

Nelson Mandela: Long Walk to Freedom – Important Questions

Q. What encouraged the policy of apartheid in South Africa?

Ans. South Africa attracted the white people because of its minerals and gems. The war for domination ensued henceforth. After the Anglo-Boer war, the white people started ruling over the native blackskinned South Africans. This system of racial domination i.e. the apartheid was used to exploit the blacks.

Q. What did ‘being free’ mean to Mandela as a boy and as a student?

Ans. As a boy ‘being free’, meant to Nelson Mandela to wander free in fields, to swim freely, and to run through the village. As a student-to stay out at night, to read what he pleased and to go wherever he chose was ‘being free’.

Q. Why is 10th May, 1994 important for South Africa?

Ans. 10th May, 1994 is important for South Africa as the inaugural oath taking ceremony of Nelson Mandela and his colleagues took place on that day. Nelson Mandela became the first black President of South Africa after three centuries of white rule.

Q. What are the twin obligations Nelson Mandela talks about in his speech?

Ans. According to Nelson Mandela, every man has twin obligations—one is towards his family and the other is towards his people and his country. But in the reign of Apartheid if one tried to fulfill his duty towards his people, he was ripped off with his family and home.

Q. What is the dream of Nelson Mandela for the future of South Africa?

Ans. Mandela dreamt that his country should be free from poverty and discrimination. No country man should be oppressed on the basis of colour and creed. He wished the Sun of freedom to shine on his country forever.

Q. What animated Mandela’s life and transformed a frightened young lawyer into a bold criminal?

Ans. It was the desire for the freedom of his people to live their lives with dignity and self-respect that animated his life. It transformed a frightened young man into a bold one. It drove a law abiding attorney to be a criminal. It turned a family loving husband to live like a monk.

Q. What pained Nelson Mandela on becoming the President of South Africa?

Ans. Mandela was pained by his inability to thank his comrades who were unable to see what their sacrifices had brought. He remembered the suffering and courage of thousand of patriots, who fought for the same cause.

Q. Why did Nelson Mandela said, “The oppressed and the oppressor alike are robbed of their humanity.”

Ans. Nelson Mandela said so because the oppressed were robbed, when they suffered all that was against humanity and the oppressor had to kill the good human being within himself before doing anything cruel to the other person.

Q. How does Nelson Mandela define the meaning of ‘courage’ and ‘the brave man’?

Ans. According to Nelson Mandela, courage is not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it. In the same way, the brave man is not he who does not feel afraid, but he who conquers that fear.

Q. What Mandela meant when he is simply the sum of all those African patriots who had gone before him?

Ans. Nelson Mandela was a patriot. Like all other patriots, he felt the need of political independence and also underwent tortures by the whites of his own country. He included three persons in his list who were role model for him.

Q. Explain Mandela’s experience of freedom as a child and as an adult.

Ans. As a child he was free he was free to run in the fields, free to swim, ran through the fields at will, everything seemed to be good and exciting. But as he gradually grew up he realised his childhood freedom was actually no freedom. As he reached adulthood he realised his freedom has already been taken away. He observed that not only his but that of others’ freedom too was missing. Mandela thought that the chains on others was a chain on him also. His desire, that everyone should live with dignity and self-respect, propelled him to fight till the end to get freedom.

Q. How did the desire for the freedom of his people change Nelson Mandela’s life?

Ans. The desire for the freedom of his people totally animated Nelson Mandela’s life. He was transformed from a frightened young man to a bold one. The desire turned a law abiding attorney to a criminal. A family loving husband was turned into a man without a home, changed a life-loving man into a monk. Mandela was no more virtuous as self sacrificing, but he could not even enjoy poor and limited freedom. He felt himself robbed when he came to know that his people were not free. He felt the slavery of his people as slavery of his own. It was this desire for the freedom of his people to live their lives with dignity and self-respect that changed his life. He was allowed freedom when he knew his

people were not free. Freedom was indivisible. The chains on anyone of his people were the chains on all of them, the chains on all his people were the chains on him also. He felt the pain and fought for them.

Q. How did Nelson Mandela describe the scene of the inauguration?

Ans. The oath taking ceremony of Nelson Mandela was a historic occasion. Dignitaries and representatives of 140 countries came to attend it. The ceremony took place in the lovely sandstone amphitheatre. He had gone there with his daughter Zenani. First, Mr. De Klerk the 2nd Deputy President, then after Thabo Mbeki the 1st Deputy President were sworn in. Nelson Mandela took the oath as the President. He pledged to obey and uphold constitution and devote himself to the well-being of the republic and its people. After the ceremony, the display of military force was carried out. Finally, the jets left off smoke trails of different colours e.g. black, red, green, blue and golden which were the colours of the New South African flag. In the end, two National Anthems were sung by the whites and the blacks. It was a jubilant moment for him.