ON FORGIVENESS AND HO`OPONOPONO

BY Pōkā Laenui

August 5, 2018

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| Queen's Prayer (Ke Aloha O Ka Haku) - by Queen Lili`uokalani | | |
| `O kou aloha nō  Aia i ka lani  A `o kou `oia `i`o  He hemolelo ho`i    Ko`u noho mihi `ana  A pa`ahao `ia  `O `oe ku`u lama  Kou nani ko`u ko`o    Mai nānā `ino`ino  Nā hewa o kānaka  Akā e huikala  A ma`ema`e nō    No laila e ka Haku  Ma lalo o kou `eheu  Kō mākou maluhia  A mau loa aku nō    `āmene | https://www.huapala.org/Q/kaiu.gif Princess Ka`iulani    https://www.huapala.org/Q/Liliu4.jpg  Queen Lili`uokalani | Your loving mercy  Is as high as Heaven  And your truth  So perfect    I live in sorrow  Imprisoned  You are my light  Your glory, my support    Behold not with malevolence  The sins of man  But forgive  And cleanse    And so, o Lord  Protect us beneath your wings  And let peace be our portion  Now and forever more    Amen |

Source: Composed by Queen Lili`uokalani, March 22, 1895, while she was under house arrest in `Iolani Palace. This hymn was dedicated to Victoria Ka`iulani, heir apparent to the throne.

Forgiveness is often accompanied by forgetting. It does not necessarily go hand in hand. Should it?

An injury to one locks the injured party into a relationship with the one who does the injury. That relationship can imprison the injured party and sometimes become so overwhelming that it becomes the driving force of one’s life. It takes away one’s freedom.

To free oneself, one must learn the art of forgiveness. But forgiveness does not need to go along with forgetting. And that is the mistake and trap we too often fall into.

One can forgive, but not forget. One can remember the injury and if necessary, every detail of its occurrence and continuity. But do not let the injury and that memory drive the control over one’s thoughts.

Forgiveness can purify. Remembering brings about caution and protection against a repeat injury.

Passion, humanity, and aloha provides the continuing strive for ho`oponopono, for correction, and for making things right again.

Forgiveness is an essential element in healing, but it is only the first step. It allows for the full process of making things right to take place. It allows the injured party to overcome the injury and becoming a full participant in making things pono. Remembering, passion for justice, humanity, and aloha are all essential elements and cannot be excluded.

I sometimes hear of the call for forgiveness over the theft of our Hawaiian nation as a necessary step for our people to move on. I'm not willing to let it go so flippantly. Nor is a mere "National Apology" by the thief adequate to move on. There must be far more to make pono than to simply cast forward those words of forgiveness and apology, as if they are magical spells!

We must engage in a process of healing, and such a process calls for many things including forgiveness. Before forgiveness must come confession - which the U.S. government has done with its Apology Law. But confession must be followed with making things right, such as the return of the item stolen - sovereignty, and the removal of the damage which continues to persist as a result of the act for which an apology is called for. That healing process must engage not only the culprit who has committed the wrong - like a thief sitting in judgment of itself, but must include as an equal partner, the victims of that wrongful act.

Hawaii will never be at peace with the thief unless and until we have made things right, until we have achieved a true practice of Ho`oponopono among us all.

He ko`u mana`o. (Just my thoughts)

Pōkā Laenui