Chapter IV

Characters in *Savitri*: Their Symbolic Significance in the Process of Perfection
Savitri begins with the “Author’s Note” which is mainly devoted to the introduction and brief interpretation of symbolic significance of the characters in the epic. Except first four lines, the full note is about characters only. That is enough to show the poet’s prime concern about the symbolic importance of the characters in the poem. In this note Sri Aurobindo says:

Still this (Savitri) is not a mere allegory, the characters are not personified qualities, but incarnation or emanations of living and conscious forces with whom we can enter into concrete touch and they take human bodies in order to help man and show him the way from his mortal state to a divine consciousness and immortal life.

Sri Aurobindo’s philosophy of perfection includes many stages from ignorance to enlightenment. Complex terminology is used to express them and hence sometimes it becomes heavier to rightly access it. But the poet in Sri Aurobindo makes the work easier by using characters as the vehicle of the ideas of philosophy. In Savitri, every character has different symbolic significance. Each one symbolizes different stage of human being who aspires to be perfect. Their oratories and activities focus author’s concept of evolution towards perfection.

By stating that the characters in Savitri are “incarnation of living and conscious forces,” Sri Aurobindo not only gives new meaning to these
characters but opens a novel view to look at them. He believes in the existence of various forces in the universe which are invisible to the human eye but can be experienced by yogis in the depth of meditative state of mind. These forces are of different kinds - both good and bad forces and they all are constantly at work. They interfere in the happenings in the universe, contribute in it and also affect human life. When Thomas Hardy says that man is a puppet in the hands of destiny, he means to say that human life doesn’t go as we plan it. Incidents, co-incidents, accidents play important role in the life of man. Most of the great things or worst things in our life take place without logic or concrete reason behind it. Why and how this happens is not known. Why a simple man like Gandhi gradually becomes so influential and powerful that barrister C.D. Das had to say, “There is no logic but magic in him” and how an ordinary painter and soldier like Adolph Hitler suddenly becomes so powerful and evil that he becomes responsible for the most disastrous world war in the history of human race. One wonders who is behind this unseen by the mortal eyes and yet whose existence is experienced. Which force comes to Milton in the early hours of the morning and inspires him with magically charged poetic words to write great epics like *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained*? In the epics of Homer there are Greek Gods of Olympus who are divided into apposite groups, they talk, they discuss, they fight amongst themselves for their favorite human beings, they help them, they protect them, they use their power to support the people
whom they like and to put the people in the trouble whom they dislike. This play of the forces behind the curtain is very important because it directly or indirectly affects the happenings in the world and in the human life. Then what is the status of human existence in the world? Is he so poor, so powerless and helpless at the hands of these supernatural forces? Homer makes them so in his epics but Sri Aurobindo doesn’t.

Man has ‘free will’ to choose his own destiny. If he chooses to live the life of virtues or truthful life, many good forces around him helps him in whatever good he does. At the same time he is tried to be tested and tempted by evil forces by many ways. They try their best to divert him from his noble path. They try to find out his weak point and target on it so that he may leave the good side and join the evil party. The people of the evil mind are used by evil forces as their vehicles of evil thoughts who try to infect the world by their ideas and actions. The conflict between these two forces good and evil makes the characters ‘wiser grew by adverse fate’ types. This play of the forces is constantly going on in the universe which is named as lila in the Hindu philosophy. On the way of perfection man has to go through this lila but the perfection is certainly beyond it. In the state of perfection all dualities end and man becomes one with the eternity.
In Homer’s epics, Gods work or use their forces for comparatively ordinary reasons like victory or defeat of their favorite person in the war. Sri Aurobindo thinks that the real work or role of these forces is to help man to achieve perfection. The role of good forces is easy to understand but according to Sri Aurobindo even evil forces work for the same noble cause. They target the weak points of aspired person which give him opportunity to discover his weakness to be stronger than before and go forward. Thus with the help of these good and evil forces man becomes perfect. On the whole, the forces work for the noble cause in Aurobindonian philosophy.

There are seven characters in the epic who play important role in the development of Savitri’s legendary story. They are Aswapati, Savitri, Satyavan, Narad, Dyumatsena, Queen-the mother of Savitri, and Death. In the ‘Author’s note’ Sri Aurobindo has introduced Aswapati, Dyumatsena, Satyavan and Savitri with their symbolic significance but Narad, Queen and Death are left unintroduced. In the epic Aswapati, Savitri, Satyavan, and Death are major characters and others are minor characters. Minor characters like Narad and Queen appear in only one book that is Book VI- The Book of Fate.

As Sri Aurobindo says, these characters are not merely personified qualities but the incarnations of the living forces around us. These characters
need to be studied on two levels- firstly, as human characters and secondly, as forces incarnate human bodies. Every character has different symbolic significance. They symbolize different stages of human being who is aspired to be perfect. Their speeches and actions focus on Sri Aurobindo’s idea of evolution from ignorance to perfection.

In the process of evolution, the first stage of the Being is ignorance. The helpless and defeated situation of the man, who is unaware of the powers, possibilities and the presence of God within him, as the blind person in search of food throws away the touchstone not knowing its worth. He is like the musk deer that hopelessly runs directionless in search of musk not knowing that by birth he has that musk in his own belly.

