

✨ The Six Great Qualities of Vishnu Sahasranamam

Mahabharatha Collection

 **Date:** 2025-10-31

 **Description:** Exploring the profound theological depth and salient features of the thousand names of Lord Vishnu as recorded by ancient sages

 **Tags:** vishnu-sahasranamam, mahabharata, bhishma, vyasa, krishna, devotion, vedic-wisdom, hindu-scripture

The Vishnu Sahasranamam (VSN) is highly esteemed for its profound theological and spiritual depth. The sources identify six principal features (six great qualities) that characterize its greatness, as recorded by the Purvacharyas.

Here is a detailed elaboration of the salient features of the Vishnu Sahasranamam:

1. Mahabharata Sarathwat (Essence of the Mahabharatam)

The Vishnu Sahasranamam is considered the essence (Sarathwat) of the Mahabharatam.

- The Mahabharatam is a massive work, generally referred to as Sapada Laksha Grantham (1 plus 25,000 verses, or 1,25,000 verses), which is two and a half times the size of Iliad and Odyssey put together.
- The VSN contains the essence of all these verses.
- The VSN is listed as one of the five gems (pancharatnam) chosen from the vastness of the Mahabharatam, along with Vidura Neeti, Sanat Sujatiyam, Yaksha Prashnam, and Bhagavad Gita.

2. Rishi bhif Pari Ganataha (Attributed to/Gathered by Rishis)

This feature highlights that the names were given and used by Rishis prior to their final compilation in the VSN by Bhishma.

- The names found within the Sahasranamam, such as Ramaha, were already in existence; for example, there was Parashurama (J Rama) and Dasaratha Rama (D Rama).
- Specific names were bestowed by great sages: Krishna's name was given by the Rishi Gargacharya, and Rama's name was given by Vasishta.
- Bhishmacharya intelligently assimilated all these pre-existing names.

3. Vedacharya Samaharat (Presented by Vedacharya Vyasa)

The VSN was presented to us by Vedacharya Vyasa. Vyasa is revered for his monumental task of compiling and assimilating vast amounts of available information.

The greatness of Vyasa is described in terms of his equivalence to the Trimurti (Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva), based on his contributions to knowledge:

- **Equal to Brahma:** Vyasa is called Achaturvadanor Brahma (Brahma minus three heads) because he performed the creation function of categorizing knowledge (Satvaraka Srishti). He grouped poetic mantras into the Rigveda, tunable mantras into the Samaveda, and prose mantras into the Yajurveda, along with the Atharvana Vedam.
- **Equal to Vishnu (Hari):** Vyasa is called Dvibahur Aparoharihi (Vishnu minus two hands) because he helps us live better, thereby performing the function of sustenance.
- **Equal to Shiva (Shambhu):** Vyasa is called Apala Lochanash Shambhu (Shiva minus one eye) because reading and contemplating his works helps in destroying sins (papam is vanished).

4. Bhishmot Krishna Matatvatah (Bhishma's Devotion to Krishna)

The Sahasranamam is important because it was first spoken by Bhishmacharya, who was regarded as a supreme devotee (parama bhakta) of Krishna.

- The composition is a conversation where Yudhishtira asked questions, Bhishma gave the replies, and Krishna sanctioned, heard, and witnessed the entire conversation.

5. Parigrahaatisayataha (Universal Acceptance and Practice)

This feature emphasizes that the Vishnu Sahasranamam has been accepted by one and all and has been in continuous practice over centuries.

- **Catalyst for Delivery:** The novel Kadambari, written over a thousand years ago, records the practice of people continuously reciting Akhanda Vishnu Sahasranamam in the labor room (Sutika Griham) to help catalyze the mother's delivery.
- **Healing Properties:** References in the Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra (dating back 1,500 years) indicate that reciting VSN helps those suffering from ailments such as kidney problems, eye problems, and respiratory problems.
- **Physical Benefits:** The continuous recitation of the shlokas provides an exercise to the tongue, similar to how Yoga provides exercise for the body.

