

Mahatma Gandhi- The Peacemaker

Why in news?

In an age of increasing globalisation of selfishness, there is an urgent need to practise the Gandhian social and political philosophy in order re-evaluate the concept of peace.

What according to Gandhi is the concept of peace?

Peace is the result of a long process of compassionate dialogue and tireless caring across cultural, religious, and political boundaries.

- Gandhi considered non-violence as an instrument of conflict resolution and universal harmony.
- It was also an essentially moral exercise.
- He viewed non-violence essentially as an ethical commitment and a constructive political action.
- According to him, a nonviolent person is bound to say which side is just, when the occasion arises.
- The most appropriate way to interpret Gandhi's approval of violence over cowardice is to consider him as a consistent thinker on peace.
- Gandhi wrote that he would advise violence where there is only a choice between cowardice and violence.
- But he believed that nonviolence is infinitely superior to violence and forgiveness is manlier than punishment.
- Mahatma Gandhi was attentive of the fact that world peace is not possible without the spiritual growth of humanity.

What was Gandhi's task of the political?

- Gandhi believed that in the absence of a concrete ethical foundation, the political could not function democratically and non-violently.
- For Gandhi, the essential task of the political was to bring moral progress.
- While Hitler believed in eliminating morality from politics, for Gandhi, the moral legitimacy of non-violence is a strategy of peacemaking.
- Gandhi advocated an awareness of the essential unity of humanity that required a critical self-examination.
- He propagated a move from egocentricity towards a shared humanity.

Gandhi pointed out that the golden way is to be friends with the world and to regard the whole human family as one.

Is it possible to keep Gandhi alive and vibrant in our classrooms?

- Gandhi's idea of non-violence was a realistic hope, armed with a dose of practical idealism.
- Gandhi's writings were inseparable from his politico-spiritual experiments, his self-reflections and vulnerabilities, the moral churning he passed through throughout his life.
- A profound truth of Gandhi was that ahimsa or peace would be impossible without sarvodaya, the economic and social development of a community as a whole.
- The richness of inner abundance or soul force was Gandhi's truth.
- Through the creative vibrancy of engaged pedagogy, we need to encourage our students to reflect on Gandhi with authentic politico-cultural and existential-spiritual questions.

References

1. <https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/mahatma-gandhi-the-peacemaker/article65962800.ece?homepage=true>
2. <https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/lead/the-mahatma-as-an-intercultural-indian/article3274735ece>
3. <https://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/keeping-gandhi-alive-in-the-classroom-8183916/>