Dyumatsena is the character in the epic which symbolizes this stage in evolution. In the ‘Author’s Note’ Sri Aurobindo describes him as- “Dyumatsena, Lord of the shining hosts, father of Satyavan, is the Divine Mind here fallen blind, losing its celestial kingdom of vision, and through that loss its kingdom of glory.” It clearly indicates that the original status of Dyumatsena was not clouded by the ignorance. He was ruling as the king of Shalwa and was also the father the proud son like Satyavan. But unfortunately his mind is infected by the ignorance hence he symbolizes “Divine Mind – here fallen blind”
In the poem, Dyumatsena is firstly introduced in Book V, Canto III by his son Satyavan while introducing himself to Savitri:

In days when yet his sight looked clear on life,
King Dyumatsena once the Shalwa reigned….¹

Sixteen lines are devoted by the poet for the brief introduction of this minor character. We are told that Dyumatsena was powerful king ruling on the country Shalwa. He enjoyed the power till his vision about the life was ‘clear’. This reminds us Aurobindonian philosophy which believes that basically man is as powerful as divine because he is part of that divinity. As long as he is aware of it, he can enjoy his original kingly status. In course of time his knowledge or clear vision is tested by the fate. The fate which favored him for long time, now left him ‘uncovered’. ‘A living night’, that is ignorance became his partner forever. Heaven’s ‘careless gifts’ to him were withdrawn and thus delight in his life is taken away. Ignorance corrupted his ‘clear sight’ of knowledge and consequently his power was weakened. Then it is said that Dyumatsena lost his vision and became blind. This blindness is of two types – spiritual and physical. Firstly as his inner vision, vision of knowledge is infected by the ignorance. He lost his right path of life. Hence Sri Aurobindo describes him as-“Divine Mind –here fallen blind.” Second blindness is physical. He lost his eyesight and became helpless.
Consequently his kingdom was usurped by others and he was exiled forcibly by them. He took shelter in the forest of Shalwa along with his wife and son, Satyavan. Thus once a mighty king became the helpless blind man living a pitiful life in the hermitage of the wild forest of Shalwa.

In Book VI, Canto I, Savitri, while reporting to her father about Satyavan aptly describes Dyumatsena as-

In his thatched hermitage Dyumatsena dwells,
Blind, exiled, outcast, once a mighty king.²

Sri Aurobindo wants to symbolize through the character of Dyumatsena that the original existence of the being is powerful and pure. It is the ignorance which corrupts our inner vision and consequently we lose our original kingly status. The hostile forces of ignorance often test us. They work to divert us from our path of truth and purity. They try their best to confuse us, make us doubtful and restless so that we lose our concentrated energy and faith. Thus they try to make us powerless and helpless. King Dyumatsena is also tested by them but he could not defeat them. Thus he symbolizes ‘The fallen mind.’ His situation may be aptly described in the lines written in another context-
All power was dubbed a tyranny cursed by God
And truth a fiction needed by the mind……
All knowledge was left a questioning ignorance.¹

Dyumatsena is not like Aswapati who will “arise, awake and stop not till the goal is achieved.” Such people need divine help to regain their lost inner vision as well as the outer glory. Dyumatsena also counts remaining days of his life waiting for the moment of deliverance. Savitri has taken birth to save such “fallen mind.” Though it is indicated that Dyumatsena passes remaining days of his life in the hermitage in deep forest of Shalwa in the company of seers and aspired rishies, it seems that he is inactive and uninspired soul. His situation is like:

Aimless man toils in an uncertain world,
Lulled by inconstant pauses of his pain…..²

He doesn’t undertake any quest for self-realization like Aswapati or Savitri. Hence his destiny can not be changed without the ‘divine help’. Savitri’s marriage with his son Satyavan is the turning point in Dyumatsena’s life. Savitri, the embodiment of the divine power comes into his helpless life as the ray of hope. Savitri not only lives with him as his daughter-in-law, but servers him with utmost care like the most humble daughter. Both Dyumatsena and his wife are very pleased to have her with them. They have great admiration and love for her. There are two important
things happened during this period of ‘living together’. Firstly, Dyumatsena ‘the fallen mind’ came into contact with the ‘Divine power’ like Savitri. The real process of his transformation begins in this period and it is hastened in due course of time. In the darkness of his life of ‘fathomless night’, Savitri came up like the rising sun. Thus Dyumatsena’s regaining of sight is symbolic.

This gradual evolution of consciousness was taking place for the period of twelve months in the divine presence of Savitri to whom Dyumatsena was attached. He begins to respect, love and admire her. This attachment between the seeker and the deliverer or saint is very important for total transformation. Thus Savitri’s demand to Death to restore the lost vision, power and glory of Dyumatsena and its sanction is certainly not unreasonable.

In Book IX, Canto II, when Savitri follows Death, who is flying away with Satyavan’s soul, throughout the journey she impresses him by her powerful arguments. During the journey, he asks her to demand anything that can soothe her earthly life. She cleverly demands him the lost power and glory of Satyavan which was his birth right but had been denied to him by the fate. It was indirectly demand for Dyumatsena’s restoration of power. Death gives her this boon and says:
I yield to his blind father’s longing heart
Kingdom and power and friends and greatness lost
And royal trappings for his peaceful age.....

While returning the glory of life to Dyumatsena taken away by the fate, Death also praises him for his development of consciousness. He thinks that Dyumatsena is the kind of person,

…who wiser grew by adverse fate.  

He thinks that Dyumatsena’s living in the forest is better for him than to enjoy once again the kingly status. Hence he comments:

The sensuous solace of the light I give
To eyes which could have found a larger realms,
A deeper vision in their fathomless night.

Since till this moment Death was unaware of Savitri’s divine powers, his justification of Dyumatsena’s status is partially true. He could not understand that with the ‘divine help’ in the form of Savitri, the ‘fallen mind’ namely Dyumatsena had been transformed into the capable man who deserves to regain his lost paradise on earth.

