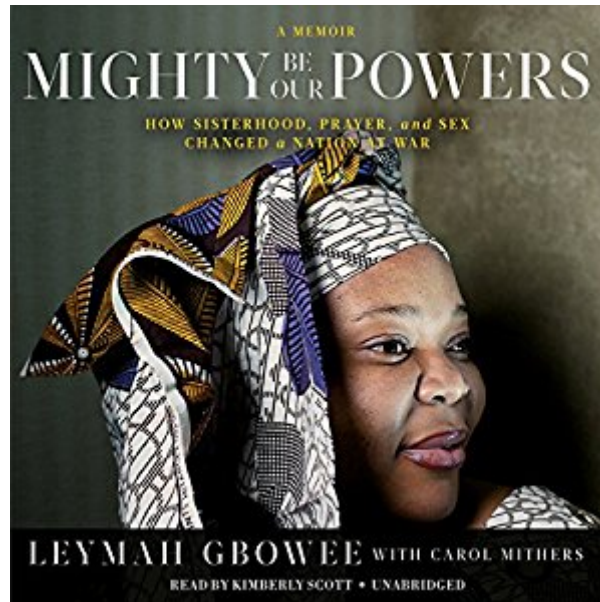


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# Mighty Be Our Powers: How Sisterhood, Prayer, And Sex Changed A Nation At War; A Memoir



## Synopsis

As a young woman growing up in Africa, 17-year-old Leymah Gbowee was crushed by a savage war when violence reached her native Monrovia, depriving her of the education she yearned for and claiming the lives of relatives and friends. As war continued to ravage Liberia, Gbowee's bitterness turned to rage-fueled action as she realized that women bear the greatest burden in prolonged conflicts. Passionate and charismatic, Gbowee was instrumental in galvanizing hundreds, if not thousands, of women in Liberia in 2002 to force a peace in the region after 14 years of war. She began organizing Christian and Muslim women to demonstrate together, founding Liberian Mass Action for Peace, launching protests and even a sex strike.

Gbowee's memoir, *Mighty Be Their Powers*, chronicles the unthinkable violence she's faced throughout her life and the peace she has helped broker by empowering hundreds of her countrywomen and others around the world to take action and takes listeners along on her continuing journey as she harnesses the power of women to bring her country peace, saves herself, and changes history.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

On October 7, 2011, Leymah Gbowee was one of 3 women awarded the 2011 Nobel Peace Prize. This book is her story. She has written a revealing and seemingly uncensored tale of her country (Liberia), her personal doubts, failures and struggles in finding, defining and implementing her goals, and the impact she and other women of like mind and courage have had on showing women throughout Africa how to be major influences in bringing peace and reconciliation to their war

ravaged countries. When one considers the impossible setting in which this woman insisted on developing and growing her movement, her success in influencing peace in Liberia is nothing short of miraculous. If you know of Africa, read her story. If you know little of Africa, definitely read it. If you are a woman, read her story. If you are a man, definitely read it.

Hearing about this book on NPR led me to choose it for our book club. Now that I've finished it, I can't wait to discuss it with my friends. It was amazing to me, to get to the end of the book and realize that the author is my age (not yet 40). I felt like she'd lived three lifetimes ... and as though I'd lived them with her. I especially appreciate how she is vulnerable and forthcoming with her own personal "failures", and how she does not forget to include humor in her story. Memoirs are my favorite kind of book. This is a great one. I take it as a personal challenge - never sit back and let life happen. Make life deal with YOU.

I love this woman and I love this book. Let me be clear, she is my friend, so if you don't want to take my word for it, don't. But I am gobsmacked, simply stunned and amazed at what a compelling read this book is--and I already knew her story when I read it!! So even though you might suspect me of bias, I really, really guarantee you won't think that once you've read it.

From the first lines written in the preface it's clear that this book is going to take you on an emotional journey that changed the face of an entire nation...and it doesn't disappoint. I was overwhelmed at the experiences shared in this story and the incredible strength of Leymah (and all the women of Liberia) to effect meaningful change in a war-torn country. Perhaps her passion, courage, and commitment will spill beyond her homeland and permeate the hearts of people around the world...this planet would be a VERY different place.

In a nation marred by violence, poverty and hopelessness, it would have been easy for Leymah Gbowee to just go about her days like so many others who were just trying to survive. A single mother of 4 and victim of an abusive relationship, she definitely had reasons to feel sorry for herself, but she does not do this. Liberia was in the midst of an intractable civil war. Child soldiers, rape and murder were prevalent and many people were displaced from their homes. Despite her personal problems, Leymah launches a movement uniting Liberian women from various tribes, ethnic groups, classes and religions to demand an end to the fighting. The author was fortunate in that she learned about and became a part of groups that were already established, but she uses the sheer force of

her will to expand the reach of these groups and to inspire her countrywomen to sit in and march for peace. It was not easy, and those brave women risked their very lives defying Charles Taylor and the rebel fighters. They were just tired of living in fear and watching their children suffer. They wore white and carried signs demanding an end to the fighting, and became known as "The Peace Women." The story is interesting on many levels. Not only is it a story about women uniting for the greater good, but it's also a story about a young woman's struggle to create a better life for her family. It's about the sacrifices she made, and those made by her family, so that she could do the work that she felt called to do for the people of Liberia. She sent her children to live in Ghana under the care of an older sister, and missed them terribly, but at least they were safe. And there are no fairytale endings in this story. There are triumphs achieved after hard work along with a fair amount of grief, heartache and disappointment.

This was not just an incredible and inspiring story but it was also beautifully written. The book drew me in and I was hooked, reading it in a 24hr period. Although our lives are very different, I felt able to relate and learn from so much of her experience. When I saw where she was able to come from mentally - the deep depression, turning to alcohol to get through the loneliness, and how much she achieved for herself and for Liberia and women's rights globally, I felt so empowered and inspired. Beautiful brave book, Beautiful brave person - I will be telling everyone about Leymah and this book for some time!

I saw Gbowee on Book TV and cried and laughed out loud. I am ordering the book today and will use it for our annual peace meeting. I am a member of SGI, an international Buddhist peace movement ([sgi-usa.org](http://sgi-usa.org)). Each time I talk to friends about Gbowee I literally get chills throughout my body. On the Q & A part of her interview a woman activist in the audience asked "how do I get more people active in the movement" and she replied "we have no problem getting activists, because we have no resources; you have resources, but not enough activists." That answer hit the nail on the head. Yes, millions of people in this country are suffering from the terrible economy, but not to the extent that people in countries like Liberia were. The women had no choice, they believed they were going to die of disease, starvation or gangster soldiers, but they were going to put up the best fight they could with a most courageous and compassionate leader. Please share this book with everyone you meet!

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