



JAPAN

A Model of
Peace and Positivity

**Maulana
Wahiduddin Khan**

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THE SECRET OF LIFE

Awareness of one's lagging position ignites the courage to push forward. Those who fail to acknowledge their lagging position will remain perpetually behind, with progress always out of reach.

The Japanese people consider themselves descendants of the sun, believing that their lineage is superior to others, granting them the right to dominate other nations. This belief gave rise to the slogan 'East Asia for Japan.' This sense of superiority and entitlement fostered a militant attitude throughout Japanese history, particularly between 1937 and 1945, as they fought other nations to assert this self-declared right. Initially, Japan experienced success in this war, capturing Manila in 1942, as well as Singapore, the Netherlands, and Rangoon. However, in the pursuit of further conquest, Japan ultimately lost everything it had gained.

During World War II, Japan and the United States were adversaries. Japan had conventional bombs, while the U.S. developed atomic bombs, disrupting the balance of power. In July 1945, the U.S. dropped two nuclear bombs on Japan, which shattered Japan's military might. America emerged victorious, leaving Japan with no choice but to accept what one observer described as a "humiliating surrender" (*Time*, April 13, 1987, p. 15).

In response, Japan demonstrated realism. On August 14,

1945, Emperor Hirohito addressed the nation with a radio broadcast, stating that they had resolved “to pave the way for a grand peace for all generations to come by enduring the unendurable and suffering that is unsufferable.”

In accordance with this decision, Japan formally signed surrender documents on September 2, 1945, acknowledging U.S. supremacy.

This was no small decision for Japan, a nation that had long stood on a foundation of perceived superiority. Now, it had to stand on the foundation of realism. Instead of anti-foreign sentiments, Japan needed to find the secret to life through self-reflection. At that time, Japan was in ruins, its industries destroyed. General MacArthur, a “war criminal” in Japanese eyes, was placed in authority over Japan in violation of their sovereignty. In addition to losing Korea, Burma, Singapore, Taiwan, and other foreign possessions, Japan lost parts of its territory, including the islands of Karafuto and Okinawa. In 1946, the “MacArthur Constitution” was implemented, designed to keep Japan under the control of foreign powers.

These circumstances represented the essence of “enduring the unendurable.” Many Japanese found it unbearable, leading some to take their own lives. According to an article in the Encyclopaedia Britannica (1984), many military extremists attempted to prevent Emperor Hirohito’s message from being broadcast. When they failed, several nationalists and military officers, feeling dishonoured, committed suicide:

“There were a number of suicides among the

military officers and nationalists who felt dishonoured.” (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 10, p. 86)

Japan adopted a pragmatic approach, accepting a secondary position (“Number 2”) after World War II. However, this did not mean Japan was content to remain in this position forever. Rather, it sought a period of rebuilding without directly confronting the powerful United States. Under this policy, Japan accepted U.S. dominance politically and economically while focusing all its energies on science and technology. Over time, this approach bore fruit. Within thirty years, Japan transformed from a defeated nation into an economic powerhouse. Japan produced high-quality electronics and other products that even Americans preferred over their domestic options due to better quality and lower cost. This situation deeply unsettled American policymakers, as one American politician, Pete Wilson, remarked, “The Japanese semiconductor Godzilla is now destroying everything but Tokyo.”

After World War II, Japan was indebted to the U.S., but by 1986, the situation had reversed. Japan became America’s creditor. In 1986, American goods imported into Japan were worth \$26 billion, while Japanese exports to America reached \$ 85 billion, creating a significant trade imbalance. By 1986, Japan had a trade surplus of over \$ 85 billion with the U.S., making America the world’s largest debtor and Japan the largest creditor (*Time*, April 13 and April 27, 1987).

This shift has inspired numerous books. In the U.S., a

popular book titled *Japan—Number One* became a bestseller. In 1945, Japan accepted being “Number 2” to the U.S. Forty years later, America acknowledged Japan’s success in reclaiming the top position.

The Japanese first wrote their story as “Japan Number 2,” which paved the way for others to write Japan—Number One. This reflects a key principle of progress in the modern world: those willing to accept defeat are often the ones who eventually win. Those who are ready to step back will one day secure a place at the front. This principle, first discovered by Muslims in the Treaty of Hudaybiyyah 1,400 years ago, has been mirrored in recent times by the Japanese in their context.

In essence, this world is one of competition. Everyone is striving to get ahead, and this race is the driving force behind human progress. Every advancement in history has emerged from this spirit of competition. America’s pursuit of leadership led humanity to nuclear power, while Japan’s resurgence created the era of electronics.

In this race, one nation inevitably falls behind while another moves forward. If the lagging nation spends its time in complaints and protests, it merely wastes valuable time. The only way forward is to acknowledge that others have progressed while they have fallen behind.

This recognition directs one’s efforts in the right direction, allowing them to rebuild without engaging in fruitless confrontation. Eventually, the day comes when they can reclaim their lost position.

Awareness of being behind instils the courage to advance again. Those who fail to recognise their lagging status will remain perpetually behind, with progress forever beyond their reach.

AN ECONOMIC PEARL HARBOUR

With patience and perseverance, the Japanese redirected their efforts toward peaceful endeavours, prioritising economic growth over retaliatory actions, ultimately achieving success in the aftermath of their military defeat.

In December 1941, during World War II, the U.S.A.'s top naval base, Pearl Harbour, on the Pacific island of Hawaii, was attacked without prior warning by the Japanese. So severe was the bombardment that, of the hundred-odd naval vessels anchored there, only a handful survived. This had the immediate effect of bringing America into the war as one of the Allied Powers. Up till that point, the U.S.A. had no direct involvement in hostilities save as a supplier of armaments to the enemies of Japan. The Japanese attack had been uncalled for and ill-considered. However, they did not realise the magnitude of their error until 1945, when America finally took its revenge by dropping the first-ever atomic bombs on two of Japan's major industrial centres, Hiroshima and Nagasaki, thus annihilating Japan as a military power. The Americans then kept a tight military and political hold over Japan. But the latter country, astonishingly, recuperated from the horror of

large-scale atomic devastation and proceeded to adapt itself to an entirely new set of circumstances. Before the Second World War, it had relied on the power of weapons.

But after witnessing the destruction they caused, it relinquished their use and set about reconstructing the country along entirely peaceful lines. Having once adopted this course, the Japanese showed great versatility, resilience and assiduity, and their success has been such that Japan is now considered the third greatest industrial power in the entire world today. Its industrial output in 2016 was \$ 1.368 billion.

In the field of industry, the victors have been defeated by the vanquished. Simply by accepting the fact that aggression could not pay dividends and then channelling its potential into the field of industry, Japan has managed quite miraculously to supersede most of the other nations of the world.

The Americans are greatly upset at this state of affairs and refer to the present 'invasion' of Japanese goods as an Economic Pearl Harbour. A book recently published in America, entitled "Japan Number One," has become a best-seller. It clearly shows that Japan has far outrun the U.S.A. in business and will soon supersede Britain. So far as foreign exchange is concerned, Japan is the wealthiest country in the world, its foreign exchange reserves totalling 74 billion dollars in 1984 (*The Times of India*, June 13-14, 1985)

How did Japan turn its military defeat into an economic victory? By encouraging patience and perseverance and

avoiding provocation, it concentrated its energies on peaceful (and, of course, remunerative) fields rather than indulging in retaliatory violence.

It initially accepted the military and political supremacy of other nations, quickly adapting itself to new scales of values, then set about the economic rehabilitation of the country without wasting a single moment on bewailing lost opportunities, blaming others for its misfortunes or on pointless nostalgia. Rather than make further mistakes, Pearl Harbour, having been the worst, concentrated all of its attention on seizing existing opportunities.

In short, Japan accepted the blame for its destruction and, once having done so, was able seriously to launch itself on its economic uplift.

We must never lose sight of the fact that we are not lone travellers on this Earth. There are always others who are trying to race ahead of us in this world of competition. The resulting situation can be approached in two entirely different ways. One is to collide with anything which obstructs our path. The other is to circumvent obstacles and then to go on our way. Clearly, the first is self-destructive, while the second, in avoiding confrontations, is much more likely to prove advantageous. A ship which sails straight at a rock or an iceberg is doomed to disaster. It is the ship that veers temporarily off its course to avoid the reefs and eventually sails safely into the harbour.

Similarly, Japan, by giving up ideas of military supremacy, has reached a much more worthwhile objective—economic supremacy. It is worth remembering that Hiroshima and

Nagasaki, once symbols of Japan's total annihilation as a military power, are now, more than seventy years later, symbols of Japan's stunning economic success.

JAPANESE—A MODEL OF PEACE

Japan stands as a model of peace. In Hiroshima, a city once devastated, they established the 'Peace Museum' as a symbol of reconciliation. By acknowledging their mistakes, they fostered a spirit of harmony and understanding.

In August 1945, the United States dropped two atomic bombs on Japan, causing unprecedented devastation. However, the Japanese did not harbour anger toward the Americans, as they understood that the action was not unprovoked; it was a response to Japan's aggressive actions. This realistic attitude has been instrumental in Japan's extraordinary progress in the modern era.

The U.S. bombed two major industrial cities, Hiroshima and Nagasaki, reducing them to rubble within minutes. Both towns, sprawling over ten miles each, were transformed into vast wastelands, with all living beings, trees, and structures obliterated. Over 150,000 people died, with 10,000 instantly vaporised. Today, both cities have been magnificently rebuilt, featuring wide roads, spacious homes, parks, and gardens, creating a completely new landscape. Only a single damaged building remains as a reminder of the devastation these cities endured during World War II.

Khushwant Singh, the editor of *The Hindustan Times* (New Delhi), visited Japan and found something remarkable. While the rest of the world has used the Hiroshima and Nagasaki incidents as a propaganda tool against America, the Japanese themselves do not hold resentment over these events. When Singh asked his Japanese companion about it, he received an unexpected response delivered in a calm tone:

“We hit them first at Pearl Harbor, killing many of them. They warned us of what they were going to do, but we thought they were only bluffing. They retaliated openly and fairly, with no deception. Once, we were adversaries; now, we are friends.” (*Hindustan Times*, April 4, 1981)

In Hiroshima, a memorial for the victims of the atomic bomb has been established, known as the Peace Museum, which displays images of the devastation caused by war. Every year, approximately seven million Japanese visit Hiroshima to witness these reminders. Conversations reveal that, although some Japanese still harbour resentment against America, they do not express it in their actions. Instead, they veil these feelings under a mantle of realism.

This pragmatic attitude enabled Japan to make remarkable progress within a short period following the war. Despite the lack of natural resources like oil and mineral mines and the need to import most raw materials, Japan today dominates global markets with the high quality of its products. This resilience and adaptability illustrate Japan’s ability to look past grievances and focus on constructive goals.

Mr. Khushwant Singh inquired about the legal profession in Japan. He was informed that law practice in Japan is not as lucrative, primarily because when disputes arise, people prefer resolving them through mutual discussion rather than taking them to court. When individuals are willing to acknowledge their mistakes, conflicts rarely escalate. Often, conflicts persist because one person places one-sided blame on another, provoking stubbornness in response and causing the issue to grow. However, when one party admits their mistake, it creates a sense of conciliation in the other, leading to a swift resolution.

This realistic approach has provided Japan with a significant advantage: trust among its people. In countries like India, business agreements and correspondence typically require experts skilled in using precise language that adheres to legal standards. However, the Japanese do not waste time drafting such detailed documents. In the United States, there are around 50,000 lawyers, whereas in Japan, there are only about 11,000, and the demand for legal experts is minimal.

Most Japanese business institutions rely on verbal agreements. While this practice initially prevailed only within Japan, foreign traders now also trust that a Japanese businessperson's word is reliable. The benefit of freedom from legal constraints is that work proceeds swiftly, without unnecessary formalities impeding efficiency.

This approach has fostered unity among the Japanese, which is undoubtedly their greatest strength. A Japanese culture expert summarized Japan's success in these words:

“Never quarrelling amongst themselves, always making everything together.” In other words, “never fighting among themselves, always working together.” (*Hindustan Times*, April 4, 1981).

ACCEPTING DEFEAT

Embracing the present lays the foundation for the future. Those who refuse to acknowledge their current reality risk missing the greater opportunities that await them.

