

*“Injustice anywhere is
a threat to justice
everywhere.”*

—Martin Luther King Jr.



The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
1929 – 1968

Civil Rights Leader – American Hero

The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and The American Civil Rights Movement of the 1960's

- ▶ The Civil Rights Movement is a very long and interesting story beginning in the early history of America.
- ▶ The song “Abraham, Martin and John” was a commentary on the struggle for racial equality in the sixties.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SIW3RsUtn3M>

Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.

The MLK, Jr.'s accomplishments were great for any man of privilege; but for a black American man born in 1929, they are even more so.

- ▶ Dr. King was a man of peace; but his words were interpreted differently by different listeners.
 - Some were threatened by his words and were provoked to violence **against him** and his family.
 - Some who agreed with him were angered by **the injustices** and provoked to violence **in spite** of his wishes for peaceful resolutions.
- ▶ Today we will look at his “**I Have a Dream Speech**” and his “**Mountaintop Speech**”.

“I Have A Dream”

- ▶ http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nFcbpGK9_aw
- ▶ Listen to and watch his powerful speaking style.
- ▶ On August 28, 1963, at the end of the Freedom March to Washington, DC MLK, Jr. gave his “I have a Dream” speech.
- ▶ It is the most beloved speech of his career and the most famous American oration of the twentieth century.

What did he say?

- ▶ "In a sense we have come to our nation's capital to cash a check."
- ▶ The black community is *owed* liberation.
- ▶ Lincoln's Emancipation Declaration promised freedom for slaves, but "the Negro is still not free".
- ▶ Further liberation and rights are necessary.



Then what did he say??

- ▶ He said that we must always conduct our struggle on the high plane of dignity and discipline... we cannot walk alone.
- ▶ He stressed his non-violent beliefs. “The struggle is just, but it should not turn to violence”.



Ok, then what did he say?

- ▶ He said, that in spite of the difficulties and frustrations of the moment, he still has a dream.
- ▶ He stressed the importance of hope.
- ▶ Many in his audience had suffered and were discouraged because of persecution. He encouraged them to keep the hope and faith that the "promised land" of complete integration will happen "one day".



Well, was that all?

No, almost but this last part is IMPORTANT!

- ▶ He said that if America is to be a great nation, civil rights and equality must be for everyone.
- ▶ This is not just a problem for the black community, but for all Americans.
- ▶ This struggle of of the 20th century is linked to the ideals of the founding fathers.



I Have Been To The Mountaintop

- ▶ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=98k-pjN6nl0>
- ▶ Notice the emotional and powerful style of his speech on April 3, 1968.
- ▶ King was shot and killed while standing on the balcony of the Lorraine Motel in Memphis on April 4, 1968.
- ▶ He was buried on April 9 in Atlanta, GA.

Tributes to MLK

- ▶ We now have a holiday in his honor; established 21 years after his death in 1989.
- ▶ Many other minority groups have benefitted by his struggle for equal rights.
- ▶ Many tributes have been made to him. The following is from a 2009 movie about the civil rights struggle, Freedom Writers.
- ▶ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QcVjKAKRpDw>