

Story: One Loves

July 19, 2026

Psalm 86:11-17

Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

The koa'e kea loved to fly. She loved to fly over the sea, and to hover over the water before diving to capture a fish or squid. She loved to fly over the land as well, to feel the thermals lift her wings as she crossed from sea to shore. And of course, as a koa'e kea from Hawai'i Island, she loved to fly around the Kilauea summit, with all the excitement of the rising hot air and, from time to time, the thundering lava fountains.

When Kilauea has fountained recently, she's tried to be there.

"You can't love all of these," said a grumpy friend. "Love isn't like that. You love some things, but that means that you don't love other things. You can't love all those different airs."

"But of course I love them," protested our koa'e kea, but her friend repeated:

"You can only love one. Just one. Love is for one. Pick just one."

That's all her friend would say.

How was she to choose? She couldn't imagine. Yes, flying over the water could be more challenging, because sometime the spray would leap toward her, but she liked that. Flying over bare rock gave her a lift, and flying among and around trees and branches gave her a thrill.

She supposed that she probably loved flying around a lava fountain the best, but that was mostly because it didn't happen that often. She flew over water every day. Lava only fountained once or month or so. If it happened every day, it wouldn't so special, and she thought she'd probably love it, but not quite as much.

And besides, as much as she loved flying around the fountains, she still loved the other flying. How could she choose one? She just wanted to weep.

"What are you sad about?" asked another friend, one who wasn't quite as grumpy as the first friend.

"How can I choose what kind of flying to love?" she asked, and was very surprised when her friend said:

"Why would you?"

She explained what their other friend had said, and he shook his head in disbelief.

“Love is bigger than that,” he said. “I love all sorts of things and all sorts of birds. Sometimes I love them in different ways. I love squid, but I love to eat it. I love my parents, but I’m not going to eat them.”

The two birds laughed at that.

“I think you’ve got enough love in you for lots of things, and lots of birds, and lots of different kinds of air and flying. Besides, it’s all the same in the end. It’s the world we were given, and I say we can love all of it.”

“Then that’s what I’ll do,” said our koa’e kea. “I’ll love all of it. Come fly with me. Let’s have a lovely time.”

by Eric Anderson