

## Vyasa

1. Whenever virtue and dharma diminish, God will incarnate in the world to eradicate evil and to uphold Dharma. It is a promise made by the Almighty Himself!

*Yadaa- Yadaa hi Dharmasya Glanirbhavathi Bharata .....*

Some people think that God incarnates only to eradicate evil (demons).

2. Punishing the wicked is only one among the many aims of His Avatara.
3. However, it is not the only aim. The main aim is to destroy the ignorance of human beings and to enlighten them.
4. That is why, even after punishing the evil doers, God continues to exist in the world in the form of the same Avatara.
5. After completely destroying all the obstacles created by evil doers, God begins enlightening his devotees.
6. There are instances when God has incarnated only to enlighten his devotees.
7. The Vyasa Avatara is a prominent Avatara among such incarnations. Knowledge is the best means to attain Moksha. That is why the scriptures say that God incarnated as Vyasa 21 times in the Vyvaswata Manvantara alone.
8. During the previous Dwapara Yuga, Lord Mahavishnu was born to Parashara Maharshi and Satyavati Devi as Krishna Dwaipayana.
9. Sage Parashara undertook penance to please Lord Shiva and requested him “Bless me with a son who is equal to you in all respects”
10. The Sankalpa of Lord Vishnu and Shiva’s boon came together and resulted in the birth of a son to Sage Parashara and Satyavati.
11. Because he took birth on an island or *Dweepa*, He was named *Dwaipayana*. As he was of dark complexion, he was called *Krishna*.

12. Thus his name was Krishna Dwaipayana.
13. It is said that he never had a childhood! Soon after birth, he crossed the stages of childhood and adolescence and directly reached the youth stage.
14. He requested his parents, Sage Parashara and Satyavati to permit him to go for tapas.
15. The father consented, but the mother refused. “Stay with us atleast for a few days!” she said.
16. But Dwaipayana was steadfast in his resolve. Finally, Satyavati had to give in. She said “If you promise to come to me whenever I remember you, I will let you go for tapas”.
17. He promised his mother that he would come to her whenever she remembered him. So saying, he went to Badarika Ashrama for penance.
18. Dwaipayana performed penance for a long time in the Badarikaashrama in the Himalayas. With the power of the *Tapas*, he classified the undivided Vedas into Rig-Veda, Yajur-veda, Sama-veda and Atharva Veda, and acquired the name Veda Vyasa.
19. He wrote the 18 Puranas, the Mahabharata and the Brahma sutras.
20. He wrote Mahabharata for the sake of common people and the Brahma Sutras for the sake of scholars.
21. Thus, by doing everything needed to expand the Karma, Upasana and Jnana Kaandas, he has greatly helped mankind.
22. Let us focus on the aspects of Vyasa’s story pertaining to his devotion at the time being.
23. Vyasa upheld Matrubbhakti (devotion to mother) as much as he upheld Bhagavad Bhakti (devotion to God). He did so to demonstrate that only those who respect and revere the mother are eligible for the Bhakti Marga (path of devotion) and Jnana Marga (the path of knowledge).

24. Vyasa plays an important role throughout the Mahabharata. His mother had ordered him to protect the Kuru race from perishing.
25. Mother's orders are the greatest of all. Though Vyasa had no special interest about the Kuru race, he had to protect it as he was bound by his mother's orders.
26. The entire Mahabharata is based on Vyasa abiding his mother's orders.
27. We could get such a great epic because of Vyasa's obedience to his mother.
28. Therefore Sage Vyasa (who in a way is responsible for Mahabharata itself) is remembered with utmost reverence by one and all.
29. Vyasa preached many spiritual aspirants.
30. His words had a magical effect on them. They understood the Brahmatattva instantly.
31. Many pupils were trained in Sage Vyasa's Ashrama. Righteousness was propounded effectively. Vedic rituals went on without any obstacles.
32. The Mahabharata became the ready reckoner and a reference book for clarifying all sorts of doubts and dilemma.
33. The Vedantins studied the Brahma Sutras and understood the Brahmatattva with ease.
34. But there was an inexplicable feeling of deficiency in the mind of Vyasa, the creator of the entire Vedic literature.
35. To rectify that deficiency and to get peace of mind, he approached the twenty first Guru, Vaasudeva.
36. He discussed with Sanaka and other sages. In spite of this, he could not attain complete peace of mind.
37. However, what became clear to him after his discussion with the great sages was that there was more to be done. There were areas which he had to explore and expound.
38. One day, he sat on the banks of the river Sarasvati and thought "Will my wish of Universal welfare ever come true? Will I ever attain complete peace of mind?"

