

I Have a Dream Chapter No 04

Study Questions Recalling

Q 1. Who does Dr King refer to by the epithet, “great American?”

Answer:

The “great American” that Martin Luther King refers to at the beginning of his speech is Abraham Lincoln. There are two ways that you can see. First, King makes an oblique reference to Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address. He says that it was “Five score years ago” that the “great American” lived. This is a reference to Lincoln’s phrase “four score and seven years ago” in the Gettysburg Address. Second, King then says that what happened 100 years previous was the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation. This was signed during the Civil War by President Lincoln, thus committing the Union to the idea of freeing the slaves.

Q 2. After reading the first paragraph, can you guess what the Emancipation Proclamation might mean?

Answer:

Emancipation proclamation might mean to free all Negroes from second class citizenship. This decree was first presented by Abraham Lincoln on 1 January 1863. It further put emphasis on giving equal rights to the Negroes of United America. As the Negroes suffered intense hardships for a long period of time in the state so now they should get freedom from all kinds of confinement. In fact, this proclamation served as a ray of hope to millions of black slaves that soon they would be getting equal rights after a long exhausting period of subjugation and injustice that was done to them by the whites of the nation.

Q 3. How does King describe the life of the Negro in the US one hundred years after the Emancipation Proclamation?

Answer:

Even after one hundred years of Emancipation Proclamation declared by Abraham Lincoln, the life of the Negroes residing in the land of America reflected no specific change in the lifestyle, liberty, or rights. According to King, one hundred years have passed but still, the Negro is not enjoying complete freedom, his life is still wandering on the path of malicious discrimination and the Negro is still dragged towards the prison of isolation with the hands cuffed by unseen chains of humiliation. Still, the Negroes are forcefully pushed to spend their lives in the hell of poverty and are kept away to have and enjoy the facilities and luxuries of life as others are enjoying to the fullest. This is not the end, the situation is worsened by the fact that the Negroes are restricted to the far end of the privileged society of America and they are made to feel that they are the forbidden or hopeless class of the society. This discrimination ruthlessly affected them not socially and morally but psychologically too.

Q 4. Why is 1963, according to Dr. King, not an end but a beginning? A beginning of what?**Answer:**

Martin Luther King was well aware that although the civil rights movement had provided a focus on racism and discrimination, what had been accomplished thus far was not nearly enough to solve all of the problems the United States had in these areas. He was looking forward to a time when people would be judged by "the content of their character," rather than the color of their skin, but he knew that marches and demonstrations and even the civil rights legislation that would come in 1964 were not going to completely solve the problem. For example, as recently as the 1960s, it was illegal for a black man and a white woman to marry in Virginia. Research suggests that white people are better at concealing their racism, it is alive and well. Martin Luther King understood very well that his era was just a beginning and the beginning of the time when there would be no discrimination made by the people on the basis of color or creed.

Q 5. What is Dr. King's advice to the black people while marching on the road to freedom?**Answer:**

Dr. King was a great advocate of equality and brotherhood which he wanted to have for his people living in the society of America. He advised black people not to be guilty of unlawful deeds that they have committed or not while marching on the road to freedom. He addressed the American Blacks that they should continue their struggle until they

would cherish equality, peace, and brotherhood in America. Freedom is their right but they must avoid all kinds of aggression. He said that they should fight for their rights without causing physical violence which may cause hostility and hatred. He insisted on his people to acquire their rights in a peaceful manner. He said, "We must keep dignity and discipline. If they keep on struggling in a disciplined way, they will achieve their aims. They should not involve themselves in such activities which are against the interests of the state."

Q 6. When will they, the Negro, be satisfied or not satisfied, according to Dr. King?

Answer:

Dr. King made it clear to the people that the Negroes will not be satisfied until and unless their demands would not be fulfilled. He listed their demands such as the chains of hatred, racial discrimination, injustice, and inequalities will be broken, they should enjoy equality, peace, and brotherhood in America. He further added that they will not be satisfied until the constitution of America fulfills its promise of giving them equal rights, justice, and freedom to all the Blacks. According to Dr. King Negroes will never be satisfied until they are the victims of police brutality. They will not be satisfied until they find accommodation in luxurious metropolitan hotels. They will not be satisfied until they are given the right to cast their vote. Last but not the least, till the achievement of equal social status and civil rights, they cannot be satisfied.

Q 7. Dr King speaks repeatedly of his dream. What is his dream?

