

July 15, 2018

I am not a prophet (#throwback)

Amos 7:12-15

1/3

PODCAST START:

Fr. Shay: Alright, so, because it's summer, Brian and I decided that we're going to take a little bit of a break from the podcast for the rest of the summer. But have no fear – we are going to continue to put up vintage posts and throwback posts of podcast episodes that cover the lectionary texts for the week, which you might not have heard before, unless you've been listening for four years. In which case, frankly, you might need a little bit of a break from us, too. [laughs] I mean, gold star if you've been listening to the podcast for all of the time that we've been doing it! But we're excited to just take a little bit of a break, to spend some time refocusing, and maybe even doing some vacation stuff. I don't know!

Brian: Yeah! I'm also excited for a little bit of a vacation. We have been doing this podcast for over two hundred episodes. I think we passed the two hundredth episode mark a couple months ago, even. I don't think we've ever taken an official, full summer vacation. And so I'm looking forward to – definitely doing a little bit of vacation stuff, but also taking the time to be part of and be present with and focus on other parts of Queer Theology. So we're not taking a break from all of it, just this podcast. We'll be active on social media, we'll still be active on our website, definitely we'll be active inside of Sanctuary Collective – you can learn more about that at QueerTheology.com/community. We would love to stay in contact with you in all of those places. And if you're not connected with us in one or more of those places already, we would love to get to know you! Say hey on social media, or join Sanctuary Collective, or hop on our email list.

I'm looking forward to, this summer, sharing some of the amazing episodes from our archives. We have a lot of good stuff in there, and if you're relatively new to the podcast, you may not have heard it. So, enjoy a few weeks of throwback episodes, starting right now!

[intro music]

FS: 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're taking a look at the texts for July 12th [2015], and we're going to look at Amos 7:12-15. It's pretty short, so I'm going to go ahead and read it. This is from the Common English Bible.

Amaziah said to Amos, "You who see things, go, run away to the land of Judah, eat your bread there, and

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2/3

prophecy there; but never again prophecy at Bethel, for it is the king's holy place and his royal house."

Amos answered Amaziah, "I am not a prophet, nor am I a prophet's son; but I am a shepherd, and a trimmer of sycamore trees. But the Lord took me from shepherding the flock, and the Lord said to me, 'Go, prophecy to my people Israel.'" [CEB]

So! What do we make of this one, Brian?

B: *Oh!* [laughs] You know, I love the prophets. [Shay laughs] The first thing that stands out here is that [laughs] the prophet is not wanted here, right? They're saying to Amos, like, don't come around here anymore. We don't want to hear what you have to say.

And I know – gay marriage became the law of the land in the US not too long ago. One of my friends on Facebook posted something to the effect of like, God, it didn't take long for the soapbox gays to come out and rain on this parade. Just sort of in response to queer folks who were critiquing both marriage as a priority and marriage as an institution. And I thought, man, even within the LGBT community, sometimes our own prophets aren't wanted. We don't want to hear the unpopular message. It's like, no, go take that uncomfortable message somewhere else and let us just remain comfortable. You know, we with privilege, or we who are comfortable – sometimes it's not even folks with privilege, necessarily, but folks who want to be comfortable in the status quo rather than rocking the boat – don't want to hear those important messages. What about you, Shay?

FS: I love the part where Amos is like, "I am not a prophet," [laughs] "I'm not a prophet's son. I'm just a trimmer of sycamore trees." Like, what a random [both laugh] protest.

B: [laughing] Yeah, so good.

FS: [laughs] I think, lots of times, those of us who have some kind of prophetic message, we want to shy away from that message. We want to say, like, well, I'm not really a prophet. I'm just, you know, whatever. I'm not a pastor or a preacher, I'm just part of a church. I'm not an activist, I'm just whatever. I think that this passage is really great, because it's like, just own it. [laughs] God's telling you to say what you need to say, whether you're a prophet or a pastor or a

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3/3

layperson [Brian *mhm*'s] or someone on twitter. It all matters, and all of these voices matter. We all have moments where we're called to be prophetic, and I think that's really important.

B: I think also, you know, seeing this passage in juxtaposition with what we know about Amos, right – so here he's like, I'm not a prophet, I'm not a son of a prophet, [laughs] I'm just this trimmer of sycamore trees. But he goes *on* to say some really fierce shit. Definitely my favorite passage in all of the Prophets, and one of my favorite passages in all of the Bible, is from Amos, which we talked about in a prior episode of the podcast (which we'll link to). But, this person who's not royal family, not a prophet, not from any kind of esteemed lineage, doesn't even fashion himself as a prophet by trade, has some really important and powerful stuff to say, and goes on to become one of the great prophets of the Hebrew Bible.

[outro music]

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FS: And I'm Shay. And you can find out more at QueerTheology.com.

B: If you'd like to connect with us, send us an email to connect@queertheology.com.

FS: Thanks for listening.

PODCAST END

Transcript by Taylor Walker

Referenced links

Brian's favorite passage: <https://www.queertheology.com/amos-5-18-24/>

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