



Mains Practice Question

Q. Mahatma Gandhi created a moral system which also served as the framework for his political practice. Elucidate. (150 Words)

05 Aug, 2021 GS Paper 4 Theoretical Questions

Approach

- Start with writing about Gandhi ji's moral values system.
- Explain how, giving examples, the Gandhian political practices were based on his moral system.
- Conclude suitably.

Introduction

Gandhiji was not only an academic thinker, but as a mass leader, he was concerned more with practice than with theory. He had to communicate with untutored masses. Although his thoughts are not illogical, they are based on premises whose truth is taken for granted.

These premises are essentially the core moral values to which Gandhi subscribes. Gandhi has a feeling of inner certainty about them. Based on such values, Gandhi has created a moral system and Gandhi's ethics and his political action are intertwined

Body

Gandhi ji's Moral Value

- **Faith in God:** Gandhi has a deep and abiding faith in God, and has written extensively about his conception of God. He regards God as an impersonal force and benevolent governor of the world. God is present (or immanent) **in every human soul.**
- **Ethical Conduct:** Men have to uphold the right, regardless of the personal consequences they may face. Gandhi urged Satyagrhis to adopt these virtues
- **Truth:** It is an ideal of human conduct; it shows how men should order their social, political and economic world.
 - It applies to entities such as political or social causes and movements.
- **Ends and Means:** Gandhi ji firmly believed that even for attaining noble objectives, men have to only adopt good means. No good can follow from bad deeds, even if they are well intentioned.
- **Ahimsa (Non-violence):** Ahimsa requires complete self-purification. It also needs faith in the existence of the soul which is distinct from the body. Ahimsa is described as 'soul force', 'power of Atman', 'power of love' and utter selflessness.
 - Anger and hatred are the opposite poles of ahimsa. Hatred is a very subtle form of violence. Men should rather win over their enemies by love.
 - One should not reply violence with counter violence.
 - In sum, many qualities — such as truthfulness, selflessness, absence of anger, pride and hate, benevolence, altruism, courage, magnanimity, humility and total submission to God — are comprised in nonviolence.

Political Practices

- **Non-violent Non-cooperation:** Gandhi advocated that evil should be tackled by means of non-violent non-cooperation with it. One should hate the evil deed but not its perpetrator.
 - The logic for this belief is that men are the children of the same God, and that attacking even a single individual is an attack on the whole of humanity.
- **Satyagrah:** A Satyagrahi is the foot soldier of the passive resistance movement. He has to embody the virtues of truth and nonviolence. The effectiveness of the civil disobedience movements will depend on him; he will also be on display as a model of Gandhian values. Gandhi prescribes various virtues which a Satyagrahi needs to cultivate.
 - The qualities which a Satyagrahi has to cultivate are -
 - Humility
 - Silence
 - Renunciation
 - Self-sacrifice
 - Thought control
 - Non-violence
 - Universal benevolence
 - Non use of drinks and drugs

Conclusion

The world may have seen Gandhi as a freedom fighter and political leader, but in his heart he was a 'sadhak' - one who is in search of God. He believed that the service of humankind was the best way to realise God, which was the driving force behind most of his rules.