In Book XII, Epilogue, we meet completely transformed Dyumatsena. When Satyavan and Savitri return to earth victoriously after defeating Death,
all the people from the forest warmly welcome them. At this glorious moment king Dyumatsena is described as:

In front King Dyumatsena walked, no more
Blind, faltering-limbed, but his far-questing eyes
Restored to all their confidence in light…**

Along with Dyumatsena, the ‘anxious face’ and ‘habitual burdened look’ of his wife and Satyavan’s mother also changes. Dyumatsena tells Satyavan,

The fortunate gods have looked on me today,
A kingdom seeking came and heaven’s rays…**

In the ancient tale of Savitri, the details of this happening are given. As it is narrated, shortly after setting his eyesight back, a group of citizens of the Shalwa kingdom arrived there, unexpectedly, extending their welcome to the mighty King Dyumatsena, they informed him that his enemy had been murdered by his own minister. Everyone in the capital had resolved that Dyumatsena should occupy the throne again as he was its rightful and worthy heir. For them it did not matter even if he was blind. Thus, imploring him to return and assume the reign of the kingdom, they told him further that the full army was also ready, with all its four divisions at his command.
Then, seeing the king with his sight regained, and in good health, they were happily surprised and bowed down to him.

Dyumatsena made his respectful obeisance to the *Rishis*, worshipped them, and with their blessings departed for his capital. They all rode a gold-embroidered and richly decorated car and accompanied by the army, left the hermitage. At the capital the priests sprinkled holy water and performed the coronation ceremony of Dyumatsena; Satyavan was also made the crown-prince. Thus the boon of Death or Yama given to Savitri got fulfilled.

Since Sri Aurobindo is more interested in the symbolic meaning than the details of the story, he concludes Dyumatsena’s chapter with the lines about him quoted above.

Thus Dyumatsena’s character symbolizes ‘the Divine mind, here fallen blind’ which is helped by ‘the Divine word’ Savitri. He is elevated from the night of deep Inconscient to the sun of enlightenment. His is the story of why the paradise was lost and how it regained. This character underlines the need of divine help in the process of evolution and sheds more light on the powerful character of Savitri.

**The Queen**, Aswapati’s wife and Savitri’s mother is another minor character in the poem. As it is told earlier, she appears in only one Book that
is Book VI, ‘The Book of Fate’. Nevertheless, her character is important because the questions and doubts raised by her to Narad are representative questions and doubts of normal human logic. She is the spokesman and representative of human reasoning. In normal human life we all have several common questions about the justification of our life by God. Life is full of unexpected incidents, co-incidents and accidents which affect and at some extent govern our life. All questions as such remain unanswered and the typical feeling of human helplessness is consoled by saying that it is our fate. What is this fate? Is it a logical system? How it works? At least while facing unwanted, unexpected and unwelcome adversities in life, one becomes curious to know the answers of these questions. It is Queen who asks these questions to Narad, the famous sage and the divine messenger, and creates an opportunity for him to clarify and justify the system and role of fate in the human life.

In Book VI, Canto I, Savitri tells her father King Aswapati, Queen and others about her choice of husband, Satyavan. Narad, the heavenly sage comes at this moment and is forced by the Queen to comment on the future of this would be marriage. Narad expresses his unwillingness to disclose the future. He says:
A future knowledge is an added pain,
A torturing burden and a fruitless light
On the enormous scene that fate has built.  

However, The Queen, Savitri’s human mother, sensing something inauspicious and disturbing, praises to the heavenly Sage to bestow his benedictions and to approve the happy marriage. She has already reconciled herself to the present status of Satyavan; but she wants to be sure that no evil lurks around there, that no rough or cruel hand is waiting there to strike and destroy her child’s happiness. The Queen is extremely fond of her daughter and in these matters she is simply displaying her practical sense, a female’s uncanny pragmatism; her fear arises out of life’s love and attachment and, it is precisely to protect that love, that she becomes realistic. Although foreknowledge shall be an ‘added pain’, she is willing to accept its consequences in full. Her worthy pragmatism goads her to argue that, by knowing beforehand the nature of the unfortunate circumstance, proper corrective action could be initiated well in advance; even the course of event could be altered by abandoning calamitous route for a better and smoother one. She doesn’t intend to stoop or bow down in front of the ‘stealthy doom’ if it is really there awaiting Savitri’s arrival at the forest-hermitage. The Queen has certain preconceptions about the human life such as-

Our days are links of a disastrous chain.
She knows how human life is often disturbed and tested by sudden attacks of mighty and cruel fate. She says that she is shaken by the sight of human pain and shares the miseries that others feel. Even a stranger’s anguish rends her heart and Savitri was her ‘well-loved child’. So she wanted to know Savitri’s fate however and whatever it may be. She says:

To know is best, however hard to bear.¹²

As an answer to her request when Narad discloses the fact that after twelve months of Satyavan and Savitri’s union, Satyavan must die Queen’s heart cries. Her first reaction to this unexpected disclosure is like any other common human being. She feels helplessness before the mighty fate and hence suggests Savitri to change her decision to marry Satyavan and set out for the choice of new man. She doesn’t want to test the cruelty of the fate and want to run away from the forthcoming danger. She thinks in this way because of two things; first because she is wise practical woman who is well aware of the limitations of human strength, uncertainty of human fate and its mighty power; Secondly because she is the mother of Savitri. Her motherhood has made her defensive and caring. She does not want to do any experiment with her dear daughter’s life. She tries her best to change Savitri’s mind by saying:
Who is the lover and who is the friend?
All passes here, nothing remains the same.

All Sweetness are baffling symbols here.
Love dies before the lover in our breast:
Our joys are perfumes in a brittle vase.\(^{13}\)

Thus Queen wants her daughter to stay away from a ‘Self-chosen doom.’ But on the other hand, unshaken Savitri whose ‘voice was calm’ and ‘face was fixed like steel’ answers firmly,

Fate’s law may change, but not my spirits will.\(^{14}\)

Then follows the question answers series between Queen and Narad.
Here, Queen is-

Voicing earth’s question to the inscrutable power.\(^{15}\)

She symbolizes the human sorrow on the earth that is questioning the heaven. In her questions to Narad-

She uttered the suffering in the word’s dumb heart
And man’s revolt against his ignorant fate.\(^{16}\)
She asks on the nature of fate, its origin, its causes and its purpose in human life. She asks about uncertainties, ignorance, disharmony, suffering, pain, apathy and imperfection in human life. She wants to know whether there is any logical system of heaven behind this. She also expresses the atheist feeling of the man by saying-

Or where begins and ends Illusion’s reign?
Perhaps the soul we feel is only a dream,
Eternal self a fiction sensed in trance. \(^{17}\)

Thus she represents typical human being whose mind is governed by logic and reason, who wants to know the logic of the system by which her life is governed.