Japan faced defeat against the United States in World War II. In April 1945, American forces landed in Japan, and General Douglas MacArthur was appointed as the Supreme Commander, staying until 1951. Under General MacArthur’s direction, a new Japanese Constitution was drafted and passed by the Japanese assembly on November 3, 1946. According to this Constitution, the Emperor of Japan’s status was reduced to that of a symbolic head of state. Article 9 of the Constitution declared that the Japanese people would never again maintain land, sea, or air forces, nor would they prepare for war in any capacity:

“Land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential, will never be maintained (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 10, p. 87).”

On the surface, this Constitution seemed like a declaration of Japan’s permanent national demise. However, Japan’s leaders wisely accepted it in its entirety, recognising that while it closed the door to military and political initiatives,

it left the door wide open for progress in science and industry. The Japanese people withdrew from the fields of military and political conflict, choosing instead to focus on remaining opportunities in knowledge and industry. As a result, within just 40 years, historians were compelled to write the following about Japan:

“Defeated in World War II (1945), Japan emerged from the ruins of war as one of the major economic powers in the world.” (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 5, p. 519)

Accepting the present opens the way to the future. Those who refuse to accept their present circumstances are deprived of the greater opportunities that the future holds.

VICTORY WITHOUT WAR

Japan exemplifies the boundless possibilities within God's creation. Here, a defeated nation can surpass its conqueror without resorting to conflict or confrontation.

The July 4, 1988, cover story of the American Weekly *Times* was dedicated to Japan, titled meaningfully: “Super Japan: Can an Economic Giant Become a Global Power?”

In 1945, the United States celebrated its victory over Japan. Today, the once-defeated Japan is achieving victory over America itself. Initially, this victory was in economic terms, but it has since extended to other areas as well. The United States is now the largest debtor nation, with an external debt

of \$ 400 billion. In contrast, Japan is the largest creditor nation, having lent \$ 240 billion to the world.

Nowadays, numerous books and articles in the United States highlight how America is rapidly declining while Japan is on a fast track to progress. One such book is titled *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers* by Professor Paul Kennedy.

After reading the mentioned Time issue, many readers sent letters in response. Some of these letters were published in the subsequent issue on July 25, 1988. One of the letters was from Brian Mirsky of Princeton. In his brief note, he wrote that the article on Japan's economic success made it clear that although America won the war, Japan won the peace:

“Your article on Japan's economic success makes it obvious that although the U.S. won the war, Japan won the peace.”

This example of Japan demonstrates how vast the realm of possibilities is in the world created by God. Here, a defeated nation can prevail over its conqueror without ever engaging in conflict or confrontation with it.

THE CONDITION FOR SUCCESS

True progress is achieved by those who can endure temporary setbacks and persevere. Often, one must first face loss to achieve success ultimately.

Today, Japan is unanimously recognized as an economic superpower. Traditionally, military strength was what

defined a nation as a superpower, but Japan has demonstrated that a nation can achieve superpower status through economic growth. Moreover, while a nation reliant on the military might eventually reach a limit in maintaining its power, there is no such limit for an economic superpower.

How did Japan become an economic superpower? Japan did not achieve this status through slogans or demands; rather, it did so through quiet, sustained effort. A vital component of this silent effort was Japan's initial acceptance of humble status, which eventually led it to a greater position. A report by Tokyo-based journalist Mr. Subhash Chakravarty, published in *The Times of India*, provides an insightful observation:

“Japan, having long recognized the U.S. as the most important external actor in Asia, is seeking to share power and influence with it without compromising Japan's self-interests or ambitions.” (*The Times of India*, April 27, 1990, page 8)

For a long period, Japan acknowledged the U.S. as the most significant external player in Asia. Now, the time has come for Japan to seek a share in power and influence alongside the U.S. without compromising its interests or aspirations.

This reflects the principle of progress in today's world: to become great, one must first accept a lesser role. To gain dominance, one must initially embrace subordination. Advancement is destined for those who endure the step back before moving forward—here, losing comes first, and only then does one attain.

WE HAVE THE ABILITY TO BOUNCE BACK

Resilience is the ability to recover quickly from change or misfortune. After suffering the dire effects of the nuclear bomb, the Japanese leaders, following the formula of resilience, re-planned their national targets. After just thirty years, Japan emerged as an economic superpower.

Resilience is a law of nature. It means the ability to recover quickly from illness, change, or misfortune. It can be found everywhere—in the physical world, the plant world, the animal world and the human world.

Resilience in physics means the ability to return to the original form after being bent, compressed or stretched. The same is true of the plant world and the animal world.

Every creature inherently possesses the power of resilience. Man has the lion's share in this gift of nature. Dr Bruce McEwen, Head of the Laboratory of Neuroendocrinology at Rockefeller University, has researched this subject and has concluded: "The human brain is very resilient. Give it a chance, and it will make every effort to repair itself."

We are living in a world of challenge and competition. Due to this, every day, we experience something unpleasant. Every day, we suffer some damage, both intellectually and

materially. This is a problem for every man and woman. Such problems are a part of nature. But nature has also provided the remedy for this problem, and that is the power of resilience.

The only thing that is required is an eight-lettered mantra, that is, patience. When you suffer some damage, either internally or externally, keep your patience. Remain silent and make your mind empty, and the mind will pacify everything within a minute. Very soon, your mind will make you feel normal. This is what Dr. McEwen has called giving the mind a chance. If you give this chance to your mind, it will soon release a strong energy, and this energy will provide you with the help required in any untoward situation. For example, in the case of anger, the mind will readily manage it; in the case of material loss, it will enlighten you as to how to do new planning; in the case of tension, it will provide you with the formula to forget, and within minutes you will become tension-free.

The formula of resilience is also applicable to the problems of nations. One such example is the recent history of Japan. Japan was the first to suffer the dire effects of the nuclear bomb. During the Second World War, the Allied powers dropped two atomic bombs on Japan, and apparently, Japan became a ruined country. However, the Japanese leaders, consciously or unconsciously, followed the formula of resilience. They were able to re-plan their national targets, and the result was miraculous: after just thirty years, Japan emerged as an economic superpower.

A recent example of the power of resilience is what happened in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy in the US. During this catastrophe, the US lost about 110 lives and suffered losses of \$ 50 billion. But, within a month, the US was able to bring things back almost to normal. How did this miracle happen? The answer is again that it was due to the secret power of resilience.

Studies show that our mind has enormous potential, perhaps unlimited potential. And that potential is tapped by the power of resilience. In a normal situation, this potential remains dormant. When one has any unusual experience, the brain becomes active and starts unfolding its hidden energy. And if it is given a chance, it will certainly recover all the losses. The only condition is that you should not disturb its natural process or stop it with some unnatural activity.

A simple demonstration of resilience is remaining silent when you become angry. Remain quiet and make your mind empty, and the mind will pacify everything within a minute. Very soon, your mind will make you feel normal. On the contrary, if you become provoked and react negatively, your anger will persist and will very soon turn into malice and even violence.

A COMPARISON

Japan immersed an entire generation in the American education system. Nearly a century later, this investment bore fruit, producing a generation that propelled Japan to the forefront of the world's leading nations.

In 1834, Lord Macaulay arrived in India and, as a key member of the Supreme Council of India, introduced an educational system that ultimately became known as the 'English Education System' throughout the country. According to Macaulay, the purpose of this system was to create a generation that would be Indian by birth but English in thought:

“So that a generation may arise which will be Indian in birth and English in thought.”

Almost all Muslim leaders (except Sir Syed Ahmad Khan) opposed this educational system. They protested against it, with some calling it a “slaughterhouse” and others expressing disdain through poetry:

*“Bachchon ke kabhi qatl se badnaam na hota,
Afsos ke Firaun ko college ki na soojhi.”*

Most people refrained from participating in this educational system. Those who did often left halfway, distancing themselves from it. This opposition led Muslims to fall behind other communities in education by at least

two centuries. Today, the root of many problems faced by Muslims can be traced to this educational backwardness, as a lack of education results in a lack of awareness, and those who lack awareness are often destined for ruin in this world.

Now, let's examine another scenario. After World War II, in 1945, Japan was defeated and found itself under complete control of the United States in the political, military, and administrative spheres. The U.S. disarmed Japan and introduced radical changes to its educational system. In December 1945, American General MacArthur issued foundational instructions regarding educational administration aimed at eradicating militarism and the nationalistic mindset among the Japanese.

Many wartime teachers were dismissed, and a strict separation of religion and politics was imposed. Shinto teachings were removed from the curriculum. The goal was to shape Japan's new generation according to American ideals. In 1946, a team of American education experts arrived in Japan to implement a detailed plan, culminating in the Report of the United States Education Mission to Japan. In line with this report, Japan's Basic Education Law and School Education Law were established in 1947, and an educational board was set up in 1948 to ensure that Japan's educational system aligned with American preferences.

Unlike Muslim leaders in India, the Japanese did not protest or boycott this "educational colonialism." Without losing a single day, they enrolled their entire generation in this "American education system."

Nearly half a century has passed since then, and the results are evident. The individuals who emerged from this American education system remained truly 'Japanese' in every sense and never transformed into 'Americans,' as the U.S. had hoped. Against American expectations, these Japanese graduates sparked a new revolution in Japan, creating a legacy of remarkable progress that even the U.S. couldn't match. They propelled Japan to the top ranks among the world's nations.

This is the key to progress in today's world. Success belongs to those who can turn adverse conditions into favourable ones, those who can transform hostile plans into beneficial resources, and those who can turn 'no' into 'yes.' People with this higher capability are the ones who succeed in the competitive world. Those who fail this test are left with nothing but protesting from the sidelines, destined to be ignored by the pages of history.

In this matter, both the secular and religious groups in our country have failed. Leaders like Akbar Allahabadi and Abu'l A'la Maududi labelled English educational institutions as 'slaughterhouses' and tried to prevent an entire generation from engaging with them.

This was a foolishly misguided approach. The true role of Islamic leaders should have been to instil awareness among Muslim youth, encouraging them to acquire knowledge from English institutions while discarding the 'Englishness.' However, due to shallow thinking, they took

a negative approach, resulting in the educational downfall of an entire generation.

In this regard, the people of Japan demonstrated greater wisdom.

PATHS TO SUCCESS: HARD WORK AFTER DEFEAT

The remarkable progress of the Japanese nation stemmed from the relentless hard work of its people following their defeat in the war.

The 17th-century French writer and thinker Jean de La Bruyère (1645-1696) stated that there are only two ways for a person to elevate themselves in this world: either through their hard work or by taking advantage of the weaknesses of others.

“In the world, there are only two ways of raising oneself, either by one’s hard work or by the weakness of others.”

One example of this is India, and another is the modern history of Japan. The independence that India gained in 1947 was, in fact, a result of taking advantage of Britain’s weakness following World War II. Conversely, after World War II, Japan achieved remarkable progress. The secret to this progress was the continuous hard work of the Japanese people after their defeat in the war.

PLANNING BASED ON REMNANT

The key to successful planning lies in aligning ambitions with available resources. The only viable approach is to realistically adjust our aspirations to match the resources of the real world.

The best formula in life is not to concern oneself with what has been lost but, by wise planning, to avail of what is still extant. Sooner or later, you will emerge as a super-achiever.

The German statesman Otto von Bismarck (1815-1898) once rightly observed that politics is the art of the possible. This aphorism can be usefully extended to include planning. Planning should be done on the basis of whatever is available to you. This means to plan on the basis of what remains. Such planning can be termed as ‘planning based on remnant.’

When chalking out a course of action, people are generally obsessed with the concept of totality. They want to have things in totality and are reluctant to accept the fulfilment of their goals in any partial way. But thinking along these lines goes against the law of nature. The realistic formula in this regard is that if the total is not achievable, one should be content with achieving just a part.

There are nations in many parts of the world that were eager to achieve things in totality but failed in their ambition—

even after a struggle lasting a hundred years. The following Hindi maxim applies to their case:

Aadhi chhod ke sajji dhaave

Aadhi rahe na sajji paave

(One who runs after the whole, leaving behind the part, loses both the part and the whole).

This is why, although these nations launched their initiatives with great enthusiasm, they ended up as failed states. They could neither achieve what they had set out to do nor were they able to retain what they already possessed.

A contrary example is the respective achievements of Japan and Germany. After the Second World War, both nations lost areas of land they had possessed before the onset of the war. Germany lost to the Soviet Union the eastern part of its country, the total area of which, including part of Berlin, was 108,333 km. A similar case is that of Japan, which surrendered the Okinawa Islands, with an area of 1,206 km, to the United States.

