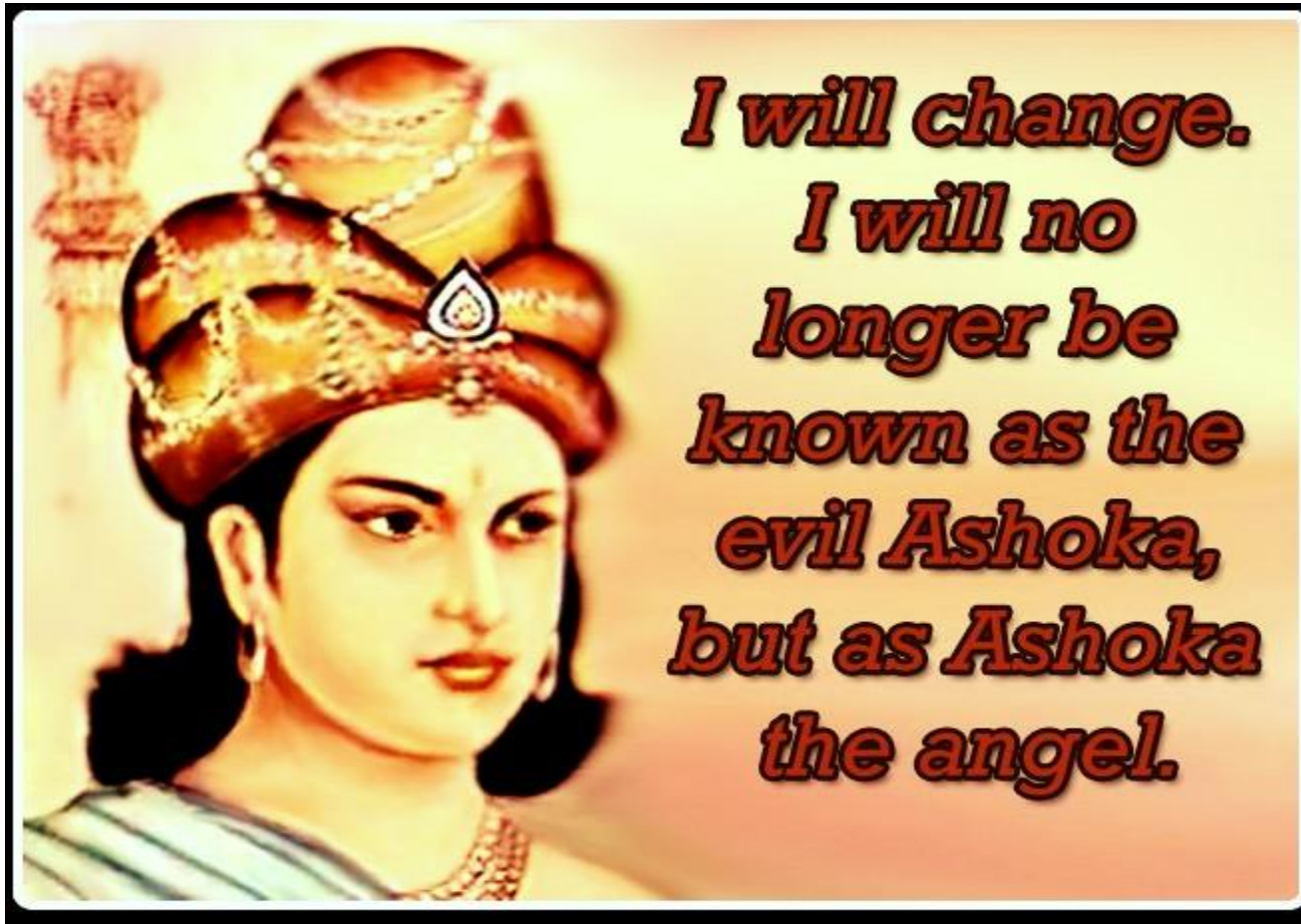


ASHOKA -- THE GREAT INDIAN EMPEROR



Vocabulary

Gruesome : Extremely unpleasant.

Wage : carry on (a war or campaign), Recompense or return.