Narad in his answer to her, says that her thought is ‘a light of the Ignorance,’ which can see outcomes of Inconscience like suffering and pain but cannot see ‘God’s face’ or ‘immortal’s meaning’ in this world. Narad tells her the purpose of sufferings and pain in human life-

Pain is the hammer of the Gods to break
A dead resistance in the mortal’s heart,
His slow inertia as of living stone. \(^{18}\)

Even death has purpose in human life. Death is for taking birth again to move further towards divinity. Man cannot be stronger without facing
struggle with mighty fate. He cannot realize his original strength without getting victory on struggles of life. Hence Narad says:

Pain is the hand of Nature sculpturing men
To greatness: an inspired labour chisels
With heavenly cruelty an unwilling mould.\textsuperscript{19}

Then Queen’s question about Savitri is answered by telling her the fact, that Savitri is not an ordinary human being but a divine force who has come to break this vicious circle and to bring out change in earth’s destiny. But as she has born as the human being, she must bear all sufferings and pain that the human being bears. Then only she can rescue them all from it.

Hence Narad rightly says, “He who would save the race must share its pain.”\textsuperscript{20}

He convinces the Queen that Savitri’s march is ‘a battle and a pilgrimage.’ Narad was sure that Savitri’s ‘spirit’s strength’ shall solve all the problems and her agony shall be transformed into ecstasy. Hence Narad suggests the Queen to accept the present and future happenings and makes her understand the facts of life. He says:

Queen, strive no more to change the secret will;
Time’s accidents are steps in its vast scheme...
Thou hast no place in that tremendous strife….\textsuperscript{21}
Thus, though Narad and Queen’s characters are interlinked in the epic, she has altogetherly different role to play than Narad. Since she is the mother of Savitri, her thoughts, speeches and actions are of caring mother. She asks human doubts and questions to Narad, the heavenly seer. She represents common human mind governed by logic and reason expressing the human curiosity to know the divin’s system. She wants to save Savitri from the self choosing doom out of her motherly care. Her character is minor but noteworthy because she represents the human consciousness.

**Narad** is important minor character. His role is of more than a heavenly messenger. Sri Aurobindo’s Narad seems to be omniscient. He has the power to look into “the unseen with seeing eyes” which enables him to know the future and the intention behind it. Since Narad and the queen appear in the same book and cantos of the poem (Book VI, canto I and II), commenting on same situations on which their views are altogether different.

Narad’s visit from his home in paradise to King Aswapati’s palace is certainly not the co-incident. It is well-timed and opportune and it marks a great turning point in the development of the epic. It gives a decisive mould for the future to shape itself with the rapidity of a divine sanction.
The Queen prays to the heavenly sage to bestow his benedictions and to approve the happy marriage. After Narad’s hints of danger the Queen insists on knowing fully, the doom into which her child is unknowingly going to step. Narad unveils the truth known on her insistence.

Narad is an instrument of the transcendent power which puts the cosmic play in action. Aswapati had told him that he can speak about the great “dangerous world” if only he can loosen the grip of adverse fate upon the helpless mortal’s soul. Therefore Narad knew what he was doing. He wanted to “steel the will of Savitri” to face the forthcoming Fate.

Narad knows that only twelve months are given to the rare young couple. Satyavan and Savitri, to be together and, “This day returning Satyavan must die.”

With the frankness of a heaven-sent prophet, Narad delivers the ruthless sentence. Whatever is the unrevealed purpose and intention behind this death, its inevitability has been asserted in a high and heavenly way by the sage from paradise.

The question arises is, if Narad had control over the events which were going to happen, then why did he add to the helpless sufferer’s
anguish? And if Satyavan had to die, why Narad did not tell this to Satyavan or his parents instead of Savitri and her parents? Answers to these questions reveal Narad’s purpose of visiting earth and his positive role in this cosmic play.

It was of no use to disclose the dangerous future to Satyavan or his parents because none of them would have been able to cancel his predetermined death. On the other hand, the only redeeming possibility is in the Woman’s will. Narad not just warned, but inspired and prepared Savitri for the eventuality. It seems that this is the urgent purpose behind his heaven-swift visit to Madra. Narad’s declaration is thus made with the purposeful and pointed intention of waking up the Savitri. It was necessary for her to thrust aside this veil and raise to her full stature of divinity to negotiate the pain. The hour of death is fast approaching and she must prepare herself to meet it. “To steel the will of Savitri” is the missioned intent and the noble motivating force behind the long journey Narad had undertaken.

His coming is not just for delivering Fate’s message to the blind and driven people but he does something more than that. He could have come simply informed the royal couple about the impeding doom, and disappeared without doing anything else or without justifying the ways of high Destiny to
the mortality-bound mind of man. Instead, he is seen here seizing the opportunity of the Queen’s pleading to enlarge the scope of his immediate mission. He becomes the interpreter of the workings and operations of the great cosmic agencies.

Finding that despite knowing the fact, Savitri is firm and resolved to marry Satyavan, Narad approves of it and thinks that his purpose to awake Savitri’s hidden divine force is served. The sage then blesses the royal hosts and, before taking his leave for his home in Paradise, wishes for them all propitious things of life and good fortune.

Thus, Narad’s role is apparently brief but very significant in the cosmic play that is going to take place.

Satyavan is one of the major characters in the epic. In ‘Author’s Note’ Sri Aurobindo introduces the character of Satyavan as: “Satyavan is the soul carrying the divine truth of being within itself but descended into the grip of death and ignorance.”