However, both countries made plans for their future economic development by first setting aside what they had lost. The result was miraculous: Germany, led by its first post-war Chancellor, Konrad Adenauer, emerged as the industrial leader of Europe. Similarly, Japan, under the wise leadership of Emperor Hirohito, rose to be the economic superpower of Asia.

This is the miracle of planning based on remnants or planning based on the remaining part of a whole, unlike planning, which entails the pursuit of an erstwhile whole.

The best formula in life is not to concern oneself with what has been lost but, by wise planning, to avail of what is still extant. Sooner or later, you will emerge as a super-achiever. This holds for both nations and individuals. Another good example of the above principle is to be found in the history of Singapore.

Previously part of Malaysia, Singapore was expelled from the Federation of Malaysia in 1965 and became an independent state. Under the leadership of its former Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew, Singapore likewise adopted a planning policy based on remnants. Although Malaysia is more than 400 times greater than Singapore in area, today, in development, the latter is far ahead of it.

All individuals and nations have certain ambitions which they seek to fulfil. Wise planning for the fulfilment of a goal requires adjustment between two things: personal ambition and available resources. The secret of truly successful planning lies in the correct weighing up of one's ambitions vis-à-vis the available resources. No one can change the course taken by the external world. No one is the master of nature. We have only one option: to find a way of making a realistic adjustment between our ambitions and the resources available in the real world.

THE GREATEST GOOD

The Japanese followed the realistic approach and endured the unendurable. As a result, they were able to reconstruct their nation as an economic superpower in the post-World War II era.

One can achieve one's target only by taking into consideration what lies beyond oneself. That is the only realistic approach and is, therefore, the wisest approach. What is the greatest good for a man or a woman? Justice is generally regarded as being the greatest good in human life. Theoretically, this would appear to be the right answer, but in any practical sense, it is an adjustment that should be regarded as the greatest good.

To illustrate this point, I would like to cite the example of Pakistan and Japan. Pakistan had its inception as a separate country after the Second World War. More than sixty years after its establishment, Pakistan is commonly regarded as a failed state. Why? This is because Pakistan has adopted a confrontational stance with its neighbouring country. Such an approach yielded nothing for Pakistan except further loss.

The opposite example can be seen in Japan. Japan also began a new phase in its history after the Second World War. There were serious issues between Japan and the U.S.A. However, Japan adopted the adjustment formula. The

Japanese Emperor of that time, Hirohito, gave a clear-cut direction to his nation. He said in one of his broadcasts just after World War II: “We have to endure the unendurable so that we may be able to reconstruct our nation in the post-World War period.” Now, it is generally accepted that the result of this policy has been miraculous, and for now, Japan has emerged as an economic superpower in the present world.

The same holds for individuals. A certain banker of my acquaintance, who was in a senior position in an international bank, had a heated exchange with his immediate superior. He was so upset by this incident that he resigned from his post. But what was the result? He is now unemployed and living in a state of frustration.

Another acquaintance of mine, who was also in a senior position in a bank, had a similar problem with a more senior executive, and he wanted my advice. I told him my advice was based on a four-point formula: first, adjustment; second, adjustment, adjustment; and, lastly again, adjustment. He took my advice, and now he is very happy with his job.

What is the difference between the concept of justice and the concept of adjustment? The difference is that obtaining justice, having to be effected on a bilateral basis, becomes a very difficult task, while adjustment, being a unilateral matter, can be instantly achieved. In the case of injustice, when some other party is behaving unfairly towards you, justice becomes a thorny issue between the two rival parties. In the quest for justice, demands and protests will naturally be made; a confrontation ensues, and sometimes

this even leads to violence. Frequently, such action proves to be counter-productive.

The case of adjustment is completely different. In this case, there is no rival or other party. You are the only player. When you opt for adjustment, you instantly find the starting point, and if justice in practice leads to confrontation, adjustment always leads to peace.

There is a well-known saying: Politics is the art of the possible. This saying pertains not only to political affairs but also to all the affairs of human life. Therefore, the best way to proceed in all aspects of human existence is to adopt a realistic approach. You have to differentiate between which target is possible and which is not, between what is achievable and what is not.

All men and women have to strike a balance between their desires and the external situation. Simply by running after one's desires, one does not necessarily achieve one's goals. One must fully comprehend the external situation, the external circumstances and the external opportunities. One can achieve one's target only by taking into consideration what lies beyond oneself. That is the only realistic approach and is, therefore, the wisest approach.

THE TEMPERAMENT OF JAPAN

The Japanese are deeply committed to quality. They strive to excel in their endeavours, often prioritizing perfection above all else, even at the expense of personal and family life.

I met a gentleman from Singapore who was a business manager. I asked him why he came to Japan. He replied that he came solely to learn. I asked again what it was about Japan that had impressed him so much that he travelled here to learn. He said he had heard and read a lot about Japan's industrial development, but there was one incident he read that deeply moved him and made him decide that he must go to Japan to gain something from there. I inquired what that incident was. He opened his briefcase and took out an English magazine. It was the following incident:

“A story is told about an expert from Sweden who went to Japan to study worker participation in management. While at a factory, he was very impressed when he saw a Japanese worker start to cry spontaneously in response to one of his questions. When he did not receive an answer from the worker, he inquired about it from the supervisor. After hearing the entire story, the supervisor explained that the real issue was that when the expert informed the worker that their company was not meeting export demands as it

used to, the worker became very distressed. The supervisor stated that Japanese workers are deeply concerned that if exports decline, it would harm the entire nation. In their view, it would be seen as a reduction in Japan's productivity standards."

After reading this incident, I reflected on how sensitive a Japanese person is about their nation, unable to bear the thought that any of their shortcomings might bring shame to it.

I recall a time from my childhood, before World War II, when the phrase "Made in Japan" signified something of poor quality and weakness. At that time, toys and other items typically came from Japan and were sold at low prices. I wanted to understand how Japan transitioned from its earlier state to the modern era when, contrary to the past, "Made in Japan" has become a label of quality products.

After speaking with some Japanese people, I learned about a concept called 'education years.' It became evident that after World War II, Japan underwent a sustained movement for awareness and reconstruction, evolving into a national movement. This movement aimed to change the national outlook.

The phase known as the 'education years' lasted approximately 15 years during the fifties and sixties. After fostering a constructive consciousness within the nation, there was another phase of around 15 years focused on the pursuit of quality, which spanned the sixties and seventies. Thus, the thirty years of intellectual effort resulted in the practical development that Japan has achieved today.

Japan invested 30 years in the arena of constructive awareness. As mentioned earlier, until World War II, Japanese products were considered substandard. However, today, the situation is reversed. Now, “Made in Japan” signifies the best and most reliable goods. Consequently, everyone is asking the question: “How do they do it and do it so well?”

People from various countries come to Japan specifically for this purpose: to uncover the secret behind its success. I met one such individual who had come from a European country at Tokyo Airport. When our conversation began, I told him that I was also grappling with the same question that he had come to Japan to answer, so I asked him to share his findings with me.

He replied that he believed the secret lies in the fact that Japanese people are highly quality-conscious. Every Japanese person possesses a strong desire to do whatever they do to the best of their ability. This desire is so intense that they are willing to forfeit everything else, even family life, in pursuit of perfection: “Every Japanese possesses a very strong desire to do well, whatever bit he does. This desire is so intense that he forfeits even family life in pursuit of perfecting it.”

This temperament among the people of Japan is their greatest asset. Unfortunately, such a temperament is lacking in countries like India. This is our most significant shortcoming, which has held us back on the global stage.

I happened to visit a Japanese office where I saw a picture carefully displayed on the wall. It was of Edwards Deming. I remarked that he is an American, part of a rival nation;

TWENTY YEARS LATER

why, then, do you have his picture displayed here? The office manager smiled and replied, “He is our super-guru.”

Edwards Deming was a statistician who presented theories on quality control for industrial development, and the Japanese quickly adopted his principles as the foundation of their growth. They educated their nation to such an extent that the concept of quality became a way of life for the entire population. They even achieved a level of industrial production known as zero defects.

The Americans had severely injured the Japanese, but they did not respond by labelling the Americans as enemies and unleashing a storm of words against them. Instead, they sought to learn from the Americans. They managed to extract beneficial lessons even from their adversaries. This is the secret to living successfully in this world, and it is such people who succeed.

TWENTY YEARS LATER

To gain something, one must be willing to lose something. To reach a height, one must tolerate some degree of lowliness. Those who adapt to this law succeed in God's world. Those who refuse to comply are destined to fail and subsequently blame others for their ruin in vain.

Between 1950 and 1970, Japan's condition was such that it relied on Western countries for advanced industrial technology, sometimes borrowing, sometimes asking, and

sometimes purchasing. However, today, Japan's economy stands on its foundations. Japan has reached a position where it can send not only products but also its industrial expertise to other countries.

Due to its advanced technological capabilities in industry, Japan now has the opportunity to assist other countries and win their friendship by taking on major projects and engaging in trade. Japanese experts are currently implementing modern irrigation projects in Thailand, teaching computer programming in Singapore, building steel mills in South Korea and China, and establishing petrochemical industries in the Middle East, among other endeavours.

Initially, the Japanese learned to produce steel from the Americans, but now they have developed that skill to the point where they are capable of exporting it back to the United States. Japan, which was once a student of America, has made such advancements in various fields, especially in communications and electronics, that the U.S. is now entering into agreements with Japan for technical assistance in its military-critical sectors. Commenting on this experience in Japan, a newspaper observer wrote:

“Now the flow is out instead of in.” (*The Hindustan Times*, June 11, 1981)

Japan was content to endure industrial subjugation for 20 years, which resulted in its current status of industrial dominance. Had it insisted on dominance from the very beginning, it would have only led to perpetual subjugation. To gain something, one must be willing to lose something;

to reach a height, one must tolerate some degree of lowliness. This is the law of the world. Those who adapt to this law of the world succeed in God's creation, while those who refuse to comply are destined to fail and subsequently blame others for their ruin in vain.

PER ARDUA AD ASTRA

When the spirit of reconstruction, marked by positive action, takes root, it inevitably paves the way for success. Conversely, when a mindset of protest and complaint, driven by negative reaction, arises, it leads only to further destruction.

An English scholar, Mr Ian Nish, travelled to Japan. He lived there for eleven years, learned the Japanese language, and conducted an in-depth study of the Japanese people. He subsequently published the results of his research in a 238-page book titled *The Story of Japan*. The author writes:

What has most profoundly impacted the life of the Japanese nation is not politics but the great Kanto earthquake. On September 1, 1923, the tremendous shocks of the earthquake devastated eastern Japan, which was the most densely populated area. The second man-made earthquake was Japan's defeat in 1945 when two atomic bombs turned two of Japan's largest cities into piles of rubble. If an earthquake inspires a mindset of reconstruction, it can become a staircase to new development. In contrast, if the quake only evokes feelings of deprivation and frustration, it

gives rise to political outcries that, in terms of results, are as meaningless as can be.

The most important thing in a person's life is the spirit of action. When the urge to act arises within a person, all their dormant powers awaken. They think better, devise more successful plans, and diligently engage in completing their tasks. Conversely, a person who lacks the urge to act remains lethargic, like a machine that is silent and motionless. Experience shows that states of satisfaction and contentment generally lull a person's faculties, failing to awaken their inner capabilities. On the other hand, when a person faces difficulties and obstacles in life, their hidden strengths are jolted awake. Their abilities spring to life just as a person who is unaware and asleep suddenly awakens when a stone falls upon them.

However, this benefit does not come to anyone automatically. In every situation, a person must play an initial role. Whenever a 'destructive' event occurs in a person's life, it places them between two possibilities. They can either learn from it that they must reactivate themselves and reconstruct anew, or they can derive sustenance from despair and complaints, continuing to sigh in frustration. At the initial stage, the tendency a person adopts determines the entire course of their life. Their internal capacities begin to function in accordance with this direction. Whenever an accident occurs in a person's life, they should look at themselves rather than merely the accident. The outcome of any future event entirely depends on how a person reacts to the circumstances. If the spirit of reconstruction arises, it

is a positive reaction that inevitably leads to success; if a mindset of protest and complaint emerges, it is a negative reaction that ultimately results in further destruction.

AWARENESS OF PURPOSE

Purpose awakens a person's latent strengths and transforms them into a new, empowered individual. It is only by reviving a sense of purpose in its citizens that a nation can be built.

