



# **King: A Photobiography of Martin Luther King, Jr.**

*Charles Johnson, Bob Adelman*

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Man, martyr, and myth--an American giant in a photobiography of unprecedented scope and depth

King is the first true photobiography of a hero's journey. Never before has his life been so richly chronicled from so many different points of view. A powerful collection of photographic images combined with text by National Book Award-winning writer Charles Johnson detail the pivotal events of King's public life--as well as his family life--in a rich and stirring format. In this book, we see Martin Luther King, Jr., in all his aspects: as son and student, husband and father, powerful preacher and courageous leader of the civil rights movement, martyr for the cause of racial justice, and finally American icon.

Photographer Bob Adelman and photo editor Robert Phelan have compiled an impressive and comprehensive array of images depicting this great man's life and times. We see King standing before a packed congregation at the Dexter Baptist Church during the bus boycott in Montgomery, Alabama, or in his own backyard playing with his children. In one moment we observe King peering calmly through the bars of the Birmingham jail after one of his arrests; the next, strapping sandals on the feet of his young daughter. There is the tragic scene in Memphis seconds after his assassination, with anguished witnesses pointing in the direction of the gunshots, and the aftermath in Atlanta, a crush of mourners following his horse-drawn casket through the streets. And of course, the indelible image of King speaking the immortal words "I have a dream" on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial. Through hundreds of photographs, we see a country being changed, an era and legacy being formed, but above all, we are given a privileged look at the man himself--at his most human and humanitarian.

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Amazon.com Review. The legacy of Martin Luther King Jr. and the civil rights movement is well documented in prose, but for sheer emotional power, nothing can compare to the pictures from this era. It's a challenge for a writer's words to match the force of Bob Adelman's photographs in this book, but novelist and essayist Charles Johnson rises to the task in his treatment of King's life and death, as well as the heroic struggle of African Americans in the United States. Johnson, the author of *Middle Passage* (which won the 1990 National Book Award), offers an exceptional account of Martin Luther King Jr. (January 15, 1929 – April 4, 1968) was an American Christian minister and activist who became the most visible spokesperson and leader in the Civil Rights Movement from 1955 until his assassination in 1968. Born in Atlanta, Georgia, King is best known for advancing civil rights through nonviolence and civil disobedience, inspired by his Christian beliefs and the nonviolent activism of Mahatma Gandhi.