Answer:

In this speech, King sets out a dream that he has for American society and he speaks of it repeatedly so as to put emphasis on his viewpoint. that he has for American society. The basic idea behind his dream is that there should no longer be racism and racial discrimination in the United States. During King's time, racial discrimination was legal in the United States. King dreamed of a time when such discrimination would not be legal. He also dreamed of a time when there would not be any racism. As he put it, he dreamed of a time when people would not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character. He had a firm belief that all men are created equal so they should get equal rights and amenities for the best of their survival.

**Q 8. What does Dr. King mean by "This is the faith with which I return to the South?"
What faith? Faith in what?**

Answer:

Dr. King has started his freedom campaign with a strong faith in his aptitude and the power of the Black American. He was sure that they will achieve their aims in a short period of time. He has faith that one day, the chains of hatred, racial discrimination, injustice, and inequalities will be broken. He has a faith that the new sun will rise with the rays of hope in the form of liberty, equality, peace, and brotherhood. He has faith that one day, all discriminations and inequalities will have to leave their land willingly or unwillingly. He has a strong faith in attaining brotherhood and togetherness. He has a faith that his great effort will soon bear sweet fruits of freedom, justice, and equality. He has a faith that one day his dream will come true and black people will get their appropriate position in American society. His faith's ultimate destination will be the time when everyone will be hearing the charismatic music of liberty, justice, and equality all over America.

Interpreting

Q 1. What does Dr. King mean by cashing a cheque, bad cheque, and a cheque that has come back marked "insufficient funds"?

Answer:

Dr. King artfully gives a comparison between promises made by the American constitution and a bad cheque. He said that the constitution of America promises to provide equal rights to all the citizens irrespective of color and creed but America has failed imperfectly to pay his black citizens the rights promised in the constitution. They are given a bad cheque that is based on false promises by draftsmen of the American constitution. The constitution of America guarantees the equality for all but the black citizens is smacked down from getting justice in America under any circumstance. Therefore, The King compares the promises made by the America constitution with a bad cheque. He means by a cheque which has come back marked "insufficient funds" that the American constitution has promoted the concept that the bank of justice is bankrupt. But in reality, this proves to be a fake justification and we refuse to believe that there are inadequate funds in the gigantic valley of opportunities for the blacks of America. At the end, he made it clear to the architects of American constitution that they are back with full zeal and enthusiasm to cash this cheque in favor of them.

Q 2. Read the last few paragraphs aloud, beginning with “This will be the day” followed by the poem until the end, placing emphasis on “Let freedom ring.” What effect is produced by the repetition of the phrase? Don’t forget that Dr. King refers to mountains all the time; and when you shoot in the mountains, what happens?

Answer:

Anaphora is one of the most prominent features of Martin Luther King which is reflected quite noticeably in his speech. It is just like poetry where the poet repeats the lines in order to put emphasis on the thought-provoking theme of his poetry. Similarly, King repeats the line “Let freedom ring”, in order to emphasize the heart touching concept which speaks in favor of the blacks of American society. By ‘ringing’ he means that everyone not only the Americans but the people of the whole world will be able to listen to the message which he wanted to give that blacks also comprise a significant part of American society so they should get justice, equal rights, and facilities in order to live a peaceful life.

He mentions all the time the mountains and hilly cities of America in his speech, this reason behind is that when all the blacks living in different parts of America come forward bonded with the rope of togetherness, they will have the same slogan for their rights and this will turn into an echo which will be heard clearly in every nook and corner of the American society.

Q 3. Granting that King knew well his audience, examine the appropriateness of his word choice, his sentence structure, his use of metaphor and analogy.

Answer:

From the opening sentence of the speech, Dr. King identified himself with the audience as fellow participants in “what will go down in history as the greatest demonstration for freedom in the history of our nation.” Tracing the history of “the Negro” in the United States, he continued to build his connection that he was one with those listening to his speech. “We have come here today to dramatize a shameful condition.”

He emphasized that they were all involved in the struggle to right the wrongs of the past and of the present. He effectively used repeated phrasing to build his case, drawing upon experiences from all walks of life and all parts of the country, always coming back to the basic point that their strength was in their unity. “We cannot walk alone.” He established his relationship at the very beginning and expanded his rapport with the

audience to the climatic ending of his presentation.

Martin Luther King uses figurative language repeatedly in the “I Have a Dream” speech.

Early in the speech, he begins a metaphor with the line, “In a sense, we’ve come to our nation’s capital to cash a check.” Here the term “cash a check” means “take advantage of America’s promise of opportunity.” By employing this metaphor, he is expressing the idea that the African-American has been promised something that has not been delivered, namely freedom.

Later in the speech, he warns his audience with another metaphor: “Let us not seek to satisfy our thirst for freedom by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred.” Here he is expressing the idea that it is possible that the oppressed African-American will become negatively affected by the prejudice that he has had to battle against. The “cup of bitterness and hatred” is a poison that will kill their quest for freedom by changing them, by transforming their righteous cause into a hateful one.

