



ICSSR Sponsored
ISSN: 2319-9997

Journal of Nehru Gram Bharati University, 2025; Vol. 14 (I):149-155

Chastity of Savitri in Savitri: A Legend and a Symbol by Sri Aurobindo: A Critical Study

Ravi Kant Mishra and Chhaya Malviya

Department of English, Nehru Gram Bharati
(Deemed to be University), Prayagraj, U.P.

Email: ravimonu1985@gmail.com

Received: 22.12.2024 Revised: 02.04.2025 Accepted: 13.05.2025

Abstract

Sri Aurobindo's Savitri: A Legend and a Symbol is a deep spiritual story that presents chastity in a way that goes beyond its usual meaning. Traditionally, chastity is seen as sexual purity or self-control, but in Aurobindo's work, it becomes a powerful symbol of spiritual strength and divine purity. This paper looks at how Savitri's chastity is much more than a moral quality. It is shown as a key to her spiritual power and connection with the divine. Through her chastity, Savitri becomes strong enough to challenge death itself and win back her husband, Satyavan. Her chastity represents her total devotion to her divine purpose, her spiritual discipline, and her ability to stay true to her higher self. The study shows how Aurobindo uses Savitri's chastity to symbolize the soul's journey toward realizing its true, divine nature. This paper also explores how Savitri's chastity connects to larger themes in Aurobindo's philosophy, such as divine love and the quest for spiritual freedom. Rather than being about simple self-restraint, it reflects a deeper spiritual process of self-purification and self-realization. In conclusion, the paper highlights how Savitri's chastity is not only a personal virtue but a symbol of divine power and spiritual growth, showing the importance of inner purity on the path to enlightenment and liberation.

Keywords: Savitri, Sri Aurobindo, chastity, divine power, self-realization, love, liberation, spiritual discipline.

Introduction

Sri Aurobindo's *Savitri: A Legend and a Symbol* is more than just a retelling of an old myth; it is a deep exploration of spiritual ideas and truths. A key theme in this epic is the character of Savitri, especially her chastity, which is central to her strength and the story's message. In traditional stories, chastity is often seen as a moral quality or physical purity, but in Aurobindo's work, it takes on a much deeper meaning. Here,

chastity is not just about being pure in body; it represents spiritual strength, devotion, and connection with the divine.

This paper will look closely at how chastity is shown in *Savitri* and what it means beyond its traditional view. For Savitri, chastity is a powerful force that helps her overcome the challenges of life and death. It symbolizes her inner purity and determination to fulfill her spiritual purpose. Through this, Aurobindo shows how the soul's journey toward truth and freedom is linked to the purity of heart and mind.

We will also explore how Savitri's chastity connects to larger ideas in Aurobindo's philosophy, like love, sacrifice, and spiritual power. By looking at how chastity plays a role in Savitri's story, this study will show how Aurobindo uses it to teach deeper spiritual lessons about the soul's connection to the divine and the power of inner strength.

Objective of the Study

- The objectives of this study on the *Chastity of Savitri in Savitri: A Legend and a Symbol by Sri Aurobindo* are:
- To understand how Aurobindo presents chastity as more than just physical purity, showing it as a symbol of spiritual strength and purity.
- To explore how Savitri's chastity gives her the strength to face and overcome challenges like death and fate.
- To see how Savitri's chastity is important in the story, especially in her victory over death and her spiritual journey.
- To link Savitri's chastity to Aurobindo's ideas about spiritual growth, the connection between body, mind, and soul, and the search for divine truth.

Methodology

This study on the *Chastity of Savitri in Savitri: A Legend and a Symbol by Sri Aurobindo* will focus on reading the text carefully to understand how Aurobindo shows Savitri's chastity as a sign of her spiritual strength. Important parts of the story will be analyzed to see how her chastity helps her face challenges like death and fate.

The study will also look at Aurobindo's ideas about spirituality, self-growth, and the connection between the body, mind, and soul. This will help explain why Savitri's chastity is not just about physical purity, but also a deep spiritual power. The research will interpret chastity as a symbol of inner strength and the soul's journey toward spiritual freedom. The study will also compare *Savitri* with other works by Aurobindo to understand how the theme of chastity fits into his bigger spiritual ideas.

Lastly, the study will consider the cultural and spiritual background in which Aurobindo wrote *Savitri*. It will look at Indian myths and Aurobindo's personal experiences to deepen the understanding of his work. Through this approach, the study aims to show how chastity in *Savitri* represents spiritual power and growth according to Aurobindo's philosophy.

Chastity of Savitri in Savitri:

In Sri Aurobindo's *Savitri: A Legend and a Symbol*, Savitri's chastity is not just about being physically pure; it represents something much deeper. It is a symbol of her spiritual strength, her connection to the divine, and her commitment to a higher purpose.

