**Biography**

**Martin Luther King, Jr.**, (January 15, 1929-April 4, 1968) was the second child and first son to the **Reverend** Martin Luther King and Alberta Williams King. King’s father was born “Michael King”, and Martin Luther King, Jr., was originally named “Michael King, Jr.”, until the family traveled to Europe in 1934 and visited Germany. His father soon changed both of their names to Martin in honor of the German Protestant leader Martin Luther. He had an older sister Willie Christine and a younger brother Alfred Daniel.

His grandfather began the family’s long **tenure** as pastors of the Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, serving from 1914 to 1931; his father has served from then until the present, and from 1960 until his death Martin Luther acted as co-pastor. Martin Luther attended segregated public schools in Georgia, graduating from high school at the age of fifteen. Martin Luther King, Jr. was a very bright student and a talented speaker. When he was nineteen he graduated from Morehouse College in Atlanta with a BA degree in Sociology. In 1951, he graduated from the Crozer Theological Seminary with a BA of **Divinity**, which qualified him to become a pastor of the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church. King also received his Ph.D. in Systematic Theology from Boston University in 1955.

In Boston he met and married Coretta Scott on June 18, 1953. They had four children: Yolanda Denise (born 1955), Martin Luther III (born 1957), Dexter Scott (born 1961) and Bernice Albertine (born 1963).

## In 1954, Martin Luther King accepted the pastorale of the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama. Always a strong worker for civil rights for members of his race, King was, by this time, a member of the executive committee of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the leading organization of its kind in the nation. He was ready, then, early in December, 1955, to accept the leadership of the first great Negro nonviolent demonstration of contemporary times in the United States, the bus boycott that lasted 382 days. On December 21, 1956, after the Supreme Court of the United States had declared unconstitutional the laws requiring segregation on buses, Negroes and whites rode the buses as equals. During these days of boycott, King was arrested, his home was bombed, he was subjected to personal abuse, but at the same time he emerged as a Negro leader of the first rank. In 1957 he was elected president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, an organization formed to provide new leadership for the civil rights movement. The ideals for this organization he took from Christianity. The person who influenced him most was the Indian leader, Mohatma Gandhi. Martin liked his ideas about peaceful protest. Starting in 1965, King began to express doubts about the United States’ role in the Vietnam War.

In the eleven-year period between 1957 and 1968, King traveled over six million miles and spoke over twenty-five hundred times, appearing wherever there was injustice, protest, and action; and meanwhile he wrote five books as well as numerous articles. In these years, he led a massive protest in Birmingham, Alabama, that caught the attention of the world, providing what he called a coalition of **conscience** and inspiring his "Letter from a Birmingham Jail", a manifesto of the Negro revolution; he planned the drives in Alabama for the registration of Negroes as voters; he directed the peaceful march on Washington, D.C., of 250,000 people to whom he delivered his address, “l Have a Dream”, he **conferred** with President John F. Kennedy and campaigned for President Lyndon B. Johnson; he was arrested upwards of twenty times and **assaulted** at least four times; he was awarded five honorary degrees; was named Man of the Year by *Time* magazine in 1963; and became not only the symbolic leader of American blacks but also a world figure.  
 On October 14, 1964, at the age of thirty-five King became the youngest person to receive the Nobel Peace Prize for his work to end racial segregation and racial discrimination through civil disobedience and other non-violent means.

When notified of his selection, he announced that he would turn over the prize money of $54,123 to the furtherance of the civil rights movement.  
 In the evening of April 4, 1968, while standing on the balcony of his motel room in Memphis, Tennessee, where he was to lead a protest march in sympathy with striking garbage workers of that city, he was assassinated. The funeral was held on 9 April 1968 at Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta.

## In 1980, the Department of Interior designated King’s boyhood home in Atlanta and several nearby buildings the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site. More than 730 cities in the United States have streets named after King.

## At the White House Rose Garden on November 2, 1983, President Ronald Reagan signed a bill creating a federal holiday to honor King. Observed for the first time on January 20, 1986, it is called Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. Following President George H. W. Bush’s 1992 proclamation, the holiday is observed on the third Monday of January each year, near the time of King’s birthday. On January 17, 2000, for the first time, Martin Luther King Jr. Day was officially observed in all fifty U.S. states.

## reverend- преподобный

tenure-cрок пребывание в должности

divinity-богословие

conscience-совесть

confer- совещаться

assault-нападать

**Do you believe that**…

* The third Monday in January is a federal legal holiday commemorating Martin Luther King’s birthday.
* Time magazine chose him as Man of the year in 1963.
* He wasn’t an educated person.
* He was named Michel but late his name was changed to Martin Luther
* He was against the war in Vietnam
* He was 35 years old when he won The Nobel Peace Prize in 1964-the youngest man to ever receive this high honour.
* He didn’t have any children.
* The person who influenced him most was Nelson Mandela.