

Chapter 8. Ashoka the Emperor who gave up War

Very Short Q&A:

Q1: Who started the policy of Dhamma?

Ans: Ashoka

Q2: What was Dhamma?

Ans: The code of conduct

Q3: The Prakrit language gave birth to the _____ language.

Ans: Pali

Q4: What was the purpose of following the policy of Dhamma?

Ans: He followed this policy to uplift the moral of his subjects though he did not declare Buddhism as the religion of the state.

Q5: Dhamma is the Prakrit word for the Sanskrit term Dharma. True/False

Ans: True

Q6: Ashoka was inspired by the teachings of _____.

Ans: Buddha

Q7: When did Ashoka's inclination towards Buddhism developed?

Ans: After the Battle of Kalinga, he slowly became the follower of the Buddhist religion and adopted the path of non violence.

Q8: From where does the term 'Dhamma' was taken from?

Ans: Prakrit language

Q9: Who constructed The Great Wall of China?

Ans: The emperors of China built this wall

Q10: What was the language in which the rock edicts were written?

Ans: The rock edicts were written in Brahmi script, in Prakrit which were the language of the common people.

Q11: Why The Great Wall of China was constructed?

Ans: The wall was constructed to protect the Chinese culture from the invaders.

Q12: Great Wall of China had a system that at every distance of about 100-200m there must be a _____.

Ans: Watch tower

Q13: What is a watch tower?

Ans: A watch tower is a type of fortification used in many parts of the world. It differs from a regular tower, it looks like a free standing structure

Q14: The city of Ujjain is located on the route from _____ to _____.

Ans: North to south

Q15: Name the emperor who was also grandfather of Ashoka.

Ans: Chandragupta Maurya

Q16: Name the three important rulers of Mauryan dynasty.

Ans: The Maurya's were a dynasty with three important rulers - Chandragupta Maurya, his son Bindusara, and his son Ashoka.

Q17: Name the wise man present in Chandragupta Maurya's empire.

Ans: Chanakya

Q18: Name other names of Chanakya.

Ans: Kautilya and Vishnugupta

Q19: Two years after the Kalinga war, Ashoka inscribed his message on the sarnath pillar.
True/False

Ans: True

Q20: Name a prosperous kingdom lying between the rivers Godavari and Mahanadi.

Ans: Kalinga

Q21: How were Empires different from the kingdoms?

Ans: Empires were larger than Kingdoms.

Q22: Which of the two was larger - "An Empire or a Kingdom"?

Ans: Empires

Q23: From whom does the emperor collect taxes?

Ans: Farmers, herders and craftspeople.

Q24: Name the book from which the administration of the Mauryan Empire was known?

Ans: Arthashastra

Q25: What do you mean by Arthashastra?

Ans: Arthashastra is a book in which the ideas of Chanakya, regarding the administration of this period have been written.

Q26: The person who deciphered the Brahmi script was an employee of the _____.

Ans: East India Company

Q27: What is the modern name of Patliputra?

Ans: Patna

Q28: Name the ruler who tried to convey his message to the people through inscriptions.

Ans: Ashoka

Q29: What was the ancient name of coastal Orissa?

Ans: Kalinga

Q30: Why did Ashoka decided to give up wars?

Ans: He was horrified by the violence and bloodshed caused due to wars.

Q31: Name a gateway to the north-west, including the Central Asia.

Ans: Taxila

Q32: Administration of the important Mauryan Provinces was placed under the control of _____.

Ans: Royal Princes

Q33: List one of the major problems that troubled Ashoka in later years of his rule?

Ans: His grandsons were fighting for the throne.

Q34: Ashoka appointed special officials who were known as the _____.

Ans: Dhamma Mahamatta

Q35: Dhamma Mahamatta went from place to place in order to spread the concept of Dhamma. True/False

Ans: True

Q36: Name the script with no descendants and which became extinct by 400 CE.

Ans: Kharoshti

Q37: Name one of the capitals of the Mauryan Dynasty, including Ujjain and Patliputra.

Ans: Taxila

Q38: According to the description of Patliputra written down by Megasthenes, it has _____ towers and _____ gates.

