

NCERT QUESTIONS WITH SOLUTIONS

1.
 - An empire is a large political unit made up of **multiple smaller kingdoms or regions**, all under the authority of a single powerful ruler—an **emperor**.
 - These smaller territories often retain local rulers who become **tributaries**, paying tribute (forms of loyalty like money, goods, or services) while remaining under imperial control.

Features of an Empire

• **Military Power**

Empires maintain large, well trained armies (often using elephants, horses, iron weapons) to conquer, control, and defend territories.

• **Centralized Administration**

A structured bureaucracy of officials oversees territories, collects taxes, enforces laws, and maintains order.

• **Communication and Infrastructure**

Empires build and maintain roads, river routes, sea navigation, and fortifications to connect distant regions for trade and governance.

• **Economic Control**

They regulate trade, issue currency, standardize weights and measures, and manage key resources like mines and forest produce.

• **Cultural Patronage**

Empires promote art, literature, religious life, centers of learning and scholarship across their domains.

• **Diversity Management**

They govern diverse populations—different languages, customs, religions—while ensuring loyalty and cohesion.

Difference between Empire and Kingdom –

- An empire goes beyond just size—it merges multiple kingdoms into a single system under imperial rule, whereas a kingdom typically governs a culturally homogenous area under a single monarch.
- An **empire** is a multi-territory political structure governed by an **emperor**, who rules over smaller kingdoms (which serve as tributaries). It relies on a centralized system of military, administration, commerce, cultural promotion, and resource management.
- A kingdom is much more limited in scale and typically culturally uniform, ruled by a king or queen with more contained political power.

2. What are some important factors for the transition from kingdoms to empires?

- Ans.**
- **Warfare and conquest** led to absorbing smaller kingdoms into a greater political unit.
 - **Economic and resource control** provided the material strength to support armies and bureaucracy.
 - **Centralized administration** enabled rulers to govern vast territories effectively.
 - **Strategic location** of kingdoms like Magadha (fertile land, rivers) gave them natural advantages.
 - **Ambitious rulers** like Chandragupta or Mahāpadma Nanda sought fame and dominance over large territories.

These factors—military strength, rich resources, strategic geography, centralized rule, visionary leadership, trade & infrastructure, and use of alliances — together enabled kingdoms to evolve into expansive empires like the Maurya empire.

3. Alexander is considered an important king in the history of the world —why do you think that is so?

Ans. • **Alexandrian conquests** united Greeks, Persians, Egyptians, and Indians under his rule.

- By **founding cities** and encouraging inter cultural marriages, he created the Hellenistic Age—an era of shared Greek influenced culture.
- His **military brilliance** and **administrative innovations** inspired later leaders and shaped global history.
- Though his empire fractured after his death, it gave rise to successor kingdoms that preserved Greek governance, commerce, and intellectual life

Thus, Alexander earns the title “Great” not just for conquering lands, but for shaping world civilization—bridging cultures, expanding knowledge, and influencing global trade and governance for centuries.

4. In early Indian history, the Mauryas are considered important. State your reasons.

Ans. • **First pan India empire**, established by Chandragupta Maurya under Kautilya.

- **Centralized administration** with organized civil service and military.
- **Coinage, trade routes, and infrastructure** strengthened economy.
- **Mauryan art and architecture** like Ashoka pillars and stupas.
- **Ethical governance under Ashoka’s Dhamma**, focusing on welfare.
- **Promotion of religious tolerance** and spread of Buddhism.
- **Well documented history** from texts like Indica, Arthashastra and Mauryan inscriptions.

5. What were some of Kautilya’s key ideas? Which ones of these can you observe even today in the world around us?

Ans. • Kautilya’s Arthashastra focused on:

- Selecting ministers based on merit, integrity, and ability.
- Establishing law and justice with fair courts and welfare policies.
- Economic management: fair taxes, public enterprises, private trade, infrastructure.
- An advanced spy system to keep the kingdom secure.
- Foreign policy guided by the Mandala theory and flexible diplomatic tactics.
- Military planning with preparedness, discipline, and preference for diplomacy.

Many of these ideas can be observed today in our modern government and administrative systems, economic regulations, intelligence services, foreign policy strategy, and ethical leadership standards.

6. What were the unusual things about Ashoka and his empire? What of that has continued to influence India and why? Write your opinion in about 250 words.

Ans. Emperor Ashoka was truly **unusual** in several ways, and aspects of his rule **still influence India today**.

Unusual Features about Ashoka and His Empire

- After the **Kalinga War** (circa 261 BCE), in which over 100,000 were killed, Ashoka renounced violence and **refused further conquests**, becoming the only king in ancient history to do so after a major victory.
- He crafted a unique moral code called **Dhamma** (his form of Dharma), promoting **non-violence (ahimsa)**, **religious tolerance**, kind treatment of servants and animals, welfare for the poor and elderly, and respect for parents and teachers.
- Aśoka had **edicts inscribed on rock pillars** across his empire—in Prakrit using Brahmi script—sharing his ethical messages. He was the first Indian ruler to use written inscriptions for mass communication.
- He set up a corps of officials called **Dhamma-mahamattas** to travel and teach these values to his subjects and even abroad (e.g., to Sri Lanka, Syria, Greece).

- Architecturally, Aśoka pioneered **stone pillars and buildings**, like the famous Lion Capital at Sarnath—beginning India's tradition of polished stone architecture.

Influence That Continues in India Today

- The Lion Capital of Ashoka and the Ashoka Chakra (wheel) feature prominently on the national emblem and Indian flag, symbolising moral sovereignty, peace, and unity.
- His principles of religious tolerance and social welfare continue in India's pluralistic democracy and welfare policies.
- Ashoka's use of public inscriptions as moral and political statements laid the groundwork for transparent governance and communication.
- His educational missions and moral outreach, both internal and external, are early examples of India's heritage of cultural diplomacy and ethical leadership.

In essence, Ashoka stands out not only for being a powerful conqueror but more so for **transformation into a humane, peace oriented ruler**. His ethos—favouring **conquest by moral persuasion rather than force**, respect for all religions, and the welfare of all beings—continues to shape modern India's identity and values.