

# Essay on Lessons We Learn from History

History is a subject in the galaxy of subjects that teaches its readers not only the subject but also a lot of wisdom. Most people hold the view that history is just a list of events that have occurred and put only in chronological order. True history is a chronological list of events. But if we study it only as that we are missing on it and we are not giving the subject its correct status.

This subject has such a large perspective of things that, no other subject that is studied ever can be without its history. Science has a history, technological development has a history, religion has a history. No subject of any significance is without a history. Then how can we say that history is trash? If a man had not discovered that fire can be produced by rubbing two stones, how would the theory of creating fire come into being? If the ancient man would not have produced the wheel, how could we know to the present uses of the wheel? So we can say that the very essence of man's progress is based on history and its study.

The evolution of man itself is based on history, his progress and most of his scientific and technological developments are all the results of man's history. If the History of evolution had not been confined into history books, and if we had not read these books, how would we know about our past, and how would we maintain the tempo of development and progress? Man learned from his mistakes, his experiences, the shortcomings of his ancestors, and continued to progress. Is this not a contribution to history? Does this not make the study of history important for us?

The one single subject that had contributed so immensely to the constant and continuous growth of civilization is history.

Another plea for not studying this drab subject is when people say history is just what passed away. In this regard we must remember that we are not only studying what the people in the past did but, in the process, we are trying to understand what mistakes they committed, and why. It has often been said that history repeats itself. This means that if we repeat the same mistakes we will reach the same disasters. Through the study of the subject, we realize the mistakes of our ancestors, and we do not commit the same mistakes. So, here comes the wisdom imparted by this lone subject. It is only after the study of history that we can assess the mistakes of the preceding generations. It is from history that the Britishers have learned that the imperialism cannot continue forever. It is the study of history that makes the modern world shudder to think of another nuclear holocaust.

The memory of Nagasaki and Hiroshima is still fresh in the minds of the world and so the fear of a repetition of this keeps us aware and cautious. If we had not studied all these facts written in our history books, our reservoir of knowledge would have been much less, and we would not have been so well aware of the results of certain actions. Is this not enough of a gift to the world, of just one single subject?

If there would not have been this subject, how would we ever be able to assess how much man has progressed from the animal he was, to the highly sophisticated creation of God that he is today? How would we ever know about our own rich cultural heritage, and so also how would we have been able to assess how and why we have become a third world country as we are today? Again, all this is possible because of our study of history.

The differences of culture in different parts of the world are also brought to our knowledge by the history of the world. It is only

through the study of history that we come to know about the social, political and educational systems of the world, and we can adapt them to our country if we feel the need. History! Besides gaining knowledge, this subject teaches us the wisdom of life and teaches the causes and effects of different actions. If we continue to learn from our history we shall never make the same mistakes again and that would be quite a step forward. Like science, history also gives us formulae. Science gives formulae for the progress of elements and history gives us the formulae of success. If we learn from History, we humans will certainly continue to forge ahead and become a more and more disciplined and cultured force.

Besides the big lessons that we learn from History, it also teaches us how to behave in our day-to-day lives. We learn how discipline helped the forces of Alexander the Great to overcome Indians, and how at the same time and venue, the undisciplined forces of India surrendered to them. We learn how with their service to India through missionaries, the British could steadily spread their wings through the length and breadth of India. We learn from history how love for mankind made saints of Vivekanand, Gautam Buddha, and Mahavira. We learn from history how man's desire to dominate others result in the ultimate break up of the British Empire in India. The greatest lesson that history has taught us is the lesson we learned from our struggle for independence, i.e. we learned how much we can achieve if we stand united and have a flare for nationalism.

Thus, this single subject which often faces the ridicule of students and elders provides us with a sea of knowledge, insight, and wisdom. It also teaches what the finer feelings of love and service can do for a man. This one subject teaches us to become human and of course, it is the alma mater of all other subjects, as the history of any subject is taught before starting the study of the subject itself. It may be said that history is the mother of all other subjects, and

should not be considered as, only a chronology of events, of the world, it is much more than just that. It is this subject that gives us the understanding of all countries that we can assess our position vis a vis others, and then continue on our path of progress.

When we study the biographies of great men, we learn how to follow their footsteps and try to achieve at least a semblance of their greatness. These biographies teach us the qualities of great men which we can emulate and try to be achievers. This single subject makes such an enormous contribution that it will not make us talk about it in a jocular tone, or slight it. It teaches us to be good humans. It teaches us what actions are likely to have what reactions. It brings to light our rich heritage and also teaches us how the other countries are progressing. So we can say that history is a great teacher.