Slain : Kill (a person or animal) in a violent way.

Corpses : A dead body, especially of a human being rather than an animal.

Strewn : Scatter or spread (things) untidily over a surface or area.

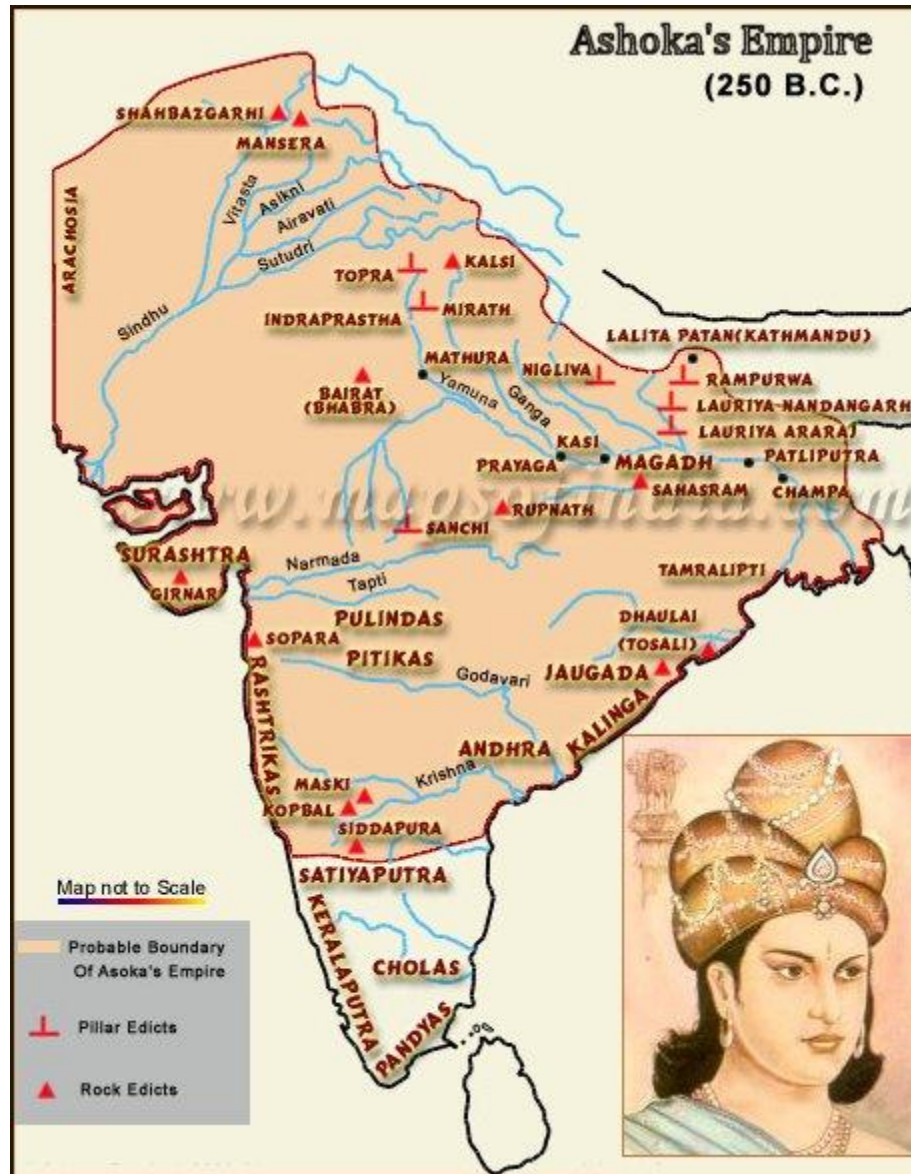
Wrench : A sudden violent twist or pull.

Solace : Comfort or consolation in a time of great distress or sadness.

Patronage : The support given by a patron.

Edicts : An official order or proclamation issued by a person in authority.