In Vyasa’s Savitri tale, on being asked by Aswapati, Narad tells him that Satyavan is a virtuous person and is given to high conduct of life. He says:
Satyavan is bright- shining like the Sun-god Vivasan, and quick and sharp in intelligence like Brihaspati. Like Shibi, he is a counsellor of truth, and is established in Brahahood. Like Yayati he is exceedingly bounteous, and is handsome like the moon. He has subdued his passions, is soft natured, is youth of heroic deeds, is full of truth, and has regulated the senses. Those who have advanced in tapasya, and grown rich in virtuous nobility, say briefly about him that, he is always straightforward, and is steadfast, and is well-established in those qualities.23

In Savitri, Sri Aurobindo describes Aswapati as:

Noble and clear as the broad peaceful heavens
A tablet of young wisdom was his brow,
His look was a wide daybreak of the gods.24

But, on being forced by the King to tell if there are any blemishes, Narad adds that there is only one blemish in him and that lies in the fact that he is to die after one year on the same day as now.

Narad is not alone who speaks highly about the virtuous attributes of Satyavan. Even Death, the unimpassioned governor of the mortal world, when he was asked by Savitri why he had come himself personally to take away his soul instead of sending his subordinates, tells her that Satyavan’s soul; is exceptionally beautiful consisting of very rare, very fine and bright features, and that it is an ocean of noble qualities.
When Savitri discovers him in the dense solitude of that green cloistered world, untouched by the hurry and care of life, she feels as if she meets her second half. He is a Veda-knower; his mind is wide and open to infinity; though brought here by adverse fate, he turned it into an opportunity to learn things from sublimities of stream and wood, from voices of the Sun, Star and flame, chants of birds and from dumb movements of the animals. From the silent hills and the rustle of the winds, in deep communion with primal nature, he acquires the wisdom of the ages. The way the morning is sure of the coming day, so he seems to grow in sunlight of the spiritual knowledge.

In studentship under the sages of the wood he glimpses the “presence of the one in all.” He is aptly described as:

As if a weapon of the living light,
Erect and lofty like a spear of God
His figure led the splendour of the morn.

In the magnificent dawning of his force
Built like a moving statue of delight
He illumined the border of the forest page.
One who brings light to the darkness and, in the rush of whose force, god-
delights, that is young Satyavan.

Perfect in beauty, noble, sweet and joyful, he attracts all hearts to live
in his own. A being so rare, hardly could be safe here in the harshness of the
error and the falsehood. He is “A godhead quarried from the stones of life”
and must fulfill himself in the world. Satyavan, who is in the forefront of
humanity, has now to cross the last ditch: death. He has to step into
immortality on earth and for this crossing to be possible and Savitri herself
has to become “a golden bridge.”

Satyavan has, in the process of evolving Time, taken on himself the
burden of inconscient horror and sufferings. This radiant God’s soul
gropingly moves and wanders in the wild thickets of life and attempts to
climb back to the heights from which it has come. But the odds are tough
and perilous in the path.

This sovereign glory is unfortunately short-living. Satyavan
came, but only to die as a youth with his life unfulfilled. Only twelve months
are given to the rare young couple, Satyavan and Savitri, to be together and
“This day returning Satyavan must die.”27
It seems that his death is a part of the divine plan executed by nature and which was necessary for its fulfillment. The death of Satyavan is the central theme of the Savitri-tale around which the entire occult action revolves. If life-chased-by-Death is to be terminated, then it is necessary that Death itself be terminated. He must die, so that The Divine mother would do so. The deathless life is the boon granted by the Divine Mother to Aswapati when he prayed her to redeem the mortal creature. The Supreme Goddess tells the Yogi:

A seed shall be sown in Death’s tremendous hour,  
A branch of heaven transplant to human soil;  
Nature shall overleap her mortal step;  
Fate shall be changed by an unchanging will.28

Thus, in the tremendous hour of Death, Satyavan has to die in the lap of Savitri. That fated event shall be the occasion for the unchanging will’s fateful action. The empty chasm left behind in the dissolution of Death will be overleapt by Nature to gain her immortal state. Such is the promise given to Aswapati and it is that promise which will be fulfilled by Savitri. The fulfillment is to take place in the death of her most beloved Satyavan.

The marriage of Satyavan and Savitri is a legend and a symbol of the helpless Lover being espoused by the luminous conquering spirit of the
Beloved. It is to meet him and be one with him that she has been coming here again and again, through the endless cycles of creation.

Satyavan is a permanent Avatar in the cycle of evolution. It is he who is subject to death and suffering, exposed to the wild buffets of wind and storm. He has accepted Inconscience as a modus operandi for a new manifestation in the domain of darkness, the void which is thicker than the Night. He is the soul of the Supreme who climbs from ignorance to the world of knowledge, Power, Truth, and Night. “A godhead growing in human lives” to a life illimitable, he moves towards the Ineffable’s bliss.

Death is another supernatural character who plays the vital role in the story of the epic. He appears before Savitri in the poem with his supernatural qualities and appearance. Just as the story of ‘Ramayana’ can not be told without the role of Ravana, the story of Krishna can not be told without the role of Kansa, and Mahabharata would have had not taken place without Duryodhana, Savitri’s tale can not be told without the role of Death. It occupies the similar place and status in Savitri’s tale.

He not only creates an opportunity for the heroine of the epic to realize the hidden powers in her and to come out with her full force to fight with him, but creates an opportunity for her to logically justify the system of divine for man. He does two main things purposefully- one is to take out the
soul of Satyavan in front of Savitri and another is to raise many doubts and questions while arguing with Savitri so that the whole system of divine will be discussed and disclosed by the Divine Mother herself. Lastly he compels Savitri to reveal her divinity so that all remaining doubts would be cleared.

