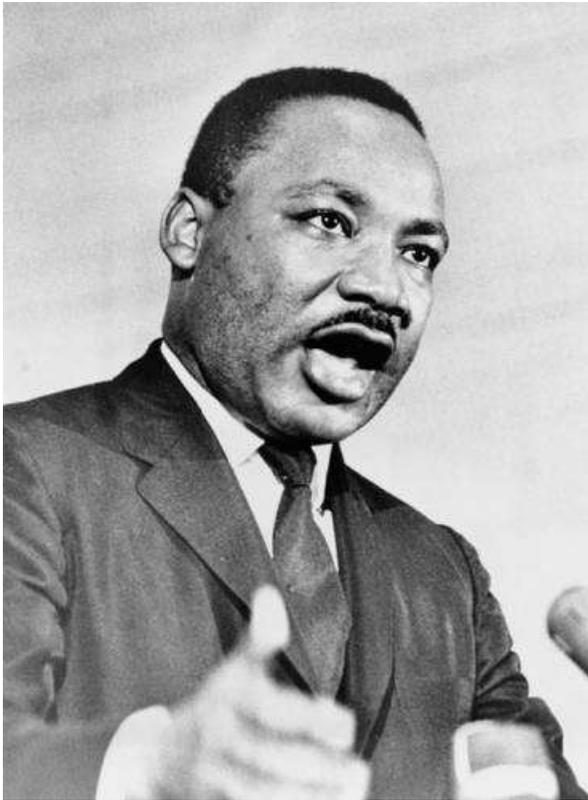


Does the election of President Barack Obama represent the fulfillment of Dr. King's dream or is it only one milestone along a longer road to full equality?



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*“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’.”*

Forty-seven years ago Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. preached these words in front of an audience of thousands. A revelation from a man who knew that when ignorance was the foundation of judgment, everything built thereupon was likely to fall.

Precise our history was; every minute detail perfected to reach this point; our destiny written long before we take our first breaths- only to be suffocated by prejudice judgment, shunned by the color of our skins and not judged by the pureness of our souls.

This is the purpose of the dream.

Though, many of us today have never been in the presence of the dreamer, we still feel compelled to eternalize the dream...and someday make it a reality. Have our efforts, however, brought us to the point where we believe that by having a black president we have achieved what Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. set out to do or is the dream of full equality more than skin deep?

It was from the early years of the 1600’s when the shackles of slavery clasped the bodies and dreams of black men and women to the ground. It was the sweat from their foreheads that made the fields of cotton and tobacco fertile.

Generations of black men and women were forced to live within the gates of injustice in the land of oppression and though the day came when they no longer had to be subservient to their ‘masters’ and wear the mark of a slave, freedom was still not theirs. They grappled with the realization that even though they no longer served the master, they lived constrained and restricted.

*“But one hundred years later, the Negro still is not free. One hundred years later, the life of the Negro is still sadly crippled by the manacles of segregation and the chains of discrimination. One hundred years later, the Negro lives on a lonely island of poverty in the midst of a vast ocean of material prosperity. One hundred years later, the Negro is still languished in the corners of American society and finds himself an exile in his own land.” - Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*

Such was the paradox that the ‘land of opportunity’ deprived black families of the luxuries of decent working conditions, equal pay and the opportunity to gain the successes of this life.

The dark and narrow road stretched far beyond the eye's sight, but Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. knew. He saw the coming of a new day in the horizon and, so he continued the struggle and strived beyond barriers and limits for he could see that change was approaching.

*'The promised land'* was within reach.

*"The time has come to reaffirm our enduring spirit; to choose our better history; to carry forward that precious gift, that noble idea, passed on from generation to generation: the God-given promise that all are equal, all are free, and all deserve a chance to pursue their full measure of happiness."*

These words rolled off the tongue of Barack Obama, each syllable resounding through the streets of every country in the world, making heads turn to the realization of a new era, an era where values would be reconsidered and contemplation would become habitual before action.

Were these words too familiar, or perhaps familiar enough to make you believe that the destination that Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. endeavored upon was finally here?

Has the time come for Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. to look down on us, and celebrate our success rooted by his appeal?

Barack Obama now leads a country which once turned their backs on his ancestors. He stands firm on his pedestal, speaking words of wisdom, reflecting peace and brotherhood, attempting to bury the days of hatred, animosity and distrust.

Barack Hussein Obama has re-awakened people's consciousness. He has given them the freedom and the right to dream again; to hope and wish for a better tomorrow. It is no longer an outward physical fight to gain equal rights and dignity but an internal struggle to re-awaken America and the world from disillusionment, hopelessness and turning anger and distrust to hope and an ability to wish and dream again.

Malcolm X, Shirley Chisholm, Jessie Jackson and many others, like Barack Obama represent milestones in Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s journey; the journey that led black people to rise above their days of slavery and inequalities and demand a fair chance at life. To hold within them a sense of confidence that comes with pride. To be able to fall into a deep, peaceful sleep only to be awakened to the light of tomorrow, a tomorrow filled with endless possibilities and opportunities that are not hindered by prejudice judgment or false interpretations.

Barack Obama represents the pinnacle of the success of black people all over the world; even though he has reached the mountain top, we still yet have to touch the sky because Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s dream went far beyond a black man taking presidency. His message appealed for every man and woman, every boy and girl, from every race, culture and religion to envision the world as a place where no one is above or beneath you, but that we are the same, that we are here to fulfill a purpose to which a greater being has instilled in us all.

We are still walking the path towards full equality. The milestones we have passed are significant, but there are those amongst who fail to see the significance, who continue to look on the surface as judgment of a person's character and fail to realize that things are more than skin deep.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s dream will forever surround us as a lingering thought. Now, we look to Barack Obama for guidance, a milestone in our journey's road and we ask ourselves will we ever reach the dream of full equality?

*"It took a lot of blood, sweat and tears to get to where we are today, but we have just begun. Today we begin in earnest the work of making sure that the world we leave our children is just a little bit better than the one we inhabit today."* - Barack Obama