

Asoka's Edicts & Inscriptions Free PDF By Governmentadda.com

Asoka's Edicts & Inscriptions

The Edicts of Ashoka are in total 33 inscriptions written on the Pillars, boulders and cave walls of Mauryan Period, during the reign of the Emperor Ashok that are dispersed throughout the Indian Sub-continent covering India, Pakistan and Nepal.

These inscriptions are divided into three broad sections –

1. Major Rock Edicts
2. Pillar Rock Edicts
3. Minor Rock Edicts

These edicts have mentioned that Buddhism as a religion had reached as far as Mediterranean under the Ashokan reign. Many Buddhist monuments had been created in the wide-spread area. In these edicts, Buddhism and the Buddha are also mentioned. But primarily these edicts focus more on social and moral precepts rather than the religious practices (or the philosophical dimension) of Buddhism during Ashoka's reign.

A notable thing in these inscriptions is, that Ashoka refers to himself in many of these inscriptions as "**Devampiyaa**" which means "Beloved of the Gods" and "King **Piyadassi**."

Language used: The inscriptions found in the eastern parts of Mauryan empire are written using the **Brahmi script** in Magadhi language. While in the western parts of the empire, the script used is **Kharoshti**, written in Prakrit. To add to the variety, one extract in the Edict 13 is written in Greek and Aramaic.

The world came to know of these details of Mauryan empire and Ashoka when the edicts and inscriptions were decoded by British Archaeologist **James Prinsep**.

Major Rock Edicts:

There are **fourteen** major rock edicts in series and two separate.

Major Rock Edict I – It Prohibits animal slaughter and bans festive gatherings. he mentions that only two peacocks and one deer were being killed in Asoka's kitchen which he wanted to be discontinued.

Major Rock Edict II – This edict provides for care for man and animals. It also describes the presence of Pandyas, Satyapura and Keralputra Kingdoms of South India.

Major Rock Edict III – It mentions and guides about Generosity to Brahmans. This edict was issued after 12 years of Asoka's coronation. It tells about the Yuktas which were subordinate officers and Pradesikas (who were district Heads) accompanied with Rajukas (Rural officers)

would go to the all the parts of the kingdom every five years to spread the Dhamma Policy of Ashoka.

Major Rock Edict IV – It says that Dhammaghosa(sound of righteousness) is ideal to the mankind and not the Bherighosa(sound of war). It also talks about the impact of Dhamma on the society.

Major Rock Edict V – It concerns about the policy of people towards their slaves. “Dhammamahamatras” are mentioned in this edict as appointees of the state.

Major Rock Edict VI – This describes the King’s desire to stay informed about the conditions of the people of his regime constantly. Welfare measures for the people.

Major Rock Edict VII – Ashoka requests tolerance for all religions and sects. This is repeated in 12th edict.

Major Rock Edict VIII – It describes Ashoka’s first Dhamma Yatra/visit to the Bodhgaya and Bodhi Tree.

Major Rock Edict IX – This edicts condemns popular ceremonies and stresses on Dhamma.

