



3.2 ✨ Ajayamano Bahudha Vijayate: The Unborn Born Many Times

Vedas Collection

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 **Description:** Exploring the profound paradox of the Supreme Purusha who, though unborn, takes manifold incarnations out of divine will to rescue souls from samsara

 **Tags:** purusha-suktam, avatars, incarnations, ajayamano, nampillai, prishni-sutapas, samsara, divine-will, utara-anuvaka

Introduction

The mantra "**Prajapatis Charati Garbhe Antah Ajayamano Bahudha Vijayate**" is the **21st mantra** of the Purusha Suktam, typically found in the **Uttara Anuvaka** (appendix mantras). This mantra is highly significant for explaining the Supreme Purusha's paradoxical nature regarding birth and manifestation.

Line-by-Line Elaboration

Sanskrit Line	Meaning and Explanation
Prajapatis Charati Garbhe Antah	The Prajapati (Purusha) resides within the creation (Garbhe Antah). This refers to the Supreme Purusha who dwells within the cosmos or creation
Ajayamano	He is fundamentally unborn (Ajayamano). The word Aja (unborn) means the one who does not have birth. The Supreme Purusha is not born like us
Bahudha Vijayate	He is born in many forms (Bahudha Vijayate) and many times

The Core Meaning

The core meaning of this phrase is that the Purusha, though inherently **unborn** (Ajayamano), is born in manifold ways. The crucial phrase that explains this paradox, emphasized by commentators, is "**unlike us**".



The Paradox of Unborn Birth

The Purusha is considered unborn because ordinary beings (Jeevatmas) are born due to **karma**—the result of accrued actions from the present and past births.

Key Distinctions

- ♦ **Ordinary Beings (Jeevatmas):** - Born due to **karma** (past actions) - Birth is a **necessity**, not a choice - Require a mother for birth - Bound by the cycle of birth and death
- ♦ **The Supreme Purusha (Paramatma):** - Born as a result of His own **will (ichha)**, not karma - Birth is by **choice**, not necessity - Born "**unlike us**" - in extraordinary ways - Fundamentally unborn, yet takes many forms



Example: Lord Narasimha

Lord Narasimha (who is referred to by the name **Ajaha** (unborn) in the Vishnu Sahasranamam) was born from an **insentient pillar**, not a mother. This exemplifies how the Supreme Purusha's births transcend natural law.



The Anecdote of Nampillai and the Deep Well

The sources provide a detailed anecdote, attributed to the commentator **Swami Nampillai** (born roughly 800 years ago), to illustrate the concept of the Supreme Being taking multiple births to save beings who only enter the cycle once. This story provides a beautiful analogy for why the Lord, though unborn, repeatedly manifests (Bahudha Vijayate).

The Story: The Daughter-in-Law and the Well

1. The Setting and the Vessel

Imagine a joint family household in the 1960s or 70s. The eldest daughter-in-law (Manni) goes to the backyard well to fetch water. While drawing water, she fails to tie the large vessel (which had dents and was precious to the mother-in-law) properly, and it falls deep into the well.

2. The Mother-in-Law's Command

The strict mother-in-law commands that the daughter-in-law should not step inside the house without that vessel.

3. The Husband's Rescue

The husband returns in the evening and finds his wife waiting, distraught, by the washing stone. Learning the problem, he jumps into the well, knowing how to swim.

4. Retrieving Possessions

In the well, he initially fetches other items that had fallen over time: - A soap box
- An aluminum plate

The wife clarifies she only wants the specific family vessel. The man then takes **three or four more dips** to fetch the precious, dented vessel.

The Analogy Explained

Swami Nampillai's explanation based on this scenario is:

"Udamaikku oru muzhukku, udaiyavanukku pala muzhukku"

(For the possession, the immersion is only once; but for the one who possesses it, the immersion is many times)

The Symbolic Meanings

Symbol

 The Well

Represents

Samsaram (the material world and the cycle of rebirth)

Symbol



The Fallen Objects
(soap box, plate, vessel)

Represents

The Jeevatmas - they fell into the waters (Samsaram) only once



The Rescuer (the husband)

Paramatma - had to immerse himself many times (take multiple dips/births) to save these possessions



The Profound Truth

To rescue the **Jeevatmas** (who are immersed in the cycle only once per object), the Supreme Purusha takes **many Avatars**: - 🐟 Matsyavatara (Fish incarnation) - 🐢 Kurmavatara (Tortoise incarnation) - 🐷 Varahavatara (Boar incarnation) - 👑 Ramavatara - 🌺 Krishna - And many more...

The Lord takes: - **One dip as Matsyavatara** → relieves a certain few Jeevatmas - **Another dip as Kurmavatara** → releases a few more Jeevatmas - And continues this process across time

This anecdote elegantly clarifies the meaning of **Ajayamano Bahudha Vijayate**: the Unborn Lord takes manifold births, not due to karma, but out of His **will to sustain and liberate** His beings.



The Three Births: Prishni and Sutapas

The concept is also supported by the account of a couple named **Prishni and Sutapas**.



The Story

1. 🙏 The Prayer

Prishni and Sutapas prayed for a son "**like you**" (the Lord) **thrice**.

2. ✨ The Lord's Promise

Since no one could be like the Lord, the Lord promised He would be **born to them thrice** to fulfill their boons, as He cannot be cloned.

3. 🌟 The Three Incarnations

The Lord was subsequently born to them in three successive incarnations:

Birth #	Incarnation	Parents	Significance
1	Prishni Garbha	Prishni and Sutapas	First birth to fulfill the boon
2	Vamana	Aditi and Kashyapa	The next Janma (rebirth) of the couple
3	Krishna (Vasudeva)	Devaki and Vasudeva	The final Janma of the couple

What This Demonstrates

This demonstrates how the Purusha **determines the criteria for His own births (ichha)**, unlike ordinary beings. The fact that He is born repeatedly in the same lineage underscores the concept of **Bahudha Vijayate**.

Connection to Guruvayur

The deity being worshipped by this couple throughout these three births is identified as the **Lord of Guruvayur**, connecting the idea of the Purusha existing across: - **Past** (Bhuta) - **Present** (Bhavya) - **Future** (Bhavat)

This aligns with the Vishnu Sahasranamam name **Bhuta Bhavya Bhavat Prabhu** (Lord of the past, present, and future).

Summary

The mantra "**Ajayamano Bahudha Vijayate**" beautifully captures the paradoxical nature of the Supreme Purusha: though fundamentally unborn and beyond the constraints of karma that bind ordinary souls, He chooses to take manifold incarnations out of His divine will to rescue His devotees from the well of samsara.

Swami Nampillai's well analogy perfectly illustrates this truth: while the Jeevatmas fall into samsara only once (like objects falling into a well), the Lord must dive in repeatedly—taking birth after birth as different avatars—to rescue them all. Each incarnation serves a purpose, liberating specific souls and upholding dharma in different ages.

The story of **Prishni and Sutapas** further demonstrates that the Lord's births are governed by His own will (ichha), not karma. He was born to the same couple across three lifetimes—as Prishni Garbha, Vamana, and Krishna—fulfilling their sincere prayer for a son "like Him" by actually becoming their son three times.

This profound teaching reminds us that every avatar—from Matsya to Krishna—represents the Unborn One choosing to be born again, diving into the well of worldly existence not out of necessity, but out of infinite compassion to retrieve His beloved possessions: us.



Reference

YouTube Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YzCWeIKtGHU&list=PLUCe17-wlYr-zIRfRt1m6fyPy2r-wjcXl>



Acknowledgment & Disclaimer

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