King uses a variety of literary and rhetorical devices, including the following:

Anaphora, or repeating a word or phrase at the beginnings of successive sentences or clauses, as in the repetition of “I have a dream . . .” here.

Balanced or parallel phrasing, as in “rise up and live out” or “the sons of . . .” and “the sons of . . .” or “the color of their skin” and “the content of their character.”

Vivid imagery, as in the reference to the “red hills of Georgia.”

Alliteration or the repetition of similar-sounding consonant sounds, as in “the content of their character.”

Metaphors, or implied comparisons, as in the reference to “the table of brotherhood” (emphasis added) and in the references to heat and to an oasis.

Allusions, as in the open quotation here from the Declaration of Independence.

Q 4. What is the most prominent structural feature in this speech?

Answer:

Martin Luther King was a master of oratory. His skill was attributable not just to his speaking skill, but also his ability to use conventional rhetorical devices to great effect. Early in the speech, King uses the device of repetition (anaphora). He repeats the term

“One hundred years later” four times in one section as he describes the condition of the African-American in contemporary society, as in,

“But one hundred years later, the Negro still is not free.” This phrase recalls the observation that he had just made regarding the signing of the emancipation proclamation “five-score years earlier.”

Later in the speech, as King is bringing his message to a close, he uses the physical properties of his voice to raise the dramatic effect. Again he uses repetition with the line “Let freedom ring from . . .” and names different American cities. Then, in the speech’s final lines he lifts his voice in the climatic buildup, he quoted an old song, “Free at last, free at last, thank God almighty, we are free at last”

Extending

Q 5. What is freedom? Using the internet, collect different definitions of freedom and write a comprehensive essay on freedom.

Answer:

Freedom is not only a word made up of seven alphabets but its meaning is as vast as the sea. It can never be understood by those who are blessed by Allah Almighty to rejoice it BUT only those who can feel its worth are not fortunate enough to have it by any means.

It can be defined in various ways, such as:

1. The condition of having the liberty
2. The ability to move or act as desired
3. Release from something unpleasant
4. A political right
5. The power or right to act, speak or think as one wants
6. The absence of subjection to foreign domination or despotic government
7. The state of not being imprisoned or enslaved
8. A special privilege or right of access, especially that of full citizenship of a city granted to a public figure as honor
9. The absence of or release from ties, obligations, etc.

10. A situation in which you are not affected by something unpleasant

Freedom is a right which one can only get pleasure from at the time of his birth. Even some cannot have this type of freedom either. As time flies and the child grows up, there is no such existence of this word in his life's dictionary. The reason behind this is a long list of duties, responsibilities which he has to perform, and commitments which he has to fulfill in order to be a good person, a civilized member of a society or just to please others.

Nowadays, it's quite an intricate task to find and feel the pleasure of freedom in one's life.

The ways to achieve freedom in a true sense are quite complicated as it has a broad spectrum from trivial to major. Let's begin with the example of a child. According to his parents, he is among the blessed ones who are living in an independent nation and can enjoy freedom. But as he grows up and wants to say something to his parents to which his parents are in opposition, on the spot his freedom gets captivated of doing or saying something according to his will.

I know rules and regulations are a must part of our lives to practice in order to behave in a civilized way but sometimes we feel too bounded with them that some of us become rebellious.

Now, come towards the national level, we consider ourselves a free nation, enjoying the freedom of speech or action but do you think we are psychologically free from the cultural invasion of our so-called neighbor? My answer is a big "NO", we are not.

It's just a tradition to say that India is our rival but in reality how many of us feel hatred towards their movies, their heroes, or their culture? NONE of us, hardly 1-2 % Pakistani are with me who have boycotted Indian movies, dramas, etc not only because of patriotism but due to the element of respect towards the sacrifices made by billions of Kashmiris who are not in a state to enjoy freedom for the last 64 years.

Roaming on the path of crookedness, now we have to touch the international border. Do you think a child who opens his eyes at the time of his birth in the lands of Kashmir, Palestine, Syria, Yemen, Burma, etc can ever be able to feel or sense the word Freedom in his life? No, because his nation or land is either facing an unwanted intrusion of the foreigners or an ideological war engulf the land causing chaos among the civilians/nationals of the same land.

In the nutshell, Yes freedom is a right of every human being but in my point of view, none of us are enjoying this right wholly or truly.

Q 6. Write an essay examining King's position in the light of today's events.

