

# Remembering Mandela

- Daniel Rosenberg

This past week the world lost one of the great ones. Nelson Mandela was a man of such great importance to the world, it almost cannot be measured. The greatest, and saddest, piece of Mandela's story, to me, is how much he had to sacrifice to receive justice. To languish in a prison for 27 years is just unthinkable. What he achieved afterwards, after he had been wrongly imprisoned for so long, is incredible.

The reason Mandela's legacy is so pertinent today is because of the turmoil in the world around us. There are reports every day in countries run by violent, hateful leaders, who suppress the voices of their subjects. Whether it's in North Korea, Syria, or any other country with an oppressive regime, it's too easy to focus on the atrocities being committed. What gets lost is the individuals; the men and women who stand up for what they believe in, and call out for justice amid a sea of hatred.

Nelson Mandela proves that it doesn't matter your background, or the color of your skin; what matters is your voice. What matters is your willingness to stand up for what's right despite seemingly insurmountable odds. The story of Nelson Mandela demonstrates that a single man can have a huge impact, but only if he's willing to do whatever it takes.

Perhaps just as impressive as Mandela's moral compass and incredible desire for equality is his forgiveness of those who had wronged him. Whether it be his many jailers, the government that practiced apartheid, or the many police officers who had brutalized the blacks of Rhodesia, Mandela was always willing to forgive in the pursuit of peace. That's something we can all learn from. Revenge isn't usually the best medicine, especially in regards to politics. Whether on a local, national, or international scale, frequently whenever there is a change in power, the victors attempt to exact revenge on their rivals. But as the success Mandela had in abolishing apartheid teaches us the most productive path is not vengeance, but cooperation. After all, Mandela didn't win the Nobel Peace Prize alone, rather with his former enemy F.W. de Klerk. The Democrats and Republicans could learn a thing or two from Mandela.

The world lost a great leader last week, the likes of which the world will probably never see again. What's important is that we remember his legacy; we remember all that he stood for; we remember that we all must strive for equality; and that one man can make a difference. All it takes is one voice to speak out when something is wrong, and to ask for the rights deserved by every man.