



## Source 1: Who was Rosa Parks?

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1 Rosa Parks was an African American woman who was born on February 4, 1913. Ms. Parks was born in Tuskegee, Alabama, to Leona and James McCauley. While growing up, she had a younger brother by the name of Sylvester. Rosa’s parents went their separate ways, and Rosa, Sylvester, and Leona moved to a small farm area in Pine Level.

2 While living in Pine Level, Rosa attended the local elementary school where her mom was a teacher. The local school consisted of only African American children; there was no mix of races in the schools.

3 Leona McCauley was a successful African American teacher and wanted her children to complete their education to obtain a diploma and later a degree. Rosa was able to complete elementary school and Montgomery Industrial School for Girls. She went on to attend Alabama Teacher State College in order to obtain her high school diploma. Unfortunately, Rosa was never able to complete school to get her diploma because of a family illness with her mother.

4 In 1932 Rosa met her soul mate, Raymond Parks, in Montgomery and married him later that year. Raymond and Rosa lived life together with no children. In 1977, Raymond Parks passed away. During their marriage, Rosa was able to return to school and obtain her high school diploma.

5 While living in the city of Montgomery as an adult, the city was very segregated. The segregation was very similar to the Pine Level School in Alabama that Rosa had attended in elementary. The white people and black people were not together but did everything separately. The places and events they attended were all segregated based on race.

6 Rosa would see signs for only one race and not the other race. Everything from water fountains to riding the bus was segregated. Often when Rosa would ride the bus, she would have to sit in the back of the bus or even stand if she needed to. She experienced racism of people of color sitting in the back of the bus while white people were able to sit at the front of the bus.

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## Source 2: Montgomery Bus Boycott

7 On December 1, 1955, Rosa Parks decided to fight back against segregation. Ms. Parks, along with all the other African American people, had to sit in the back of the buses while the white people were able to sit in the front. If there were no seats on the bus a black person, that had already been on the bus, had to get up and give their seat to the white person entering the bus.

8 Rosa Parks finally got tired of being treated like a second-class citizen. She and other African Americans were fed up with the segregation. One day after work, Rosa sat on the bus and did not give up her seat when a white person entering the bus came on. Rosa was immediately arrested and taken to jail. Rosa was instructed to pay a penalty fine of \$10 for not obeying the law. Of course, Ms. Parks did not pay the fine because of her beliefs of the segregation law not being fair to all.

9 The arrest of Rosa led to an uproar from the African American community. The African American leaders got together to discuss what happened and decided to do a boycott. NAACP began formed plans to organize the boycott of the city buses. The NAACP even got together to create flyers and newspaper ads to reach as many African Americans they could about not riding the city bus. The boycott would be to no longer ride the city bus as long as it took to change the segregation law. The boycott of the Montgomery buses lasted for a total of 381 days. The African American communities and leaders worked together to get to places that were needed without using the city bus. After a long boycott of over one year, the U.S. Supreme court ruled the segregation laws in Alabama to be unconstitutional.

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### Source 3: Life After the Montgomery Bus Boycott

10 After the Montgomery Bus Boycott and Rosa Parks' arrest, her family had a difficult time. Rosa was fired from her full-time job working at a department store. Rosa Parks' husband was also fired from his job due to supporting his wife and the ongoing court case from the boycott on the Montgomery city bus. After searching around for work and unable to successfully find a job, the couple moved to Detroit, Michigan.

11 While in Detroit, Rosa and her husband's life began to improve. Both Rosa and Raymond were able to find a job to help support themselves. Rosa started off working as a secretary and receptionist in U.S. Representative John Conyer's congressional office. Later, Rosa became a part of Planned Parenthood. Rosa Parks served on the board of the Planned Parenthood Federation of America.

12 In 1987, Rosa and her friend Elaine Steele founded the Rosa and Raymond Parks Institute for Self Development. The institute was designed to run the "Pathways to Freedom" bus tours. The bus tours helped to show the younger African Americans the Underground Railroad sites that were throughout the country. The Underground Railroad were secret routes that had safe houses in the United States. The Underground Railroad was used as a way for African American slaves to escape to freedom to free states. By the year 1850, it is believed that over 100,000 slaves had escaped to freedom using the Underground Railroad.

