



God Hears Her Podcast

Episode 153 – Hopeful End: An Easter Bible Study

Elisa Morgan & Eryn Adkins & Vivian Mabuni

Eryn: I think when I look around my circumstance, and I'm...if there's temptation to want to pursue something that adds a, like what you said, adds a pleasure to my pain quickly; I know it's not worth it. Jesus is who He says He is. He was consistent in His character and how He showed up in relationships and how He showed up in the way that He loved. And then He not only showed that and demonstrated that in the communities that He served, but then He did that for us on the cross.

Voice: You're listening to *God Hears Her*, a podcast for women where we explore the stunning truth that God hears you, He sees you, and He loves you because you are His. Find out how these realities free you today on *God Hears Her*.

Elisa: Welcome to *God Hears Her*. I'm Elisa Morgan.

Vivian: And I'm Vivian Mabuni. I'm excited to join the team of hosts. Today, we invite you to get out your Bibles and a journal for an Easter Bible study with me, Elisa, and Eryn.

Elisa: We're so excited to talk about some passages that you may not think about when you think of Easter. Let's dive deep together during this *God Hears Her* conversation. This is a really special episode.

[laughter]

Elisa: I want everybody to kind of...

Eryn: It is. It is. It is.

Elisa: ...get right up on the edge of your chairs, right?

Eryn: And we've known for a little while what we wanted to share.

Elisa: We are so excited to announce that Eryn and I are adding to our union.

[laughter]



Eryn: Our union, I love that.

Elisa: We have a third host.

Eryn: Yes.

Elisa: Ta, ta, ta. 🎵

Eryn: And you may be familiar with her, because she has been on *God Hears Her* a few times, two times, right?

Elisa: Yes, yes.

Eryn: Two, three, two?

Elisa: Probably more than that, yeah.

Eryn: More than that.

Elisa: And she's a dear friend of the Our Daily Bread Ministries audience, too. Cause she's been involved in several other of our efforts. But we, everybody knows her. So ta, ta, ta, with no further adieu, we welcome Vivian Mabuni. Whoo, whoo, whoo, whoo, whoo, whoo, whoo.

Eryn: Vivian's in the house.

Vivian: I am so thrilled to be in the house with you two. Because I like you so much.

Elisa: Oh.

Eryn: Oh.

Vivian: And I respect you. And I know that it's just easy to have conversations with kindred spirits. And you two are just that. So I am so honored and excited and thrilled to be a part of the *God Hears Her* community on an official level. And I'm so excited for what will unfold as we link arms together.

Eryn: Yeah.

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Elisa: You know we really have been praying about this for some time, like years. I mean Eryn and I have this, we think, fabulous dynamic of reaching across several decades, you know, to represent women—one in the more advanced years, one in the y...youngish years. And we love the dynamic. But we've also felt like God wanted to bring another voice into the mix. And as we've prayed about it, we've thought about lots of different folks. But God made it abundantly clear that Viv is our cohort.

Eryn: And to pull back the curtain a little bit too, you know, this last fall we got to really record and talk and have dinner together and connect behind the scenes.

Elisa: Yeah.

Eryn: And it just...it was so natural. And Vivian, I...I look up to you, and I look up to your work. And so I...I'm excited to learn more about how you see God and how you know He's so evident in your life. And I know that I'm not the only one that feels that way. I would imagine the people listening that are familiar with your work are excited as well. And then I know that there's someone women that have question marks. And they want to learn more about who you are and what makes Vivian. And if you haven't listened to our past episodes with Vivian, I really encourage you just to do it in the search bar, "Vivian Mabuni" godhearsher.org. We have, I think, two episodes.

Vivian: I love that, yeah.

Eryn: We're excited to start. And this episode is a really special one.

Elisa: Yes.

Eryn: Cause this really gets into the heart of our faith. And we get to do it with Vivian.

Elisa: Yeah. This is what we're gonna call our Easter Episode. And we...we have been talking about, praying about what exactly to cover. And if you've missed some of our past Easter episodes, you might want to go take a listen. Like we did one specifically on the women of Easter, which was so interesting.

Eryn: I loved that one, yeah.

