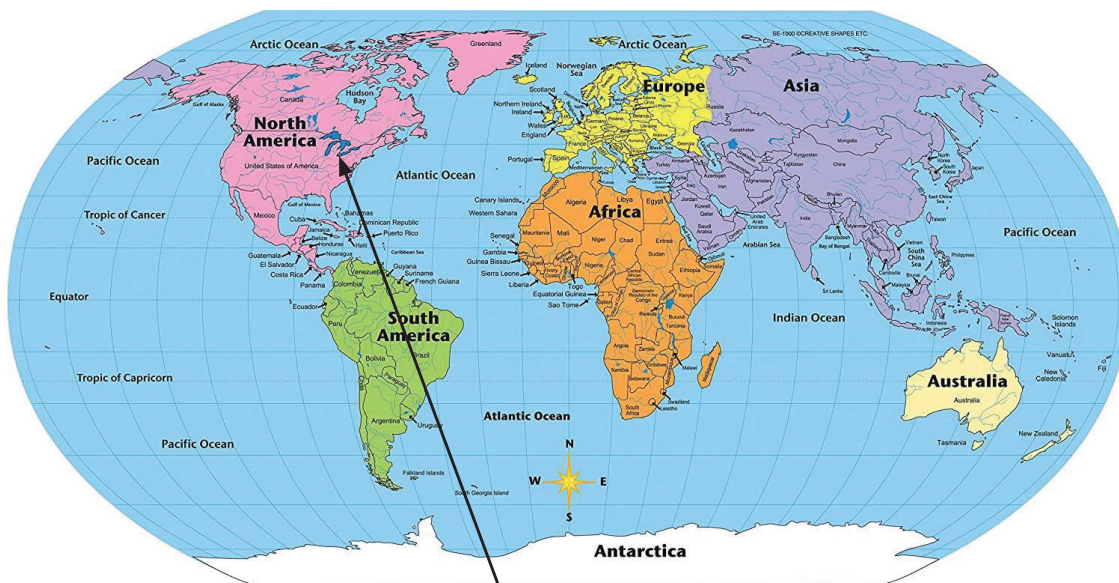
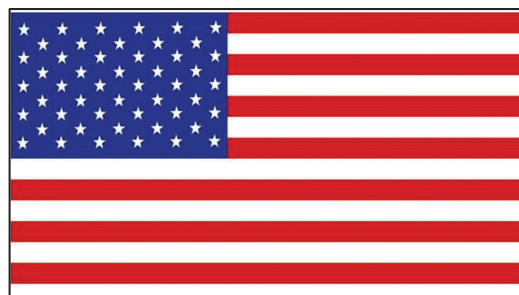