In 1931, Japan occupied Manchuria in northeastern China and established a government of its choice there. This action strained relations between China and Japan. On July 7, 1937, an incident occurred at the Marco Polo Bridge near Beijing, igniting tensions and leading to military conflict between the two nations, which eventually culminated in World War II.

Since that time, there has been mutual animosity and tension between China and Japan. A few years ago, Japan and China signed an agreement in which Japan was to set up a steel mill in China, but after completing the project, the Chinese government abruptly cancelled the deal.

However, when China's new Prime Minister, Deng Xiaoping, recently adopted an open-door policy, abandoning strict communist extremism, Japan saw an opportunity. Japan then began actively engaging with China. If one wishes to fly from Japan to China today, one

must book one's seat three months in advance, as every seat on flights from Japan to China is fully booked.

China offers enormous trade opportunities, and Japan is eager to utilise them fully. To achieve this goal, Japan has decided to let go of bitter memories of the past. As one traveller described it, Japan resolved to endure every 'pinprick' from China unilaterally.

This traveller noted that during his stay in Tokyo (June 1985), Radio Beijing announced that China would open a museum showcasing images of past atrocities committed by the Japanese against the Chinese, with its inauguration set for 1987, marking the 50th anniversary of the Marco Polo incident. When Japanese people were asked to comment on this news, they remained silent. When pressed further, they responded, "You know our Chinese friends have a way of twisting our tails and appealing to our conscience" (*The Times of India*, June 13, 1985).

Japan had a purpose: to promote its trade. This purpose cultivated resilience, patience, diplomacy, and restraint in Japan. Their purpose taught them how to let go of the past and unilaterally bury all disputes and grievances, clearing the path toward their goal.

The psychology of a purposeful group always reflects this approach, whether their aim is commercial or otherwise. When a group loses these qualities, it is a sign that they have lost their sense of purpose. Without a purpose, they lack character.

Today, our nation's greatest weakness is a lack of character. In every field, one quickly sees that people have lost their

integrity. A firm foundation cannot be built on such individuals. Wherever they are placed, they prove to be like unstable bricks in a wall, failing to offer the solidity of well-fired bricks.

The root cause of this weakness is the loss of purpose. Our people have become a purposeless group, lacking goals for either worldly advancement or spiritual growth. This is their core weakness. If we can revive a sense of purpose within them, they will once again become a vibrant, principled community, just as they were in the past. Instilling a sense of purpose in individuals is to instil everything in them. Purpose awakens a person's latent strengths and transforms them into a new, empowered individual.

CHARACTER BUILDS THE NATION

The role of individuals in nation-building is akin to that of bricks in a structure. A nation where citizens embrace compromise, cooperation, and patience for short-term challenges to achieve long-term progress will thrive.

Toyota Motor Company is a Japanese automobile manufacturer that has maintained its production process without losing a single workday for nearly the past 30 years. This is just one example that illustrates the reasons behind the rapid industrial development in Japan. General Motors and Ford Motor Company are considered the largest automotive manufacturers in the world. However, the

average annual production per worker in these American companies is eleven cars. In contrast, in the aforementioned Japanese motor company, the average yearly output per worker is thirty-three cars.

The secret behind Japan's remarkable industrial development lies in its labour force. The constructive temperament of Japanese workers is Japan's greatest wealth. Despite Japan having little to no production of coal, iron, oil, and other metals, it still exhibits the fastest industrial development in the world. What is it about the temperament of Japanese workers that has become such a significant asset for Japan? According to one observer:

“A national spirit of compromise and cooperation and a willingness to endure short-term setbacks for the long-term good of the nation, company, or family.” (*The Hindustan Times*, August 25, 1981)

The national character of the Japanese people is one of readiness for compromise and cooperation. For the broader benefit of the nation, company, or family, they are willing to endure temporary losses.

In the construction of a nation, the most critical factor is the temperament of its individuals. If the temperament of individuals is flawed, nothing can save the nation from destruction. Conversely, if the temperament of individuals is right, that nation will certainly succeed, regardless of how many enemies it faces.

The role of individuals in nation-building is akin to that of bricks in a structure. A building made of poor-quality bricks is unstable and can collapse under any incident. In

contrast, a building constructed with strong bricks can be trusted to stand firm against floods and storms. Every gust of wind that strikes it merely bounces back; it cannot damage it.

MORAL STATE

**The true strength of a nation lies in its moral values.
The level of success a nation achieves will be directly
proportional to the level of ethical and moral standards
upheld by its people—no less, no more.**

An article was published in *Time* magazine on September 5, 1988. This informative article focused on the Korean economy. It stated that the engine of Korea's Hyundai car was made in Japan, while the other components were manufactured locally, and the car was then sold as a Korean product. In response, Dong Man Kim, the General Manager of Hyundai Motor Company (Seoul), wrote a rebuttal letter to *Time*, stating:

“I would like to invite you to our Ulsan plant to see how we manufacture our engines.”

In other words, he invited them to their factory in Ulsan to see how they produced their engines. This letter from the General Manager was not only a challenge but also a statement that the *Time* report was contrary to the facts. Nonetheless, *Time* published the letter verbatim in its October 24 issue.

This incident underscores a profound lesson: individuals or

institutions that demonstrate the courage to acknowledge and rectify their mistakes not only grow but flourish. Transparent and honest engagement with criticism strengthens credibility and fosters a culture of continuous growth and lasting progress.

CONSTRUCTIVE TEMPERAMENT

A constructive temperament ensures the progress and success of nations. Conversely, a society in which individuals only think of themselves can never achieve significant improvement.

Dr. Abdul Jalil from New Delhi visited Japan in 1970 and stayed there for six months. In a meeting on October 14, 1984, he recounted an experience: he was residing in Tokyo and would regularly travel to a particular destination, a fifteen-minute journey by train from Tokyo.

One day, Dr. Jalil boarded a train in Tokyo as usual, but after fifteen minutes, his desired station had still not arrived. When the train stopped at a station, he checked the board and saw it was the wrong one. Concerned that he might have boarded the wrong train, he noticed a young Japanese man standing nearby. However, there was a language barrier; Dr. Jalil didn't speak Japanese, and the young man didn't understand English. Dr. Jalil wrote down the name of his station on a piece of paper and showed it to the young man.

As the train had just started moving but had not left the platform, the young man immediately pulled the emergency chain, stopping the train. He then guided Dr. Jalil out of the train and, without a word, walked him to a train that was going in the opposite direction. He sat with Dr. Jalil on the new train, which departed shortly. In a few minutes, they arrived at the station Dr. Jalil was trying to reach. The young man then saw him off and continued on his journey. Throughout this entire incident, there was no verbal communication because of the language barrier.

Dr. Jalil shared another instance: he witnessed a minor accident on the road where two Japanese cars collided head-on. Both drivers got out of their vehicles, bowed to each other, and one of them said, "It was my fault; please forgive me." The other replied, "No, it was my mistake; please forgive me."

This is what is known as a constructive temperament, a trait that ensures the progress and success of nations. Conversely, a society in which individuals only think of themselves and disregard others can never achieve significant improvement.

COLLECTIVE ACTION

Japanese teamwork is the greatest secret behind their national development. Greater progress is always achieved when a large number of individuals work together. Unity is the way to attain substantial development. Unity transforms one into many, amplifying the effort exponentially.

American shipyards take 16 months to build a 50,000-ton tanker, while in Spain, it takes 24 months to complete the same tanker. However, Japanese shipbuilders managed to construct it in just eight months.

What is the secret behind this Japanese miracle? Western experts, after a thorough examination, have identified the primary reason as teamwork. Japanese workers, managers, and officers work in extreme unity. Their collaboration remains intact at every stage of the process, resulting in high-quality products delivered in less time.

Collective harmony is deeply ingrained in Japanese culture and practices. Whether in families, factories, small enterprises, or large institutions, harmony has become a distinctive feature of the Japanese character. As Japanese affairs expert William Ouchi states:

“Every activity in Japan is a group activity and not a springboard to individual glory and personal advertisement.” (*The Hindustan Times*, February 16, 1986)

In Japan, every activity is a collective endeavour; no activity serves as a means of individual glory or personal promotion.

This characteristic of the Japanese is the greatest secret behind their national development. Greater progress is always achieved when a large number of individuals work together. The main obstacle to working collaboratively is that individual personalities do not emerge. A nation whose individuals are inclined to develop their identities will never succeed in unified action and thus will not achieve significant progress.

The simplest way to attain substantial development is through unity. Unity transforms one into many, amplifying the effort exponentially.

THE ONLY PATH

The journey of life is never a smooth path. Life is filled with accidents and hardships that impact both individuals and nations. This is a system established by the Creator. Avoid complaining and focus on finding solutions and persevere despite challenges. It is the only path to success.

In *Al-Risala* (March 1988), there is mention of a Japanese engineer, Shogo Katakura, whom I met in the Maldives. In response to one of my questions, he said that Japan's geographic conditions have instilled in the Japanese a mindset of constantly seeking new ideas. Frequent changes in weather, along with recurring earthquakes and storms,

repeatedly present new challenges. This compels the Japanese to think of ways to adapt to changing conditions continually.

This situation has made the quest for new ideas a permanent trait among the Japanese. This same mindset helped them rebuild after the devastation of World War II. After the war, they reassessed their situation in light of the new conditions, formulated fresh plans, and achieved even greater success. An American author described this Japanese trait by saying they became “*the masters of change rather than the victims.*”

The journey of life is never a smooth path. Life is filled with accidents and hardships that impact both individuals and nations. This is a system established by the Creator, and there is no way to avoid it.

In such circumstances, there is only one path to success: to persist despite difficulties. One must have the courage to reach their destination despite the thorns and stones along the way.

Refrain from complaining about the changes in circumstances. Instead, think of new solutions that are in line with the new conditions, and you will always remain successful.

LIVING IN THE CULTURE OF DISCOVERY

Discover something new every day. If you are an intellectually awakened person, then it is quite possible to extract new things from your observations every day and night.

If you are an intellectually awakened person, then it is quite possible to extract new things from your observations every day and night. There is a Japanese saying: 'Discover something new every day, even if it be a new method of threading a needle.' This saying is based on nature.

According to nature, everyone should develop his mind. Intellectual development is a continuous process that goes on day and night.

The universe of facts is replete with points of interest. If you are an awakened person, if have a curious mind, and you are sensitive about your learning, then it is quite possible that every experience, every observation, will teach you a new lesson. Each time you cogitate, you will be able to discover a new idea. Discovery is food for the mind, just as physical items are food for the body. When we eat lunch or breakfast, we eat physical food, which energizes our bodies. Similar inputs are required for intellectual health. We must be so conscious of this fact that we should derive something new from every experience. It all depends upon

our intellectual awakening. If you are an intellectually awakened person, then it is quite possible to extract new things from your observations every day and night.

Without this daily discovery, your mind will become so dull that you will be just like an animal. Ostensibly, you will appear to be a human being, but in fact, you will be something of a lesser being altogether.

All animals need physical food, but they do not need intellectual food, whereas it is in the nature of man to need intellectual stimuli. And for this purpose, he must discover new things every day. This habit makes one a creative person. And only a creative person can do great things in life.

DISCOVERY, DISCOVERY, DISCOVERY

**Seek something new each day, for discovery breathes
life into the soul. It is the key to the mind's evolution.
A life devoid of discovery is akin to a body bereft of
its soul.**

Spirituality and realisation are not static; they are like a tree, a continuously evolving entity. The truth is that the human mind possesses limitless potential. The universe of facts outside the human mind is also unlimited.

In such a situation, anyone who keeps their mind continuously alert and reflects with focus will discover new truths every day, even every moment. For them, the treasure of discoveries will never run dry.

Just as material food sustains the body, spiritual discoveries nourish the soul of knowledge. Continuous material nourishment guarantees the life of the body, and similarly, continuous spiritual discoveries ensure a person's life and evolution in knowledge and spirituality.

This discovery can be viewed as an intellectual process. The conditions for keeping this process ongoing are only two: reflection and protecting oneself from distractions.

Anyone who possesses these two qualities will undoubtedly become a person of discovery. After that, nothing will prevent them from reaching discoveries.

Discovery is the life of the soul; it is a means of evolution for the mind. Discovery completes a human being. A person without discovery is like a body without a soul.

PRICE OF EXCELLENCE

History amplifies value; an ordinary object becomes extraordinary when imbued with historical significance, surpassing even technological or material wealth.