13 In 1992, Rosa wrote her autobiography. In her book, *My Story*, Rosa talked about her life and the segregation she experienced in Montgomery. Three years later, Rosa went on to publish another book. The book titled *Quiet Strength* was about how Rosa used her religion to help her overcome the struggle and fight she had throughout her life.

14 Rosa received many awards during her lifetime. She received the Spingarn Medal from NAACP, Martin Luther King Jr. Award, and a Presidential Medal of Freedom by former President Bill Clinton (1996). She continued to receive awards for her courage and continued faith in helping to create a change in segregation.

15 In October 2005, Rosa Parks died in her home having suffered from progressive dementia.

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## Excerpt from the “I Have a Dream” Speech

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1 Five score years ago, a great American, in whose symbolic shadow we stand today, signed the Emancipation Proclamation. This momentous decree came as a great beacon light of hope to millions of Negro slaves who had been seared in the flames of withering injustice. It came as a joyous daybreak to end the long night of their captivity.

2 But there is something that I must say to my people, who stand on the warm threshold which leads into the palace of justice: In the process of gaining our rightful place, we must not be guilty of wrongful deeds. Let us not seek to satisfy our thirst for freedom by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred. We must forever conduct our struggle on the high plane of dignity and discipline. We must not allow our creative protest to degenerate into physical violence. Again and again, we must rise to the majestic heights of meeting physical force with soul force.



3 We cannot walk alone.

4 And as we walk, we must make the pledge that we shall always march ahead.

5 We cannot turn back.

6 Let us not wallow in the valley of despair, I say to you today, my friends.

7 And so even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a deeply rooted in the American dream.  
dream

8 I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal."

9 I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia, the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood.

10 I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a state sweltering with the heat of injustice, sweltering with the heat of oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice.

11 I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.

12 I have a *dream* today!



13 I have a dream that one day, down in Alabama, with its vicious racists, with its governor having his lips dripping with the words of "interposition" and "nullification" -- one day right there in Alabama little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers.

14 I have a *dream* today!

15 I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, and every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plain, and the crooked places will be made straight; "and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together."

16 This is our hope, and this is the faith that I go back to the South with.

17 With this faith, we will be able to hew out of the mountain of despair a stone of hope. With this faith, we will be able to transform the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood. With this faith, we will be able to work together, to pray together, to struggle together, to go to jail together, to stand up for freedom together, knowing that we will be free one day.

18 And this will be the day -- this will be the day when all of God's children will be able to sing with new meaning:

19 *My country 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing. Land where my fathers died, land of the Pilgrim's pride, from every mountainside, let freedom ring!*

20 And if America is to be a great nation, this must become true.

21 And when this happens, and when we allow freedom to ring, when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when *all* of God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual:

22 *Free at last! Free at last! Thank God Almighty, we are free at last!*



## Celebrating His Legacy



### National Holiday

23 Martin Luther King Jr. Day is a national holiday marking the birthday of Martin Luther King Jr. It is observed on the third Monday of January each year, which is around King's birthday, January 15. Only two other figures have national holidays in the U.S. honoring them: George Washington and Christopher Columbus.

24 Honoring Martin Luther King Jr. with a national holiday was not easy. It took 15 years to create the holiday. The campaign for a federal holiday in King's honor began soon after his assassination in 1968. President Ronald Reagan did not sign the holiday into law until 1983, and it was first observed three years later in 1986. At first, some states resisted observing the holiday. They gave it alternative names or combined it with other holidays. It was not until 2000 that Martin Luther King Jr. Day was officially observed in all 50 states for the first time.

### National Memorial

25 The Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial is located in Washington, D.C. The Memorial covers four acres and includes a granite statue of Martin Luther King carved by sculptor Lei Yixin. The memorial opened to the public on August 22, 2011. The official address of the monument, 1964 Independence Avenue, S.W., commemorates the year the Civil Rights Act of 1964 became law.

