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## 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: This week, we are taking a look at the lectionary text for July 1<sup>st</sup>. We're going to look at Psalm 130, and I'm going to go ahead and read it. This is from the New Revised Standard Version.

Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord. Lord, hear my voice! Let your ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications!

If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities, Lord, who could stand? But there is forgiveness with you, so that you may be revered.

I wait for the Lord, my soul waits, and in his word I hope; my soul waits for the Lord, more than those who watch for the morning, more than those who watch for the morning.

O Israel, hope in the Lord! For with the Lord there is steadfast love, and with him is great power to redeem. It is he who will redeem Israel from all its iniquities.  
[NRSV]

So whaddya think, Brian?

B: So, it's funny, because I'm usually the one who has a version other than the Common English Bible open, and you're always Team Common English Bible. And today [Shay laughs] I have Common English [Brian laughs] open and you

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picked something else. So, if you hear me quoting, I will be quoting from the Common English Bible.

But when we were looking at the texts for this week, this one really jumped out at me. I think that, normally, the texts that jump out at me are the super political, do this, do that, moving and shaking, badass radical Jesus – and that’s sort of where my politics are in general. And also this year in particular, way back in January, we talked about picking words for the year – I’ll link to some articles and podcasts about New Year stuff – but my words for the year are decide and act. I’ve been finding myself really drawn to passages that are decisive and action-oriented. And so I was surprised when I had this sort of little heart tug that was like, oh no, listen to this one. It’s a bit more meditative and contemplative.

What jumped out at me was verse three, and my version says, “If you kept track of sins, Lord my Lord, who would stand a chance? But forgiveness is with you.” [CEB] You know, I remember growing up hearing a lot about just how sinful, how sick and sinful everyone was in general. Homosexual people in particular [laughs] but everyone, that we were sort of broken, and it was because Adam and Eve ate these apples, and we were infected by this like, magic curse. I think moving through life and away from that, there was a period of time where I felt like sin had been weaponized and sin was this conservative thing and there wasn’t really a place in the modern world, or in my faith, for sin. And over the past many years, I’ve sort of come back around to this idea that sin is real. And it’s maybe not, you know, masturbating. [laughs] But that bad stuff happens in the world, and not just that it happens, but I do bad stuff. I think that it’s okay to reckon with that, but also to remember that the message that we see here, and throughout scripture, is a hopeful one. It’s not like God is keeping track of your sins and you’re going to be punished – in fact it says here “*if* you kept track of sins, who would stand a chance” – God isn’t keeping track of your sins. We have a God who wants to forgive; forgiveness is with you.

And then, at the end of this passage, “he is the one who will redeem Israel from all its sin.” I remember learning about Jesus, that Jesus was sort of this stand-in for temple sacrifices. The way that I was taught Judaism (which is, talking to actual Jewish people in my life, [laughs] not how they understand Judaism) but the way that Christians taught me Judaism was that, basically, if you didn’t slaughter/sacrifice at the temple, you were going to go to hell forever and be punished by God forever. And that’s like, not how Jews understand Judaism, so maybe that’s not how it ever was. But we see here, in this Psalm from the Hebrew Bible, God is the one who will redeem Israel from all its sins. It’s not like, people who do the right sacrifice, who pray the right prayer – this is a God with

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**Forgiveness is with you**  
**Psalm 130**

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whom forgiveness is, who is planning on redeeming all. We see throughout the Hebrew Bible this sort of ever-widening circle of who God is with and who God is for. And that continues through the Christian Bible and into today. So, yeah – sometimes we're not perfect, and God is still with us, and God still has a heart for us, and God is forgiving us. And that doesn't mean that we don't have consequences and we aren't called to be better – throughout scripture we see we're called to right action also. But I think, especially for queer people who are often told we're just not good enough, for so long, that there's this impulse that we just have to be perfect – you don't have to be perfect, and you don't have to hold it all together. God is there in the midst of your imperfection, and calls you to ever-greater love and justice and grace and mercy. What about you, Shay?

FS: I think the part of this passage that's really resonating with me is verses five and six, particularly the part about "my whole being waits for my Lord, more than the night watch waits for morning." [Brian *mhm*'s] I've been thinking a lot about being a Christian and this idea of the hope of resurrection, and the hope of God redeeming all things, and all things being made right. And then, the juxtaposition of turning on the news. [laughs] And like, everything is shit everywhere. So I love this kind of acknowledgement of longing and of waiting. It makes me think of – I've done a couple camping trips or whatever where it was really cold and I couldn't sleep. It was just miserable. And that sense of how desperately you're waiting to see the sun rise [Brian laughs] because you know that when it does, maybe you'll get warm and the night will be over and all of that stuff. So, I love the poetic and really visceral image of that, because I recognize it.

And it's nice to know that that recognition has always been a part of the story, while it's also a little bit depressing [Brian laughs] to know that that longing has always been a part of the story. But I think that it's good to know that, it's okay to feel in the midst of the longing. It's okay to long for the morning. It's okay for you to have a sense of not rightness with the world, because the world isn't right. You're allowed to have those moments where you just feel depressed and sad and where the news bums you out for a little while, so that you then can turn around and get back to work and be a part of that, making all things right. So I think that's what's resonating for me in this verse, to sit with that sense of longing and then to get up there and do the work.

B: Yeah. If you're sort of feeling in the midst of things, whether it's just sort of the hopelessness of the world, or depression and anxiety, or dealing with unaffirming people around you, we have a variety of different articles and podcasts and resources around self care that might help you sift through some of that. I will put a link to that in the description below, and also, you can find all the resources at

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QueerTheology.com/resources. I'll link specifically to some of the self care ones in the description and the shownotes of this episode.

[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

### **Referenced links**

January episode of the pod: <https://www.queertheology.com/new-year-new-you/>

Queer Theology resources page: <https://www.queertheology.com/resources/>

Video series on self care: <https://www.queertheology.com/self-care-guide/>