THE REV. DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

Martin

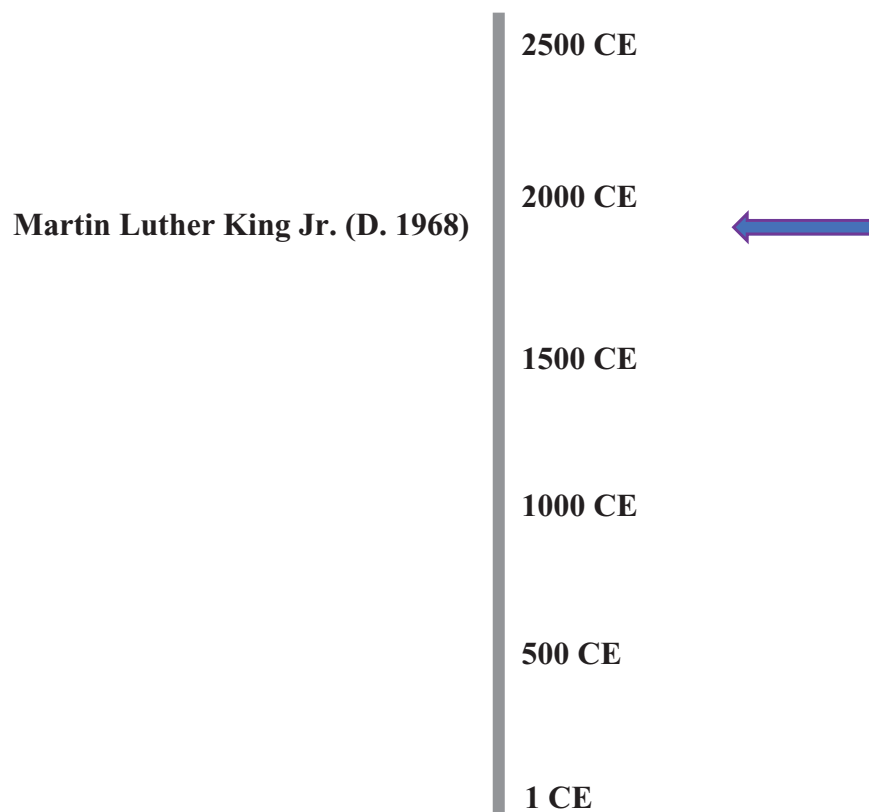


The United States, Martin Luther King Jr.'s Country



The Flag of the United States

Luther King Jr.



The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

This is the story of The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. We remember him during the time of the color green. Dr. King was born on January 15, 1929, in Atlanta, Georgia. His mother and father called him Michael after his father, but when he was five his father changed both their names to “Martin Luther King” to honor the great German Reformer from the 16th century. That German reformer fought to make the world better, and Martin and his father did too.

Martin had an older sister and younger brother. His father gathered the family for dinner every night at 6:00 pm and led them in lively discussions about God and the world. “Daddy King” felt it was important to discuss serious things with his children, even when they were very young. They often talked about how all people should be treated with respect.

Martin’s mother also talked with the children about important things. When Martin was six, his best friend, who was White, told him that his parents said they couldn’t play together anymore. This confused Martin. He became sad and angry. His mother took him on her

lap and told him about slavery and prejudice. “Prejudice” is when someone doesn’t like you just because they don’t like the color of your skin. She reminded him that there are places in the Bible where the people of God overcame slavery and prejudice. He could too.

When Martin grew up, he became a Baptist minister like his father and grandfather. He also studied for many years, and became a Doctor of Theology. That’s why he is known as “Dr. King.” He also worked hard for the dream that Black Americans would no longer be treated differently because of the color of their skin.

No one knew how real change might begin, until one day in 1955 in Montgomery, Alabama. A Black woman named Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on a bus for a White person. This changed everything.

In those days, buses were divided into White, mixed, and Black sections. Rosa Parks was sitting in the mixed section, but by law Black people still had to move to the back of the bus when told to. The bus driver told her to move to make room for some White people who got

on the bus. The other Black people moved, but Rosa didn't. She wasn't tired, she said, only tired of giving in to unjust laws. She was arrested and Black Americans became angry when they heard about it.

Dr. King helped the Black people of Montgomery fight back peacefully. They stopped taking the bus. This way the bus company lost money. Black people walked to work for 381 days, sometimes many miles.

Do you know what happened? The city changed the law that forced Black people to sit in the back of the bus. They could sit anywhere they wanted to. This was the first of many protests Dr. King organized that changed America forever.

Working for change is never easy. It takes courage and faith. Many people were mean to Dr. King and his family. Someone tried to blow up their house. Many tried to scare them with their words, but also with knives and guns. Dr. King was arrested and placed in jail 29 times for trying to change things by protesting against unjust laws.

In 1963 a huge crowd of people came to Washington, D.C. to march for jobs and freedom. That's when Dr. King made his most famous speech.

He said, "I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not to be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character." This was also the year when he won the Nobel Peace Prize at age 34. The next year the Civil Rights Act turned his dream into law, and the next year the Voting Rights Act was passed, but there was still more work to be done.

Dr. King continued to travel the country working for change until one day in 1968 he was killed. He was in Memphis, Tennessee, to lead another protest. He was buried in Atlanta, where he was born.

We remember Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. because of his dream that Black Americans would be treated the same as everyone else and because he courageously traveled everywhere to make this dream come true.

I wonder what part of Dr. King's story you like the best?

I wonder what part is the most important?

I wonder what part is about you or what part you are in?

I wonder if we could leave any of the story out and still have all that we need?