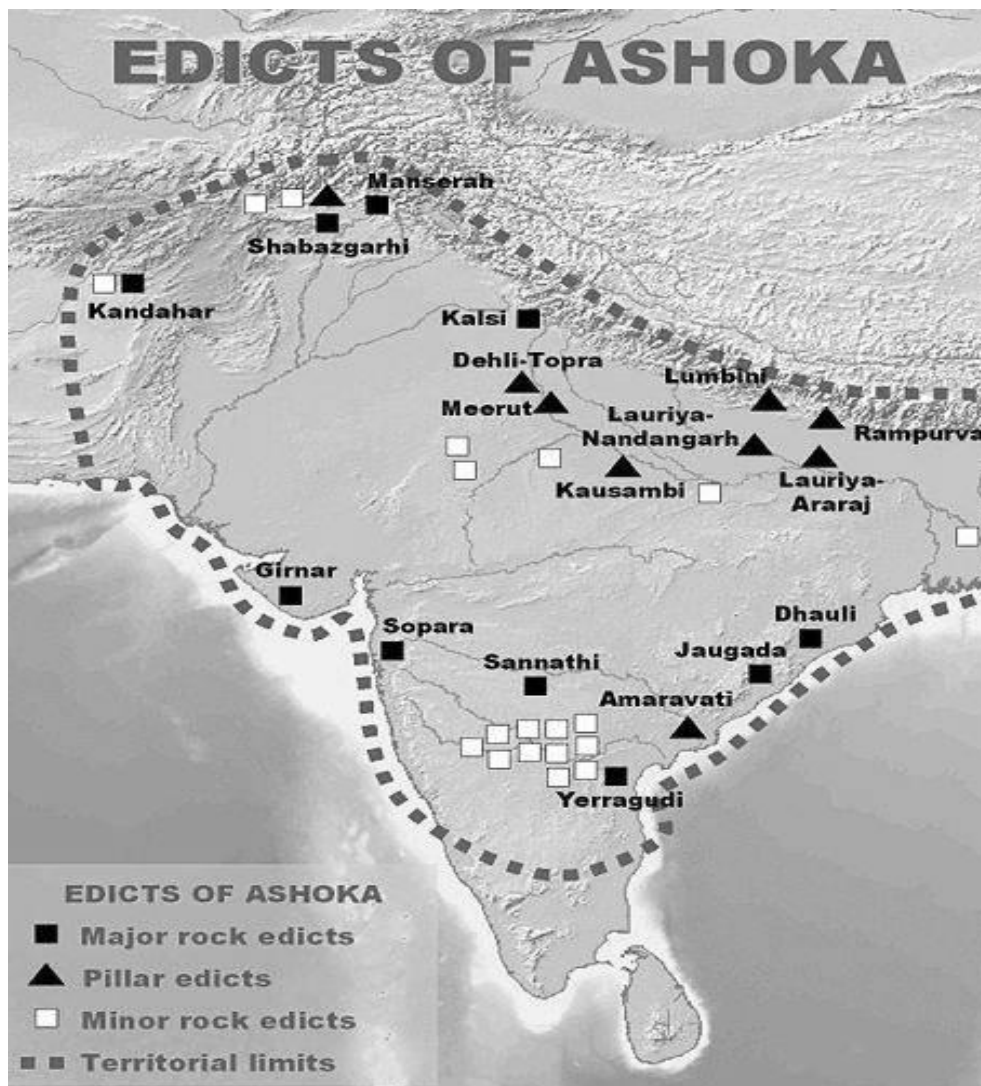
Major Rock Edict X – It condemns the desire for fame and glory of individual and stresses upon popularity of Dhamma.

Major Rock Edict XI – It elaborates on Dhamma(Moral Law).

Major Rock Edict XII – Here also he request for tolerance among different religions and sects, as mentioned in 7th edict.

Major Rock Edict XIII – Asoka mentions his victory over Kalinga . Also mentions Victory of Asoka’s Dhamma over Greek Kings, Antiochus of Syria, Ptolemy of Egypt, Antigonus of Macedonia, Magas of Cyrene, Alexander of Epirus and Cholas, Pandyas etc.

Major Rock Edict XIV – This describes the engraving of inscriptions installed in different parts of country.



Minor Rock Edicts:

These are inscribed on 15 rocks found across India. Minor Rock Edicts have been found at various locations. It is interesting to note here that, Ashoka has used his name only at these four places. Maski in Karnataka; at Brahmagiri in Karnataka; at Gujarra in Madhya Pradesh; at Nettur in Andhra Pradesh.