- Born in 304 BC, the great king Ashoka was the grandson of the famous ruler Chandragupta Maurya and son of Mauryan emperor Bindusara and his queen, Dharma.
- The name Ashoka means "without any sorrow" in Sanskrit.
- As a young lad, Ashoka excelled in whatever he was taught. Be it the art of warfare or reading the Holy Scriptures, Asoka excelled in everything he did.
- After being crowned as the king, he proved himself by smoothly administrating his territory and performing all his duties as an able and courageous king.
- His empire spread across the Indian subcontinent, stretching from the present day Pakistan and Afghanistan to Bangladesh and the Indian state of Assam to Kerala and Andhra in south India, thus covering a vast area.
- Under his rule, the entire India was united as one single entity with smooth administration.



- Ashoka planned to seize the territory of Kalinga. He led a huge army and fought a gruesome battle with the army of Kalinga. The battle of Kalinga made him pledge to never wage a war again.
- Though Ashoka emerged victorious at the end, the sight of the battlefield made his heart break with shame, guilt, and disgust. It is said that the battle was so furious that the waters of River Daya turned red with the blood of the slain soldiers and civilians.



- The sight of numerous corpses lying strewn across the battlefield made his heart wrench.
- He felt sick inside. The battle ground looked like a graveyard with bodies of not just soldiers but men, women, and children also.
- He saw young children crying over the bodies of their dead parents, women crying over the bodies of their dead husbands, mothers crying over the loss of their kids.



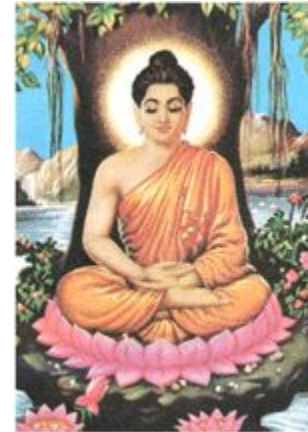
- This turned him heartbroken and thus, made a pledge to never ever fight a battle again. To seek solace, he converted to Buddhism.
- He was so inspired by the teachings of the Buddhist monks and Buddhist philosophies that he used his statues to impart this knowledge all over the world.
- He is credited to be the first Emperor to make a serious attempt at developing Buddhist policies.



Missions to Spread Buddhism

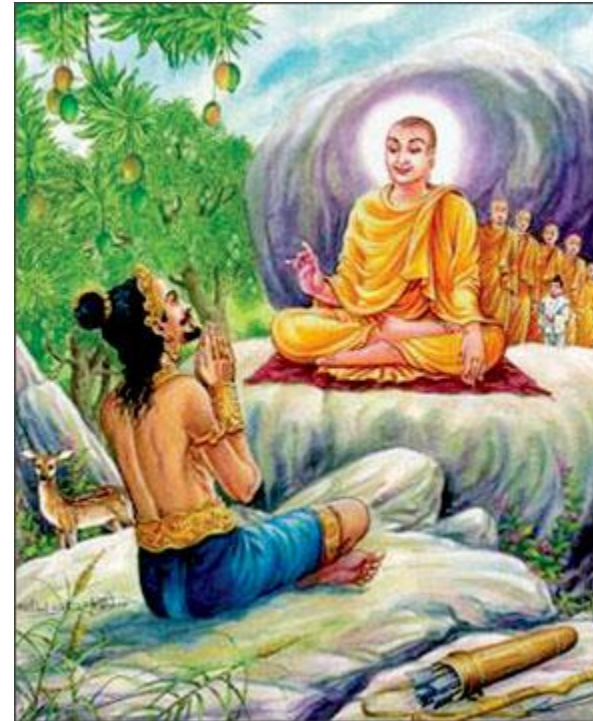
The third council of Buddhism was held under the patronage of Emperor Ashoka. He sent his missionaries to the following places:

- Kashmir - Gandhara Majjhantika
- Mahisamandala (Mysore) - Mahadeva
- Vanavasi (Tamil Nadu) - Rakkhita
- Aparantaka (Gujarat and Sindh) - Yona Dhammarakkhita
- Maharattha (Maharashtra) - Mahadhammarakkhita
- "Country of the Yona" (Bactria/ Seleucid Empire) - Maharakkhita
- Himavanta (Nepal) - Majjhima
- Suvannabhumi (Thailand/ Myanmar) - Sona and Uttara
- Lankadipa (Sri Lanka) - Mahamahinda



