

Vishnu Sahasranamam - Dyanam



Vishnu sahasranamam Collection

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Description: Exploring the essential preparatory section that establishes the foundation before chanting the thousand divine names

Tags: purvangam, prologue, vishnu-sahasranamam, mantra-angas, dhyana-shlokas, sankalpam, vedavyasa

The Sacred Prelude: Purvangam of Vishnu Sahasranamam



Based on the sources, the portion of the Vishnu Sahasranamam following Bhishma's answers to the six questions and preceding the actual thousand names is known as the **Purvangam** (Prologue or Prelude). This section serves as a preparation for the chanter, establishing the authority of the text, the technical components of the mantra, and the visualization (Dhyana) of the Lord.

Here is a detailed breakdown of this section:

1. The Nature of the Names (Avatarika)

Before the technical invocations, there are verses establishing the nature of the names.

Yani Namani Gaunani: Bhishma states, "I will recite for the welfare of all (bhutaye), those names which are expressive of His attributes (gaunani) and which are well-known and sung by the great Rishis".

Commentary: While Adi Shankara interprets gauna as secondary, Parashara Bhatta interprets it as names derived from gunas (qualities/attributes).

2. The Rishi, Chandas, and Devata (Metadata)

This section establishes the "copyright" and structure of the hymn.

- **Rishi (Sage):** *Vedavyaso Mahan Rishihi* — The sage who composed/compiled this is Veda Vyasa.
- **Chandas (Meter):** *Chando'nushtup* — The meter is Anushtup (32 syllables per verse).
- **Devata (Deity):** *Devo Bhagavan Devaki Sutaha* — The deity being praised is the son of Devaki (Krishna).

3. The Mantra Angas (Components of the Mantra)

The text is treated as a Maha Mantra, and thus has specific components assigned to lock and unlock its power.

Beejam (Seed)

Amritamshudbhavo Bhanuriti Beejam — The source/seed is the One who gave rise to the moon (Amritamshu) and the sun (Bhanu).

Shakti (Power)

Devaki Nandana Srishteti Shaktihi — The power of the mantra is the son of Devaki.

Hridayam (Heart)

Trisama Hridayam Tasya — The heart of the mantra is the Lord praised by the three Samas (Vedas).

Kilakam (Pin/Wedge)

Shankhabhrin Nandaki Chakriti Kilakam — The pin is the One bearing the conch, sword, and discus.

Astram (Weapon)

Sharngadhanva Gadadhara Ityastram — The weapon is the wielder of the Sharnga bow and the Gada (mace).

Kavacham (Armor)

Trisama Samagas Sameti Kavacham.

Yoni (Source)

Anandam Parabrahmeti Yonihi.

Digbandhah (Protection)

Ritus Sudarshana Kala Iti Digbandhaha — Bound by time and the Sudarshana.

4. The Sankalpam (Formal Resolve)

This involves the formal declaration of intent to chant: "*Asya Sri Vishnu Divya Sahasranama Stotra Mahamantrasya...*"

Restriction Note

The source mentions a traditional view that women may recite the Vishnu Sahasranamam freely, but are advised to skip this specific Sankalpam portion ("*Asya Sri Vishnu...*") and the single word *Harihi* (which contains the Pranava/Omkara), as certain intonations may affect the female reproductive system. However, the source notes that this is a specific traditional view and others may differ.

5. Dhyana Shlokas (Visualization Verses)

Before chanting the names, the devotee must visualize the form of the Lord. The text provides several distinct visualizations:

The Lord in the Milky Ocean (Kshirodanvat...)

This verse visualizes the Lord reclining on Adisesha in the ocean of milk. The serpent bed looks like a canopy of pearls (*mauktikanam mala*). The Lord is adorned with pearls and served by clouds that spray nectar.

The Cosmic Form (Bhupadau yasya nabhi...)

This visualizes the Lord's body as the universe. The earth is His feet, the sky is His navel, the wind is His breath, the sun and moon are His eyes, and the directions are His ears. He encompasses the three worlds (*Tribhuvana Vapusham*).

The Peaceful Form (Shantakaram...)

A very famous verse describing Him as the personification of peace, reclining on the serpent (*Bhujagashayanam*), having a lotus in His navel (*Padmanabham*), and being the Lord of gods (*Suresham*).

The Krishna Form (Sashanka chakram...)

Describes the Lord holding the conch and discus, wearing a crown and earrings (*Kireeta Kundalam*), dressed in yellow silk (*Peeta Vastram*), and having eyes like lotus petals.

Krishna on the Golden Throne (Chayayam Parijatasya...)

A specific meditation on Lord Krishna seated on a golden throne (*Hema Simhasanopari*) under the shade of the Parijata tree, accompanied by Rukmini and Satyabhama.

The Transition to the Sacred Names

Following these visualizations, the text usually moves to *Om Namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya* (the Dwadashakshari mantra) and then begins the 1,000 names starting with *Vishwam*.

Vishnu Sahasranamam Commentary Discussion



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](#).