

## PODCAST START:

Brian: Hello there, and welcome to the Queer Theology podcast! This week we're doing something a little bit different. Earlier this year, we passed our 200<sup>th</sup> episode of the queer lectionary podcast. We've been giving an LGBTQ-take on a different Bible passage every week for over four years now. We wanted to try out a #throwbackthursday edition of the podcast. We know that some of you have not been listening [laughs] for the past four years, so welcome! And even those of you who have been with us since the first episode, perhaps you don't remember everything we said all those years ago. So we wanted to try out Throwback Thursday, where we go back into our archives and pull out a podcast that speaks to this upcoming week's lectionary but is one that we've recorded in the past.

So, that's what today's episode is going to be. It's going to be from a few years ago, on a passage for this upcoming Sunday's lectionary. If this is something you want to see more of, either in lieu of our regular episode or as a bonus second episode during the week, let us know. Tweet at us @QTheology, facebook.com/qtheology, send us an email at connect@queertheology.com. Let us know what you think about this Throwback Thursday lectionary idea.

So without further ado, here's this week's episode.

[intro music]

Fr. Shay: Welcome to the Reading Queerly queer theology podcast, where each week, your hosts Brian Murphy and Shay Kearns will offer a reflection on the week's lectionary readings. This week we are taking a look at the lectionary text for April 6<sup>th</sup>, and we are going to look at the Ezekiel 37:1-14 passage. It's a little bit long so we're just going to link it on the website. Head on over to [QueerTheology.com/49](http://QueerTheology.com/49) and we'll have the text printed there and you can read it. We'd also love to hear your thoughts, as well.

[not read aloud]

The hand of the Lord came upon me, and he brought me out by the spirit of the Lord and set me down in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. He led me all around them; there were very many lying in the valley, and they were very dry. He said to me, "Mortal, can

these bones live?" I answered, "O Lord God, you know." Then he said to me, "Prophecy to these bones, and say to them: O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. Thus says the Lord God to these bones: I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. I will lay sinews on you, and will cause flesh to come upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live; and you shall know that I am the Lord."

So I prophesied as I had been commanded; and as I prophesied, suddenly there was a noise, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. I looked, and there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them; but there was no breath in them. Then he said to me, "Prophecy to the breath, prophecy, mortal, and say to the breath: Thus says the Lord God: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live." I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood on their feet, a vast multitude.

Then he said to me, "Mortal, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, 'Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are cut off completely.' Therefore prophecy, and say to them, Thus says the Lord God: I am going to open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people; and I will bring you back to the land of Israel. And you shall know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people. I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you on your own soil; then you shall know that I, the Lord, have spoken and will act, says the Lord." [NRSV]

So Brian, as you read this text, what comes up for you?

B: So, I've heard this text a bunch of times – probably some when I was younger, but since I've known you [both laugh] a lot. I know that this is one of your passages. I remember the first time that I heard you preach on this passage, I was like, *holy goodness*. Shay is creating new theology. It just sort of blew my

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mind. But I didn't think of you this time for some reason. When I was reading it this time, what came to mind was the AIDS crisis and the effect that AIDS has on the body, in the US and also abroad, and how with that advanced-stage AIDS, people can get really wasted, and thin, and gaunt, and pretty close to just being bones. And then I was thinking of the miracle of modern medicine, and the advancements in treatment for people living with HIV and AIDS and how that can really just bring people back to life.

Obviously, God does not necessarily factor into that equation anyways, but I was just sort of struck by the parallel. And I thought, that's sort of what we're doing with Queer Theology, right? It's finding our own parallels. Perhaps if we were writing scriptures now, writing the story of our lives, that's one of the things that we might include.

FS: You said it. This is one of my passages. This is one of the very first passages that I preached from a trans perspective when I was in seminary. It's become one of those passages that I just go back to over and over again. For me, when I envisioned this passage, when the dry bones came back to life, I had always pictured that like, they were dancing skeletons in this giant field. [Brian laughs] So when I actually *read* the passage and really dug into it, I realized that the bones came back together, and then there was also flesh on them, and then they got breath in them – it was a *full* resurrection. [Brian *mhms*] It was a *bodily* resurrection. It was this way that this passage really said that bodies matter, in a way that I had *never* been taught growing up. For me, as a trans person in the midst of my transition, to read that my body mattered was just mind-blowing to me. I mean, it just changed everything. I love this passage, and this idea that God is going to put God's breath in us and we will live.

And you know, this passage is all about returning from exile. For me, I related that to the exile that I had experienced from my body, and then coming home to my body and feeling like it was mine for the first time. But I think, in a lot of ways, the queer community experiences exile at lots of different levels.

B: Yeah, absolutely.

FS: And so to talk about...

B: Exile from our family, exile from our church community, exile from our friends sometimes.

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FS: Yeah, and so to talk about the fact that we can not only come back from exile but that our bodies are valued and vital in that coming back, is really amazing.

B: There's just some beautiful language in here, right? In verse nine, "He said to me, 'Prophecy to the breath; prophecy, human one! Say to the breath, the Lord God proclaims: Come from the four winds, breath! Breathe into these dead bodies and let them live.'" Like, let us live. Ugh. Yes. Amen.

[outro music]

B: I'm Brian—

FS: And I'm Shay. And you can find out more at [QueerTheology.com](http://QueerTheology.com).

B: If you'd like to connect with us, send us an email to [connect@queertheology.com](mailto:connect@queertheology.com).

FS: Thanks for listening.

**PODCAST END**

Transcript by Taylor Walker