

### ASHOKA'S DHAMMA

- ◆ Ashoka's Dhamma preached love and tolerance and asked the people to live in peace and harmony.
- ◆ He wanted his subjects to lead a virtuous life and to be friendly with each other.
- ◆ He wanted the children to obey the elders and their parents.
- ◆ He wanted the masters to treat their slaves and servants with kindness.
- ◆ He wanted that the killing of animals should be stopped for eating as well as for religious sacrifices. In his own kitchen, too, he had stopped the cooking of meat.
- ◆ He wanted the people to lead a happy life and not to fight over matters like land and religion.

### ASHOKA'S EDICTS

For the purpose of spreading the message of his Dhamma, Ashoka issued many edicts, which are like public proclamations. These were writings engraved on rocks or stone pillars. He also built stupas like the one at Sanchi. His edicts conveyed the teaching of his Dhamma to his subjects. The rock pillars also tell us about Ashoka's activities and how great he was.

The local language, Pali, was used for inscriptions so that all the common people could understand them. You must remember that Sanskrit was the language of the Brahmins and the common people did not understand it.

#### THINK & TALK

Can you imagine Ashoka had got all these inscriptions written on rocks and pillars as long back as the third century B.C.? They still exist in good condition. Isn't it an evidence of the superior and advanced science and technology of that period?

### Our National Emblem

Ashoka's pillar at Sarnath carries the figure of four lions. This figure is now the official seal of the Indian Government. Another emblem is the wheel which is found on the rocks and pillars.

The wheel stands for the law which the Buddha taught.



*Sanchi Stupa: The Sanchi Stupa in Madhya Pradesh, represents the best specimen of Buddhist architecture. It was built by Ashoka in the 3rd century B.C. The stupa consists of a big hemispherical dome, containing the Buddhist relics. It has four gateways and an umbrella crowning the top and a railing surrounding the dome.*



*The pillars were made of sandstone and were so beautifully polished that they shone like mirrors.*

