

On the day of Vasant Panchami Celebration we learned about Hindu religious books. Let us see who wrote those books.

### **Vedas:**

The four Vedas – Rig-Veda, Samaveda, Yajurveda, and Atharvaveda – are not the work of any single author. In ancient India, there were many rishis (sages) living simple lives in the Himalayas and along the banks of sacred rivers. The Rishis had names like Angiras, Bhrgu, Yajnavalkya, and Gargi (Gargi was a woman). They sought to understand the fundamental truths of life – Why are we born? How did the world come into existence? How can we live a good life? Because of their intense inquiry and deep meditation, they received God's blessings and were able to discover the answers to their questions.

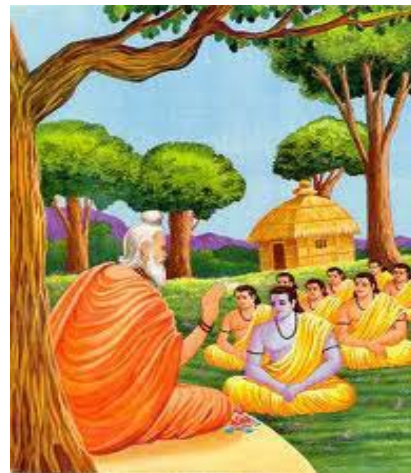
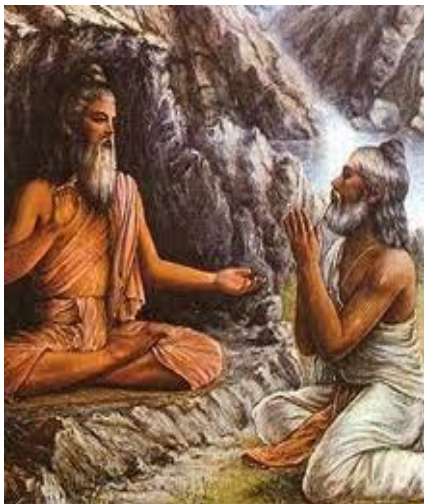
God revealed these sacred truths to the ancient sages, and the sages composed hymns and texts in the Sanskrit language to express these truths. Their hymns and texts were then passed on from generation to generation, from teacher to student, by chanting them aloud; they were not yet written down. Eventually, the great rishi, VedVyas, compiled all of their hymns and texts into four collections, which are now known as the Vedas.

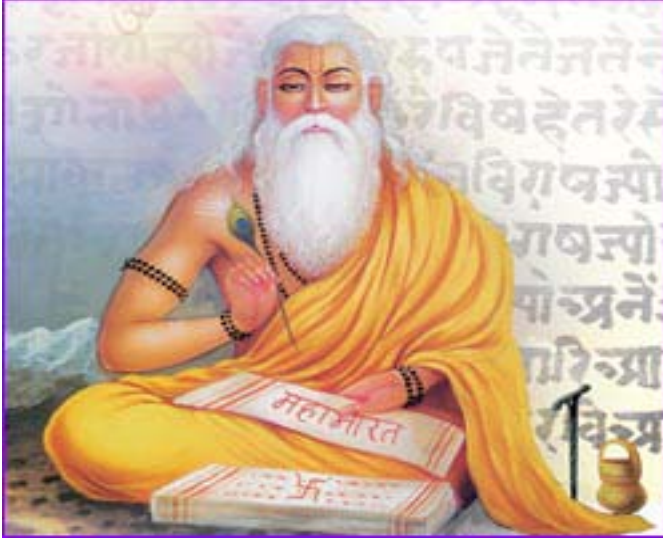
### **Puranas:**

18 Puranas were also written by BhagavanVedVyas.

### **Bhagavat Gita and Mahabharata:**

Bhagavat Gita and Mahabharata were written by BhagavanVedVyas.





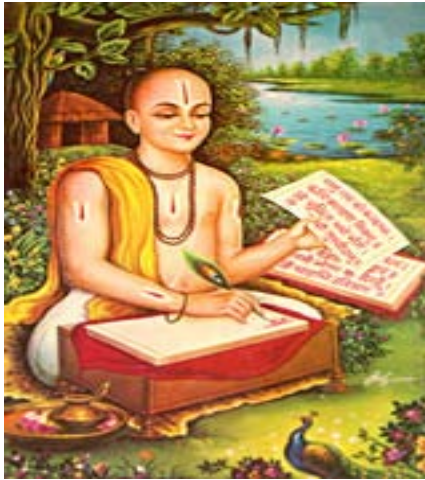
### **Bhagwan VedVyas**

Bhagwan VedVyas is Sanatan Dharma's first and greatest acharya. He classified the four Vedas, wrote the 18 Purans, the Brahma Sutras, and uttered the Mahabharat which Shri Ganeshji penned down. The Mahabharat is glorified as the fifth Veda. Of all Mahabharat's sections, the most important and its essence and crown jewel is the Bhagvad Gita.