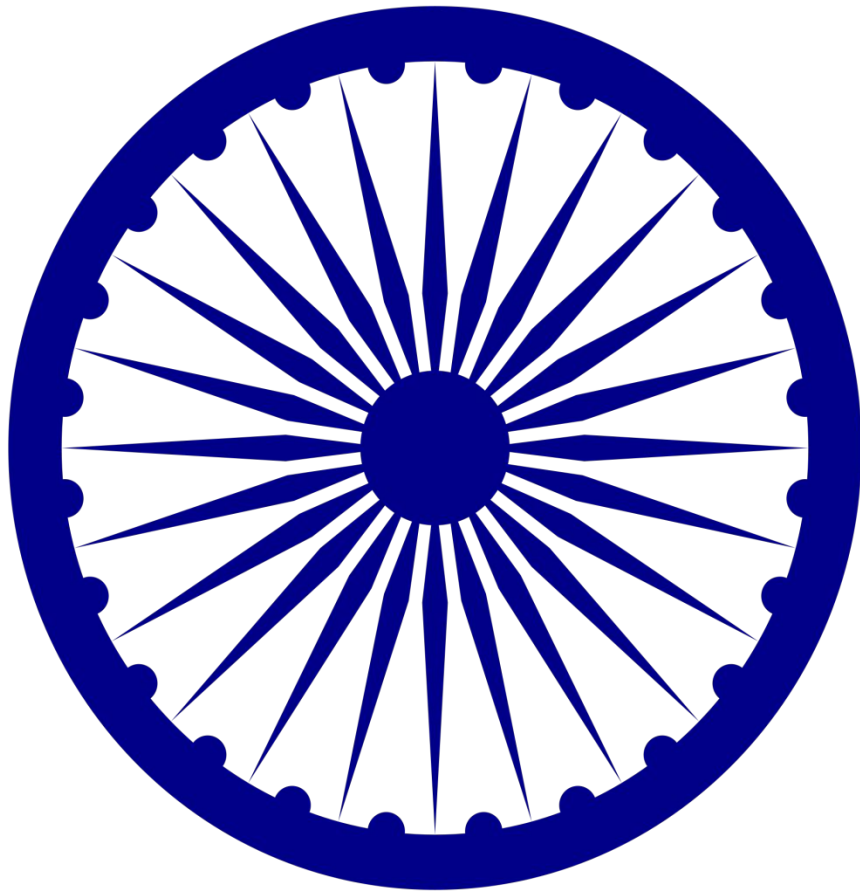
His missionaries also went to the below mentioned places:

- Seleucid Empire (Middle Asia)
- Egypt
- Macedonia
- Cyrene (Libya)
- Epirus (Greece and Albania)



Death

After ruling over the Indian subcontinent for a period of approximately 40 years, the Great Emperor Asoka left for the holy abode in 232 BC. After his death, his empire lasted for just fifty more years.



The **Ashoka Chakra** is a depiction of the **dharmachakra**; represented with 24 spokes. It is so called because it appears on a number of **edicts of Ashoka**, most prominent among which is the **Lion Capital of Sarnath**. The most visible use of the Ashoka chakra today is at the centre of the **national flag of the Republic of India**.

ASHOKA CHAKRA



The original Lion Capital. The angle from which this picture has been taken, minus the **inverted bell** -shaped **lotus** flower, has been adopted as the **National Emblem of India** showing the Horse on the left and the Bull on the right of the **Ashoka Chakra** in the circular base on which the four **Indian lions** are seated back to back. On the far side there is an Elephant and a Lion. The wheel "Ashoka Chakra" from its base has been placed onto the centre of the **National Flag of India**.

ASHOKA PILLAR SARNATH



Capital of (sculpted) Ashoka pillar at Sarnath.
(A. S. (1904))

The Lion Capital on the ground at Sarnath, before 1911, probably 1904-05



The second stamp of independent India and the first for domestic use. ¹

Reviewed By	Reviewed On	Comments / Changes Made
Vidyesh	11.09.2015	N.A
Rachna	10.02.2016	Modified the meaning of wage as per usage in the presentation