

# Learning from the Past Paves the Way for the Future.

Outline:

## 1- Introductory Remarks:

Past carries the best lessons of life, it highlights the mistakes and failures of history; thereby, learning from the past paves the way for the future.

## 2- How learning from the past paves the way for the future.

i) Past acts as a guiding principle, hence, after learning from the past, it becomes easier to shape future

→ Alexander became the great when he learnt from the failures of his predecessors.

ii) Mistakes of the past give a chance to become perfect.

→ Mahmood Ghaznavi won when he mullied over his past blunders.

iii) Nations that learn from the lessons of the past are bound to succeed.

→ China becomes the fastest-growing country when it learns that restricting market is not helping.

iv) Learning from the past is necessary to avoid failure in the future.

→ The Nokia collapsed as it neglected the lesson of the past 'Innovation is the key to success.'

v) Learning from the past makes one immaculate and infallible.

Abraham Lincoln learnt from the example of Genghis Khan that tyranny can never be good for peaceful coexistence.

vi) Past provides an opportunity to critically evaluate the history, thereby, it paves the path for the future.

Muslims in the subcontinent got freedom when they paid heed to the wisdom of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, Allama Iqbal, and Quaid-e-Azam.

vii) Past experiences induce empathy and sympathy, whereby a person is able to shape a brighter future.

Abdul Sattar Edhi learnt from his experiences and became one of the most celebrated philanthropist.

viii) Past acts as a mirror, thereby, that hides no pitfalls, thereby, it trods path for the future.

→ Thomas Edison succeeded to make bulb after learning from his 999 mistakes.

ix) Learning from the past leads to prosperity and growth.

→ European nations touches the height of glory when they learnt from the past.

x) A key factor behind <sup>one's</sup> success is one's ability of learning from the past.

3- Measures that should be taken to promote the culture of 'learning from the past'?

i) Curriculum that bolsters creativity and critical thinking through activity-based learning is a sine qua non.

→ Activities that prove the past precedents.

ii) Renowned successful people who learnt from their past must be invited to schools educational institutions and other organisations.

4- Conclusion.

## Learning from the Past Paves the Way

“ for the Future.

Past is like a teacher who tells what brings success and what causes failure.”

(Will Durant)

The above-mentioned words of Will Durant, an American author, clearly depict how important is one's past. Be it an individual's past or a nation's, it carries a great significance. Past has both the successes and failures. Learning from the past paves the way for the future. It guides <sup>in</sup> to shaping the future in an immaculate and infallible manner. It acts as a compass that clears the future course. Past has the best lessons of the history. It hides nothing. It provides an opportunity to evaluate things critically and meticulously. History is replete with examples which substantiate that learning from the past paves the path for the future. For instance, Alexander of Macedonia became the great only when he learnt from the mistakes of his predecessors in the Persian Empire. Mahmood Ghaznavi succeeded finally when he knew his mistakes ~~attempted~~ committed.

by him in his earlier war-attempts. On the same pattern, China's case study also validates the fact. China becomes able to bring 800 million people out of poverty when its leadership acknowledges the past-mistake of 'limiting its market' for foreigners. Simply put, learning from the past is a key to success; it leads to prosperity and makes future brighter and brilliant. Hence, the art of 'learning from the past' must be taught in educational institutions and organisational setups.

Now, if one probes into the question how learning from the past paves the path for the future, what comes to one's mind first is the fact that past acts as a guiding principle. Like a good mentor, past teaches ~~the~~ individuals and nation what is to do and what is not to do. It tells what is bad and what is good for the future. It brings clarity in life through bringing the failures and success of others in front of us. The example of Alexander of Macedonia is a great evidence of the

above-stated words. He became the great Alexander when he studied the stories of his predecessors. ~~After~~ Before expanding the Persian Empire, first he brought about innovation and creativity in military weapons. He revolutionized the arms of that time, for he knew the reason of failure his elders — lack of innovation. He learnt from their mistakes. Thereby, it became easier for him to shape a brighter future of the Persian Empire. The example clearly validate that learning from the past paves path for the future.

On the <sup>same</sup> pattern, learning from the past mistakes leads to perfection <sup>in the future</sup>. Past highlights the blunders and pitfalls committed by individuals and nations. It clears the air, and makes things more visible and lucid. To justify, the famous ~~17~~ seventeen attempts of Mehmood Ghorznavi are there. Mehmood Ghorznavi failed sixteen times in his attack on <sup>the</sup> Somnat temple, but at the 17<sup>th</sup> try, he became victor. The reason was simple behind his success: he learnt from his mistakes.

He mulled over his shortcomings and failures, and found the new ways of doing the same. Subsequently, after learning from his past experiences, he triumphed the temple of Somnat. From the given case study, hence, it can be asserted that learning from the past paves the path for the future.

It is evident that nations which learn from the past are confined to succeed and flourish. Simply because the art of learning from the past helps them to avoid which causes failure and downfall. China's quick rise in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is a living proof of the words. There was a time when China used to restrict its market access to foreign traders, but at the same time, the nation was also a prey to poverty and destitution. Nevertheless, time changes so the Chinese. The Chinese leadership knew that limiting its markets cannot make China a success-story. Consequently, they learnt from their mistake, and Ding Xio Ping decided to open the Chinese markets for

others. The decision proved very fruitful as due to it, China brought 800 million of its people out of poverty. Simply put, it, <sup>today,</sup> China is the fastest growing country in the world, the reason is candid: they learnt from their past blunders. To recapitulate, learning from the past not only makes <sup>the</sup> future prosperous but also prevents from failure.