Pillar Edicts:

The pillars edicts use two types of stones. One type is a spotted, white sandstone sourced from Mathura. Another type is a Buff colored Sandstone and Quartzite sourced from Amravati. There are a total 11 pillars that have been found in India and Nepal. These are found at Topra (Delhi), Meerut, Kausambi, rampurva, Champaran, Mehrauli, Sanchi, Sarnath, Rummindei, and Nigalisagar. All of these pillars are monoliths (made from single rock).

Pillar Edict I – It mentions about Ashoka's principle of protection to people.

Pillar Edict II – It defines 'dhamma'.

Pillar Edict III – It abolishes the practice of harshness, cruelty, anger, pride among his subjects as sins.

Pillar Edict IV – It deals with duties of Rajukas.

Pillar Edict V – This edicts describes the list of animals and birds which shall not be killed on listed days. Also there is another list of animals which must not be killed at all occasions.

Pillar Edict VI – It describes the Dhamma Policy of the state.

Pillar Edict VII – It describes the works done by Ashoka for fulfilment of the Dhamma Policy. He observes that all sects desire self control as well as purity of mind.

Who is considered the founder of Buddhism?

- a) Siddhartha Gautama
- b) Mahavira
- c) Ashoka the Great
- d) Confucius

Solution: a) Siddhartha Gautama

Siddhartha Gautama was born in which present-day country?

- a) India
- b) Nepal
- c) China
- d) Sri Lanka

Solution: b) Nepal

The term "Buddha" means:

- a) Enlightened one
- b) Divine being
- c) Teacher
- d) Warrior

Solution: a) Enlightened one

The tree under which Siddhartha Gautama attained enlightenment is known as:

- a) Banyan tree
- b) Bodhi tree
- c) Oak tree
- d) Palm tree

Solution: b) Bodhi tree

The first sermon given by Buddha after his enlightenment is called:

- a) Dhammapada
- b) Lotus Sutra
- c) Tripitaka
- d) Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta

Solution: d) Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta

The core teachings of Buddhism are encapsulated in the Four Noble Truths. Which of the following is NOT one of the Four Noble Truths?

- a) Life is suffering
- b) The cause of suffering is desire
- c) The end of suffering is attainable
- d) The world is eternal

Solution: d) The world is eternal

The Eightfold Path is a central concept in Buddhism. Which of the following is NOT part of the Eightfold Path?

- a) Right faith
- b) Right livelihood
- c) Right concentration
- d) Right sacrifice

Solution: d) Right sacrifice

The ultimate goal of Buddhism is to attain:

- a) Wealth and prosperity
- b) Reincarnation in a higher realm
- c) Nirvana
- d) Enlightenment for all beings

Solution: c) Nirvana

The Buddhist monastic community is known as the:

- a) Sangha
- b) Dharma

- c) Karma
- d) Bhikkhu

Solution: a) Sangha

The scriptures of Buddhism are called:

- a) Vedas
- b) Upanishads
- c) Tripitaka
- d) Sutras

Solution: c) Tripitaka

Which of the following is NOT one of the Three Jewels of Buddhism?

- a) Buddha
- b) Dharma
- c) Sangha
- d) Karma

Solution: d) Karma

The branch of Buddhism that is prevalent in Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, and Cambodia is:

- a) Theravada Buddhism
- b) Mahayana Buddhism
- c) Vajrayana Buddhism
- d) Zen Buddhism

Solution: a) Theravada Buddhism

The branch of Buddhism that emphasizes compassion and the goal of helping all sentient beings achieve enlightenment is:

- a) Theravada Buddhism
- b) Mahayana Buddhism
- c) Vajrayana Buddhism
- d) Zen Buddhism

Solution: b) Mahayana Buddhism

The branch of Buddhism that is prevalent in Tibet, Bhutan, and Mongolia, and is known for its esoteric practices, is:

- a) Theravada Buddhism
- b) Mahayana Buddhism
- c) Vajrayana Buddhism
- d) Zen Buddhism

Solution: c) Vajrayana Buddhism

The concept of "Anicca" in Buddhism refers to:

- a) Impermanence
- b) Suffering
- c) Non-self
- d) Nirvana

Solution: a) Impermanence

The concept of "Anatta" in Buddhism refers to:

- a) Impermanence
- b) Suffering
- c) Non-self
- d) Nirvana

Solution: c) Non-self

The symbol of Buddhism, representing the enlightened mind, is:

- a) Wheel of Dharma
- b) Lotus flower
- c) Bodhi tree
- d) Dharmachakra

Solution: d) Dharmachakra

Which of the following is NOT one of the Five Precepts in Buddhism?

