

## A PILGRIM'S GUIDE

**'A STATESMAN FOR ALL SEASONS'**  
**TARAPĪPIPI TE WAHAROA,**  
**WIREMU TĀMIHANA**

# ‘A STATESMAN FOR ALL SEASONS’ TARAPĪPIPI TE WAHAROA, WIREMU TĀMIHANA

In 1838 after the death of the Ngāti Hāuā paramount chief Te Waharoa, and Tārore the child martyr his relation, Tarapipipi as a son became the chief of Ngāti Hauā, taking the baptismal name Wiremu Tāmihana. He set up a Christian pā named Tāpiri near Waharoa, where services could be held undisturbed and where the inhabitants could live a Christian life. Wiremu had learned to read and write using Te Rongopai ā Ruka, The Gospel of Luke in Māori, in the school established by Alfred and

Charlotte Brown CMS at the great Matamata Pā in Waharoa in 1836.

This educational mission only lasted a year but this was enough for Wiremu to become an able writer in both Māori and English and an able orator in English. It is possible to see a number of his hopes derived from the message of the bible, weaving into his own aspirations as a new paramount chief. For example, from the central message of Jesus in the beatitudes in the Gospel of Matthew chapter 5:

**Ka koa te hunga he rawakore nei te wairua:  
no rātou hoki te rangatiratanga o te rangi.**

**Ka koa te hunga e tangi ana: ka whakamārietia hoki rātou.**

**Ka koa te hunga ngākau māhaki: ka riro hoki i a rātou te whenua.**

**Ka koa te hunga e hiakai ana, e hiainu ana, ki te tika: e mākona hoki rātou.**

**Ka koa te hunga tohu tangata: e tohungia hoki rātou.**

**Ka koa te hunga ngakau ma: e kite hoki rātou i te Atua.**

**Ka koa te hunga hohou rongo: ka huaina hoki rātou he tamariki nā te Atua.**

**Ka koa te hunga e whakatoia ana mō te tika:  
nō rātou hoki te rangatiratanga o te rangi.**

**Ka koa koutou ina tāwai rātou i a koutou, ina whakatoi, ina puaki i a rātou ngā kupu kino katoa mō koutou, he mea teka, he whakaaro hoki ki ahau.**

**Kia hari, kia whakamanamana: he rahi hoki te utu mō koutou i te rangi: he pēnei hoki tā rātou whakatoi i ngā poropiti i mua i a koutou.**

**Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.**

**Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.**

**Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.**

**Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.**

**Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.**

**Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.**

**Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.**

**Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake,  
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."**

**Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of  
evil against you falsely on my account.**

**Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven,  
for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you."**

The way of thinking here is clearly life giving and verb orientated, based on what is happening and the interrelationship of faith, hope and love. It's also a clear example of the Lukan emphasis on healing and wholeness as the central reality of the mission of the Messiah, and the incoming Kingdom of God in Christ. This is a sacred form of tino rangatiratanga, true, compassionate and justice based chiefly rule in terms of abundant life .

Wiremu Tāmihana, Tārore and her father Ngākuku narrated parts of Luke's gospel in Māori at the Matamata Pā, in a totally by Māori for Māori context. The message would have resonated in Māori thought forms as well as its appeal to a new form of compassion and hope.

This also partly explains why Te Rongopai, the Gospel itself, eventually spread so quickly and easily across ngā Iwi Māori, the Māori tribes, all

over Aotearoa, often beyond Pākehā mediation. Te Rongopai seemed to spread as a taonga and treasure with a life of its own, from hapu to hapu and iwi to iwi. It was often a by Māori, with Māori, for Māori process.



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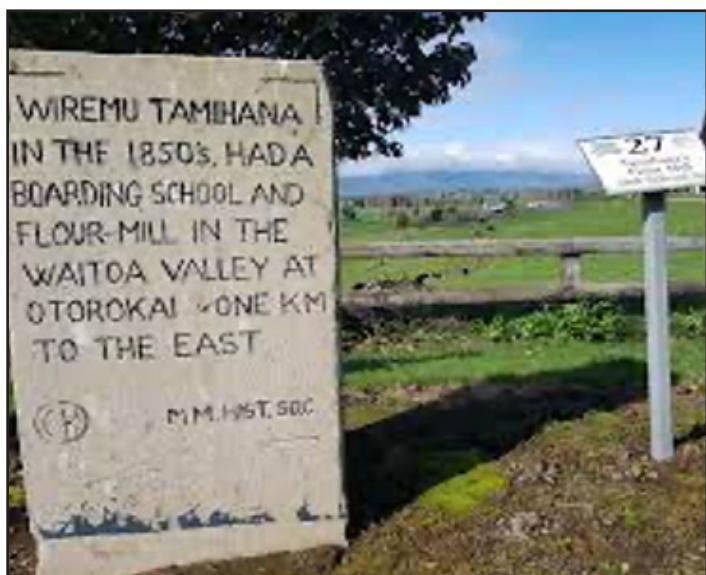
The process closely resembled the natural scattering of Kingdom of God seed on good soil, as the parable of the sower describes it in the gospel according to Saint Matthew chapter 13 verses 1 to 23, the gospel according to Saint Mark chapter 4 verses 1 to 20 and the gospel according to Saint Luke chapter 8 verses 4 to 15.