6. Gita Chaika Arthakashchanaha (Essence of the Bhagavad Gita)

The Vishnu Sahasranamam is also considered the essence of the Bhagavad Gita.

- Adi Shankara intelligently coupled the two by stating: Geyam Gita Nama Sahasram (recite the Gita and the thousand names).
- Unlike the Bhagavad Gita, which requires structured study (beginning with the first six chapters on Karma Yoga and Gnana Yoga), the Vishnu

Sahasranamam is highly accessible because one can "choose and pick names from anywhere and look into the commentaries and explain".



Insights from Specific Names in the VSN

The sources further illustrate the depth and relatability of the VSN through the meaning and anecdotes associated with several names:

Name (Nama)	Meaning/Description	Source	Anecdote/Elaboration
Achalaha	The one who is uncontrollable through force.	Krishna, while visiting Duryodhana's Sabha Mantapam, showed his cosmic form and was uncontrollable by the valorous wrestlers and forces unleashed by Duryodhana.	Krishna had promised Duryodhana not to lift a weapon in the Bharata Yuddham. However, to allow his devotee, Bhishma, to win a challenge (who pledged to make Krishna lift a weapon), Krishna jumped from his chariot and rushed toward Bhishma with the chakram. He was ready to lose in front of his devotee.
Chalaha	The one who is controllable or ready to forgo a promise if love is shown towards him.		
Vijitatma	The one who is subservient to his devotees. The one who ensures the devotee wins, even if Mahalakshmi finds a fault in them.	When Ranganayaki (Mahalakshmi) complained that Vibhishana had claimed her presence caused bad omens in Lanka, Ranganatha (Narayana) fought for his devotee (Vibhishana), ensuring the devotee wins.	Narayana eats whatever food his devotees prepare. He stood on a brick for Pundalika. He rolled up his serpent couch and left Kanchipuram when his devotee Tirumalisai Alvar asked him to leave, and returned
Vidheyatma	The one who lives by what his devotees say; the one who is commandable by his devotees.		

Name (Nama)	Meaning/Description	Source	Anecdote/Elaboration
Achyutaha	The one who will not abandon his devotees.	when asked to come back, demonstrating he is controllable by devotion.	
Duswapna	The one who will give very pleasing dreams (destruction of bad dreams).	The term Chuti in Sanskrit means to leave or abandon. Rukmini, in her letter to Krishna, challenged him to come and protect her by asking: "Aren't you called Achyuta?" meaning he cannot abandon her.	The term Chuti in Sanskrit means to leave or abandon. Rukmini, in her letter to Krishna, challenged him to come and protect her by asking: "Aren't you called Achyuta?" meaning he cannot abandon her.
Nashanaha		This name (926th nama) is connected to the story of Gajendra Moksham.	
Chandramshuhu	The one whose rays are like the moon, providing happiness and knowledge.	The Acharyas suggest remembering this name when sleeping, or thinking of Gajendra Moksham, helps prevent bad dreams (dusswapna nashanam).	This name connects to the cool, soothing nature of Rama, who was called Rama Chandra because he looked like the moon to Rishis tormented by Rakshasas. It also refers to Narayana disseminating knowledge (Vedas) to Brahma through the cool, nectarine rays of the moon, after the knowledge was lost (Hayagriva Avataram).



Reference

This blog post is based on notes taken from the following video : **Video Source: Watch on YouTube** For a more detailed explanation, I highly recommend watching the original video.



Acknowledgment & Disclaimer

These articles are based on discourses by **Sri Dushyanth Sridhar**, who renders discourses in English & Tamil on Rāmāyana, Mahābhārata, Bhāgavata, Vishnu Purāna, Bhagavad Gitā, Vishnu Sahasranāma, and Divya Prabanda in the upanyāsam, pravachanam, or kālakshepam style. Visit <https://desikadaya.org> for more information. These notes are presented solely for educational purposes to help viewers download and benefit from these teachings. Any incorrect interpretations or inaccuracies are mine and unintentional—please forgive me. For any feedback, please send an [email](#).

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