Elisa: But...but in this episode, we want to talk about a couple of passages. I'm gonna share one. Viv's gonna share one. Eryn's gonna interact with us. What passages around Easter catch your attention around Easter? You know, so when we come up to the story, and...and we'd love to hear from you on



social media or some...any place you want to get in touch with us. What really sits with you, and what comes to mind? What do we prompt with you? And I'm gonna take us to a very unusual place, I think. It's...it's a little different. But it's one that God has spoken to me about for years. And believe it or not, it's from a passage in one of the Gospels. It's in Luke 19, and it's in verses 37 to 40. Let's split it up and read it. Viv, would you start us in Luke 19, verse 37? And Eryn, pick it up maybe in 39?

Vivian: Luke 19:37, "Now He came near the path down the Mount of Olives, and the whole crowd of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the miracles they had seen: 'Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord. Peace in heaven and glory in the highest heaven.'"

Eryn: "Some of the Pharisees from the crowd told Him, 'Teacher, rebuke Your disciples.' He answered, 'I tell you, if they were to keep silent, the stones would cry out.'"

Elisa: Okay, now what does this have to do with Easter, right?

Eryn: I don't know. But in my Bible, for some reason, I wrote in all caps, "THE STONES WOULD CRY OUT." So maybe it has something...

Elisa: Good, good, good. Yeah, I think you're onto it. Right there, that...that's the line that gets me every time. So let's set some context here. This is the Triumphal Entry, right, where He enters the place where the road goes down to the Mount of Olives. And so this is like a week before Jesus' death on the cross. And everybody's super excited because He raised Lazarus from the dead, *dun, dun dun*, big time miracle, all right. All these folks are, you know, following after Him. And what do they call Him in verse 38, Viv?

Vivian: The King.

Elisa: That's right. They're way impressed with Him. And this is way before they're gonna start ridiculing Him, scorning Him, abusing Him. And the Pharisees in the crowd get very upset. Do you see that in verse 39? And they say, Teacher, do what?

Eryn: Rebuke Your disciples. And what does that mean? Rebuke your disciples. Does that mean quiet them? Does that mean take back what they're saying? All the above?

Elisa: Yeah, yeah, I kind of think of...

Vivian: Set them straight.



Elisa: ...set them straight, yeah.

Eryn: Set them straight.

Elisa: It gives me the picture of a mom who's got out of control children.

Eryn: Oh, that's a good...that's a good visual.

Elisa: You know they're in the gr...grocery store, and they're pulling everything off the shelves. And the manager goes, woman, rebuke your children, kind of thing.

Eryn: Yeah.

Elisa: They're out of control. But I think there's even more there I think the Pharisees are saying. Not only are they out of control, but they're heretical. They're calling You, the One who comes in the name of the Lord, they're calling You the Messiah, which is an anathema, which is a heresy for they're...they're waiting for a different kind of Messiah. Okay, verse 40. What is Jesus' response? And Eryn, you kind of hit on this early.

Eryn: Yeah, "He answered, I tell you if they were to keep silent, the stones would cry out."

Elisa: What does that mean?

Eryn: I mean, I get very literal. Cause I'm like well, stones can't cry.

Elisa: Right. Remember the pet rock phase?

Eryn: Oh, yes. You would put little googly eyes on them.

Elisa: Rocks are inanimate, right?

Eryn: Right, so the stones would cry out. Vivian, what do you think that means?

Vivian: There's such a...a swell of excitement that it just cannot be contained. And it's so grand that if people were to be quiet, just nature would erupt in praise.



Elisa: Oh, that's so good.

Vivian: And so when I think about that, the stones would cry out, it's powerful.

Eryn: I love that.

Elisa: I think you're onto something, yeah. Paul talks about nature crying out, doesn't he? In his letters to Rome, he talks about the creation groaning with us in like labor pangs. He also talks about how God's revealed in the things He's created. We go back to Genesis, and we see God first creating the earth and the heavens and the earth and the creatures and the plants and the sky and the light, everything. And there is something in this. I think you're 'right, that even if...if the disciples were quiet, even if we all shut our mouths, almost if...even if...I'm taking this forward. I'm gonna start preaching here. But if all of Scripture was obliterated, if we burned all the Bibles, if all the Christians in the world were silenced, the stones would cry out.

Eryn: Nature would erupt in praise.