Ans: 570 towers and 64 gates.

Q39: There are around 41 cities where the inscriptions and edicts were found. True/False

Ans: False

Q40: During the Mauryan period, the royal princes were appointed as_____.

Ans: Governors

Q41: Seleucus Nicator belonged to_____.

Ans: Greece

Q42: Name the region that was popular for the production of blanket during Maurya period.

Ans: North-west

Q43: Name the city discussed in the detailed way by Megasthenes.

Ans: Pataliputra

Q44: The lions that we see on our currency notes and coins are taken from the Ashoka pillar located at _____.

Ans: Sarnath

Q45: The empire inherited by Ashoka was founded by his grandfather. True/False

Ans: True

Q46: Name An enemy of Dhana Nanda, who helped Chandragupta to seize the throne of Magadha.

Ans: Kautilya

Q47: Which area was under the direct control of the emperor?

Ans: The area around Pataliputra was under the direct control of the emperor.

Q48: Name some of the countries where Ashoka sent his officials to spread Dhamma.

Ans: Ashoka sent his officials to spread dhamma to Syria, Egypt, Greece, and Sri Lanka.

Q49: What was the turning point in Ashoka's life ?

Ans: The Battle of Kalinga was the turning point in Ashoka's life.

Q50: What were the crops that the Indus people cultivated ?

Ans: Pulses, wheat, barley, peas, rice, sesame, linseed and mustard .

Short Q&A:

Q1: Write short notes on King Chandragupta Maurya.

Ans: Chandragupta Maurya was the founder of the Mauryan empire. He defeated Dhananda the last Nanda ruler. His court was adorned by wise men like Kautilya and ambassadors like Megasthenes. Many of Chanakya's ideas were written down in a book called the Arthashastra. Megasthenes was sent to the court of Chandragupta by the Greek ruler of West Asia named Seleucus Nicator. He has given a lot of information regarding the King and the capital city of Pataliputra.

Q2: Differentiate between tribute and taxes.

Ans: Tribute was collected not on regular basis and people gave it more or less willingly, taxes were collected on regular basis and it was compulsory for the people to pay them.

Q3: How can we say that Ashoka was a unique ruler?

Ans: Ashoka was the most famous Mauryan ruler.

1. He was the first ruler who tried to spread his message to the people through inscriptions.
2. He is the only king in the history of the world who gave up conquest after winning a war.
3. He followed a religious policy of his own and formulated the famous policy of Dhamma.

Q4: Who paid taxes to the emperor?

Ans: Taxes were collected from farmers, herders, crafts persons and traders, who lived in villages and towns in the area. They were collected by officials appointed by the emperor.

Q5: Name some of the important cities of the Mauryan empire?

Ans: There were several cities in the empire such as the capital city Pataliputra, Taxila, and Ujjain.

Q6: Name the three important rulers of the Mauryan dynasty.

Ans: Chandragupta, his son Bindusara, and Bindusara's son, Ashoka were three important rulers of the Mauryan dynasty.

Q7: What was the relation of the people who lived in the forest areas with the empire?

Ans: People who lived in the forest areas were more or less independent, but they were expected to provide elephants, timber, honey and way to Mauryan officials.

Q8: What does Megasthenes write about Pataliputra?

Ans: According to Megasthenes, Pataliputra was a beautiful city surrounded by a huge wall. It had 570 towers and 64 gates. The houses had two or three storeys and were made of wood and mud brick. The palace of the king was made of wood with stone carvings. It was surrounded with gardens and enclosures for keeping birds.

Q9: How did Ashoka convey his message to the people?

Ans: Ashoka conveyed his message through inscriptions and his officials.

Q10: What does Megasthenes write about the Mauryan emperor?

Ans: According to the account of Megasthenes, the emperor appeared in public with grand royal processions. He was carried in a golden palanquin. Elephants guarding were decorated with gold and silver. The king was surrounded by armed women, as he was afraid someone might kill him. He never slept in the same bedroom for two nights. He had special servants who would taste his food before the king ate it.

