallest of tasks? If I want to be charged with authority over others, do I have the humble heart to sincerely serve others with patience, kindness and joy? For Ke Akua, Our God says in I Peter 5:6, "No laila, e ho'oha'aha'a 'oukou iā 'oukou iho ma lalo iho o ka lima mana o ke Akua, i ho'oki'eki'e a'e 'o ia iā 'oukou i ka wā pono." Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you."

As Lent continues and we head toward celebrating Jesus' resurrection, I encourage everyone to take some time to talk with God, vent if you need to, ask questions, and listen for His response. What is He saying to you?

Teen Take

By Jrae Viela, KSM'16

Being a senior in high school, there are a lot of distractions that make it hard for you to hear from God. Luckily for me, I have my parents, friends, family and Kahu in my life who bring me back to reality so I can hear from God when I sometimes get caught up in all the craziness. God is everywhere and He speaks to everyone differently.

For me, I feel like God speaks to me the most at church through the pastor, my daily devotional or through my parents. The message at church each week is different and is somehow always relevant. Those weekly messages and daily devotionals help me get through anything and everything. Although I most of the time I don't like listening to my parents, God speaks to me through them. He uses them to make sure I'm doing the right thing, making the right decisions so I can have a good life.

I'm writing this on Tuesday, March 15, my brother Pono's birthday, who passed away in 2004. His birthday has always been a really hard day to get through but this year it's been harder than usual. Because of God's never ending grace, trust and humility, I have been able to get through it. He used those things through my dad today as my dad was comforting me and making sure that I was okay. Today after talking to my dad I realized how important and special the Lenten season really is -- not only because of all the sacrifices that Jesus went through just for us but also because of the blessing my family received on that day.

After Pono's passing, I told my parents that I wanted another brother but since my mom couldn't have babies naturally any longer, they had to go through in vitro fertilization. Easter Sunday was the day that Jai, my younger brother was conceived. That wasn't just a coincidence; it was a sign from God.

As we continue to go through this Lenten season, open up to God, listen/talk to Him and pray. He'll help you through anything and everything. So how do you hear God? What is He saying to you?

Questions to Ponder

- Kevin raised up three main themes where God is challenging him so the lines of communication may be opened up: grace, trust and humility. Grace is defined as “unmerited favor.” It often means that we are not punished even though we should be. When does someone extend grace to you? And how willing are you to extend grace to someone else?
- It is said that trust is a two-way street. Are you a trustworthy person? Can someone rely on you to be there for them like God is there for you? What do you need to do to be trustworthy?
- Too often our minds are too busy thinking of things to say. Being ha’aha’a (humble) means we must quiet ourselves so that we might be open to what God and others have to say. Take some time to humble yourself and just sit so you might open yourself to God’s still voice.

Pule / Prayer

E Ke Akua, you come into our midst each and every day, yet we don't always recognize your presence. On this Palm Sunday, may we feel free to shout out our “Hosannas” and to proclaim loudly that you are Lord. May that openness of mind allow your voice to reach into our hearts so we might be transformed and renewed as your people. Keep us steadfast in our faith this week as we make the journey to the cross and allow us to pause along the way to ho’ala hou, to rekindle our faith in you. Ma ka inoa o Iesū Kristo, ‘Āmene.

Keiki Activity

The Sunday before Easter is known as Palm Sunday. Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a humble donkey to the cheers of the crowd. How would you celebrate Jesus coming into town? Would you recognize him as God's son? More importantly, would he recognize you as a child of God? What do you need to do to show you love Ke Akua? Watch this video to see this story come alive- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O56CiH0dwLw>.

Hīmeni / Hymn

"Aia Hele Kākou" / Trust and Obey

Aia hele kākou, me ka Haku Iesu
Kei ka nani i 'olino mai
Noho mau no kela me ka po'e a pau
I paulele, a ho'olohe mau

Hui:

Ke ala no nei, e hau'oli mau ai
E paulele, a ho'olohe mau kākou ia Iesu

When we walk with the Lord
In the light of his word,
What a glory he sheds on our way!
While we do his good will,
He abides with us still,
And with all who will trust and obey.

Refrain:

Trust and obey, for there's no other way
To be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.