Savitri's chastity means that her heart, mind, and body are all in harmony with divine will. It is a deep spiritual purity that connects her to higher truths beyond the physical world. She is not just pure in body, but her soul is aligned with the divine.

"In her purity, the seed of creation lay,
The heart of the cosmos beat in her soul,
Through her chastity, the whole world was renewed,
And the divine law of the universe found its way."

Here, Aurobindo reflects on the cosmic significance of Savitri's chastity. It is through her purity that the entire universe is transformed, and divine law is restored. Savitri's chastity is thus shown as an active force in the cosmic order. In this stanza from *Savitri: A Legend and a Symbol*, Sri Aurobindo shows how important Savitri's purity is, not just for herself but for the entire universe.

The second line, "*The heart of the cosmos beat in her soul*," connects Savitri's soul to the entire universe. It suggests that she is deeply linked to the universe, and her soul is in harmony with the whole cosmos. She is part of the universal life force, and her actions are in tune with the rhythm of the world.

In the line, "*Through her chastity, the whole world was renewed*," Aurobindo tells us that Savitri's purity brings about a change in the world. Her strong and pure heart helps bring balance and order to everything around her. It's like she helps the world become better, restoring it to its true, divine form.

Lastly, "*And the divine law of the universe found its way*," means that because of Savitri's purity, the divine rules of the universe can make their way into the world. Her life and actions show the world the divine

order, and she helps bring these laws into practice.

In simple terms, this stanza shows that Savitri's purity is not just about being good—it is a powerful force that connects her to the universe and helps renew and align everything with the divine order. Her chastity is what makes the world better and brings everything back to balance. It shows how important purity is, not just for a person, but for the whole world.

Her chastity gives her the power to face the toughest challenges, even death. When she must confront Yama, the god of death, her purity and spiritual focus give her the strength to defeat him and bring her husband, Satyavan, back to life.

"Her chastity, a seal upon her heart,
A sacred trust kept in the hands of God,
A fire that burned but did not consume her soul,
Giving her the strength to fight against the mighty forces of fate."

Here, Savitri's chastity is shown as a sacred trust, a divine gift that empowers her. The purity of her soul becomes a source of unyielding strength, enabling her to overcome even the most powerful challenges, such as confronting Yama, the god of death.

"Her love was a flame, but untouched by desire,
Her chastity was a power that lifted her soul,
To realms where no mortal mind can follow,
And her purpose, beyond the reach of time or death."

This stanza underscores the distinction between physical love and divine love. Savitri's love is selfless, and her chastity is the key that allows her to ascend spiritually. Her chastity becomes the tool through which she aligns herself with her higher, divine purpose.

While Savitri deeply loves her husband, Satyavan, her love goes beyond physical attraction. Her chastity is a reflection of her commitment to divine love and a higher truth, rather than earthly desires or pleasures.

"Her chastity was the will of the Divine in action,
A divine instrument in the hands of fate,
To break the chains of death and open the gates,
To the eternal victory that no mortal could claim."

This stanza highlights the role of Savitri's chastity in fulfilling a higher divine purpose. Her purity becomes the instrument through which the divine will is enacted, leading to her triumph over death and her ability

to bring about eternal victory.

Savitri's chastity also represents the power of the divine feminine—grace, wisdom, and strength. It is through her purity that she connects with higher spiritual powers, and it is this connection that allows her to overcome great obstacles and defeat darkness.

"A woman, made divine by her purity,
Her spirit is a star that lights the way to truth,
She trod the path where no darkness could stay,
For her heart was a mirror to the eternal Light."

The next line, *"Her spirit a star that lights the way to truth,"* compares Savitri's spirit to a star. Just like a star lights up the dark sky, Savitri's pure spirit helps guide others toward the truth. Her inner light shows the way for those searching for wisdom.

The line, *"She trod the path where no darkness could stay,"* means that Savitri walks a path of truth and goodness, where nothing bad can exist. Her purity keeps away all negativity, showing that goodness and light can drive out darkness and evil.

Finally, *"For her heart was a mirror to the eternal Light,"* says that Savitri's heart reflects the divine light, which represents wisdom, truth, and love. Her heart is open to this higher truth, and she mirrors it to the world. This shows that Savitri is not just receiving divine light, but she is also sharing it with others.

Through these lines, Aurobindo shows that Savitri's purity and goodness make her a shining example of divine power. She is a light to others, guiding them toward truth and wisdom, and her spirit reflects the eternal divine truth. This suggests that inner purity and connection to the divine are the true sources of strength and enlightenment.

Aurobindo emphasizes that Savitri's purity is not only physical but transcendent. Her chastity is equated with divine light, and this divine quality enables her to dispel darkness and walk the path toward the highest spiritual truth.