Answer:

African Americans are citizens of the United States with ancestors who came from Africa. Their forefathers were brought to American colonies as slaves in the 17th and 18th centuries. About 40 million African Americans, 13% of the total population, live in the USA today.

In the past, African Americans have been known by many names. They were called Negroes, Blacks, and Coloureds. In the last 30 years, the term African Americans have officially been used. About half of them live in the southern states of the USA, the rest in large cities of the East, Midwest, and West.

Black Americans have faced many problems in the past and perhaps they will face new difficulties in the future. In the past, black Americans and other racial groups have been discriminated against and enslaved. Throughout history, black people have been denied many important things. Black Americans could not work, live, shop, eat, or travel where they wanted.

They couldn't vote, they were forced to go to separate schools and were also excluded from universities. A large majority of blacks lived in poverty. Many years have passed since those times and today the situation is very different. In education, many blacks receive a college degree from universities that used to exclude them. Black Americans have also experienced changes at work.

They are often offered more professional and managerial jobs. In politics, most black Americans now participate in elections. However, some black people still face problems like discrimination and prejudice. While Martin Luther King wanted to improve the situation of Blacks in a non-violent way, others were more violent and militant. In the 1960's Malcolm X preached that Blacks should use force and violence to achieve equal rights. Stokely Carmichael coined the term "Black Power".

During this decade the country was hit by a series of riots, mostly in big cities. Blacks

protested against bad schools, poor housing, high prices and unequal treatment by the police.

In the 1968 Olympic Games, two American medal winners held their closed fists in the air and in protest, turned away from the American flag during the ceremony. In the same year the most respected leader of the American Blacks, Martin Luther King, was assassinated by a white man in Memphis, Tennessee.

Since the violent times of the 60s African Americans have made progress and improved their situation in every part of American life.

The largest cities, including New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles have had Black mayors. Colin Powell and Condoleezza Rice were two African Americans who became Secretary of State, and in 2009 Barack Obama became the first African American president of the United States.

In the film industry, Halle Berry and Denzel Washington are among the most famous stars. Bill Cosby was the first African American with his own comedy show and Oprah Winfrey is the most famous and best-earning talk master on American TV.

Blacks have dominated many sports as well. Boxer Muhammad Ali was heavyweight champion of the 60s and 70s. Basketball's Michael Jordan was probably the most successful player in NBA history.

Despite these advances, about 25% of African Americans live in poverty. Discrimination still exists in many areas and the standard of living lags behind that of the white population. Compared to other groups, the average income is much lower and the rate of unemployment higher. Nevertheless, African Americans have made big gains since slavery ended 150 years ago.

Writing

The student will be asked to write an essay on the achievements and efforts of the great African – American Leader, Martin Luther King.

Answer:

Martin Luther King is the name that rings a bell in the mind of every literate and history

lover person about black people's freedom and rights movement. This person of high stature was born on January 15, 1929, in Atlanta, Georgia. King was the greatest leader of the Civil Rights Movement beginning in the 1950s.

Martin Luther King

Dr. King started the Civil Rights Movement to raise his voice for the rights and freedom of the black people of America. He was against racism, racial discrimination, inequality, and injustice done to the blacks by the whites of America.

Writing from a jail cell in Birmingham, Alabama in 1963, he explained that the civil rights activists were "standing up for what is best in the American dream and for the sacred values in our Judaeo-Christian heritage, thereby bringing our nation back to those great wells of democracy which were dug deep by the founding fathers in their formulation of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence."

Some of his most prominent achievements are as follows:

- In 1963, Dr. King achieved perhaps his most important accomplishment when he helped lead over 200,000 people to the Lincoln Memorial overlooking the Washington Monument. It was here where King made his historic "I Have a Dream" speech which called for an end to racism.
- On the same day that Rosa Parks was arrested for refusing to give up her seat on a bus to a white person, King led the boycott on the Montgomery, Ala., bus system. The boycott, which lasted over a year, was a political and social protest against racial segregation.
- King preached and practiced non-violent opposition in the face of oppression, established the Southern Christian Leadership Conference in 1957. Under King's guidance, the SCLC peacefully organized mass protest campaigns, voter registration drives and fought for equality.
- When the boycott initially failed, King and the SCLC started "Project C," a series of sit-ins and marches
- After his years of historic accomplishments and triumphs, King was honored with the distinguished award in 1964. At 35, King was the youngest man to ever receive the Nobel Peace Prize. King won several awards in his lifetime, but the peace prize was inarguably his greatest one.

The efforts of Dr. King and others in the Civil Rights Movement led to the adoption of several federal civil rights acts and ground-breaking Supreme Court decisions. King was assassinated on April 4, 1968, in Memphis, Tennessee.