An article published in the Times of India (May 1, 1990) with a London dateline reports that an old car manufactured nearly 40 years ago was recently sold for 9 million pounds. The first buyer purchased it in 1931 for 6,500 pounds. There are currently only six such cars in existence worldwide.

London: A 59-year-old Bugatti Royale has become the world's most expensive car, drawing a price of more

than £ 9 million from a group of Japanese businessmen. The 3-ton luxury saloon—one of only six of its kind in existence—surpassed the previous record price of £ 8.5 million paid last November by a Japanese buyer for a 1963 Ferrari GTO, *The Sunday Times* of London reported. The Bugatti cost 6,500 pounds when it was built in 1931.

No car in the world has ever been sold for such a high price, while in terms of mechanical quality, it is quite ordinary compared to a high-end car of today. The value of this car does not lie in its mechanical attributes but in its historical significance. History is more valuable than anything else—more so than advanced technology and gold and silver. An ordinary car is just a car, whereas this particular car is a historical artefact.

THE HIGHEST STANDARD

The Japanese people pursue excellence in every task they undertake, demonstrating that success is achievable despite challenges or limited natural resources.

As I was passing through a street in New York at night, I noticed a brightly lit advertisement for the Japanese car, Toyota. The advertisement was extremely well-crafted and beautifully presented. We also saw ads for American vehicles (Buick, Ford, etc.) on New York's streets, but they seemed quite lacklustre compared to the Japanese ads. The American ads were merely average, while the Japanese ad was a fine example of art.

Similarly, at the United Nations, we noticed that many female guides were appointed to assist the visitors. The guide assigned to our group was a Japanese girl. She was so energetic and introduced everything in such flawless English that it was hard to tell if she was human or a machine. This is a common characteristic of the Japanese people—they strive to perform any task they undertake to the highest standard. When people possess this quality, nothing in the world can stop them from achieving success, regardless of how few natural resources they may have.

IMPARTIALITY: THE SECRET OF SUCCESS

The Koreans used a computer to select their athletes and spent one million dollars to train them for each discipline for two years. This highlights that fairness and impartiality pave the way to success, while parochialism and nepotism are detrimental flaws.

The 10th Asian Games were held in Seoul, South Korea, in September 1986. In this 16-day competition, South Korea bagged the highest tally of medals. The details are given below:

	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
China	94	82	46	222
S. Korea	93	55	76	224
Japan	58	76	77	211

Iran	6	6	10	22
India	5	9	23	37
Philippines	4	5	9	18
Thailand	3	10	13	26
Pakistan	2	3	4	9

So, between them, China, Korea and Japan bagged the lion's share of the total medals. India is a far bigger and more populous country than South Korea, yet this chart shows that India lagged very far behind Korea. Commenting on this, The Indian Express of October 6, 1986, writes:

“The Koreans used a computer to select their athletes and spent one million dollars to train them for each discipline for two years. India used familiar hit-or-miss methods in which the old malady of parochialism and nepotism may not have been at a total discount.”

To cut a long story short, the Koreans selected their competitors on the basis of talent, whereas India chose well-connected people. How different could the outcome have been if India had done as Korea did and had fed the necessary data about the potential participants into a computer and allowed the selection to be made with the total disinterestedness and mechanical impartiality that only a computer is capable of? This shows that impartiality is the secret of success, while parochialism and nepotism is an old malady.

LEARNING FROM THE ENEMY

The example of Japan tells us that in this world, great success belongs to those who seek to learn from everyone, whether friend or foe.

In 1949, Japan held an industrial seminar and extended a special invitation to Dr. Edward Deming from the United States. In his lecture, Dr. Deming presented a new theory for achieving high-quality industrial production: the concept of quality control (*The Hindustan Times*, December 28, 1986).

For Japan, Americans were seen as an enemy nation. In World War II, the United States inflicted a severe defeat and humiliation upon Japan. Given this background, one would expect a lingering bitterness toward America. However, the Japanese rose above such negative feelings. As a result, they were able to invite an American professor to their seminar, calmly consider his advice, and wholeheartedly embrace it.

The Japanese grasped Dr. Deming's insights fully, aligning their entire industrial system with the principles of quality control. They set a target of "zero defects" for their manufacturers—producing goods without any flaws. The Japanese dedication and seriousness ensured they met this goal. Soon, Japanese factories were producing defect-free products. A British retailer once remarked that if he

ordered a million items from Japan, he could be sure that not a single one would have a defect. This reliability earned Japan's products a reputation for quality worldwide, and Japanese trade flourished. Japan eventually dominated even the U.S. market, the same country from which they had learned the quality control approach.

The example of Japan tells us that in this world, great success belongs to those who seek to learn from everyone, whether friend or foe.

THE SYSTEM OF NATURE

Diversity and difference are fundamental principles of the world, forming the foundation of human progress. The clash of perspectives sparks new ideas, fueling intellectual growth, while the challenges born of diversity inspire creativity and drive innovation.

Zauq Dehlavi (1789–1854) is a famous Urdu poet. One of his verses states:

“Flowers of various hues adorn the garden; oh,
Zauq, this world is beautified by its diversity.”

This is a law of nature. If you stand in a garden, you will notice that each plant and tree has a unique appearance. Every tree's flowers display a distinct colour in their bloom, making the whole garden a symphony of diversity. Even the birds sing in varied voices. They convey that the Creator delights in a garden where the koel's song harmonizes with the bulbul's chirp, where one bird's melody differs

from another's, creating a tapestry of sounds. Everything embodies a new example of diversity.

This diversity is found in every element of the universe, including humans. Studies in biology and psychology reveal that every human being is entirely different from another. Not only are fingerprints unique, but even each person's cells differ from those of others. One person's eyes do not match another's. This diversity and difference are not merely for aesthetic beauty; they hold profound wisdom within. The truth is that all human progress is rooted in this diversity and difference. It is through this that discoveries are made, ideas clash, and ultimately, intellectual evolution takes place. Mutual challenges arise from this diversity, stimulating mental alertness and creativity.

In any gathering where all participants share the same opinion, no new ideas emerge. In an industrial system where all engineers are moulded in the same way, new technology cannot be achieved. In a society where all writers share the same taste, creative literature cannot flourish. In a country where all politicians come from the same mould, they cannot accomplish great political feats.

Diversity and difference are fundamental laws of this world. They persist independently in every aspect of life. No human can alter this law. Even if someone tries to change it by force, nature's powerful forces will eventually break down this artificial system and restore it to the principle of diversity. Wisdom resides in this truth: both individual intellectual growth and collective human progress stem from it.

THE SECOND CHANCE

Life is full of second chances. Wisdom lies in recognising and capturing the available opportunities and having the courage to avail yourself of a second chance.

In Reader's Digest (February 1987), there was an article titled 'Dare to Change Your Life.' This article shared several stories of individuals who initially faced failure, suffering losses and challenges. However, they did not lose hope; despite losing one opportunity, they kept their eyes open for the next. This strategy worked, and after an initial failure, they found success in their second attempt. The article concluded with the notion that life is full of second chances. The only requirements to seize these chances are the ability to recognise them and the courage to act:

“Life is full of second chances. All we need for a second chance is the ability to recognise it and the courage to act.”

Life is, essentially, about utilising second chances—a truth as valid for individuals as it is for nations. History confirms this. In the early days, Islam did not find an opportunity to thrive in Makkah, but it embraced the opportunity in Madinah and carved its path forward. Western nations, unable to succeed in the Crusades, capitalised on intellectual opportunities to regain prominence.

In today's world, it is common to miss the first chance,

either due to inexperience or others' opposition. However, losing the first opportunity does not mean losing all opportunities. If one remains hopeful after missing the first chance, a second chance is often just around the corner, ready to be seized to reach the intended destination.

It is unwise to wrest opportunities already occupied by others; wisdom lies in capturing those opportunities that are still available.

An article published in *The Times of India* (April 13, 1989) with a New York dateline was titled "Japan's Bid to Excel the US in Supercomputers." The report mentioned that America's long-standing dominance in the field of supercomputers was now in question. Analysts from an American corporation predicted that a Japanese supercomputer named SX-X would enter the market in 1990. This machine was expected to be the fastest globally, capable of performing 20 billion scientific calculations per second, making it 25 per cent faster than America's fastest supercomputer. It was also designed to be more cost-effective while maintaining precision.

The importance of this supercomputer extends beyond scientific research, oil exploration, and weather forecasting. It is also crucial for national security, as it is extensively used in nuclear weapons development. This new Japanese computer has ushered the world into a new industrial era, rendering previously "modern" computers traditional and outdated and even giving Japan a technological advantage in military fields.

In 1945, America created the "super bomb" that devastated

Japan. Yet, it could not strip Japan of the potential to create the “supercomputer,” which allowed it to rise anew and, within just 45 years, change the course of history.

Destruction, no matter how extensive, does not eliminate the possibilities for rebuilding, and the power of construction is, ultimately, greater than the power of destruction.

ACTION, NOT REACTION

Responding to provocation is simply a reflex, but rising above it to focus on growth and stability reflects true strength and purposeful action. The universal law asserts that progress favors those who embrace purposeful action, while those consumed by mere reaction set themselves on a path to ruin.

The American company IBM was so advanced in the field of computers that it was often referred to as the “computer giant.” A few years ago, IBM executives mocked Japanese computer companies, saying, “When IBM sneezes, Japanese computer makers are blown away.”

However, Japanese industrialists did not react angrily to this “provocation.” They focused wholeheartedly on improving the quality of their computers. According to *Time* (September 17, 1990), Japan eventually surpassed the world in the computer industry. In fact, Japanese company Fujitsu announced that its latest, largest computer could process up to 600 million instructions per second,

compared to IBM's best computer, which could only process 210 million instructions per second.

Becoming provoked by incitement is called reaction, while ignoring provocation to focus on development and stability is called action. The law of this world is that those who prove themselves through "action" progress, while those absorbed in "reaction" ultimately find themselves in ruin.

ELEVATED THINKING

**In life, constant effort toward progress is essential.
Without sustained advancement, stagnation sets in,
leading inevitably to decline and obscurity.**

A Tokyo publishing house released a 160-page book that provides insight into Japanese society and the Japanese mindset. The book, titled *Japanese Society* (1987), is authored by Chie Nakane, a professor of social anthropology at Tokyo University. She describes the Japanese mental makeup in detail, summarising it as: "The constant desire to rise a little higher than the average" (p.155).

According to Nakane, this desire to exceed the average defines the Japanese way of life. They treat it with the reverence of a religious teaching, striving continuously to live by it. Life, as she describes, is never static; one either ascends or descends. This principle is absolute—if one does not strive to rise, one will inevitably begin to fall. No extra effort is needed to decline.

This principle applies equally to both faith and worldly

matters. A true believer is one whose faith is constantly growing. If one's faith stops increasing, they naturally start moving toward a decline in belief. Here, remaining in a single state is impossible.

The same principle applies to worldly affairs: one must relentlessly pursue progress in life. Those who fail to maintain their path of advancement inevitably succumb to stagnation and eventual decline. Staying committed to growth is vital, for neglecting it is akin to embracing decay.

MAKING HISTORY

**Never lose hope in the face of current circumstances.
History often reveals that what appears to be a fading
force can revive and rise to prominence once more.**

B. Tuchman states that history is the unfolding of miscalculation. This means that observers form an opinion about history based on the present. However, when the present becomes the future, it becomes clear that people's estimations are entirely incorrect. The future often manifests in ways that differ significantly from what those initially understanding it perceived.

For instance, in 6 AH, the Treaty of Hudaibiyyah was concluded between the Messenger of God, Prophet Muhammad and the Quraysh. At that time, all the Quraysh believed that the Muslims had effectively signed their death warrant. Yet subsequent years revealed that this seemingly disastrous loss contained a great victory in disguise.

Similarly, in 1945, when American warplanes roared into the skies to drop atomic bombs on Japan, America believed it was turning Japan into a pile of ashes forever. However, forty years later, the world witnessed Japan rising as the largest industrial power.

This demonstrates that it is not humans who shape history; rather, it is God who determines the course of human history according to His will. The shaping of history is decided from the unseen, not from observable conditions.

This study of history provides comfort to those whom worldly observers may deem extinguished or erased. Events show that seemingly extinguished embers can suddenly flare up in this world. A buried entity can rise again, alive and powerful, standing on the Earth. Here, a seemingly spent force can rejuvenate and become a force once again.

Never let current circumstances dishearten you, for as history turns its page, outcomes often defy the expectations shaped by visible conditions.