Vivian: I think we see that. Like I mean there's something when we lift our eyes, there's something about getting out into nature even that just evokes natural praise. My father is not a follower of Christ yet. I continue to pray for him decades later. But I still remember as a little girl being in the mountains of Colorado. And we walked up to the lake where we were gonna go fishing. And the mountains were just crisp, and the air was so clear. And he said in Chinese to me, it's like, "How can someone not believe there is a God?"

Elisa: Wow.

Vivian: And this is coming from...it's a praise from someone who doesn't even acknowledge the true Creator.

Elisa: That's beautiful.

Vivian: But I think that that's how it evokes the sense of majesty and honor and...and praise.

Elisa: When I look at this with the resurrection, and this is to another stone that's key in the resurrection. And it's the stone over the tomb. That stone that was rolled in place and sealed and Roman guards positioned outside of it to make sure that no one stole the body of the dead Jesus, because He had



predicted he would rise from the dead after three days; and they don't want anybody to be able to prove that He is indeed God. That stone was sealed and rolled in place. And yet, Easter morning, we know the seal was broken. It was rolled back. Jesus escaped from the tomb. And that stone cries out, does it not? It cries out over centuries that He has risen. What do you say?

Vivian: He is risen indeed.

Eryn: He is risen indeed.

Elisa: He is risen indeed, amen, amen. And I guess I want to leave this little point with us on this particular passage. Even if everything in your life is silent about God, you're in a season where [pfft] zero words from Him, can't tell if He's even there, what are the stones that cry out to remind you of His existence and His faithfulness, and His resurrection power that Easter is real? That's a question I want us to chew on for a minute and...and think about. And for all of us who are...who are together today thinking about this, think back through what are the stones that cry out to you about God's faithfulness? Because, you know, back in Joshua, he was told to mound up stones in a river to remember God's faithfulness. So what might those stones be in your life? Can you think of something that you could pinpoint right now?

Eryn: In my circumstances where I feel maybe hopeless or voiceless or, it's not even that I don't think that God's there, sometimes I feel like darkness is winning. And He is there, but it just feels like darkness is getting bigger than Him. Which is, I know that's not true. But it does, in those moments, you just feel swallowed up, right, by the things that are not fair or unjust or painful or question marks of how something is going to change or transform or be different. So for me, I have to have a...a gratitude journal, because it's so practical. And that sound like I'm just so, so great at being a Christian woman, have a gratitude journal. But I actually like desperately need to write down the things that I'm grateful for that I've seen Him do in my life. Those are the stones for me. So I look back, and I'm like okay. He financially provided this specific way. I have to be so specific. Because if I'm not, I do...I do forget. Or I do get...get lost in...in my circumstances of wondering where He is.

Elisa: And sometimes they may be just little pebbles, you know, just...just little even grains of sand. They're not like a big rock or a stone. It's just a slight kind of a whisper. That's so good, Eryn, cause it helps us to focus on that differently. How about you, Viv?

Vivian: Well, I think this idea of remembrance is so key, because we're so quick to forget. And I think about, I'm in seminary right now, and so last semester, Professor John Moreland, he shared in class just



in passing. But it has stuck with me. He's like don't determine who God is based on your circumstances. You need to evaluate your circumstances based on who God is.

Elisa: Oh wow.

Vivian: And I think...

Eryn: That's so good.

Vivian: ...how often it's easy. Like what you were talking about, Eryn. Like when we start to experience the quiet and the hard, we start to think that God doesn't care. He doesn't hear. He doesn't know. And instead, we need to refocus our hearts on what's true of who God really is. And that's where we have to be rooted in the Scriptures. And I think God has been faithful, and we can look back over the years and see His faithfulness. And things that we thought were so important that He ended up saying no to that ended up yielding something so much better. And it...I think dovetailing off of this idea of the stones of remembrance, I have a fountain in my office, a little water fountain thing. But I do have little rocks that I've picked up in different places. I have one that I picked up in Japan, you know, on a lakeshore just to remind me of a time when God came through or spoke something to me through the Bible and through my circumstances to remind me of His faithfulness. I'm thinking right now of a rock of surrender was really a prelude to God going before me before my cancer diagnosis. But that was a...a point in time when God had asked, like will you trust Me with your whole life? And I thought He wanted us to move to Japan to become missionaries there. But it was really just a re-upping of surrender to Him. And so that rock is so meaningful, because it went into a hard time. But it also reminds me how God was preparing me and preparing my heart for that season. And so it's even, for me, a continuation that it's not necessarily a point in time. But it's also a daily, day-by-day remembering and reflecting. Cause we just forget. And when I'm in my hardest times, it's just easy for me to be swallowed by the circumstances.