Death as a principle, in its first appearance, is utter destruction, nothing-ness, and non-existence. Indeed, Death is the shadow and an everlasting companion of life. The process of Death starts from our very birth. Cells start dying from the moment we are born. Age catches up, time begins to fly. This inevitability of death is also viewed by some people in another way. As somebody has aptly defined death as- “Sleep is a temporary death and death is the permanent sleep.”

Thus it is non-being, non-existence, the permanent sleep, the inevitable and natural end of human life where we all submit rather helplessly and without any appeal.

Normally, thought of death makes us feel uncomfortable and negative. But Sri Aurobindo’s vision penetrates beyond it and discovers new nature, meaning and cause of death. According to him, the negation is an apparent obstacle in order to increase, to purify and intensify the speed of the process by which the world and humanity is being remodeled and recreated. He
chases the human efforts till the end; until he finds that nothing more is to be achieved; then his task is also fulfilled:

Death is a stair, a door, a stumbling stride
The soul must take to cross from birth to birth,
A great defeat pregnant with victory,
A whip to lash us towards our deathless state.28

Except for some people who get into a pathological state, most of us live as if instinct with immortality. It is very strange. It reminds us the well known story from Mahabharata, when Yudhishthira is asked about many things and then the master-question is asked: ‘what is the greatest wonder, the most surprising thing he noticed in the world?’ He replies, ‘Everyday we see men die, yet we believe we are immortal.’ This story is often interpreted in a superficial way, as reminding us that everybody has to die, yet we are foolish enough to believe that we are immortal. But if thought in a different way, the story touches this paradox. There is belief deeply rooted in our mind that we are immortal because something in us is immortal. There is something in us which just refuses to believe in death and something in us which even uses death as a goad to discover our own immortality. Death is a passage to immortality till we realize that:

We come to her from a supernal Light,
By Light we live and to the Light we go.29
Death is in a sense the natural consequence of being finite. And immortality, in its widest sense, is infinity of being. Finiteness of being leads to death, because by its very nature whatever is finite will have a beginning, it will have an end. But if it is infinite it has neither a beginning nor an end. So one way is to jump from finiteness to infinity, the other way is to fill the finite with the infinite. It sounds almost an impossible task but according to Aurobindonian philosophy, it is the work one has to do here on the earth.

A power that lives upon the heights must act,
Bring into life’s closed room the Immortal’s air
And fill the finite with the Infinite.30

That is the sense of death and immortality. Death is about living in boundaries; so we test the boundaries. Every time man tries to exceed the boundaries, he becomes a claimant to immortality. Thus, immortality is not just waking up one day and seeing ‘I am never going to die.’ In fact one can attain that status by gradually expanding these limits and boundaries.

Sri Aurobindo’s concept of immortality should not be mistaken. It is not preoccupied with the human body. Everything has been put into certain limits by the law of nature and it must live within those limits. It can not exceed those limits otherwise it would upset the balance. When we think about immortality, we straightway think about immortality of the present
personality. But Sri Aurobindo says, it will be very boring! Who would like to be the same outer personality forever? It is going to be sickening – even for one life it is very difficult to be the same forever. Definitely there comes a stage in human life when one becomes fed up with life and no interest is left for living the same routine life. Then in some cases, mystic attraction for death is also developed. Here death comes as a change, a big change like a big refreshing holiday trip which makes you forget about everything concerning your earthly life. It gives you not only change but a new chance to play better, a new game of life. In imperfect human life, death becomes the final solution of all physical, mental as well as spiritual limitations. That is the reason why the immortality of Ashwathama in *Mahabharata* is a great curse on him. That is the reason why Cybel of Eliot’s *The Waste Land*, when children ask her question “Cybel, what do you want?” she answers “I want to die”.

This terrible Godhead pursues the human endeavour till the end; until he finds that nothing more is to be done; then his mission too is fulfilled. So the last cry, the cry of a desperate dying Death, pierces the universe and throws the final challenge to Savitri:

> O human claimant to immortality;
> Reveal thy power; lay bare thy spirit’s force,
> Let deathless eyes look into the eyes of Death.\(^{31}\)
Death’s desire, his prayer too is fulfilled. He faces Savitri- but this is not the Savitri against whom he fought. She speaks in a changed voice:

I have given thee thy awful shape of dread
And thy sharp sword of terror and grief and pain
To force the soul of man to struggle for light.\(^{32}\)

What happens thereafter is strange and miraculous. Light flashed all around, a leaping tongue of fire spread out and the dark form of Death was burnt- not to ashes but to blazing sparks of light:

His body was eaten by light, his spirit devoured.\(^{33}\)

In this way, Death came to his death- not to death in reality but to a new incarnation. Death returned to his original divine Reality, an emanation of the Divine Mother.

A secret splendour rose revealed to sight
Where once the vast embodies void has stood.
Night the dim mask had grown a wonderful face.\(^{34}\)
So, as the need of the Death is left no more, he reaches to his own perfection.

