

## PODCAST START:

[intro music]

Brian: Welcome to the Queer Theology podcast!

Fr. Shay: Where each episode, we take a queer look at the week's lectionary readings. We're the cofounders of QueerTheology.com and the hosts for this podcast. I'm Father Shay Kearns —

B: And I'm Brian G. Murphy. Hello again! It is so good to back with you for another week of the queer theology podcast. This is Brian – you have another week of just me as Shay wraps up his trip and gets settled back at home. He will be back joining me for the podcast shortly, but for now, it is just me and you listening today. You know, I wish there was a way that I could see y'all, because the podcast has become this special place for me over the past few years, and I think Shay would agree with me on this as well. We get emails to our email address, which is [connect@queertheology.org](mailto:connect@queertheology.org), somewhat regularly from folks who listen to the podcast. Many of the people who are Sanctuary Collective, which is our online community, first found us through the podcast. I just feel like this is a really special group of people. If you're listening to this, you're special to me, and know that there are lots and lots of people all around the world listening to this with you. We're part of an amazing LGBTQ family that also has some pretty awesome straight, cis supporters who are a part of it. I just wanted to take a moment to be grateful for that and for you today.

Today we're looking at the lectionary text for Sunday, August 28<sup>th</sup>. We're going to be taking a look at Psalm 68:4-7 and then 10-11. I picked this one for a reason; I think you will hear something familiar when you hear it. I'm going to read it to you right now.

Sing to God! Sing praises to his name! Exalt the one  
who rides the clouds! The Lord is his name. Celebrate  
before him!

Father of orphans and defender of widows is God in his  
holy habitation. God settles the lonely in their homes; he  
sets prisoners free with happiness, but the rebellious  
dwell in a parched land. When you went forth before

your people, God, when you marched through the wasteland, Selah ...

...In your goodness, God, you provided for the poor. My Lord gives the command— many messengers are bringing good news... [CEB]

You know, this is something that we talk about often on the Queer Theology podcast, this idea of justice and good news and providing for the poor. Sometimes when we're looking at the lectionary text, Shay and I sort of joke, I don't know what we can say about that that we haven't already said! And today, as I was looking through all the different passages that are for this week to pick something to do, I had that same thought again for this one. Oh, you know, what new would I say? And today I had a moment of like, I think that's exactly what I want to say. Talking about justice, whether that's LGBTQ justice, where that's faith-based justice, you can sometimes feel like a broken record – especially in a world that is wildly unjust. You sometimes feel like you're banging your head against the door or the desk or whatever it is, like, how are we still here? How are we still having this conversation? How are we still talking about this? [laughs] If that is something that you feel, I feel that too. I sometimes get self-conscious. Am I a one-trick pony? Is this all we have to say? Today, this passage coming up in the lectionary was a reminder that the reason why we talk about this so often at Queer Theology is because it's *important* to the folks who wrote the Bible. This idea of God being on the side of the poor and the oppressed, of God working for justice and for liberation, is something that you see over and over and over again. It's in Psalm 68 – it's in many of the Psalms, it's in many of the prophets, it's in Exodus, even in parts of Genesis, all the way through to Jesus's ministry and the church after that – there's this recurring theme of justice.

One of the other passages for this week is Luke 14. Jesus tells a parable about when you're at a wedding, don't take the place of honor. That two-part parable says, well, when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the cripple, the lame and the blind. Jesus talks about this over and over again. So when we feel ourselves harping on the same themes of justice and grace and forgiveness and liberation and freedom for the oppressed, it's not because we're fixating on one part of the Bible to the exclusion of all else. Really, that's what anti-LGBTQ Christians do. They cherry-pick a few verses that are super out of context, that are super ambiguous, that maybe probably don't even condemn same-sex sex, let alone loving queer relationships, consensual queer relationships – but they do this to the exclusion of all else in the Bible. But when you look at this lectionary every year – there's three different versions of the lectionary, so it repeats every three

years – over and over and over and over and over again, you see the same themes cropping up in the lectionary: justice, liberation, forgiveness, grace. You even see themes of despair, distraught, questioning God, wrestling with the questions of being unsure and uncertain, trying to make sense of when bad things happen, even to the people who have God's favor.

And so I think, that is what I want to leave you with today. That if you ever are questioning what God's priorities are, just take a look at the lectionary. Go through the Bible over the course of a year, two years, three years. You will see so many of the same things come up over and over and over again. That tells you what was on the heart of the folks writing the Bible, what they understood to be important to God. It's not that one letter that says, women remain silent in church. It is instead, so many women being powerful, prophetic leaders, from the Hebrew scriptures through to the New Testament, the Christian Testament. It is not controlling your sexuality. Yes, there's some ancient laws that talk about some pretty rigid rules around sexuality, but we can see those as contextual. Over and over again we see in the Bible love, and grace, an ever-widening circle of inclusion. We see Song of Songs, this love poem between not-necessarily a married couple, right? There's just so much in the Bible that speaks to these liberal, progressive values, or what we understand today to be liberal, progressive values. You know, I don't have the beliefs that I have in spite of my commitment to Christianity, but rather because of it. So, yeah. Keep that with you today as you go about your day, your week. Tuck it away for when you're having those moments of doubt that say, "Maybe they're right, maybe I have to doubt what's important to God." Look back and be like, "Oh yeah, there's a clear theme and it's this, it's justice." You are beloved by God and God is on your side, today and every day.

If you would like a little reminder throughout your week, every week day we send out a queer-positive, queer-inclusive affirmation, sources ranging from the Bible to Joan Jett lyrics to Harry Potter quotes to Rilke to Rumi – there's so much in there. Along with that quote we send a few questions for reflection. It's a great way to start your morning off on a positive note. If you're someone who used to do a quiet time or a daily devotional and you found all of those to be a little problematic, and like you had to leave a bit of yourself behind because it was from a theology that didn't align with you, didn't include you, or you felt like there was no room for doubt in those – the affirmations are a place to spark thoughtfulness and discussion. I think you'll really get a lot out of that. You can go to [queertheology.com/daily](http://queertheology.com/daily). They're free, every single weekday all year long. For now, that is all. I will see you next week! Take bets on whether Shay will be here next week or not. Tweet at us [#queertheology](https://twitter.com/queertheology) or [@QTheology](https://www.instagram.com/queertheology) and let us

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know if you think Shay will be back next week or not. That is all for now! See you soon. Bye!

[outro music]

B: The Queer Theology podcast is just one of many things that we do at QueerTheology.com, which provides resources, community and inspiration for LGBTQ Christians and straight cisgender supporters.

FS: To dive into more of the action, visit us at QueerTheology.com. You can also connect with us online on Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr and Instagram.

B: We'll see you next week.

**PODCAST END**

Transcript by Taylor Walker