Elisa: So even if God seems to be quiet, even if those around us seem to be quiet, let's listen to the stones. Let's listen to the messages God has given us. Let's focus on them and let them cry out His character, His truth, His action on our behalf in both bringing His Son and then in sacrificing His Son, and in raising His Son from the dead. So thinking about listening to the stones crying out, they convince us that God is resurrected. That...that's my verse that connects me to Easter in a weird way, but I really like it.

Vivian: For me, when I think about Easter, again growing up in a non-religious home, there were a lot of misconceptions I had about Jesus. And so I think from a completely non-religious perspective, I had a



respect for Jesus. I thought He taught good things. I pictured Him as someone with long hair who played the flute maybe. I just, you know, but just a good philosopher.

Eryn: That's so...so real.

Vivian: You know what I mean? It's just like that's...

Elisa: Flute.

Vivian: ...really are something, you know, sitting under a tree. But for me, the crux of Easter and our entire faith is on the truth of the resurrection. Because if Jesus didn't rise from the dead, if He's not alive this very moment, then He was just a good Teacher, a good, like Ghandi, or any other leader, a leader for a time who said some good things that people kind of repeat and post on Instagram. You know like that...but if He really rose from the dead, then everything changes, and so...

Elisa: No one else has ever done that.

Vivian: Yeah. No one else has ever done that. And I think about it, because even the people that were raised from the dead in the Bible like Lazarus, the servant girl, whatever, the...they all eventually physically died.

Elisa: True.

Vivian: And Jesus' death and resurrection, He never died again, thus, proving He was God. So I always turn to 1 Corinthians 15 during Easter, because that chapter Paul writes just summarizing what the gospel is. And I think if people don't know and we hear the word *gospel* which means good news, what that is, you can read the first part of 1 Corinthians 15 basically in verses 3 through 8 explains the gospel of Christ died, He rose from the dead. He appeared to more than 500. And that was a truth that Paul was so convinced of that the disciples were so convinced of that they died for that truth. And then I think what for me becomes my Easter verses, is what I would love for you two to read out loud a little bit further down in 1 Corinthians 15. If you want to read like 14 through 20, and I'll just have you maybe take half of them. Eryn, you can start, and Elisa, you could finish, but starting in 14.

Eryn: "And if Christ has not been raised, then our proclamation is in vain and so is your faith. Moreover, we are found to be false witness about God. Because we have testified wrongly about God that He raised up Christ, whom He did not raise up, if in fact the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, not



even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless. You are still in your sins.”

Elisa: “Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost. If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied. But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep.”

Vivian: Paul, to me, is such a brilliant thinker, and he’s very systematic in his thinking. So he kind of is laying out for us like just the truth of if Christ had not been raised from the dead, then we’re still in our sin. We are still dead to sin. And, ultimately, if Christ has not been raised, our faith is worthless.

Elisa: We are to be pitied. That is so sad.

Vivian: And we are yeah.

Elisa: Gosh, super sad.

Eryn: Yeah.

Vivian: But it’s true. And I think about that like for my faith, when it’s hard, why do I persevere? Why do I continue to believe? Why is it that I would stay the course even though it would feel better to just go a different direction and just try to feel good instead of staying faithful and obedient. And this is the reason why, and this is the story of the resurrection and Easter for me. So when you read these verses, I would like to ask you two like, how does it land with you? What stands out to you? And why, you know, when it’s hard, when life is hard as we’ve been talking about, how is this truth bringing hope?