Thus Death, though apparently plays the role of antagonist in the epic, shows another aspect of perfection at the end.
Aswapati is one of the two most important characters of the epic. Most of the scholars of Sri Aurobindo Ashram Pondicherry who wrote on Savitri believe that there is large amount of autobiographical elements in this character. Aswapati is the king of Madra and the father of Savitri. In Vyasa’s ancient tale of Savitri, Aswapati is narrated as a noble king of Madra. An ardent follower of dharma, he was of a devout nature and was firmly established in truth. He was respectful to the seers and sages and was king to the citizens of his country. Performer of Yajnas, presiding over charities, skillful in work, one who had conquered the senses, he was loved by the people of his kingdom and himself loved them; Aswapati’s single concern was always the welfare of everybody and towards that end he spared no effort. But he was issueless. With the passing of time, and with the advancing of age, this caused him great affliction. Therefore, with the intention of getting a child, he undertook very hard and arduous tapasya, extending over eighteen years. Everyday he offered a hundred-thousand oblations to the Goddess Savitri. He observed rules of the strictest continence, and held all the sense fully under control, and took just a little food and that too only in the sixth part of the day. At last, pleased with his devotion and worship, Goddess Savitri herself appeared out of the sacrificial flames in front of him, and blessed him. She granted him the boon of a daughter fulfilling an appropriate wish of him...
Sri Aurobindo in ‘Authors Note’ calls him ‘The Lord of Horse’. This alludes to the Vedic symbolism, where Aswa the horse, is the symbol of life-energy or vital power. In the poem he is the symbol of the aspiring soul of man as manifested in life on earth. He is also introduced as “The Lord of Tapasya”. Aswapati is the practitioner of Integral Yoga, he is a philosopher, sage, and king who propitiated Savitri, the Goddess of creation. In the symbol he is the image of an accomplished master, and his pilgrimage is that eternal journey which every soul must make by one road or the other from the dark and solitary wood to the abode of God. Aswapati is “a colonist from immortality.” His spirit stooped from larger sphere into our province of ephemeral sight. His knowledge shared the light ineffable. He was the treasurer of super human dreams. Sri Aurobindo describes him in his note as a symbol of “the concentrated energy of spiritual endeavour that helps us to rise from the mortal to the immortal planes.” His character is the eternal character which is affiliated to the cosmic space and time. He is the frontier of the mortal’s quest for perfection. He is the protagonist of that mysterious play in which the divinity pursues itself through forms. He has inborn power from the Unknowable and knowledge of all the human efforts done so far for the evolution of self. The poet describes his soul as ‘eternity’s deligate’. His mind was pure and ascending forever towards Heaven like fire. His will was
like like a hunter in the trails of Light. His thoughts were enlightened by the infinitude and life was oceaned by the life divine.

Thus Aswapati is the Lord of *tapasya* carrying within his bosom Man’s eternal aspiration, dares, ‘the unplumbed infinitudes’ and brings to earth consciousness of the Divine Shakti who will redeem him once for all. His adventure of consciousness and joy represents on the human level the struggle and endeavour of every aspirant. It embodies the typical spiritual efforts to reach the eternal silence. At the same time Aswapati is ‘the colonist’ from the other side, whose ascent is unique. For not only does he penetrate “world after world” and “heaven after heaven” realising their “guarded powers” and cherishing “their beatitudes” – planes of consciousness quite unknown to even man’s highest spiritual endeavour- but his soar reaches the “last high world”- “where all worlds meet”:

In its summit gleam where Night is not nor sleep,
The light began of the Trinity supreme.\(^{37}\)

In his quest to realise the truth of man, Aswapati comes to know that man is not just sum total of body, life and mind. He is not just a knot of ego but that he is a soul. A self which can expand itself to contain the all and all that is beyond the universal. This is the first of his two ‘yogic movements’- the psycho- spiritual transformation. Then he ascends into the other one: “a
greater spiritual transformation with an ascent to a supreme power."38 In the first movement there is “his own spiritual fulfillment,” but in the second movement he is more or a typical representative of the race to win the possibility of discovery and possession of all the planes of consciousness. The culmination or the fulfillment of this second movement is not his arriving at the supramental-consciousness, but to aspire and to bring down that Truth-consciousness to earth, so that there is a new creation and the earthly life gets transformed into a divine life. He is a protagonist of not only the ascent but also the descent. He achieves not only “an individual victory” over the “structured vision of the cosmic self ”39 but also a universal realisation so that a new path is laid for all who aspire to ascend into the supramental consciousness.

In his ascent of consciousness he observes that the universe is built in a hierarchical fashion with mounting levels of consciousness. He moves from the dark and dense consciousness of the body to the beginnings of worlds of life-force, the vital-consciousness. Aswapati meets different creatures and beings of these levels. Then he moves to the higher vital worlds and then to the mental worlds.

Aswapati discovers that just as there is an upward movement leading to brighter levels of consciousness, there is also a downward movements
leading to great sinister worlds full of perversion, crookedness and falsehood and pretentions which throw all their influence upon man. Wanting to find the source of this evil, this anti-divine existence, Aswapati dives deeper only to come face to face with the Mother of Evil and the sons of Darkness:

I saw that a falsehood was planted deep
At the very root of things
Where the grey Sphinx guards God’s riddle sleep
On the Dragon’s outspread wings.
I have seen the source whence her agonies part
And the inner reason of hell.40

‘He who would bring the heaven’ upon earth has to ‘tread the dolorous way’- so did Aswapati and only then he could move on to the worlds beyond mind, and reach to the vastness which ‘brooded free from sense of space’. Arrested for a while by ‘the uncaring bliss’, Aswapati apotheosises:

O soul, it is too early to rejoice!
Thou hast reached the boundless silence of the self,
Thou hasn’t leaped into a glad divine abyss;
But where hasn’t thou thrown self’s mission and self’s power?
On what dead bank on the Eternal’s road? 41

Aswapati’s eyes open, as it were, to a new vision and understanding of creation. All existence has a meaning and a purpose and it is through a
process of evolution that all things are moving towards their fulfillment. All earth shall one day be transformed into a luminous consciousness and substance; it would be similar to the existence on the supramental plane:

None was apart, none lived for himself alone,
Each lived for God in him and God in all,
Each solenness inexpressible held the whole.\(^{42}\)

Thus a divine impatience grips him, for he wants to see that glorious future upon earth. He cries out to the Divine Mother:

Linger not long with thy transmuting hand
Pressed vainly on one golden bar of time…..
Let a great word be spoken from the heights
And one great act unlock the doors of Fate.\(^{43}\)

The Divine Mother responds to the call of mankind:

O strong forerunner, I have heard thy cry,
One shall descend and break the iron Law…\(^{44}\)

And the Divine Mother herself descends, as the daughter of Aswapati, as Savitri.
Thus truly performing the duty of the king, Aswapati engages himself in not only physical and spiritual welfare of his citizens, but tries successfully to reach his individual perfection. It is he, who prepares ground for the divinity to descend and hasten the slow process of evolution on earth.