THE EXAMPLE OF JAPAN

As the 20th century draws to a close, humanity stands amidst an intellectual void, having lost its previous ideological foundation. Now, it seeks a new cornerstone for rebuilding. The quest for God and religion remains an intrinsic human necessity deeply rooted in our inner being.

Today, humanity is in search of a new guiding philosophy. Those who can provide this new worldview will emerge

as leaders of the 21st-century world. According to F.H. Bradley, this new philosophy is essentially a “new religion.” On a deeper level, however, Bradley’s concept of a “new religion” actually aligns with what is traditionally understood as an unaltered or pure religion. Had Bradley understood the distinction between the altered and the unaltered, he would likely have described his ideal as the latter rather than something entirely “new.”

In essence, what modern humanity seeks is none other than Islam. Islam, as a natural and unaltered religion, encompasses complete truth. Although unfamiliar with it, people often refer to this ideal by different names, like a new ideology, new religion, new system, or new revolution.

As humanity approaches the end of the 20th century, it finds itself in an intellectual void. It has lost its former ideological foundation and now seeks a new one to rebuild upon. To illustrate this need, let me recount the example of Japan.

The current imperial family of Japan has ruled for over 1,500 years. For centuries, the Japanese regarded their emperor as a deity known as ‘Kami,’ attributing divine qualities to him. However, after World War II, they began to view their emperor as merely a human, referred to as ‘Hito.’

This shift was a tremendous ideological upheaval for the Japanese people. For 1,500 years, they believed their emperor was a god endowed with divine attributes and capable of protecting them from any power. When the United States dropped atomic bombs on Hiroshima and

Nagasaki, Japan's military might crumble. For the first time in over a millennium, Japan suffered complete defeat against an external power. On August 15, 1945, Emperor Hirohito announced on radio that Japan had lost the war and would surrender to the United States.

Hearing this from their "divine" emperor was a profound shock for the Japanese. They had believed their emperor was invincible, but his admission of defeat shattered that belief. This realization left them with the understanding that their emperor was, after all, just a human being and not a supreme god.

This event proved even more devastating for the Japanese psyche than the atomic bombings themselves. The bombs temporarily destroyed two cities, but the loss of this belief fundamentally and permanently impacted the inner spirit of the Japanese people. The younger generation of Japan today faces deep frustration, having lost a profound source of confidence. The Japanese nation is now searching for a new 'god'—a spiritual anchor to replace what they lost. This search has become Japan's most significant challenge.

What happened in Japan reflects, in various forms, the state of modern nations worldwide. Each has lost its traditional 'god,' the source upon which they relied. Consciously or unconsciously, each nation is now in search of a new god, a replacement for what they have lost.

This search is not coincidental but rooted in human nature itself. God and religion are not external constructs; they are deeply ingrained within human beings as an essential inner need. Psychological and anthropological research

has conclusively shown that humanity cannot exist without a belief in God or religion (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 15, p. 628)

Edmund Burke succinctly summarized this idea, saying, “Man is by his constitution a religious animal.” This is why modern humanity, driven by its intrinsic nature, is in search of a genuine, true God that can fulfil the profound needs of the human soul.

SIGNS OF GOD

**The creations themselves bear witness to their Creator.
To those with the vision to perceive, every sight
prompts the declaration, “Surely, this is made by God.
No one else can create it.”**

On the 7th of September 1984, I stood in front of a tree in a mountainous area of Africa. This tree was new to me; I had never seen such a tree before.

The tree seemed to be a sign of God in its entirety. Everything about it struck me as extraordinary: its delicate flower, its carved fruit, and the mathematically crafted leaves all cried out that they had not come into existence by themselves but that a Creator had made them. Every tree in this world is a testament to God’s craftsmanship. However, this particular tree made a special impression on me since it was the first time I had encountered it.

As I looked at this strange and beautiful tree in Africa, I spontaneously exclaimed, “It seems that for everything

God has created in this world, He has inscribed: ‘Made by God.’”

God has inscribed this on His creations and then concealed Himself from people’s sight so that they might recognise the Creator through the creation and, despite the unseen, perceive God’s presence in this world.

An expert in machines can look at a machine and say, “This machine was made in Russia, or it was made in America, Britain, or Japan.” The same is true for everything in the universe. We are in a world filled with countless natural machines, each continuously performing its function. Although there is no visible label indicating who made these “machines,” their extraordinary design and incomprehensibly excellent performance serve as their declaration of origin. The creations themselves reveal their Creator.

Nothing in the universe has words inscribed on it stating who made it. However, in a meaningful sense, each one bears such an inscription. If one has the sight to see, one will proclaim upon observing anything, “Surely, this is made by God. No one else can create it.”

EVIDENCE OF GOD

Modern technologies such as the remote control provide clear evidence of divine governance over the universe, demonstrating that God's control spans the vast expanse of the cosmos.

Remote Control

In the modern era, one of the new words added to the human lexicon is “remote control,” which means to control something from a distance without any physical interface.

Today, many situations have arisen where signals or messages cannot be sent via wires, such as with moving vehicles like aeroplanes or spacecraft. In such cases, remote control or radio control is employed to operate the machine as desired.

In these situations, signals are sent in coded form. The relevant machine has a receiver that is always active to receive signals at the desired frequency. This method has become widely used in various tasks today.

The technique of remote control has developed to the extent that instructions are sent to machines orbiting in space from the ground with great precision, and they are monitored accordingly. If any malfunction occurs within them, they can be corrected from the ground using radio waves without any physical medium.

Telecontrol System to Keep a Watch Tokyo, June 26, 1985 (Kyodo)

Do you want your curtains to open and close at home while you are on vacation? Or to ensure that the front door is locked? Or turn on the air conditioner just before you get home? You can do it all by telephone with Japanese-made home automation equipment.

“Telecontrol systems” can be hooked up to many appliances, including air conditioners, electric locks, rice cookers, and lights. The new home automation products also include security systems to guard against fire or theft through electronic sensors, multi-function “intelligent” telephones for telecommunications, and intercoms linking rooms. The telecontrol system allows the user to turn appliances on or off and to check for fire leaks or theft with special sensors that send coded signals through a push-button telephone. (*The Hindustan Times*, New Delhi, June 27, 1985, p.17)

Steering by Satellite

Nineteenth-century clipper-ship captains looked to the stars to steer their course. Many modern skippers rely on Loran, a land-based navigation system using radio waves. However, Loran has definite limitations: the system’s radio transmission sunsets. In the future, many high-tech ships will chart their paths using an advanced navigational method called GPS.

The system, developed by the U.S. military, will consist of a global network of 18 satellites. Using a \$25,000 receiver and a special antenna, ships can pick up coded radio signals

transmitted by the four closest GPS satellites. The timing of the signals indicates the location of the vessel. With such a system, modern sailors may seldom stray off course. (*Newsweek*, September 16, 1985, p. 5)

The remote control system is a material manifestation of a deeper, spiritual reality. It serves as a practical example of how God controls the vast universe directly and operates it according to His will. While remote control by radio is a human invention, it has made a greater divine reality comprehensible to us.

Do you wish that when you are away on vacation, you could still open and close your home curtains? Or ensure, while away, that your front door is locked? Similarly, do you want to be able to turn on your home air conditioner before you arrive back?

You can accomplish all of these tasks by installing Japanese-made automated devices in your home, allowing you to manage everything via telephone while your house is empty.

This mechanical system is called a telecontrol system. It can be connected to various household items, including air conditioners, electric locks, pressure cookers, and lights.

The new automated home devices also include many additional features, such as electrical systems for protection against fire or theft. Likewise, there are “intelligent” telephones for remote communication and intercom systems that link different rooms.

With the telecontrol system, you can turn electrical appliances on or off, detect fires, identify gas leaks, or

monitor for theft with specific devices that send messages in coded form.

God controls the universe while remaining outside of it; He is not present within the universe like a limited human being. This was once merely a belief, but today, it has become a reality that we can easily comprehend through our known experiences. The telecontrol system mentioned serves as a preliminary demonstration of this event at the level of a household, akin to how God has established this control on a grander scale throughout the universe.

SCIENCE TOWARDS ONENESS OF GOD

The natural world operates with remarkable consistency, governed by a single law and precise mathematical equations. So extraordinary was this order that Boltzmann famously asked, “Who is the God that wrote these signs?”

In the field of physics, it has been understood since Newton that four types of laws or forces control the various phenomena of nature:

1. Gravitational force
2. Electromagnetic force
3. Strong nuclear force
4. Weak nuclear force

According to legend, Newton discovered the law of gravitation when he saw an apple fall from a tree. He

pondered, “Why does the apple fall down instead of going up?” This question led him to realize that a force of attraction operates within the Earth and similarly among all celestial bodies. Later, Einstein made some technical revisions to this theory. However, the original theory is still regarded as a fundamental principle of nature in science.

The experiment for the electromagnetic law was first conducted by Faraday in 1821. He demonstrated that the force of electricity is deeply connected to the force of magnetism. When a magnet is combined with movement, electricity is produced, and when the wave of magnetism and electricity is combined, movement occurs (January 6, 1980).

For the first 50 years, these two laws were deemed sufficient for explaining all physical phenomena. However, at the beginning of the twentieth century, with increased knowledge about the internal structure of the atom and the discovery of particles smaller than atoms operating within them, a shift in physical theories began. This led to the theories of strong nuclear force and weak nuclear force.

The nucleus of the atom is surrounded by electrons, which are significantly smaller and lighter than protons. Yet studies show that each electron carries the same charge as the heavier protons. However, both are opposites: electrons have a negative electric charge, and protons have a positive electric charge. Electrons orbit the outer regions of the atom so that there is a significant amount of space between them and the nucleus. However, both negative and positive charges are equal, which allows the atom to remain electrically neutral and stable.

Now, the question arises: how does the nucleus of the atom remain stable? Why do electrons and protons not scatter apart? The explanation for stability is that a new kind of attractive force operates close to protons and neutrons. This force is derived from particles known as mesons. Protons and neutrons within the atom are fundamentally considered identical.

If we take two pieces of magnets and align their similar poles (north to north or south to south), they will repel each other. According to this known physical principle, protons and neutrons should flee from one another; however, this does not occur because protons and neutrons are constantly changing and, during this change, emit a force in the form of mesons that bind them together; this is known as strong nuclear force. Similarly, scientists have observed that certain particles within some atoms (neutrons, mesons) suddenly break apart. This situation, for instance, occurs with radium. The sudden decay of atomic particles contradicts the established physical principle of causality because it cannot be predicted which of the numerous particles will decay first; it entirely depends on chance. The mysterious force assumed to exist in the atom to explain this phenomenon is termed the weak nuclear force.

Scientists believe that all events in the universe arise from the interaction of these four forces. However, science, by its very nature, is always in search of unity. Scientific observation of the universe indicates that the entire cosmos operates in remarkable harmony. This

astonishing harmony suggests that there is a single law that governs the whole system of nature. Consequently, physics is continuously seeking a unified theory. The “conscience” of science persistently strives to reduce the number of natural laws and to discover a single principle that explains all events.

Einstein attempted to unify the first two laws of gravitation and electromagnetism, dedicating more than 25 years to this endeavour, but he was unsuccessful. It is said that shortly before his death, he told his son, “I wish I knew more mathematics so that I could solve this problem.” The joint Nobel Prize in Physics awarded in 1979 to Dr. Abdus Salam and two other American scientists (Gershwins and Weinberg) was based on a similar investigation. They managed to unify the last two laws of nature (strong and weak nuclear forces) within a single mathematical framework. This theory is known as the G.S.W Theory. They demonstrated that both statutes are fundamentally one. In this way, they reduced the number from four to three.

It is said that Dr. Abdus Salam deserves the greatest credit for this discovery. Still, the fact that he did not receive the award alone reflects the unfortunate reality that he is from Pakistan, a country lacking the resources necessary for such research. Such research can only be conducted in institutions that possess millions of dollars and extremely valuable machinery and can hire dozens of scientists for a single project. Such institutions are either in the United States, Japan, or Western Europe.

Although science limits itself to the question of ‘what is,’ it does not endeavour to explore the question of ‘why is.’ However, it is a fact that the world discovered by science is so complex and astonishing that one cannot encounter the question of ‘why is’ without being confronted by it. Maxwell (1831-1879) was the person who successfully described the laws of electromagnetic interaction in mathematical equations. The consistent system of nature outside of human beings, which operates through a singular law, being expressed so beautifully in human-made mathematical equations was so extraordinary that Boltzmann exclaimed, “Who was the God who wrote these signs?”