So now we can understand why VedVyas is the greatest acharya. He was born on an island in the holy river Yamuna, on Ashadh Purnima over 5,000 years ago. His father was Parashar rishi and mother, Satyavati. He studied under his father, as well as other great rishis. He then taught the Vedas to his pupils. He had four famous sons: King Pandu - father of the Pandavas, Dhritarashtra - father of the Kauravs, Vidurji - famous for his text, Vidurniti, and Shukdevji - famous for his wisdom given to King Parikshit, in the Shrimad Bhagwat. The Bhagwat is the 18th Puran which Vyasji wrote. In it he has described Shri Krishn'a divine episodes. He then attained inner peace.

Sage Vyasa wanted to dictate the verses of Mahabharata to someone who was capable of writing extremely fast, and without mistakes. Lord Brahma decided that Lord Ganesh was the only person equal to this great task. When Lord Ganesh came to Vyasa, Vyasa told him that he would dictate the poem very fast and that Ganesh must take down all the verses without mistakes. Ganesh threw a challenge in return that he would write as fast as Vyasa dictates and that too correctly, but when dictating, Vyasa should not stop till he complete the entire Mahabharata. Vyasa accepted the challenge and Ganesh used his broken tusk as the divine quill to record the Mahabharata. Lord Krishna in the battlefield recited Gita, which is part of Mahabharata written by VedVyas.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cQE5ZT8m7s4>  
[://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z5PwHWZ36-o&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z5PwHWZ36-o&feature=related)

**Ramayana:****Tulsidas:**

Several great saints and poets wrote the Ramayana in the various Indian languages. The most popular one in India is the Ramacharita Manas by Goswami Tulasidas. It is considered auspicious to recite it at home. Tulasidas was born in the year 1532 in a Brahmin family in the town of Rajapur near Varanasi. He lost his parents at an early age and was neglected by his relatives. He lived in a Hanuman temple, in Varanasi and ate whatever was given to him. Naraharidas, his guru, spotted him and instilled in Tulasidas the love for Sri Rama. Tulasidas grew up and became a scholar in Vedas and Upanishads.

Tulasidas married Ratnavali, who was a very intelligent and pious lady. Tulasidas loved his wife, and could never stand even a moment's separation from her. Once he crossed a flooded river to see his wife, who was visiting her parents. Ratnavali got angry and said "What do you get by loving this mortal body? If you were to love Lord Sri Rama like this, you would get mukti."

These words rekindled his love for Sri Rama; he renounced family life and started traveling across north India, preaching Sri Rama's life. In Chitrakoot, he wrote the masterpiece Ramcharit Manas. He wrote in one of the Hindi dialects known as Avadhi spoken around Ayodhya region. He authored 22 different works.

Once king Jahangir offered him money to the performance some miracles. Tulasidas retorted 'Who needs money when one has the love of Rama and of what use are the miracles before his glory?'

Some thieves came to Tulasidas's Ashram to take away his goods. They saw a blue-complexioned guard, with bow and arrow in his hands, keeping watch at the gate. Wherever they moved, the guard followed them. They were frightened. In the morning they asked Tulasidas, "O venerable saint! We saw a young guard with bow and arrow in his hands at the gate of your residence. Who is this man?" Tulasidas remained silent and wept. He came to know that Lord Rama Himself had been taking the trouble to protect his goods. He at once distributed all his wealth among the poor. [://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HgvqWI4ei1A](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HgvqWI4ei1A)

## Valmiki:



The original Ramayana was written in Sanskrit by Rishi Valmiki.

During TretaYug, a time thousands of years ago, a man named Ratnakar lived in the forests along the banks of the holy river Ganga. Ratnakar was a cruel hunter and a fearless thief. Everyone was afraid of Ratnakar! When he walked in the forest, even the birds would fly to their nests, and the animals would look for a place to hide. One day, Ratnakar was hiding by the side of a forest pathway, waiting for a victim. Along came the great sage Naradji, who was walking peacefully, admiring the beauty of the forest and singing kirtans in praise of God. Ratnakar jumped out in front of him and demanded, "Hand over all you have or else!" With love flowing from his eyes, Naradji said smilingly, "My dear man, all that I have are these rags I wear. If you want them, you may take them!" Naradji's fearlessness surprised Ratnakar. As Ratnakar gazed in Naradji's eyes, his cruel mind melted. Naradji saw this transformation and lovingly explained to Ratnakar how stealing and killing animals was very sinful. He reminded Ratnakar that although his family was eager to share the fruits of his bad actions, they would not share his sins.

Upon this realization, Ratnakar fell to Naradji's feet and asked for forgiveness. Naradji taught him to recite the sacred name of Ram. Ratnakar sat down in the forest and continued chanting with closed eyes. His concentration was so deep that he remained in meditation for years. In fact, he sat there so long in meditation that an anthill grew all around and above him! One day Naradji came that way and carefully cleared away the anthill. With a kind smile, Naradji declared Ratnakar a sage, "As you are now reborn from a 'Val-mika' (ant-hill), from now you'll be known as Valmiki."

With tears of joy in his eyes, the sage Valmiki began his new life. He built an ashram near the river Ganga that provided refuge to Sitaji, wife of Shri Bhagwan Ram. It was at this ashram that Valmiki Rishi composed the Ramayan!

[://www.youtube.com/watch?v=11\\_XK8vofE](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=11_XK8vofE)