39. At that moment, by divine coincidence, Sage Narada came there, chanting the divine name of Narayana.
40. Vyasa welcomed Sage Narada with reverence and devotion.
41. Narada said to him, “Vyasa! You have accomplished great things. You have given to the world more than anyone else has. Even then, you seem to be bothered by something. What is the reason for your worry?”
42. Vyasa replied, “O Revered Sage! You are all-knowing. What is there to hide from you? Everyone praises me and calls me the ocean of knowledge. Yet, I am not completely happy.”
43. “All those works are ones that will be of great help to the Sadhakas. They contain all subjects. Yet, I am not contented.
44. I feel that there is still a lot more for me to do. Only after I do all that, my works will reach completion.
45. But I am at a loss to understand as to what I should do to attain peace of mind. Please have mercy on me and show me the way out of this worry.”
46. Saying so, he fell at Narada’s feet.
47. Narada was pleased by Vyasa’s approach. He preached the “Chatuhshloki Bhagavata” (Bhagavata of four verses) to Vyasa. “Praise the deeds of the lord. That will give you peace of mind.” he said and disappeared.
48. Vyasa felt energized. With renewed happiness and enthusiasm, he wrote the great epic Bhagavata during his stay in Badarikaashrama.
49. This great epic is like the breath to all devotees. It is also called as ‘Parama Hamsa Samhita’ and ‘Saattvatee Shruti’.
50. Saattvatee Shruti means ‘the Veda of the devotees of Vishnu’. In this way, Vyasa became the originator of the Bhagavata tradition.

51. No wonder his name finds mention amongst the great Bhagavata devotees.
52. Vyasa has shown us the path of devotion as well as the path to knowledge in this great epic – Srimad Bhagavata.
53. Another great epic – Mahabharata was also written by Vyasa. It is a monumental work that serves as a reference text for aspects such as Karma, Dharma and Jnana. The sages of yore have praised Sage Vyasa's Mahabharata as follows:  
Namostute Vyaasa Vishaala buddhe .....
54. (I bow down to the extraordinarily brilliant Vyasa Maharshi, who, (with the help of the oil called Mahabharata) has lighted the lamp of knowledge (in our hearts).
55. After having read the Bhagavata in particular, the sages realized that Vyasa was none other than Vishnu himself.  
(Vyaasaaya Vishnu Roopaaya .....) (Prostrations to Vyasa who is disguised as Vishnu; Prostrations to Vishnu who is of the form of Vyasa. Prostrations to that reservoir of knowledge (Jnana Nidhi), who hails from the lineage of Vasishtha)
56. Vyasa himself preached the Bhagavata to Shuka Muni. Thus, the Bhagavata tradition started.
57. The message of Bhakti and Jnana spread all over the world through this sacred epic.
58. In India, many Ashrams got established with the name 'Vyasa' attached to them.
59. These Ashramas essentially taught Mahabharata, Bhagavad Gita, Bhagavata and the Brahma Sutras.
60. Vyasa was finally satisfied because his real aim was achieved.
61. After ridding himself of the sense of dissatisfaction, Vyasa undertook deep penance. He was transformed in to light. Even today, it is believed, Vyasa makes it a point to be present wherever Satsang takes place.

62. Because Vyasa is the embodiment of knowledge, He is someone who is always there! That is, he is a Chiranjeevi (one who lives forever)
63. Those who remember Vyasa and follow the path laid down by him will never suffer any deficiency. They will make themselves eligible for all auspicious things.
64. In this episode, we have concentrated only on those aspects that are important at this point of time. The path of devotion and knowledge are the most important aspects. It is Vyasa who simplified these aspects and made it accessible by the masses. To that great sage, let us offer our respectful prostrations!

JAYA GURU DATTA