

Nelson Mandela – In His Own Words – From Freedom to the Future – Tributes and Speeches. Little Brown 2003.

None of us who witnessed Nelson Mandela's walk to freedom in 1990 will ever forget it, nor lose our sense of awareness that a local human event was occurring which would have worldwide repercussions. That Mandela became President of a free South Africa, ensured its transition from oppression to freedom, and then entered a well-deserved retirement retaining his over-arching moral and ethical superiority, his reputation enhanced, makes him the stuff of legend.

But the life of Nelson Mandela is much more than momentous occasions that were witnessed by millions across the world. This collection of his speeches and addresses, together with moving words penned about him in prose and poetry, shows the breadth and depth of the man; and all of us lucky enough to have heard him speak can hear that matchless voice as we read the words.

Some of these texts possess a quality that is spiritual and timeless, others are of a more timely and transient nature, but the combination of them all is a powerful literary collection which perfectly complements Mandela's autobiography Long Walk to Freedom.

For those who cherish freedom, for those who revelled in the creation of a free South Africa, and for those who feel that their own lives have been enhanced by having lived at the same time as Nelson Mandela, this is a collection to treasure.

Rabbi Dr Charles H Middleburgh