

Gandhi Biography

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Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, was born on October 2, 1869, in Porbandar, India. He became one of the most respected spiritual and political leaders of the 1900's. GandhiJI helped free the Indian people from British rule through non-violent resistance, and is honoured by Indians as the father of the Indian Nation

The Indian people called Gandhiji 'Mahatma', meaning Great Soul. At the age of 13 Gandhi married Kasturba, a girl the same age. Their parents arranged the marriage. The Gandhis had four children. Gandhi studied law in London and returned to India in 1891 to practice. In 1893 he took on a one-year contract to do legal work in South Africa.

At the time the British controlled South Africa. When he attempted to claim his rights as a British subject he was abused, and soon saw that all Indians suffered similar treatment. Gandhi stayed in South Africa for 21 years working to secure rights for Indian people.

He developed a method of action based upon the principles of courage, non-violence and truth called Satyagraha. He believed that the way people behave is more important than what they achieve. Satyagraha promoted non-violence and civil disobedience as the most appropriate methods for obtaining political and social goals. In 1915 Gandhi returned India. Within 15 years he became the leader of the Indian nationalist movement.

Using the principles of Satyagraha he led the campaign for Indian independence from Britain. Gandhi was arrested many times by the British for his activities in South Africa and India. He believed it was honourable to go to jail for a just cause. Altogether he spent seven years in prison for his political activities.

More than once Gandhi used fasting to impress upon others the need to be non-violent. India was granted independence in 1947, and partitioned into India and Pakistan. Rioting between Hindus and Muslims followed. Gandhi had been an advocate for a united India where Hindus and Muslims lived together in peace.

On January 13, 1948, at the age of 78, he began a fast with the purpose of stopping the bloodshed. After 5 days the opposing leaders pledged to stop the fighting and Gandhi broke his fast. Twelve days later a Hindu fanatic, Nathuram Godse who opposed his program of tolerance for all creeds and religion assassinated him.