

ant-hill and took the hermit out. Because he came out of Valmīka or white-ant-hill he came to be known as Vālmiki. He built his hermitage on the bank of the river Tamāsā and lived there with his disciples. It was at this place that he composed the famous poem Rāmāyaṇa. (For further details see under Rāmāyaṇa).

2) *Other details.*

(i) Vālmiki shines in the palace of Indra. (M.B. Sabhā Parva, Chapter 7, Stanza 16).

(ii) Mention is made in Mahābhārata, Udyoga Parva, Chapter 83, Stanza 27, that Vālmiki met Śrī Kṛṣṇa who was going to Hastināpura as a messenger of the Pāṇḍavas.

(iii) Sātyaki recited a poem composed by Vālmiki, after having killed Bhūriśravas in the Bhārata-battle. (M.B. Droṇa Parva, Chapter 143, Stanza 57).

(iv) Vālmiki told Yudhiṣṭhira of the benefits of his devotion to Śiva. (M.B. Anuśāsana Parva, Chapter 18, Stanza 8).

VĀLMĪKI II. One of the prominent sons of Garuḍa. (Mahābhārata, Udyoga Parva, Chapter 101, Stanza 11).

VĀMĀ. An attendant of Subrahmaṇya. (M.B. Śalya Parva, Chapter 46, Stanza 12).

VĀMADEVA. An ancient hermit.

1) *Vāmadeva and Śala.* Three sons named Śala, Dala and Bala were born to King Parikṣit by his wife Suśobhanā, a princess of Maṇḍūkā. In due course, King Parikṣit anointed his eldest son Śala as King and went to the forest for penance.

Once Śala went to the forest to hunt. While chasing a deer, the King asked his charioteer to bring horses capable of overtaking the deer. The charioteer told the King that such horses were available at the hermitage of Vāmadeva. They went to the hermitage of Vāmadeva and got the horses on condition that they would be returned.

After the hunting, Śala reached his capital. Seeing the beauty and the vigorous nature of the horses, the King did not like to part with them. Vāmadeva sent his disciple to the court of the King to take the horses back. But the King sent him back empty-handed. Vāmadeva got angry. He came in person and demanded his horses. The King replied that Brahmins did not require such horses. While these two were quarrelling with each other, some fierce giants came there and pierced Śala with a trident and killed him. (M.B. Vana Parva, Chapter 192).

2) *Other information.*

(i) He was a friend of Vasiṣṭha and a priest of Daśaratha. (Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa, Bālakāṇḍa. Sarga 7, Stanza 3).

(ii) Maṇḍala 4 of Ṛgveda was composed by Vāmadeva.

(iii) Vāmadeva was a hermit who had praised the Aśvinīdevas when he was in his mother's womb. (Ṛgveda, Maṇḍala 1, Sūkta 119).

(iv) Once Vāmadeva tried to eat the flesh of a dog because of hunger, with a view to save Brahmins. (Manusmṛti, Chapter 10, Stanza 106).

(v) He was a prominent member in the assembly of Indra. (M.B. Sabhā Parva, Chapter 7, Stanza 17).

(vi) Once Vāmadeva gave advice about righteousness to King Vasumanas. (M.B. Śānti Parva, Chapter 92).

VĀMADEVA II. A King. Arjuna defeated this King during his regional conquest of the North. (M.B. Sabhā Parva, Chapter 27, Stanza 11).

VĀMADEVA III. One of the seven sons born to Manu by his wife Śatarūpā. It is stated in Matsya Purāṇa, Chapter 4, that the Brahmin was born from the face, Kṣatriya from the hand, Vaiśya from the calf of the leg and Śūdra from the foot, of Vāmadeva, who was an incarnation of Śiva. This Vāmadeva who had five faces and a trident in his hand, fought with Candra, when Tārā the wife of Brhaspati was carried away by Candra. (Matsya Purāṇa, 4-13).

VĀMANA I. An incarnation of Mahāviṣṇu.

1) *General information.* There are ten main incarnations of Mahāviṣṇu. Of these, the incarnation of Vāmana is the fifth.

2) *Two Vāmanas.* Two different stories occur in the Purāṇas about the incarnation of Vāmana. One story is about how Mahāviṣṇu took the incarnation of Vāmana and thrust Mahābali an asura, down to the nether-world. This story is more widely known. In the second story the place of Mahābali is given to the asura called Dhundhu. This is the main difference. For a comparative study, both stories are given below:

a) *The first story of the incarnation of Vāmana.* The devas (gods) such as Indra and the others were born to Prajāpati Kaśyapa by his wife Aditi and the asuras (demons) such as Mahābali and others, by his wife Diti. The Daityas (asuras) began to harm and harass the Devas to a great extent. Once Aditi, the mother of the Devas, complained to Kaśyapa about this. He advised her to take the fast called 'Payovrata' fixing the image of Mahāviṣṇu in her heart and that he will take birth through her as Vāmana and destroy Mahābali. According to the advice of her husband, Aditi began to take Payovrata, at the end of which Mahāviṣṇu appeared before her and asked her what her wish was. She told Viṣṇu, of her grievances and Viṣṇu consoled her and said "You have invoked me by your prayer and fast for the safety of your sons. So I will enter your womb through the penance of Kaśyapa and take birth as your son and rescue your sons."

Mahāviṣṇu disappeared. Aditi worshipped her husband with devotion. By contemplation Kaśyapa knew everything. He infused the energy he had acquired by penance into Aditi, who gave birth to a son. The birth took place on the twelfth day of the month of Bhādrapada, in the bright lunar fortnight at the auspicious moment called Abhijit, in the star of Śrāvaṇa. The infant had four hands. While Kaśyapa and Aditi were looking on, the infant changed its form and became a dwarfish Brahmin boy. The Devas brought presents to the child. The Sun taught him the spell called Sāvitrīmantra. Brhaspati gave the Brahmastring. Kaśyapa gave the string worn round the waist. The earth gave the hide of a black antelope. Soma the Vanaspati gave a rod; Aditi gave the cloth over the privities, the sky an umbrella, the seven hermits gave Kuśa-grass, Brahmā gave a waterpot, Sarasvatī gave a rosary and Kubera gave a pot.

At that time, the powerful Mahābali had brought the three worlds of heaven, earth and Pātāla (the nether-world) under his control. That Asura King performed a horse-sacrifice with the help of a Bhārgava Brahmin. Hearing about it Vāmana started for the place of sacrifice. Mahābali was performing the sacrifice at a place called Bhṛgukacchaka on the North bank of river Narmadā. The priests who were performing the rites