
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.

FS: Welcome back! This week we're taking a look at the texts for December 4th, and we're going to look at the Psalms – Psalm 72:1-7 and 18 and 19. I'm going to go ahead and read that, because it's pretty short.

Give the king your justice, O God,
and your righteousness to a king's son.
May he judge your people with righteousness,
and your poor with justice.
May the mountains yield prosperity for the people,
and the hills, in righteousness.
May he defend the cause of the poor of the people,
give deliverance to the needy,
and crush the oppressor.

May he live while the sun endures,
and as long as the moon, throughout all generations.
May he be like rain that falls on the mown grass,
like showers that water the earth.
In his days may righteousness flourish
and peace abound, until the moon is no more. ...

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel,
who alone does wondrous things.
Blessed be his glorious name forever;
may his glory fill the whole earth.
Amen and Amen. [NRSV]

B: A-men!

FS: Yeah! This is a good one.

B: Yeah. You know, sometimes, I really like the prophets, cause they get sort of righteously indignant, or the New Testament – the Christian testament – because it feels very applicable and action-oriented, but there's something nice about the Psalms every now and then, to either comfort me or to get me riled up. This is something that I can really relate to, this idea of not necessarily trusting, but 'may he defend, *may* the mountains yield, *may* he live while the sun endures.' I just like this idea that God is on the side of the poor and the needy, and that sometimes it feels like me, that God is on my side, and sometimes as a reminder – God is on the side of those folks, and so I should be as well. What about you, Shay?

FS: I like that this passage gives us a little bit of a – there's a little bit of a bite to it. It's not all, let's just all be peaceful and friends and hold hands.

B: It's not lying down in green pastures. [laughs]

FS: Right? There's a little bit of a, this is what needs to happen. May you crush the oppressor! [laughs] I think, especially in the United States at the moment [Brian laughs] in the wake of an election that has a lot of us feeling—

B: Yup.

FS: Some kinda way.

B: Yup. [laughs]

FS: I think that, you know, this psalm is asking for a king who will be a just king, a ruler who will care for the needy and the poor. And I'm just so blown away by the results of this election, right, which said that 81% of white evangelicals voted for Donald Trump.

B: [groans]

FS: And I think, you *cannot* hold scripture as your sacred text when there is a text that says, "May he defend the cause of the poor of the people and give deliverance to the needy," and then turn around and vote for someone like Trump. I'm finding a lot of comfort in this passage in the midst of my anger and

frustration for a church that just seems to have completely walked away from the actual gospel, and instead have given themselves over to American exceptionalism and white supremacy and racism.

B: Ooh. Call it what it is.

FS: Call it what it is.

[emphatic overtalk]

FS: And I think for me, this is a time, as a church, when it's like, alright. Who are we going to be as a people? What does it mean to follow Jesus? If you really think that following Jesus means holding up white supremacy and really awful atonement theology, and—

B: Ooh!

FS: —churches that don't ordain women, like, it's time to be done. [laughs] I'm sorry, I just – I can't do it anymore.

B: Done. D-O-N-E done. You know, what I appreciate about this passage is that sometimes in scripture we see this sort of like, this is the way things are, this is the way things will be. Very sort of declarative about the way God is or the way the future will be, God is building a new heaven and a new earth. What I like about this passage, what I appreciate about this passage, is that it invites us – it's calling upon the king, but it invites the people of God to do the work of God. It's not just God operating in a vacuum. It's not a psalm just praising God. It's a psalm asking for God's will to be done through people. I think that's an important reminder for me, that God's will only gets done through and by people. We can either be a part of that work or we can [laughs] let that work pass us by or stand in its way.

If you don't already know, this podcast is just one of the things we do at Queer Theology, and another big part of Queer Theology is Sanctuary Collective, our members community online. I would love to let Mandy, one of our members, tell you a little more about that now.

[audio recording plays]

Mandy: I joined the Sanctuary Collective because ten minutes a week of queer theology wasn't enough for me. As a Unitarian Universalist training for ministry, I

have a harder time coming out as Christian than as queer. But after years of rejecting Christian scripture because of narrow, culturally-imperialist interpretations, the Queer Theology podcast has helped me reclaim it as a tool for making meaning in my life. And like I said, I couldn't get enough. I joined Sanctuary Collective hoping to find a place to go deeper in my explorations without having to apologize for either my queerness or my Christianity, or even my doubts about the divinity of Christ. It has been all that and more, truly the community I was searching for. We explore and question together, we celebrate one another's joys and share in each other's tears, and we always know we have a safe place where our whole selves are welcome. We'd love to welcome you, too. If you'd like to read more details and testimonies, you can check it out at QueerTheology.com/sanctuarycollective.

[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