



Mohandas Gandhi

"A small body of determined spirits fired by an unquenchable faith in their mission can alter the course of history."

Mohandas Gandhi (1869-1948) was one of the most significant figures of the last century. Born in British India, he went to England for his education and became a lawyer. In 1893, he moved to South Africa, where the prejudice he experienced compelled him to lead a campaign for better treatment of Indians in the colony. In 1915, Gandhi returned to India to apply the principles of non-violent resistance that he had honed over the years. Inspired by his Hindu faith and the teachings of Jesus, he developed the principles of satyagraha, or truth-force, as the foundation of the peaceful movement to free his native country. However, unlike many other nationalist leaders, Gandhi's efforts transcended politics, as he fought to elevate the poor, end the discrimination of the caste system, and promote better Hindu-Muslim relations. His civil disobedience frequently resulted in arrest and imprisonment, but his campaign for freedom and justice also made him an international celebrity. One of his most celebrated protests was the 1930 Salt March, in which he and his followers walked over 200 miles to the ocean to protest a hated tax on salt. The image of Gandhi wearing his simple homemade cotton robe, itself a form of protest, remains famous to this day. Although the goal of independence was finally achieved in 1947, the region was divided into two countries, Hindu India and Muslim Pakistan, leading to waves of violence. In order to stop the fighting, Gandhi visited areas of conflict and went on a hunger strike. Soon after, he was assassinated by a radical Hindu nationalist on January 30th, 1948. He was mourned by millions under the honorific he carried during much of his life, the Mahatma, or great-souled.

Mohandas Gandhi was one of the fiercest advocates ever for love and peace, and his words and actions continue to inspire countless individuals across the globe.