



## Mains Practice Question

**Q.** Non-violence, in its active sense, includes truth and fearlessness. Discuss. (150 words)

11 Feb, 2019 GS Paper 4 Theoretical Questions

### Approach

- Introduce with different perspective of Gandhi's non-violence.
- Discuss how it comprised of truth and fearlessness.

### Introduction

- Gandhi foresaw the impending reign of violence which, according to him, was the inevitable product of modern materialistic, sensate civilization. So he advocated a total rejection of this violence-procreating civilization. He, at the same time, identified and projected ahimsa or nonviolence as the only force capable of confronting violence and urged humanity for a conscious implantation of the principle of nonviolence into the very centre of our being and existence.
- He explained Ahimsa in **negative** and **positive** terms.
  - The negative view of ahimsa implies that -one should not harm anyone by thought, word or deed.
  - The positive view:
    - It does not just mean that one avoids injuring others. One should also show overflowing love to mankind and all living beings.
    - It is closely linked to truth, and to man's search for God. As God is truth and love and as love is ahimsa, man can realize God only by pursuing ahimsa. Gandhi regards truth and non-violence to be inseparable.

### Body

Non-violence, in its active sense, includes truth and fearlessness and many more:

- Many prerequisites are necessary for steadfast pursuit of ahimsa. Foremost among these are truthfulness and fearlessness. Men need only fear God and no one else.
- Ahimsa implies total nonviolence, no physical violence, and no passive violence. Gandhi translates Ahimsa as love. Because according to him if you have love towards somebody, and you respect that person, then you are not going to do any harm to that person.
- For Gandhi, nonviolence is the greatest force at the disposal of mankind. It is mightier than any weapon of mass destruction. It is superior to brute force. It is a living force of power and no one has been or will ever be able to measure its limits or its extend.
- Gandhi's nonviolence is the search for truth. Truth is the most fundamental aspect in Gandhi's Philosophy of nonviolence. His whole life has been "experiments of truth". It was in this course of his pursuit of truth that Gandhi discovered nonviolence, which he further explained in his Autobiography thus "Ahimsa is the basis of the search for truth."
- He insists that non-violence is not a creed of inaction. Nor is it for the weak or the timid. Non-Violence does not signify meek acceptance of evil. It is better to be violent than to be cowardly. Gandhi naturally feared that ahimsa may become a convenient alibi for avoiding confrontation with

the British ruler.

### **Conclusion**

Vengeance is better than meek surrender to superior force. But forgiveness is the best for it shows strength and courage. In sum, many qualities – such as truthfulness, selfishness, absence of anger, pride and hate, benevolence, altruism, courage, magnanimity, humility and total submission to God—are comprised in non-violence.

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