Q11: The lion capital is made of which material? What is the common feature between our national flag and the Lion capital?

Ans: The Lion capital is carved in stone. The Wheel "Ashoka Chakra" is found in both our National Flag and the Lion capital.

Q12: Where this lion capital was originally placed and how many lions are there in this Lion capital?

Ans: It was originally placed atop the Ashokan pillar at Sarnath, now in the state of Uttar Pradesh. There are four lions in this Lion capital.

Q13: What was Ashoka's dhamma? Explain.

Ans: Ashoka's dhamma was not related to the worship of any god or performance of sacrifice. He considered that it was his responsibility, just like a father has towards his

children, to instruct the people of the empire so as to reduce conflicts among them. He was inspired by the teachings of the Buddha.

Q14: Why did Ashoka give up fighting wars?

Ans: Ashoka fought a war to conquer Kalinga. It was his last war. He decided to give up fighting wars after the victory over Kalinga, because he was horrified by the violence and bloodshed in that. He is the only king in the history of the world who gave up conquest after winning a war.

Q15: Write a note on the cities of the Mauryan empire.

Ans: The Mauryan empire was one of the largest empires to rule the Indian subcontinent. In the Mauryan empire, there were several cities such as the capital Pataliputra, Taxila and Ujjain. Taxila was a gateway to the northwest, including Central Asia, while Ujjain lay on the route from north to south India. Merchants, officials and crafts persons probably lived in these cities.

Q16: How can we say that Ashoka was a unique ruler?

Ans: Ashoka was the most famous Mauryan ruler. He was the first ruler who tried to take his message to the people through inscriptions. Most of his inscriptions were in Prakrit and were written in Brahmi script.

Q17: Explain the war which diverted Ashoka towards Buddhism?

Ans: The most famous war fought by Ashoka was the War of Kalinga. The blood and violence compelled him to abandon the fights on a large scale. The War of Kalinga diverted him to the teachings of Buddha. He is the only king in the history who gave up conquest after winning the war.

Q18: What was the difference between tributes and taxes?

Ans: Tributes were gifts that were given to the rulers by people with free will, taxes on the other hand were levied by the state administration and had to be paid. The taxes were the main source of revenue for the state.

Q19: How do we know that Ashoka did not force his people to become Buddhist?

Ans: Ashoka's edicts propagate Dhamma vis-vis Buddhism. Dhamma lays down principals of disciplined living and how to be a good human being.

Q20: What are Dipavamsa, Ashokavadana & Mahavamsa?

Ans: These are names of books, one in Sanskrit and two in Sinhalese which describe the life and times of Ashoka.

Q21: What did the Dhamma Mamattas do?

Ans: Dhamma Mahamattas, as the term implies spread the word of Dhamma amongst the people. They saw the carving of the edicts and even read them out to people who were unable to read it.

Q22: The empire was a vast territory. How did the Emperor run the empire?

Ans: Administration was decentralized. Provinces had governors and only the area in the immediate proximity of the capital was under the direct supervision of the emperor. Spies too were deployed to monitor the functioning of officials.

Q23: Ashoka propogated the principle of non-violence yet maintained a large standing army? Why?

Ans: The army was a deterrent for anyone who thought of attacking the far flung frontiers of Ashoka's empire.

Q24: Why are the Sarnath Lions and the Ashoka Chakra important for us?

Ans: The Sarnath lions are our National emblem and the Ashoka chakra occupies the palce of pride on our National Flag.

Long Q&A:

Q1: Briefly describe the administration of the Mauryan Empire.

Ans: The Mauryan empire was so large that different parts were ruled differently. The empire was divided into provinces with the imperial capital at Pataliputra. The area around Pataliputra was under the direct control of the emperor. Other areas or provinces were ruled from the provincial capitals such as Taxila and Ujjain.

For efficient administrative control over provinces following steps were taken -

- The royal princes governed the provinces as king's representatives.
- Officials were appointed to collect taxes from the people.
- Mauryan empire had a large army and vast network of spies.
- The Emperor supervised the whole administration with the help of the members of the royal family and senior ministers.