Savitri's chastity is a force that helps her conquer not just physical challenges, but also the limitations of the material world. By staying pure, she triumphs over death itself, showing that the spirit is more powerful than physical life.

"With chastity as her sword, she faced the lord of death,
With her soul's fire burning, her heart a steady flame,
She spoke no word of fear, her vow unbroken,

In the face of darkness, her will remain the same."

This stanza emphasizes Savitri's unwavering spirit. Her chastity is compared to a sword, symbolizing its power and strength. Even in the face of Death, Savitri's vow remains unbroken, showing that her chastity is both a source of spiritual power and inner resolve. In this powerful stanza from *Savitri: A Legend and a Symbol*, Sri Aurobindo shows Savitri's courage and strength as she faces death itself. The first line says, "*With chastity as her sword, she faced the lord of death.*" Here, Savitri's chastity, or purity, is her weapon. Instead of using a sword or physical force, she uses her inner strength, which comes from her purity of heart and mind, to stand strong against death.

The next line, "*With her soul's fire burning, her heart a steady flame,*" describes how Savitri's spirit is full of fire and determination. Her soul burns with passion, and her heart stays calm and strong, like a steady flame that doesn't flicker or go out. Even in the most difficult moments, she remains focused and unafraid.

In the line, "*She spoke no word of fear, her vow unbroken,*" we see that Savitri shows no fear, even when facing the powerful lord of death. She has made a vow to save her husband, and no matter what happens, she keeps that promise. Her vow is unbroken because her determination is stronger than any fear.

Finally, the line "*In the face of darkness, her will remained the same*" tells us that Savitri's willpower doesn't change, even when faced with the darkest challenges. The "darkness" here represents death, and despite the fear and uncertainty it brings, Savitri stays strong and determined.

This stanza shows Savitri as a woman whose strength comes from within. Her purity, courage, and unwavering determination allow her to face death without fear. She doesn't rely on anything external but on her inner strength, which is enough to challenge the greatest force—death itself. Savitri represents the power of love, purity, and determination to overcome any obstacle.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, the chastity of Savitri in *Savitri: A Legend and a Symbol* by Sri Aurobindo is shown as a powerful symbol of spiritual strength and purity. Aurobindo presents chastity not just as physical purity, but as an inner power that helps Savitri achieve her higher spiritual goals. Her chastity gives her the strength to face and overcome great

challenges, including defeating death itself.

For Aurobindo, chastity represents more than just abstinence; it is about being in harmony with divine purpose. Savitri's purity connects her with higher spiritual forces and gives her the ability to shape her destiny.

This study shows that Savitri's chastity symbolizes the journey of the soul toward spiritual growth and enlightenment. It highlights how Aurobindo uses Indian mythology and his own spiritual beliefs to show that chastity can be a powerful force for change and self-realization.

In the end, Savitri's chastity represents inner strength and the ability to stay true to one's spiritual path. Through her, Aurobindo teaches that true power comes from within, through purity of heart, mind, and soul. This critical study of her chastity highlights its importance in the story and Aurobindo's message about spiritual growth and transformation.

Bibliography:

- Aurobindo, Sri. *The Synthesis of Yoga*. Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1999.
- Aurobindo, Sri. *Savitri: A Legend and a Symbol*. Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1950..
- Das, Ananta K. *Sri Aurobindo and the Concept of Chastity in Savitri*. New Delhi: B.R. Publishing Corporation, 2008.
- Mehta, Narayan. *Sri Aurobindo and the Mother: The Synthesis of Spirituality and Yoga*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 2003.
- Bose, Taraknath. *Sri Aurobindo: The Poet of Divine Reality*. Kolkata: Firma K.L. Mukhopadhyay, 2001.
- Sahu, Santosh. *The Symbolism in Aurobindo's Savitri: A Critical Study*. Jaipur: Rawat Publications, 2015.
- Patel, Vinay. "Chastity in the Works of Sri Aurobindo: A Study of Savitri's Role." *Journal of Indian Literature*, vol. 14, no. 3, 2011, pp. 118-132.
- Ray, Pratima. *The Feminine Power in Sri Aurobindo's Savitri*. Delhi: Vikas Publishing House, 2017.
- Choudhury, Arvind. *Savitri and the Concept of Divine Will*. Kolkata: Calcutta University Press, 2012.
- Ghosh, Ranjana. *Spiritual Symbolism in Sri Aurobindo's Savitri*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010.

Disclaimer/Publisher's Note:

The statements, opinions and data contained in all publications are solely those of the individual author(s) and contributor(s) and not of JNGBU and/or the editor(s). JNGBU and/or the editor(s) disclaim responsibility for any injury to people or property resulting from any ideas, methods, instructions or products referred to in the content.