Inspired by the seeding of transformative biblical theology and his political hopes for a peaceful and just way of life, Tāmihana initiated peace-making efforts by constant attempts to persuade his own tribe to give up war. He also arranged a peace with the traditional enemies of the Ngāti Hauā, culminating in a feast at Matamata in 1846 to celebrate the occasion with the Rotorua tribes. In the same year, Tāmihana moved his Christian followers to the Pēria Hills. The name Pēria in Māori comes from the biblical 'Berea', the mission base for Paul, Silas and Timothy in Acts chapter 17:11-12. Acts chapters 2, 4 and 5 also guided the community when they shared so much in common. Here Wiremu hoped to model a new Aotearoa in the light of increasing settler arrivals from Europe, where Māori and Pākehā could model living harmoniously together in mutual prosperity. He believed that daily prayer together was a key; only faith, hope and love would cultivate a just and peaceful community in rapidly changing cultural, political and military circumstances.



Several settled, orderly communities were established, including Pēria and Otorokai in the Waitoa valley, with each house surrounded by its own plantations of wheat, maize, kumara and potatoes. There was also a school, flour mill, post office, whare rūnanga, and a church built on top of a hill.



A contemporary noted of Pēria: "Every morning and evening a bell called this orderly, simple, religious people to prayers. I never saw a more charming instance of simple idyllic life, than this remarkable Maori village presented in 1856".

In the 1850s Wiremu Tāmihana began to take a greater part in the wider arena of Māori affairs. He became concerned with the problems of how the Maori people were going to cope with the increase in European settlement and

the worst features of European culture. He had the vision of Māori and pākehā working side by side and the Māori people presenting a united front, unbroken by tribal conflicts. He wanted to encourage agriculture and education for his people and to prevent the further sale or lease of Māori land. Although Tāmihana was not the originator of the King movement, he took a leading part in its development and earned the title, "kingmaker", in the 18 months leading up to Pōtatau Te Wherowhero's election as the first of the Māori kings in 1858.

The aim was to retain Māori land, to protect the unity of Māori interests and to retain the Maori language. Wiremu Tāmihana saw no conflict between the King movement and the English monarchy. On one occasion he said: "*The Queen and the King, they are one. Each is on the piece which belongs to each. But love and law surround them, and above is God.*" Wiremu's inspiration was derived from the book of Deuteronomy chapter 17, verses 14-20, where an anointed King under God rules in righteousness



and justice. He believed that this form of monarchy could forge a partnership with Queen Victoria and the British presence in Aotearoa, since the Queen and her people identified as Christian, and the Queen as governor of the Church of England. Some have suggested he was seeking something like aspects of what we now call MMP combined with Māori seats nationally. Or a model similar to a free fiefdom working in partnership with another one where the common ground was agreed and mutually beneficial for the national interest. This seems parallel to some of the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi today. Tāmihana was a prophet ahead of his time.

When the Waitara dispute erupted into war, Tāmihana went to Taranaki in an attempt at peacemaking, but was unsuccessful. Despite Tāmihana's efforts to keep the peace, hostilities broke out in the Waikato in 1863. Throughout the conflict Tāmihana tried several times to negotiate a settlement, but was ignored. For two years the fighting raged on. Tāmihana then met General Carey at Tamahere in May 1865. The general said, ***"Tamehana, by your valiant acts you have proved yourself and people a brave race, and by your coming in to-day and making peace you will have won the good will and respect of every man."***



Tāmihana placed his taiaha before Carey as a symbol of a covenant of peace between the two sides. The colonial government misinterpreted the gesture as a surrender. A condition of the peace making for Wiremu was the return of significant tracts of ancestral land to Ngāti Hauā, which wasn't honoured at the time.

