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**PODCAST START:**

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 co-founders 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. It is Sunday, June 23rd and today, we are going to look at Psalm 42 and 43. Which is one of the texts for today, and I'm gonna go ahead and read it before we jump in.

Just like a deer that craves streams of water,  
my whole being craves you, God.  
My whole being thirsts for God, for the living God.  
When will I come and see God's face?  
My tears have been my food both day and night,  
as people constantly questioned me,  
"Where's your God now?"

But I remember these things as I bare my soul:  
how I made my way to the mighty one's abode,  
to God's own house,  
with joyous shouts and thanksgiving songs—  
a huge crowd celebrating the festival!  
Why, I ask myself, are you so depressed?  
Why are you so upset inside?  
Hope in God!  
Because I will again give him thanks,  
my saving presence and my God.

My whole being is depressed.  
That's why I remember you  
from the land of Jordan and Hermon,  
from Mount Mizar.  
Deep called to deep at the noise of your waterfalls;  
all your massive waves surged over me.  
By day the Lord commands his faithful love;  
by night his song is with me—  
a prayer to the God of my life.

I will say to God, my solid rock,  
    “Why have you forgotten me?  
    Why do I have to walk around,  
    sad, oppressed by enemies?”  
With my bones crushed, my foes make fun of me,  
    constantly questioning me: “Where’s your God now?”

Why, I ask myself, are you so depressed?  
    Why are you so upset inside?  
    Hope in God!  
    Because I will again give him thanks,  
    my saving presence and my God.

Establish justice for me, God!  
    Argue my case against ungodly people!  
    Rescue me from the dishonest and unjust!  
Because you are my God, my protective fortress!  
    Why have you rejected me?  
    Why do I have to walk around,  
    sad, oppressed by enemies?  
Send your light and truth—those will guide me!  
    Let them bring me to your holy mountain,  
    to your dwelling place.  
Let me come to God’s altar—  
let me come to God, my joy, my delight—  
    then I will give you thanks with the lyre,  
    God, my God!

Why, I ask myself, are you so depressed?  
    Why are you so upset inside?  
    Hope in God!  
    Because I will again give him thanks,  
    my saving presence and my God.

B: Ooohhh!!

FS: Yeah!

B: Yeah! I am so thankful for this passage. As someone who suffers from depression, it’s so beautiful and amazing to see the word depressed in scripture. And to see someone, that sort of saying, “My whole being is depressed. Why are you so depressed?” I relate to this.

FS: Yeah!

B: Yeah! This is real! The Bible is real!

FS: And I also think about the fact that this is probably a worship song. Especially with that refrain that echoes over and over again. What would it have meant to me as a depressed teenager, in particular, to have gotten to sing a song like this on Sunday mornings instead of the if-you're-not-happy-your-faith-must-not-that-strong-enough worship songs of my youth.

B: Like you're so great. Everything is great. I'm great. You're amazing. Everything is wonderful. This is so great!

FS: Yeah! And if it isn't, Jesus is gonna fix it in a second --- so be happy!

B: Yeah, absolutely! And I think this pairs well with the passage that we were talking about last week --- suffering. Last week we were talking about suffering under empire, and there's some sort of suffering under --- it might be some sort of chemical depression, sometimes bad shit happens in the world that causes you to be depressed. Sometimes your depression or anxiety is a completely rational and understandable response to the world around you. And we see some of that here, also and what I appreciate about it is it's not like, "Oh well, like life is hard, but I'll just lay here and take it because that's what God wants for me." Right? There's this questioning --- I ask myself, why are you depressed? Why are you so upset? Hope in God. But then in 43, it transitions to "Okay! If I'm going to hope in God then some shit is going to change." Right? Establish justice for me, God! Argue my case against ungodly people! Rescue me from the dishonest and unjust! Protect me. Send your light and truth.

The physical circumstances have to change as well. It's just not enough to be content in your suffering or say, pray and hope that something magical, internal thing happens --- if that does happen for you, that's amazing. But I appreciate here that this author is putting their hope in God, but also, saying that we gotta do this together and stuff around me has got to change.

What about you Shay?

FS: I love the deep sense of honesty in all of this and the humanity in it. Like you said, the sense that it's not just --- pray and hope in God, or pray more. It's like I have hope in God even though the world is completely messed up. And also, I'm trusting that God is gonna fight my enemies and do something about this oppression that I'm feeling that is making me depressed. But I also like this question of "Why I ask myself why are you so depressed?" Because I think so many of us have asked ourselves that question in the midst of depression, especially when we've been in a space where external surroundings maybe don't lead --- it's nothing is necessarily going wrong in our lives, we have people that love us, we have a safe place to live and something still isn't right, and so we are asking that question. And I appreciate that this sense is like, it isn't just why are you so depressed --- get over it. It's asking the question and not really answering it, and I appreciate that. Because I think that often, the responses that we

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## Depressed Psalm 42-43

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get to depression are just suck it up and deal; or get over it; or you don't have the right to feel that way. I feel that this passage let's us sit in it in a way that is maybe helpful and healthy.

B: Yeah! Totally! I've sometimes been depressed because my family was not great, was actually pretty bad when I came out as queer. But also, I have to go to therapy and see a psychiatrist and be on medication because sometimes I don't know what's wrong. I'm just depressed and I can't just fix it. Both of those are okay, too. Both of those are reflected here. It's so comforting to see like: Oh! I'm not alone in my clinical depression here.

A few years ago, we looked at another lectionary text from this Sunday: 1st Kings. It's about depression also, a depressed prophet, Elijah. You can listen to that at [QueerTheology.com/186](http://QueerTheology.com/186).

[outro music plays]

B: The Queer Theology podcast is just one of many things that we do at [QueerTheology.com](http://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](http://QueerTheology.com). You can also connect with us online: on Facebook, Tumblr, Twitter, and Instagram.

B: We'll see you next week.

**PODCAST END**

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