



being a force

Onahi Idikwu explores how we find God's strength at work in our weakest moments

A quick search on Google will reveal that being a force requires strength or energy to produce movement or an action. It is an active thing that can yield hope when applied well. For some, being a channel of hope in your home or workplace is exciting, whereas others may be filled with dread and reluctance. I feel a tension between these two realities, my heart leaping at the thought of being used to bring positive change. But like

a weighted blanket, residual tiredness is not far behind, sapping my energy.

How force-like do you feel right now? If you feel ready and enthused, then praise God. However, a lack of enthusiasm does not limit God. Being used as a force is not dependant on our ability but on his. If, like me, working as a nurse or midwife has left you feeling desperately exhausted and hopeless at times, then let's explore together how God used four

desperately hopeless men not only to bring deliverance and hope for themselves, but to the nation of Israel.

This unusual account is found in 2 Kings 7. The people of Israel are in the middle of a war, and with the capital city of Samaria surrounded by enemy armies, the people are experiencing a savage famine. It is in that crisis that we find four men with leprosy facing a dilemma. As outcasts in their society due to their illness, they reason that if they go into the city they will die. If they stay sitting outside the city, with no access to food, they will also die. So, they decide all they can do is surrender to the army of the Arameans. If the enemy kept them alive, then they would live. But if they were killed, then they were no worse off than what would inevitably happen to them if they did nothing.

The incredible thing was that when they reached the edge of the camp, no one was there. *'For the Lord had caused the Arameans to hear the sound of chariots and horses and a great army...'* (v.6) They had thought an unconquerable force was against them and fled, leaving all their food and goods to be enjoyed by the four men. After helping themselves to a much-needed meal, these four men with leprosy returned to the city to

alert the gatekeeper of the good news that starving Israelites could get lifesaving food from the Aramean camp. God used four distressed men to miraculously provide for a nation.

The force these four men exerted was not restricted by their disability but rather was wholly dependent on God's great power and will. In the same way, our weakness and lack of influence does not limit God's hand. As children of God, we have his Holy Spirit in us to propel life into each area of our lives and work.

It is also key to note that these men, though few in number, were still a community. Through them God was able to bring hope to a hopeless situation. No matter how isolated we may feel, there is a physical and spiritual body of believers around us. It is within the context of this community that God can use us to be a force for hope in any and every situation he has put us in.

Are there three or others in your workplace or across your city with whom you can join and pray together? 🙏

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