

MAHAVIRA

The Hero of Nonviolence

SUMMARY

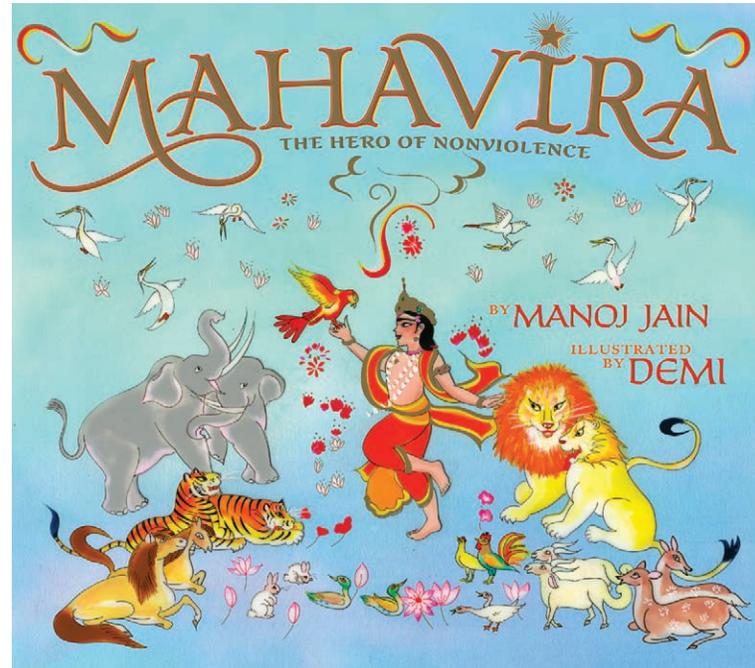
- Mahavira was a young prince who renounced all his wealth and power to become a monk
- He lived in India during the sixth century B.C.E., at the same time as Siddhartha Gautama, the founder of Buddhism
- Mahavira became a great spiritual teacher within the Jain religion, showing kindness to every living being and emphasizing the practice of nonviolence, compassion, and forgiveness
- Today over 10 million Jains around the world follow his example, practicing a vegetarian diet and promoting ecological practices
- Mahavira's teachings on nonviolence also influenced Mahatma Gandhi, who in turn influenced Martin Luther King, Jr.
- *Mahavira: The Hero of Nonviolence* is the story of this remarkable Jain's life

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Manoj Jain is a physician and widely published writer on both medical and faith-based subjects. He is a frequent contributor to the *Washington Post* and the *Huffington Post*, and his work has also appeared on NPR, CNN, and the *New York Times*. Committed to following Mahavira's teaching of nonviolence, Dr. Jain co-founded the annual Gandhi-King Conference with Arun Gandhi, the grandson of Mahatma Gandhi. He lives with his wife and three children in Memphis, TN.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Demi is the award-winning author of over 130 bestselling children's books. Her titles have sold over half a million copies. *The Empty Pot* was selected by former First Lady Barbara Bush in 1990 as one of the books to be read on the ABC Radio Network Program *Mrs. Bush's Story Time*, sponsored by the Children's Literacy Initiative. Demi's book *Gandhi* was named a *New York Times* Best Illustrated Book and received an Oppenheim Toy Portfolio Platinum Award. In addition, she represented the United States at the First International Children's Book Conference in Beijing, China, in 1992. She lives with her husband in Yarrow Point, WA.



Winner of the "Children's Religious" category of
The USA "Best Books 2014" Awards

"A beautifully illustrated children's story based upon the life of a teacher of the Jain faith. With an illustrative style and child-friendly, simple-to-understand text, this book will enchant children and adults."

—*ForeWord Reviews*

"A deeply religious wisdom tale of Jainism that empowers children and adults everywhere to imagine a better world for all. The brilliant gold-framed illustrations convey the exotic Indian background to the teachings and life story of Mahavira."

—*Children's Bookwatch*

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Wisdom Tales
Stories from Around the World

MAHAVIRA: THE HERO OF NONVIOLENCE — WISDOM TALES DISCUSSION GUIDE

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What does Mahavira's name mean? Why was he given this name?
2. Mahavira was an Indian prince. Why did he renounce all his wealth and power?
3. What are the three spiritual "jewels" of (1) right faith, (2) right knowledge, and (3) right conduct?
4. How did the story of Mahavira and the demon elephant give rise to Forgiveness Day? In what way is this day similar to Thanksgiving Day?
5. The three main beliefs of Jainism are (1) nonviolence, (2) non-absolutism (or pluralism), and (3) non-possessiveness (or detachment). Give examples of how Mahavira practiced these teachings during his life.
6. Why are Jains vegetarians? Do you think it is wrong to eat meat?
7. During the festival of Diwali, Jains celebrate the day Mahavira died. Why do they not mourn Mahavira's passing?
8. How did Mahatma Gandhi use nonviolence in his campaign against British rule in India?
9. How did Martin Luther King Jr. use nonviolence to help bring equal rights for African-Americans in the USA? Can you think of a case where it might be necessary to use violence?
10. Is it possible for there to be a world where no one gets hurt, where no one is teased or bullied, and where there is no fear or anger?