THE TESTIMONY OF SCIENCE

The thought-controlled wheelchair demonstrates the concept of a thought-driven universe, reflecting God’s will as the ultimate governing force.

In today’s world, the internet is a global treasure of information. It can be called an electronic encyclopaedia. If you go to the internet and type in the following words—Thought-Controlled Wheelchair—a page of information will appear on the screen, explaining that a wheelchair can be controlled through the mind without any external device.

A person sitting in a wheelchair can operate it purely through their mind, steering it in any desired direction

without using their hands. Toyota Motors of Japan publicly demonstrated this technology on July 1, 2009.

Thought-Controlled Wheel Chair

Japan's Toyota Motor Company said yesterday that it had invented a way to allow a person to steer an electric wheelchair through a simple thought, using a helmet-like device that measures their brain waves. They said that they had developed a way of steering a wheelchair by just detecting brain waves without the person having to move a muscle or shout a command. Toyota's system, developed in collaboration with researchers in Japan, is among the fastest in the world in analysing brain waves, it said in a release on Monday. (*The Times of India*, New Delhi, July 1, 2009)

This event illustrates how God controls the entire universe by His will. The successful demonstration of a thought-controlled wheelchair is practical evidence of a thought-controlled universe.

This scientific discovery makes it comprehensible that a supreme Divine Mind is fully in control of the entire universe.

UNVEILING THE UNSEEN: THE ESSENTIAL JOURNEY OF DISCOVERY IN FAITH

God has hidden the Hereafter from human perception, leaving it for humanity to uncover—to transform the unseen into observable reality. This discovery or unveiling is known as faith.

For human beings, the most crucial element is discovery. It is through discovery that progress in this world is achieved, as well as advancement in the Hereafter. The ideal human being, according to the Quran, believes in the unseen. The relevant words in the Quran are:

“Those who believe in the unseen...” (2:3).

What does it mean to believe in the unseen? In other words, it is to make the unknown known—essentially, the process that is referred to today as discovery.

God has concealed the secrets of worldly progress within the heavens and the earth. These secrets are referred to as the laws of nature. In science, these secrets (or laws of nature) are discovered. The nation that uncovers these secrets advances beyond others, as we currently observe in Western nations or Japan within Asia. Developed countries have achieved all their progress based on these discoveries.

Similarly, God has concealed the Hereafter from human sight. Now, it is up to humanity to discover it—to bring what is hidden into observable reality. This discovery or unveiling is known as faith. The more a person advances in this faith, the greater their progress and success in the Hereafter will be.

SECURITY AND TRUTH

The most fundamental pursuit for a person is truth in connection with their inner self and peace in relation to the world around them.

In the Arabic section of the fortnightly Yaqeen International from Karachi (October 22, 1990), there is a report about Islam. It states that the famous Japanese boxer Antonio Inoki has embraced Islam. His Islamic name is Muhammad Hussain Inoki. According to the Arabic reporting in the newspaper, he said:

“I sought security and truth, and my efforts led me to enter the fold of Islam.”

The most important thing a person seeks is truth in relation to their inner self and peace with regard to the external world. Today’s person often feels deprived of both. When one studies Islam, one finds answers to these two needs within it, and ultimately, one enters into Islam.

ANOTHER POTENTIAL

Japan's potential was realized by a nation that persevered through all adversities and was willing to struggle for forty years. Similarly, to bring Islam's far greater potential to reality, a living, dynamic nation is needed. However, such a nation does not exist today. As a result, Islam's potential for progress has not yet become a reality in the world.

A book about modern Japan has been published, titled *The Japan That Can Say No*. The authors are two prominent Japanese figures: Shintaro Ishihara, who has twice served as a minister in Japan, and Akio Morita, the globally renowned chairman of Sony Corporation.

This book has many insightful points. At one point, the authors write that no matter how much America increases its military power, it has reached a limit where it can no longer act against us because America itself now depends on us. If Japan were to tell the U.S. that it would stop selling its chips, the American computer industry would be affected. In fact, America cannot even manufacture its advanced stealth bomber without Japanese technology. In detailing such scenarios, they write, "If one doesn't use Japanese semiconductors, one cannot guarantee precision."

This is the way of life in this world. In this world, one gains a place by making oneself indispensable to others

and by proving one's usefulness to the point where others recognize it as a necessity. No one can be their enemy, so no one can overlook someone or a group that they deem essential.

Japan has proven its importance in material and economic terms. This same importance exists on a larger scale in favour of Islam. Just as Japan's usefulness has made it impossible for the U.S. (or other countries) to ignore, if people were to understand the profound spiritual and humanitarian benefits Islam offers, it would be equally impossible for them to ignore it.

This second scenario holds a monopoly-like exclusivity for Islam. The path to true faith and genuine human welfare does not exist in any other religious or secular system aside from Islam.

Today, in its silent language, Islam speaks to the world: If you do not make room in your heart for the remembrance of God, you will find no peace for the mind and soul. If you do not accept the belief in the Oneness of God, you cannot explain the universe in any comprehensible way. If you do not adopt Islam, you will not find any religion elsewhere that stands as an indisputable historical reality.

Japan's potential was realized by a nation that persevered through all adversities and was willing to struggle for forty years. Similarly, to bring Islam's far greater potential to reality, a living, dynamic nation is needed. However, such a nation does not exist today. As a result, Islam's potential for progress has not yet become a reality in the world.

ZERO DEFECT UNIVERSE IS UNDER GOD'S CONTROL

The material world, governed directly by the Creator, operates under a flawless cosmic order, with zero-defect management from the outset. In contrast, in the human world, where individuals implement their plans—such as in industry—a zero-defect management system remains elusive.

During World War II (1939-1945), the concept of Zero Defect Management emerged. Numerous articles and books were published on this topic, and soon, the idea spread rapidly in developed countries. Several nations, such as the United States and Japan, attempted to implement this concept on a large scale. However, after extensive experience, it was concluded that achieving zero defects in management was impossible. You can read more about this topic, for example, in the article *The Concept of Zero Defects in Quality Management* by Chandana Das. (<https://www.simplilearn.com/concept-of-zero-defects-quality-management-article>)

In modern times, industrially developed countries have made extensive efforts to establish zero-defect management. A substantial amount of research has been conducted, and books have been written on the subject. Throughout most of the twentieth century, this work continued, yet

the goal remained elusive, even though the most advanced nations, like the United States and Japan, participated. At the same time, modern scientific studies have shown that the system of nature is established with a remarkable level of precision—for example, the orbits of stars and planets. If you want to know the exact time the sun will rise and set tomorrow, you can accurately calculate it today.

On one hand, human experience shows that the concept of zero-defect management in the human world has completely failed. On the other hand, in the material world, excluding humans, this concept exists in full. For example, if you want to know the sunrise and sunset times on April 15, 2025, you can accurately determine that on April 15, 2025, in Delhi, the sunrise and sunset times will be as follows:

Sunrise: 05:56

Sunset: 18:46

The times of sunrise and sunset can be calculated with the same accuracy for any place in the world. Similarly, the entire system of the material world runs with perfect precision. The science of the material world, known as astronomy, physics, chemistry, and so on, can record data from thousands of years ago to thousands of years into the future without any discrepancy. No difference has ever been recorded in this world's functioning.

Consider that the material world, which operates directly under the Creator's management, has followed the principle of zero-defect management from the beginning. In contrast, in the human world, where people implement their plans, such as in industry, the zero-defect management

system could not be established despite intense efforts. On one side, observe Divine Management in space, which continuously operates on the principle of zero defects; on the other side, look at Human Management, where, despite almost a century of continuous effort, zero-defect management could not be achieved. To gain more insight into the human management experience on this matter, you may refer to the article available on the internet.

Zero Defects, a term coined by Mr. Philip Crosby in his book “Absolutes of Quality Management,” has emerged as a popular and highly-regarded concept in quality management—so much so that Six Sigma is adopting it as one of its major theories.

Unfortunately, the concept has also faced a fair degree of criticism, with some arguing that a state of zero defects cannot exist. Others have worked hard to prove the naysayers wrong, pointing out that “zero defects” in quality management doesn’t literally mean perfection but rather refers to a state where waste is eliminated and defects are reduced. This means ensuring the highest quality standards for projects. What Do We Mean by Zero Defects: From a literal standpoint, it’s pretty obvious that attaining zero defects is technically not possible in any sizable or complex manufacturing project.

Now, apply the well-known formula to this two-way experience: “Things are understood by their opposites” or “It is in comparison that you understand.”

The Quran alludes in various verses to the idea of comparing the system that human beings establish in this world to

the broader system governing the rest of the universe. A comparative study of both reveals a fundamental difference between the two realms. In the human world, despite all efforts, a system of zero-defect management has not been achieved. It has come to be accepted that achieving such perfection within human systems is not possible. On the other hand, in the material world established by God, this concept of flawless order has existed with remarkable accuracy throughout history.

When this contrast is evaluated through the formula as mentioned earlier, it becomes evident—based on human experience itself—that the Owner of this universe is a higher being, namely Allah, the Lord of all worlds. The difference between human society and the realm of the exact sciences serves as definitive proof of God’s existence. This is the truth articulated in the Quran in these words:

“He created seven heavens, one above the other in layers. You will not find any flaw in the creation of the Gracious One. Then look once again: can you see any flaw? Then look again and again. Your gaze will come back to you confused and exhausted.” (67:3-4)

Similarly, another Quranic verse states:

“Have they not observed the sky above them and marked how We have built it and adorned it, leaving no flaws in it?” (50:6)

In modern times, the discovery of this flawless cosmic order reinforces one of the attributes of God, the Lord of all worlds, namely:

“God: there is no deity save Him, the Living, the Eternal One. Neither slumber nor sleep overtakes Him. To Him belong whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is on the earth.”
(2:255)

Every component of the vast universe which God controls functions under the zero-defect laws. Besides the world of man, the rest of the universe is a zero-defect universe. This is because man is on test in this world for which God Almighty has given him freedom. Due to the exigencies of trial, the ideal, zero-defect world cannot be established in this world. Man will only find the zero-defect world--Paradise-- in the Hereafter after death.

JAPAN'S TARGET OF 'ZERO-DEFECT' INTRODUCES PARADISE

God has created an ideal world called Paradise: a world of everlasting joy and bliss that will come into existence in the Hereafter. Those individuals who pass the test in a short period in this world will reap the rewards of their actions by getting entry into eternal Paradise.

The Japanese target of 'zero defects' for their manufacturers—producing goods without any flaws serves as an introduction to Paradise for human beings. We cannot find Paradise in the present world. This world only serves as an introduction to Paradise. Paradise is the zero-defect world of the Hereafter, a realm of everlasting joy and bliss,

unmarred by turmoil or pain. In Paradise, one is never beset by anguish or calamity. It is a trouble-free world of infinite blessings, where neither death, boredom, or grief exists. However, in this world, man faces contradictions.

Every component of the vast universe is complete in itself. Here, it is only man who lives in contradiction. Other than man, the whole of the universe is a zero-defect universe. It is only man whose life seems defective.

In the rest of the universe, satisfaction prevails, while in man's life, dissatisfaction abounds. In the rest of the universe, all things get what they require, but man is the only creature in the world who does not always get what he wants. The rest of the universe is evil-free, but man, exceptionally, is afflicted with the 'problem of evil.'

Paradise is the answer to this seeming conundrum. The concept of Paradise tells us that all those good things that are there for the rest of the creation are fully available for man too, with the only difference that the rest of the universe gets what it desires in the world of 'today,' while man will get all that he wishes in the world of 'tomorrow' (the Hereafter).

The search for such an ideal world is an instinctive urge in man. Everyone seeks an invisible Paradise, yet no one can find such infinite blessings in this present, finite world. God has reserved it for the Hereafter.

Paradise is not granted automatically; only those who perform righteous deeds on Earth will be deserving of it. God has divided our lives into two parts: a short period on Earth and eternal life in the Hereafter. This world is for

action, while the next world is for reaping the rewards of those actions.

Man is free to act as he wishes on Earth, but this freedom is merely a test. He should recognize it as such and not revel in his power. Those who are not deluded by their temporary authority and never lose sight of their true position will be granted Paradise. Those who rebel based on their worldly power will abide in Hell.