- a) Do not kill
- b) Do not steal
- c) Do not lie
- d) Do not desire wealth

Solution: d) Do not desire wealth

The Great Stupa at Sanchi, India, is a significant Buddhist monument built during the reign of:

- a) Ashoka the Great
- b) King Kanishka
- c) King Ashvaghosha
- d) Nagarjuna

Solution: a) Ashoka the Great

The spread of Buddhism to China was facilitated by the translation of Buddhist scriptures by:

- a) Confucius
- b) Laozi
- c) Xuanzang
- d) Zhuangzi

Solution: c) Xuanzang

The famous rock-cut caves of Ajanta and Ellora in India are associated with which branch of Buddhism?

- a) Theravada Buddhism
- b) Mahayana Buddhism
- c) Vajrayana Buddhism
- d) Zen Buddhism

Solution: b) Mahayana Buddhism

The Buddhist festival that celebrates the birth, enlightenment, and death of the Buddha is called:

- a) Wesak
- b) Vesak
- c) Diwali

d) Holi

Solution: b) Vesak

The concept of "Metta" in Buddhism refers to:

- a) Loving-kindness
- b) Compassion
- c) Equanimity
- d) Mindfulness

Solution: a) Loving-kindness

The term "Dukkha" in Buddhism refers to:

- a) Enlightenment
- b) Suffering
- c) Liberation
- d) Reincarnation

Solution: b) Suffering

The Buddhist concept of "Karma" refers to:

- a) The cycle of birth and death
- b) The law of cause and effect
- c) The pursuit of enlightenment
- d) The renunciation of worldly desires

Solution: b) The law of cause and effect

The first council of Buddhist monks was held shortly after the death of the Buddha in:

- a) Rajgir
- b) Vaishali
- c) Sarnath
- d) Bodh Gaya

Solution: a) Rajgir

The famous Buddhist pilgrimage site in India where the Buddha gave his first sermon is:

- a) Bodh Gaya
- b) Sarnath
- c) Lumbini
- d) Kushinagar

Solution: b) Sarnath

The bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara is associated with compassion and is particularly revered in:

- a) Theravada Buddhism
- b) Mahayana Buddhism
- c) Vajrayana Buddhism
- d) Zen Buddhism

Solution: b) Mahayana Buddhism

The Tibetan Buddhist spiritual leader, often referred to as the Dalai Lama, is believed to be the reincarnation of:

- a) Siddhartha Gautama
- b) Ashoka the Great
- c) Avalokiteshvara
- d) Milarepa

Solution: c) Avalokiteshvara

The Zen school of Buddhism, known for its emphasis on meditation and direct experience, originated in:

- a) China
- b) Japan
- c) India
- d) Tibet

Solution: a) China

The Buddhist concept of "Mara" represents:

- a) The cycle of birth and death
- b) The cosmic forces of delusion and temptation

- c) The ultimate reality
- d) The enlightened mind

Solution: b) The cosmic forces of delusion and temptation

The Buddhist text known as the "Diamond Sutra" is a revered scripture in:

- a) Theravada Buddhism
- b) Mahayana Buddhism
- c) Vajrayana Buddhism
- d) Zen Buddhism

Solution: b) Mahayana Buddhism

The practice of mindfulness meditation, known as Vipassana, is primarily associated with:

- a) Theravada Buddhism
- b) Mahayana Buddhism
- c) Vajrayana Buddhism
- d) Zen Buddhism

