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[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 to the Queer Theology podcast! This week we are taking a look at the lectionary text for March 12th. We're going to take a look at Genesis 12:1-4. It's super short, so I'm just going to go ahead and read it for us.

“The Lord said to Abram, ‘Leave your land, your family, and your father’s household for the land that I will show you. I will make of you a great nation and will bless you. I will make your name respected, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, those who curse you I will curse; all the families of the earth will be blessed because of you.’

“Abram left just as the Lord told him, and Lot went with him. Now Abram was 75 years old when he left Haran.”

[CEB]

B: I'm feeling this passage today. Like in a big old queer way! So, a few things. The first is that I think there's something about Abram having to leave. He has to go out from his country, his people, his father's household, in order to be made into this great nation. It reminds me about queer people who have to leave their families of origin, whether because they have completely unaffirming families of origin and they just have to leave for safety reasons, or because they're kicked out, or even queer folks who have accepting families of origin but just need to leave and make their own queer family. Being a member of a straight family, you're not brought up in queer culture. Going out and finding your own culture and creating a family – I'm in the middle of watching *When We Rise*, the Dustin Lance Black miniseries on ABC, and it looks back at the 70s and jumps back and forth between today and then. I was struck by how many people had to leave their families and make pilgrimages from Arizona – Cleve Jones goes from

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Arizona to San Francisco. There's a guy in the military who was in Vietnam and gets transferred also to San Francisco. There's this going and this coming of queer folks – and queer folks throughout time have come together and made ourselves into this great nation. We don't have necessarily a political nation, right, but the descendants of Abram become the nation of Israel. There's something resonant there with me and queer folks and creating our family. When I think about the movements that we've had, from Stonewall, to the AIDS memorial quilt, to lesbians taking care of gay men who are dying of AIDS, queer couples fostering and adopting children in need, trans folks explaining gender to all of us – I just think that there's something magical happening with queer folks and part of that is leaving where we've come from and going out to somewhere else to sort of make that great nation. What about you, Shay?

FS: Man, all of that resonates with me. And I think too, the other piece of this is that, "I will make your name respected and you will be a blessing." I think that there's something in that for me, too. You and I talk about this all the time, right? Queer people have more to offer the world than what we are not. There's something that we have to give to the world that is a gift and a blessing. When we can teach people about chosen family and the value of chosen family, when we can deconstruct gender binaries, when we can deconstruct monogamy, when we can help to show a different way of being and living and moving through the world – one that is vibrant, and filled with joy and passion and beauty, that's a blessing. So often, especially queer and trans Christians, we feel on the defensive, like we're fighting for our place at the table. I think that this passage just shows us – no! We have this amazing thing to offer. We have this great name. We have this blessing. And it's really that we're moving through the world and inviting other people to be a part of it. That's a gift that we're giving to them. That's really beautiful and powerful and important. I think that it's time we claim that and own it and really celebrate it.

B: Yeah, absolutely. If this taking a queer look at scripture is something that excites you, and maybe you feel like five to ten minutes a week isn't enough for you, we do even more of this inside of Sanctuary Collective. We teach you how to do it. We're gathered together with other LGBTQ Christians and straight, cisgender supporters around the world, sort of hashing out and doing life and theology and community together. We would love to welcome you into that. You can find out more about Sanctuary Collective at QueerTheology.com/sanctuarycollective.

[outro music plays]

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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