26 The centerpiece for the memorial is based on a quote from King's "I Have A Dream" speech: "Out of a mountain of despair, a stone of hope." A 30 foot high statue of King is named the Stone of Hope. It stands past two other pieces of granite that symbolize the "Mountain of Despair." When visitors come to the memorial, they pass through the Mountain of Despair on the way to the Stone of Hope, symbolically moving through the struggle as Dr. King did during his life. In addition to the statue, a 450 foot long inscription wall includes fourteen memorable quotes from King's sermons and speeches.

27 The statue of Martin Luther King Jr. was positioned so that he is looking over the water toward the horizon. The cherry trees around the memorial bloom every year during the anniversary of King's death. Although this is not the first memorial to an African American in Washington, D.C., King is the first African American honored with a memorial on or near the National Mall, and only the fourth non-President to have a memorial.

*"Celebrating His Legacy" written for educational purposes.*



## Martin Luther King Jr.

### Early Life

28 Martin Luther King Jr. was born as Michael King Jr. on January 15, 1929, in Atlanta, Georgia. Martin Luther King Jr. was the middle child of Michael King Sr. and Alberta Williams King. Martin Luther King Jr.'s father, Michael King Sr., was also a successful minister. He changed his name to Martin Luther King Sr. in honor of a German religious leader named Martin Luther. Later on, Michael Jr. followed his father's lead and changed his name to Martin Luther King Jr. Martin had one older sister and one younger brother. The King children grew up in a secure and loving environment but did experience racism in Atlanta.

29 King attended Morehouse College. He earned a sociology degree in 1948. Next, he attended Crozer Theological Seminary School in Chester, Pennsylvania. He was valedictorian of his class in 1951 and elected student body president. King then got his doctorate degree from Boston University, where he met Coretta Scott. She was studying at the New England Conservatory School in Boston. They were married in June 1953 and had four children: Yolanda, Martin Luther King III, Dexter Scott, and Bernice.

### Civil Rights Movement

30 On December 1, 1955, Rosa Parks boarded the bus to go home from work when the bus driver demanded that Parks and several other African Americans give up their seats. Three other African-American passengers reluctantly gave up their places, but Parks refused. Rosa Parks was arrested. On the night that Rosa Parks was arrested, civil rights leaders met to plan a citywide bus boycott. NAACP leader E.D. Nixon elected Martin Luther King Jr. to lead the boycott. The bus boycott lasted 382 days. Both King's and E.D. Nixon's homes were attacked. Finally, the courts ruled that bus transportation could no longer be segregated.

*“The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.”*

31 In January 1957, Martin Luther King Jr. and 60 ministers and civil rights activists founded the Southern Christian Leadership Conference to organize nonviolent protests for civil rights. King met with religious and civil rights leaders and lectured all over the country on race-related issues. Martin Luther King Jr. also encouraged college students to continue to use nonviolent methods during their protests. King and 36 students were arrested for peacefully sitting in the lunch counter area after the store refused to serve them. By August of 1960, the sit-ins had been successful in ending segregation at lunch counters in 27 southern cities.

32 On August 28, 1963, the historic March on Washington drew more than 200,000 people in the shadow of the Lincoln Memorial. It was here that King made his famous "I Have a Dream" speech, emphasizing his belief that someday all men could be brothers. This resulted in the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 authorizing the federal government to enforce desegregation of public accommodations and outlawing discrimination in publicly owned facilities. This also led to Martin Luther King, Jr. receiving the Nobel Peace Prize for 1964.



### **Assassination**

33 On April 4, 1968, Martin Luther King Jr. was shot to death at a hotel in Memphis, Tennessee. A single shot fired by James Earl Ray from over 200 feet away at a nearby motel struck King in the neck. James Earl Ray assassinated King by firing a rifle from a bathroom window that looked out onto the hotel balcony where King was standing. He died one hour after being shot.

34 James Earl Ray was placed on the FBI's Ten Most Wanted Fugitives List. He used a fake name and escaped to Canada, stayed for a month, then flew to England. Ray was finally caught on June 8 at Heathrow Airport in London, England. Ray pleaded guilty in March 1969 and was sentenced to 99 years in prison. He died on April 23, 1998.

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