

Ashoka and Empire Administration

Chapter 5: The Rise of Empires · Topic 2

Key Concept

After witnessing the massive bloodshed of the Kalinga War, Ashoka felt deep remorse and turned towards Buddhism, adopting policies based on non-violence and welfare.

Ashoka administered his empire through edicts (royal orders) inscribed on rocks and pillars, spreading messages about morality, tolerance, and good governance.

He implemented welfare measures like building hospitals, planting trees along roads, and digging wells, showing concern for his subjects' well-being.

Ashoka's approach to administration, blending strong governance with ethical principles, is remembered as one of the most progressive systems of ancient governance.

Quick Revision Notes

- Ashoka transformed after the Kalinga War.
- He adopted Buddhism and non-violence policies.
- Ashoka used edicts on rocks and pillars to communicate.
- Edicts spread messages about morality and governance.
- Ashoka built hospitals and planted trees for welfare.
- He dug wells to help his subjects.
- Ashoka blended governance with ethical principles.
- His administration is remembered as progressive.

Practice Questions

- 1 Research the Kalinga War and its impact on Ashoka.
- 2 Find an example of an Ashokan edict and its message.
- 3 Discuss Ashoka's welfare measures.
- 4 Explain why Ashoka's administration is considered progressive.
- 5 Compare Ashoka's approach before and after the Kalinga War.
- 6 Research where Ashokan pillars can be found today.