Solution: a) Theravada Buddhism

The branch of Buddhism that emphasizes sudden enlightenment through direct experience is:

- a) Theravada Buddhism
- b) Mahayana Buddhism
- c) Vajrayana Buddhism
- d) Zen Buddhism

Solution: d) Zen Buddhism

The Buddhist concept of "Upaya" refers to:

- a) Skillful means
- b) Liberation from suffering
- c) Non-attachment
- d) Emptiness

Solution: a) Skillful means

The Buddhist scholar Nagarjuna is associated with the philosophy of:

- a) Advaita Vedanta
- b) Madhyamaka
- c) Yogacara
- d) Tathagatagarbha

Solution: b) Madhyamaka

The "Lotus Sutra" is a revered scripture in:

- a) Theravada Buddhism
- b) Mahayana Buddhism
- c) Vajrayana Buddhism
- d) Zen Buddhism

Solution: b) Mahayana Buddhism

The Buddhist concept of "Anapanasati" refers to:

- a) Walking meditation
- b) Loving-kindness meditation
- c) Mindfulness of breathing
- d) Visualization meditation

Solution: c) Mindfulness of breathing

The Tibetan Buddhist practice of constructing intricate sand mandalas is a visual representation of:

- a) Impermanence
- b) Compassion
- c) Emptiness
- d) Enlightenment

Solution: c) Emptiness

The famous Buddhist university, Nalanda, was located in present-day:

- a) India

- b) Nepal
- c) Sri Lanka
- d) Tibet

Solution: a) India

The Buddhist concept of "Bodhisattva" refers to:

- a) An enlightened being
- b) A compassionate being on the path to enlightenment
- c) A monk or nun in the monastic community
- d) A teacher or guru

Solution: b) A compassionate being on the path to enlightenment

The Buddhist concept of "Samsara" refers to:

- a) Liberation from suffering
- b) The cycle of birth and death
- c) The pursuit of enlightenment
- d) The renunciation of worldly desires

Solution: b) The cycle of birth and death

The famous Buddhist pilgrimage site in Nepal, believed to be the birthplace of the Buddha, is:

- a) Bodh Gaya
- b) Sarnath
- c) Lumbini
- d) Kushinagar

Solution: c) Lumbini

The Zen practice of "Koan" involves:

- a) Chanting of mantras
- b) Contemplation of sacred images
- c) Question and answer dialogues
- d) Walking meditation

Solution: c) Question and answer dialogues

The Buddhist concept of "Nirvana" can be best described as:

- a) Eternal bliss
- b) Union with the divine
- c) Liberation from suffering and the cycle of rebirth
- d) Enlightenment for all beings

Solution: c) Liberation from suffering and the cycle of rebirth

The Chinese Buddhist monk who is credited with the transmission of Chan/Zen Buddhism to China is:

- a) Xuanzang
- b) Bodhidharma
- c) Huineng
- d) Linji

Solution: b) Bodhidharma

The Tibetan Buddhist practice of "Tonglen" involves:

- a) Mindful breathing
- b) Compassionate meditation
- c) Chanting of mantras
- d) Prostrations

Solution: b) Compassionate meditation

The Buddhist concept of "Dana" refers to:

- a) Meditation
- b) Rituals and ceremonies
- c) Generosity and giving
- d) Ascetic practices

Solution: c) Generosity and giving

The Japanese Buddhist sect known for its focus on Pure Land practices and devotion to Amitabha Buddha is:

- a) Nichiren Buddhism
- b) Shingon Buddhism
- c) Jodo Shinshu Buddhism
- d) Tendai Buddhism

Solution: c) Jodo Shinshu Buddhism

The Vietnamese Zen master who played a significant role in promoting peace during the Vietnam War was:

- a) Thich Nhat Hanh
- b) Dogen Zenji
- c) Hakuin Ekaku
- d) Linji Yixuan

Solution: a) Thich Nhat Hanh