All real power in this world belongs to God alone. He is the Lord of all things, and no one can escape His control for an instant. Those who acknowledge this truth will submit to God willingly. They are the ones who are worthy of Paradise. Those who deny this fact and follow their impulses wherever they lead are offenders in God's sight and will have no share in the blessings of the Hereafter.

THE LIFE OF PARADISE

This world offers fleeting pleasures, while the hereafter promises true, eternal joy. In paradise, everything will be of the highest standard, fulfilling every desire in a realm of lasting happiness.

During my trip to Japan in December 1990, I met a gentleman. I mentioned that the current world is a temporary place, while the Hereafter is the realm of eternal residence. A person should strive to build their "Paradise" in the eternal world. He responded that humans become bored with comforts or pleasures after a short

time. Indeed, in our advanced modern world, there is a widespread problem of boredom. In such a situation, what is the benefit of an eternal Paradise?

Those who do not believe in the Hereafter have always expressed this view. However, this is merely a fallacy. The truth is that boredom arises from the end of the ability to enjoy, not from the end of the desire for pleasure.

These individuals assume that when we wish to enjoy pleasure, we soon become satiated and find no remaining delight in it. But this premise is inherently flawed. The reality is that humans possess an insatiable nature by their very nature. What humans find appealing is something they wish to enjoy eternally.

However, in the present world, humans are plagued by numerous limitations. Therefore, whenever a person seeks to enjoy something desirable, its limitations soon obstruct their enjoyment. Despite their inclination, they lose the power to savour it. For instance, when we eat a delicious food, its taste does not diminish for us; rather, our stomach becomes full, which forces us to stop eating it. Similarly, many wealthy people, despite their cravings, stop indulging in certain things because they fear becoming overweight and suffering from various ailments.

The same applies to all other pleasures. The truth is that boredom or disinterest is a limit to our capacity for enjoyment, not a limitation of desire itself.

Paradise is the place where not only will all pleasures be granted to humans in a more complete state, but also the

limitations on their capacity to enjoy these pleasures will be removed.

In Paradise, this contradiction will cease to exist: a person desires to enjoy, but due to some limitation, they cannot indulge in their favoured things. The result will be that Paradise will become a realm of eternal happiness for humanity.

The boredom (boredom) that a person experiences in this world is, in fact, the result of a contradiction. Humans are inherently idealistic beings; they seek to attain things in their ideal form. However, in this world, everything is non-standard or non-ideal. This is the root cause of boredom.

A person rushes toward something out of passion. Before obtaining it, they are under the illusion that it is precisely the ideal thing they sought. But once they attain it and experience it, they realise that it falls far short of their desired ideal. This is why, in this world, a person may find the thrill of the chase, but they do not experience the joy of possession.

In this world, there is a deceptive pleasure for a person, while the Hereafter offers true pleasure. Everything in the Hereafter will be of the highest standard. Therefore, it will become a source of genuine and limitless delight for humans. Whatever a person desires will be granted to them in Paradise, enhanced and fulfilling, so there will be no question of boredom there.

DESERVING OF PARADISE

Paradise is a perfect, evil-free world of the hereafter,
reserved for those who recognize God in the unseen,
live by His principles, and develop positive personalities.

Looking at the industrialised and planned cities of Japan, I often think of Paradise—the ideal world of the Hereafter. Paradise is a vast, zero-defect, evil-free universe, complete in itself. For thousands of years, man has sought Paradise on Earth due to his natural urges. With the advent of the Industrial Revolution and the age of consumerism, man thought that he could build a Paradise on Earth, believing that the Industrial Age would culminate in the perfect world—Paradise—that he longed for. However, these hopes were dashed with the arrival of pollution, acid rain, and global warming. Moreover, global warming has made it abundantly clear that man cannot build a Paradise on Earth.

Paradise will only be found in a state of perfection in the Hereafter. In Paradise, man will experience a life of eternal joy, peace, and happiness. There will be no need for physical labour; pleasant intellectual activities will suffice to achieve all desired goals. Man must realize that he stands on the threshold of Paradise. The present Earth is a Paradise-in-the-making, not Paradise itself. So, how can man achieve the Paradise of his dreams?

To find an answer to this question, one must become aware of the Creation Plan of God. God has created man according to His Plan. To become acquainted with this plan, man must thoroughly understand himself. Just as the workings of a machine can only be understood when we study the engineer's drawings, the same principle applies to understanding man. Besides the engineer's mind, there is no other way to clarify what the machine is meant for. The case is the same for men. Only by understanding the Creation Plan of the Creator can we know the purpose of man's life.

Man's existence is such a unique phenomenon that no comparable example can be found throughout the vastness of the cosmos. Man is rightly called the 'best of all creations,' which means the best and most meaningful 'being' among all created things. Such a 'meaningful being' cannot have been created without a purpose. The Creator of man has created him according to a unique plan. The Quran, the only preserved religious scripture, sheds light on this plan:

“He created death and life so that He might test you, and find out which of you is best in conduct.”
(67:2)

According to this verse of the Quran, man was created as an eternal being, and 'death and life' represent both the pre-death and post-death periods of human life. Thus, death and life encompass the entire eternal lifespan of human beings. The Creator of man has created him according to a unique plan. His intention is for man to undergo a period of trial in this present, imperfect world, and then, based on

his deeds, he will earn the right to inhabit the perfect and eternal world, which is another name for Paradise.

According to His will, God created a perfect world called Paradise—a world that fulfils all our human desires, free of all limitations and disadvantages, free of fear and pain, and free of all imperfections. It is an eternal world with neither death nor old age, an ideal world where we can achieve fulfilment.

Less-than-perfect beings cannot inhabit a perfect Paradise. Therefore, God created perfection-seeking creatures—human beings. He intended for us to spend a period of trial here on Earth. After this, we will earn the right to inhabit the perfect and eternal world according to our deeds.

The essence of God’s creation plan is to grant a person complete freedom—not as a gift, but as a test. This test enables God to judge who misuses their freedom and who uses it wisely. This is the divine scheme for humanity. In the pre-death period of life, individuals have the opportunity to qualify themselves for Paradise so that in the post-death period, they may be settled as deserving candidates in this perfect world.

This world, therefore, has all the components necessary for a test. It contains perfection-seeking beings in a less-than-perfect world who have been given complete freedom to choose their actions. Thus, we have a choice—we can misuse our freedom to do evil or use our freedom wisely, submit to God, and qualify for Paradise. Those who misuse their God-given freedom are warned in the Quran:

“This is the Truth from your Lord. Let him who

will believe in it and him who will deny it.”
(18:29)

The Creator of the world has created this world as one half of a pair—the present world, in which we live after birth, is the first half; the next eternal world, where we live after death, is the other half. The Creator of man has further designed him as an eternal creature and divided his life into two periods: the pre-death period, which is life in this world, and the post-death period, or life after death. The limited period before death is meant to be a test for man, while the eternal period after his death will be a time of reward or punishment based on his performance in this life’s test.

According to this Creation Plan of God, human beings are placed in situations where they face hardships from time to time throughout their lives as part of their test. Difficulty and sadness are integral parts of the Creator’s plan. No man has the power to extricate himself from this life of trial and tribulation. This arrangement serves as a reminder that the present world has not been made as a place of luxury and comfort but as a period of trial to determine whether he is eligible for eternal life in Paradise. This is the scheme of existence for this world devised by its Creator. The Creator aims to select those who are fit to inhabit the world of Paradise.

In this world of trials, to be eligible for Paradise, every man or woman must possess two qualifications: the acknowledgement of the truth of the one God and the commitment to leading a principled life to develop a positive personality. Those who pass this test will be granted a place

in Paradise, where all their desires will be fulfilled. Those who fail will endure eternal deprivation.

In this world, man finds himself free. However, this freedom is not his by right; it is a test. Man must acknowledge the truth of the One God and surrender to Him—not by compulsion, but by his own choice. This voluntary surrender to the One God is, without doubt, the greatest sacrifice a person can make. Acknowledging the truth of the One God is an act of humility, not only before God but before others as well. Yet, it is this very virtue that will elevate man to the highest position and lead him to the very gates of Paradise.

The second critical requirement is to lead a principled life. Generally, a person's character is shaped by emotions such as anger, revenge, jealousy, hatred, greed, selfishness, and dishonesty. These negative feelings often dominate one's personality. However, a person must become disciplined in these matters. He should not shape his character based on external influences but rather by his own decisions rooted in higher principles to develop a divine character. To purify oneself from every negative emotion, one should develop a lofty, positive character. Only one who has developed a completely positive personality will be held deserving of living in the neighbourhood of God in Paradise.

ONLY POSITIVE PERSONALITIES WILL FIND ENTRY INTO PARADISE

Only a positive personality will find entry into the ideal world of Paradise in the Hereafter. Such a personality looks at the positive in everything. He finds opportunities for growth where others only see destruction. He extracts positive lessons from negative experiences.

What is the description of a positive personality who can be found deserving of Paradise in the world Hereafter? The following example of a Japanese person helps us understand this. An Indian man had the opportunity to visit Japan for the first time. During a conversation with his Japanese host, he said sympathetically:

“America treated your people very unfairly. It dropped the first atomic bombs in history on your country, reducing two of your cities to rubble.”

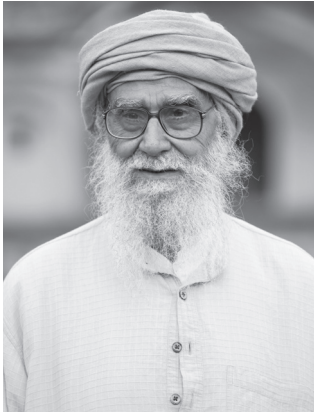
This question could have provoked the Japanese to react. However, the Japanese host replied calmly:

“Not at all. Those bombs turned out to be a blessing in disguise for us. Before the war, these cities—Hiroshima and Nagasaki—were built in an outdated manner, with narrow, winding streets, dilapidated houses, and unhygienic

neighbourhoods. Under normal circumstances, it would have been impossible to rebuild them in a modern way. But when the war completely wiped them off the map, we were presented with an opportunity. We seized it and rebuilt these cities as modern, well-planned urban centres.”

This is the essence of positive thinking: finding opportunities for growth and renewal even in the face of destruction. The response of the Japanese can make us understand what a true positive character is. He does not live in complaints. He looks for the positive in everything. He finds opportunities for growth where others only see destruction. He extracts positive lessons from negative experiences. Only people with such completely positive character will find entry into Paradise, The Home of Peace (Quran, 10: 25) in the Hereafter.

Only positive personalities will enter the ideal world of Paradise. They see the good in everything, find growth in adversity, and learn from negative experiences.



Maulana Wahiduddin Khan (1925-2021) was an Islamic scholar, spiritual guide, and ambassador of peace. His English translation of the Quran and its Commentary are widely appreciated for their simplicity, clarity, and ease of understanding. He has authored over 200 books; and two magazines, *Spirit of Islam* and *Al-Risala*; and recorded thousands of

video and audio lectures. Demonstrating the relevance of Islam in the modern idiom, this material delves into Islam's spiritual wisdom, the Prophet's non-violent approach, its relationship with modernity, and other contemporary issues.

For his seminal contributions to world peace, Maulana received numerous national and international awards including the 'Demiurges Peace International Award' by the Nuclear Disarmament Forum AG under the patronage of the former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev (2002). The Government of India honoured him with the 'Padma Vibhushan Award' (2021), and the 'Padma Bhushan Award' (2000) for his contributions to spirituality. He was also the recipient of the 'Rajiv Gandhi Sadbhavna Award' (2010), the 'Communal Harmony Award' (2000), and the 'National Citizen's Award' by Mother Teresa (1996), to name a few. In 2001, Maulana founded the *Centre for Peace and Spirituality International* which is actively carrying his legacy forward by distributing copies of the Quran and peacefully conveying the spiritual message of Islam at a global level.



Japan stands as a model of peace and positivity. In Hiroshima, a city once devastated, they established the 'Peace Museum' as a powerful symbol of reconciliation. By acknowledging their past mistakes, they fostered a spirit of harmony and mutual understanding. They immersed an entire generation in the American education system and industrialization, laying the groundwork for progress and development. Nearly a century later, this investment bore fruit, producing a generation that propelled Japan to the forefront of the world's leading nations. The remarkable progress of the Japanese nation is a testament to the realistic planning of its leaders, its pursuit of excellence, and the relentless hard work of its people. Japan serves as an inspiring model for others to emulate.

