

TUGGED, BUT NOT BOUND

Nevertheless, I am continually with You; You have taken hold of my right hand. – Psalm 73:23



The Hawaiian word, *hukihuki* is a word that means to “pull” or draw frequently (i.e, tug-of-war game). It also means to “gather”, such as with *kalo* and drawing of *wai* (water). But it is also used when there is a disagreement in a relationship; a quarrel, dissension with a person or a group (i.e., family). *Hukihuki* along with a chain of troubled relationships handed down by personal conflicts can cause unbearable burden and damage. It occurs when there is a “pull” in opposite directions to gain power in a two-way struggle and if it lasts long enough, something, will eventually, give. In relationships, family contention and hostilities can be damaging, especially, when it involves children. It can be a “power play” and its negative effect and impact, if left unresolved, can span for weeks, months and years as an endless burden.

Hukihuki can take many forms, even, as a bully and nobody likes a bully. They push, shove, mock, even chase you. It may be someone you don’t really know or particularly care for. But to be mocked and taunted by those whom you love—that’s a deeper pain. Ask Jesus. He came to bring salvation to His own yet, His own rejected Him. They stripped Him, robed Him in scarlet, stuck a crown of thorns onto His head, spat on Him and as they knelt before Him, they mocked and beat Him with a reed they had given Him earlier as a scepter. (Matt. 27:30) However, in the Book of Isaiah, there is another reed. It’s a “bruised reed”, not an insulting one. The bruised reed in this passage stands for those of us who have been hurt, bullied, and insulted. Such a reed may be damaged, but it is not unrecoverable. It says, “*A bruised reed He will not break and a dimly burning wick He will not extinguish; He will faithfully bring forth justice.*” (Isaiah 42:3) This verse speaks of God’s faithfulness to those of us who may have been persecuted by life’s scenarios and *hukihuki*, including the people we know, even, loved. Someone that you had at one time trusted and counted on. A spouse, parent, relative or co-worker. It’s unexpected that Jesus who came to bring justice to the “bruised reeds” in life received unjust betrayal by the same. Though He grasped the wilted reed in His hand and nurtured it back gently to health and strength, Jesus stood bloodied, beaten, and mocked by those He came to save, even though He was the true king on the cross. In moments of *hukihuki*, I want to encourage you today to take a closer look at the “reed”, even from the cross, for as God upholds the weak, He will not spare the wicked, but will judge them according to truth and equity.

God wants us to live for Him and His glory, and to do that, we sometimes must go against what other people want and not allow ourselves to be intimidated or oppressed. We also need to be watchful, for *hukihuki* can be another distraction from moving forward in God’s purpose. When it comes to fulfilling our calling, what matters most is what God wants us to do. You and I will have our “*hukihuki*” moments, but we’re not to allow our yesterdays to determine our tomorrows. He has you in His right hand! Hold on to Him! **WE MAY BE TUGGED, BUT WE ARE NOT BOUND!**