Elisa: The first place I go, because it’s been a grueling couple of months in my context. There have been two specific unexpected, if you will, deaths; one of a very young woman that we’ve loved for years, one of a peer of mine who was a neighbor. And then months before that, there were two or three other deaths. I mean I’m...I’m just in a season where I’m watching that God is calling people to the end of their days on this planet. And it goes back to what you were saying, Viv. If this is it, it’s kind of a sad thing. And how do we cope with, not just our lives, but the death of others if we don’t have a hope beyond here? And I’m not just talking about...it’s funny. One of my friends who’s now deceased...he had lost his life partner. And he was saying, I bet you just feel so comforted that you know you’re gonna see Evan again when you’re in heaven. And I thought about it and thought about it. And I thought, yeah, that’s not really what does it for me. I mean that sounds horrible, like I have a bad marriage or something. But I sure, that’ll be great if I



can see Evan again. But really what brings me comfort is knowing that God has me. God has me. He has an answer for death. I trust His character. And we...and we go back to other parts of our conversation. You know, when we can't hear from Him, or we don't understand what He's doing, can we trust who He is? And who He is, is the resurrection God who promises to bring life out of death.

Eryn: When I read these words, "If we have put our hope in Christ for this life only, we should be pitied more than anyone." What you said earlier, Vivian, when you were talking about there were teachers and communicators that would create a community around them and inspire. But the difference is here is that He raised from the [death]. There's literally nobody else that has ever done that and has performed that level of a miracle, right? And so for me, I think when I look around my circumstance and I'm...if there's temptation to want to pursue something that adds a, like what you said, adds a pleasure to my pain quickly; I know it's not worth it. Jesus is who He says He is. He was consistent in His character and how He showed up in relationships and how He showed up in the way that He loved. And then He not only showed that and demonstrated that in the communities that He served, but then He did that for us on the cross. And so for me, that's what sticks out to me. It makes my hope just so much bigger. And the daily and then the mundane tasks of life and then the small things that happen and then the big, painful things that happen, I just know that He's right there, that He's with me. He's walking with me. He sees it all. He sees the pain, cause He wore the pain, cause He endured the pain. If anybody knows what betrayal is like, if anybody knows what gossiping is like, if anybody knows what...

Elisa: Being unjustly accused is like, yeah.

Eryn: Yes, if anybody knows that, it's Him. And that's where I find my hope in, cause I know He endured that and felt the emotions of that. And if He did, then He knows what my feelings are like. I can walk with Him in...in what I feel on a daily basis knowing that He knows what that feels like. And that just, oh that births something in you that's just so divine.

Vivian: I love that because, not only can we read about how He responded, and especially I think how Jesus was good to women. Throughout all of the Gospels, He honored women. He never...women were never the butt of the joke. He didn't...He wasn't sarcastic or cutting. He was honoring and honorable and...and kind. And then to think that He's alive now, that He can minister to us in the moment with our hardest times. And I...I think this world has so many competing values that make it easy for us to run after the things of the world, whether it's position, power, money, relationships, all of these things that we can put our hope in. And Jesus calls us to put our hope entirely in Him, that He would be our life. And when we do, we can't touch the bottom of the swimming pool anymore. It's like we can't touch bottom. It's like we are just all in. And that's the way to live the Christian life in a way with freedom. And if Jesus wasn't



raised from the dead, then those people in the deep end who can't touch bottom, who have fully put all the poker chips in the middle and said, *Yes, Jesus. I am all in with You*, they are the ones...we are the ones to most be pitied. But He has been raised from the dead, and that gives me the greatest hope. Because as women, we are continually encouraging and calling each other out to trust Him, to not give up, to trust Him with our whole being, to put our hope entirely in Him. And hope will not disappoint.

Elisa: So let's say this together. And just as you're listening, say it with us as well. Okay, let's do it three times. "He is risen."

All: He is risen, indeed.

Elisa: He is risen.

All: He is risen, indeed.

Elisa: He is risen.

All: He is risen, indeed.

Vivian: Happy Easter, friends. What a beautiful reminder that we have hope because of Jesus. We hope you have a wonderful time celebrating the hope of the resurrection with your families.

Elisa: Yes, Viv. Happy Easter. Be sure to check the show notes for a link to an Our Daily Bread book *Encounters With Jesus*. You can find that and more at godhearsher.org. That's godhearsher.org.

Vivian: Thank you for joining us. And don't forget, God hears you. He sees you, and He loves you because you are His.

Elisa: Today's episode was engineered by Anne Stevens and produced by Jade Gustman and Mary Jo Clark. We also want to thank Kathi and Peggy for all of their help and support. Thanks, everyone.

Vivian: *God Hears Her* is a production of Our Daily Bread Ministries.