After the war, Tāmihana on several occasions petitioned parliament over the war and the confiscations that followed it. No action was taken, but in 1928 a royal commission had concluded: ***"It is clear that a grave injustice was done to the Natives in question by forcing them into the position of rebels and afterwards confiscating their lands."***

Having lived to see many of his other dreams unrealized, but holding unflinchingly to his faith and his vision, Wiremu Tāmihana died with Bible in hand on 27 December 1866 at Turanga-o-moana near Matamata. His last words were: ***"My children, I die, but let my words remain. Obey the laws of God and man."***



Only a few months before his death, he wrote to the General Assembly of New Zealand:

*After we had embraced Christianity, when my tribe sought payment [utu] for our dead who had fallen, I did not give my consent. Then I said, "Stop, strive to repay in a Christian manner. Let peaceful living be the payment for my dead."*

*They consented. I then drew all my enemies to me; they all came, not one continued a stranger to me; but all became related to me in the bonds of Christian fellowship.*

*Then I said, what a good payment this is for those that are dead, this living peacefully!*

Tāmihana was a peacemaker who had a vision of a future for Aotearoa New Zealand which placed him ahead not only of his Māori but also his pakeha contemporaries. The Māori King movement continues to this day in the Waikato, Maniapoto, and Ngāti Hauā areas, and extends its mana and its influence much further afield. Ngāti Hauā settled with the crown over the raupatu, their unjust dispossession, in 2013.

Ngāti Hauā continue to forward their tribal development as an iwi through their rūnanga and many iwi based projects for the common good. The vision of the king maker continues to be relevant today in terms of rangatiratanga, kaitiakitanga and manuhiritanga: chiefly rule, guardianship and hospitality to others and to potential partners.

He is commemorated in a tekoteko figure at the marae in Waharoa, in a stained glass window in All Saints Anglican church Matamata, and at the Firth Museum out of Matamata.

**Tarapīpipi Te Waharoa,  
Wiremu Tāmihana,  
had an inclusive and mutually  
prosperous vision,  
based on good faith.  
He was, is, and will continue to be,  
a sign of hope for Aotearoa.**



*Wiremu Tāmihana is represented at the base of the main pou , post, in the mahau , veranda, of the Te Oro wharenuui meeting house at Raungaiti Marae Waharoa.*

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A mongst other significant Ngāti Hauā tribal initiatives today, the Ngāti Hauā Mahi trust, a work skills riparian planting scheme today, is inspired by Wiremu's example, and is peopled by his descendants, iwi representatives, the Anglican church and other colleagues from the wider community. The trust believes that Wiremu Tāmihana's iwi and their initiatives have a key role in transforming the waterways, the vegetation and the people of the Ngāti Hauā tribal area in Piako. Because Wiremu reached out to his own tribe, to the church and to the wider community for the common good, so does the trust today.



*Keri Thompson Kaiwhakahaere matua, Ngati Hauā Mahi Trust. A direct descendant of Wiremu Tāmihana and daughter of the current Tumuaki.*



The collects for Wiremu Tāmihana's feast day on June the 23rd from "For All the Saints" can encourage us:

**E te Atua kaha rawa**  
**i hoatu e koe ki a Wiremu Tāmihana**  
**he whakakitenga i tau i whakatakoto ai,**  
**a me te whakapumautanga o tou aroha me tou mana.**  
  
**Meinga anō hoki ki a mātou,**  
**kia mau pū ki te tumanako**  
**kei roto nei i a Ihu Karaiti te Huarahi, te Pono, me te Ora. Amine**  
  
**Gracious and eternal God, through your Holy Spirit**  
**you gave to Wiremu Tāmihana a vision of your peace and unity**  
**and grace to labour for it without wavering;**  
**grant us the same hope**  
**and courage to live for him**  
**who is our way, our truth, our life,**  
**Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.**

*Holy God, holy and just, holy and undeceived,  
as we honour Wiremu the king-maker,  
who sought for peace and to lead  
his people to the gospel;  
Keep us honourable and fair  
in our dealings with each other,  
true servants of the Prince of peace.  
Amen.*



*Te Rangatira Anaru Thompson, direct descendant of Wiremu Tāmihana; Tumuaki of Ngāti Hauā and the Kīngitanga.*

**Tarapīpipi te Waharoa;  
Wiremu Tāmihana**

**E Wiremu te rangatira,  
weaver of thousands;  
your rangatiratanga makes  
a pattern of us all.**

**You gather the strands  
and create a design;  
Kingmaker, prophet and Matua.**

**Living together peacefully  
was your word,  
your hope,  
your way.**

**May the country you saw,  
be seen by the peoples again.**

**May the faith you knew,  
be known, grown and shared.**

**May we find and be found,  
in the ways of your love  
and goodness.**

## Notes

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