

Gandhi managed to repress violence -- which was bound to explode one day, and it did explode. And in that explosion he himself was assassinated. Strange, a man who has been teaching non-violence his whole life is assassinated.

In fact, before Gandhi was assassinated, in his diary, he mentions many times, "Now I would like God to take me away from life." When he was young he had written in his autobiography, "I would like to live one hundred and twenty-five years." And he repeated it again and again until India became independent.

When India became independent, his followers... they were not really his followers, because none of them was listening to what he was saying. He was against smoking, but almost all his political followers, the leaders, were smokers; they were all drinkers. His successor, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, was a meat-eater; Indira too, was a meat-eater. Strange, a country of non-violent people, a country of vegetarians has been for the last forty years almost continuously ruled by a single family who are not vegetarians. Now again, Indira's son is there on the throne, and he is not a vegetarian either.

So those disciples were not listening to him, but they still kept him high in the sky because he had immense influence over the Indian masses. The Indian masses were not interested in his politics, they were interested in his mahatmahood, his saintliness.

His followers were not interested in his mahatmahood. They all laughed behind his back, they thought that he was a crackpot. But they were interested in political power, and that man had the whole country in his hands. So till these political leaders came to power, they went on listening to Gandhi. The moment they were in power, nobody bothered about Gandhi.

Gandhi said, "I have become absolutely useless. Nobody listens to me, nobody is ready to follow my advice. It would be good if God took me away from life. Now I do not want to live for one hundred and twenty-five years."

Asking God to release you from your body is a religious way of being suicidal. He could not commit

GANDHI



And Religion

suicide, because that would go against his whole philosophy. But he was waiting for somebody else to do the dirty job. And one man, Nathuram Godse, did it.

The last words of Gandhi when he was assassinated were, "Ah, God!" My feeling is that he felt immensely relieved. He was in a constant torture after the freedom. First the explosion of violence all over the country -- one million people dead, many more crippled, blinded, their hands cut, their legs cut; many more

made beggars because their houses were burned....

And this man was thinking that after independence there would be an era of non-violence, peace. His intentions were good, but his understanding was poor. His intentions were good, but how to implement those intentions in reality, he was absolutely unaware.

He was not a meditator. He used to pray every day, but prayer is not meditation. Prayer is faith, belief in God. You start with a lie! You don't know whether God exists or not; or even if he exists, whether he bothers about prayers or not.

Gandhi's religion is just the religion of the mediocre masses, it is not the religion of an enlightened man. So he was praying every day, his followers were praying every day, and all their prayers resulted in chaos. That was the answer from God. Forty years of prayer, discipline, celibacy....

And about small things Gandhi was really nasty. He wouldn't allow anybody to drink tea. In his ashram tea was prohibited, coffee was impossible to bring in. The question of alcohol did not arise.

For forty years the people followed all kinds of ascetic disciplines, prayed morning and evening -- and the answer was millions of people either murdered or half-murdered; and Gandhi himself assassinated. If this is the result of practising non-violence, then I don't think there is any difference practising violence.

-Osho, *From Death to Deathlessness* # 15

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