It is undeniable fact that learning from the past averts failure in the future. Past is full of examples of failures and successes. Anyone may ponder upon those rises and downfalls and highlight the reasons of failure. The past acts as a precedent that directs the future. To make things more clear, the downfall of Nokia must be discussed. There was a time when Nokia used to be the fastest growing market in the mobile industry. Two things change rapidly as Nokia neglects the lessons of the past — stagnation is bound to collapse. On the one hand, the world was witnessing the rise of smartphones, internet, and social



media, while Nokia was still busy in the production of conventional keypad-mobiles. As Nokia ignored the past as its future became blurred and tainted. Now, in the contemporary times, tech industry fully materialises the fact that learning from the past is a sine qua non for the future-development and competing the industry.

Over and above, learning from the lessons of the past also makes one immaculate and infallible, thereby, it helps in paving the way for the future. There is a famous quote of Albert Einstein, a famous physicist and scientist:

“Ordinary people commit mistakes and learn from them, whereas genius people learn from the mistakes of others.”

The veracity of words can be assessed in the life of Abraham Lincoln, the 16<sup>th</sup> President of America. The man could have followed the path of authoritarianism

and despotism but he preferred to peace and democratic-spirit. The reason was simple that he had learnt from the life of Genghis Khan that tyranny can never be helpful for peaceful existence. If, today, the U.S. is the super power, the credit goes to its founding father who learnt from the past and shaped a brighter future for the next generations. The example clearly justifies that learning from the past paves path for the future.

On further analyzing the statement, it becomes clear that past provides an opportunity to evaluate things critically, thereby, it helps in shaping <sup>the</sup> future. The past acts as a filtration-plant. It separates <sup>the</sup> good from ~~the~~ bad. The veracity of the words can be substantiated in the form of the Muslims in the subcontinent of India. ~~For~~ For a long time, Muslims continued to oppose the teachings of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan. Khan advised to get education and be friendly towards <sup>the</sup> British but Muslims

discarded the wisdom. Nevertheless, after suffering a lot of adversities and mishaps at the hands of the Hindu-led Congress, finally, Muslims realized their mistake. Thus, after learning from the past, they started getting education, behaving friendly towards the British, and protesting peacefully for their rights. Consequently, after paying heed to the values advocated by Sir Syed, Allama Iqbal and Quaid-e-Azam, they got freedom in 1947 from the discriminatory rule of the Hindus and the British colonialism. Hence, it is pertinent to reiterate that learning from the past makes the future better and promising.

Similarly, past acts as a mirror that hides nothing, thereby, learning from it trods a smooth path for the future. Certainly, past describes ~~itself~~ ~~itself~~ even the minor details. It reveals all secrets. It clears the fog that obstructs the path to a brighter future. It teaches the best lessons. It directs one about one's mistakes and helps in avoiding them in future.

Thomas Edison's example validates the words stated above. Edison failed 999 times while making a bulb, but he did not quit. Rather, he learnt from his mistakes ~~as his saying~~ <sup>ing</sup>. He learnt 999 ways of not making a bulb. Today, if the world is enjoying the lights of bulbs, the reason is ~~the~~ <sup>Edison's</sup> art of learning from the past. In short, learning from the past opens the gates to a brighter future.

Last not the least, learning from the past also leads to prosperity and growth. It is a natural law that to grow one must know what is good and what is bad. For example, if a nation does not know that war can destroy the labor of centuries, certainly, the nation is continued to indulge in war-activities unless it ~~experiences~~ <sup>experiences</sup> itself. However, if the nation, despite having exposure to war, does not learn will bound to collapse. The example of the European nations is a crystal clear evidence in this regard. For years, the nations engaged in conflicts and

wars. They did not learn from the lessons of the past, thereby, they could not shape a brighter future. However, time comes when these nations learn the lesson of the past - what can be achieved through war is also achievable through peace and dialogue. Today, the ~~EU~~ European Union is the result of that learning. On a nutshell, from the example of EU, it can be asserted that learning from the past paves path for the future, thus, the art of learning from the past must be taught.

Knowing the value of the learning from the past, curriculum must be designed in a way that inculcates the art. It can be done through inculcating creativity and critical thinking among masses. There must be some activities in schools, colleges, and universities, ~~so that~~ <sup>which</sup> justify the universal truth and past analysis. For example, to validate the past fact, 'try, try again till you succeed' in the form of Mehmood Ghaznavi,

and Thomas Edison must be practiced. Similarly, people who have learnt from their past and become successful in life should be invited to educational institutions and organisational setups. For their presence would bring foster the sense more quickly. People will believe their words. In short, learning from the past should be taught as it is important to shape a brighter future.

To summarize and give the finishing touch to the debate, it is pertinent to say that learning from the past paves the path for the future. Simply because, past acts a mirror. It hides no pitfall or shortcoming. It describes ~~and~~ each and every facet. It is replete with historic examples. It carries the best lessons of life. It provides a chance to evaluate things critically. Thereby, learning from the past helps in shaping the future. History bears witness that those individuals or nations that learnt from the past were good at

framing future. ~~Some~~ Names like Abraham Lincoln, Ding Xio Ping, Mehmood Ghaznavi, and Thomas Edison are the great examples. The persons learnt from the past; resultantly they were able to shape a brighter future. To conclude the debate and reiterate the stance 'learning from the past paves the path for the future', nothing seems more appealing than the words of Yuval Noah Harari, a famous Israeli author:

"Past brings clarity; it provides a great opportunity to excel through providing deep insights into failures and successes of others. "