

About Nelson Mandela

The South African activist and former president **Nelson Mandela (1918-2013)** helped bring an end to apartheid and has been a global advocate for human rights. A member of the African National Congress party beginning in the 1940s, he was a leader of both peaceful protests and armed resistance against the white minority's oppressive regime in a racially divided South Africa. His actions landed him in prison for nearly three decades and made him the face of the antiapartheid movement both within his country and internationally. Released in 1990, he participated in the eradication of apartheid and in 1994 became the first black president of South Africa, forming a multiethnic government to oversee the country's transition. After retiring from politics in 1999, he remained a devoted champion for peace and social justice in his own nation and around the world until his death in 2013 at the age of 95.

Long Walk to Freedom Summary

This chapter is an extract from the autobiography of Nelson Mandela (born- 18 July, 1918), the first Black President of South Africa. It begins with the description of their inaugural ceremony which took place on the 10th of May 1994 where the entire nation along with many international leaders embraced the victory of a newly and fairly elected government. It involved speeches by the President and the two Deputy Presidents followed by an impressive air show of fighter jets and helicopters. Long ago, in the first decade of the twentieth century, white supremacy introduced the system of apartheid and made life a living hell for the dark-skinned population. It gave rise to one of the most inhumane societies of the world. Many people have struggled and sacrificed for basic human rights. The author expressed his desire to thank all those freedom fighters who couldn't live to see this autumn day. He referred to the citizens as the greatest asset of the country. It is these people he gathered his courage from. Mandela believes that courageous is not the man who is fearless, but the man who has overcome fear. He also mentioned the two responsibilities every human has and how in order to fulfil his obligation towards the society, his obligation towards his family was neglected. He became a man of people when he realised that the idea of freedom was an illusion for him and people like him. It was then he joined the African National Congress and fought for his rights till he became the first black President of the nation. According to him, the oppressor is as much a prisoner as the oppressed. As soon as the former robs the oppressed of their freedom he, himself gets robbed of his humanity. Thus, the oppressor too, is not free.