The last and undoubtedly the most important character in the epic is Savitri after whose name the epic is named. She is the central character in the poem and it is her tale narrated by the poet. All other characters in the poem though have individual existence and significance, appear to shed light on the importance, need or varied aspects of her character. Even in Mahabharata from where the original story is taken, the legend is named as Savitri Upakhyan that means Savitri’s story.

There may be hardly an Indian woman who is unknown of Savitri. In Hindu culture, she is worshiped as goddess who strengthens nuptial bond. Tradition makes her an unusual princess of supernatural element who wins back the soul of her dead husband from the God of Death. This extraordinary event is a significant myth famous for unique achievement of a woman on this death-dominated earth.

The Sanskrit word ‘Savitr’ means the Sun-God, who is the creator of the world. The descendent of ‘Savitr’ in feminine form is Savitri. So, Savitri
means “someone descended from the Sun” or “an energy derived from the Sun, the Divine creator”. In the poem, she bears in her womb the birth of new world, the perfect world.

In ‘Author’s Note’, Sri Aurobindo describes Savitri as—“Savitri is the Divine Word, daughter of the Sun, goddess of the supreme Truth who comes down and is born to save”. So, she is power of the supreme in human shape and a saviour on earth.

She makes a splendid sacrifice of the eminence of her heavenly abundances and accepts the travail of evolutionary growth. This is an aspect of the process of manifestation itself, assuring in it the supreme’s direct involvement in the person of Savitri. The creator can’t be happy with the conditions as they prevail now and if there is an issue, it becomes his concern to deal with it. Therefore in response to a call from the praying soul of earth he sends to this world his power as Savitri.

A world’s desire compels her mortal birth.45

By condescending to be born here Savitri accomplishes the heavenly task. She removes the dark obstacle that lies across the path of the divine Event and makes the manifestation of a new world a reality.
Savitri takes birth as a daughter of Aswapati as an answer to his 
tapasya for the divine help. He is told that he would soon get a daughter, 
beautiful and effulgent, ‘Kanya tejaswini’. It happens exactly like that and he 
names her as Savitri.

Fair and beautiful, like the Goddess Fortune, the princess grew into 
full maidenhood at an appropriate age. With perfect body and lotus-eyed, she 
looks like a perfect golden idol. People often think her 
to be some heavenly damsel, devakanya, who has come here as Aswapati’s 
daughter. Because of that heavenly beauty and the fiery splendour of her 
youth, no king or hero-prince dares approach her, extending his hand in 
marriage.

Seeing his daughter grown to full youth and beautiful like a goddess, 
deverupini, and yet unmarried, Aswapati is very much distressed. He tells 
her that she should go out in search of one who is endowed with qualities 
like her own, a young man of her own choice to espouse.

The noble virgin, blushing somewhat, bows at her father’s feet and, 
without a second thought, sets out on her distant search. She travels through 
various kingdoms as well as ancient and holy places of pilgrimage and gives
away great wealth to the most excellent in sacred learning. In the course of her journey, as she passes through the green wooded regions, she visits several hermitages and makes respectful obeisance to the royal sages and the Rishis, deeply absorbed in a life of contemplation. She goes to the far Shalwa country which at once was ruled by King Dyumatsena. But, as he became blind and his kingdom invaded by his past enemy, Dyumatsena had to retire, with his wife and a young child, to the forest. That child, named Satyavan, grew in the hermitage under the tutorship of the sages and the elderly Rishis, learning the sacred lores from them. Cupid does his job as soon as Savitri and Satyavan face each other. Savitri decides to marry Satyavan.

And wave affinity in a silent gaze.\textsuperscript{46}

She comes back to her father’s court and discloses the details of her journey along with her resolution to marry with Satyavan. Narad, the respected sage who is present at this moment in the court of her father, at once rings a note of alarm and discloses the future of Satyavan that after his marriage, he has life of only twelve months. Savitri’s mother, the Queen advises her not to choose the person who has such a short life to love and live.
Savitri however remains firm in her resolve. She is sure of her steps and her resolution holds:

Once my heart chose and chooses not again…
Death’s grip can break our bodies, not our souls;
If Death take him, I too know how to die.\(^{47}\)

Savitri will not allow blind Fate to take her love away from her so abruptly. Since she is born to save, she denies Death and affirms life. She asserts that Satyavan is the choice of her inner voice which is the governing authority for her. In the moment of crisis, her unveiled divinity and hidden strength spontaneously speaks out:

I am stronger than death and greater than my Fate;
My love shall outlast the world, doom falls from me
Helpless against my immortality.
Fate’s law may change, but not my spirit’s will.\(^ {48}\)

Finally Narad recommends their marriage and it takes place.

The marriage of Satyavan and Savitri has symbolic meaning. Satyavan is a lover who has entered into horror-filled cave of the occult inconscience and offered his self to die to be saved by his beloved and to be immortal. Now his other part, the Better Half, must arrive to rescue him. It is the
marriage of this lost forlorn Lover espoused by the luminous conquering spirit of the Beloved. It is to meet him and be one with him that she has been coming here again and again, through the endless cycles of creation. If Satyavan is to be considered as the lost Lover in the ocean of forgetfulness; then the ever-awake Savitri, the divine-Beloved in human form, has to plunge into it and bring him out through the death of the human Satyavan.

After marriage at her husband’s place, Savitri accepts the simple and sacred life of those forest-dwelling ascetics. She looks after the needs and small wants of her old mother-in-law. She speaks with her father-in-law, with a sense of deep humility and reverence. Both of them are immensely pleased by her conduct. In a like manner, always remaining calm and contended, employing soft and sweet language, mindful of her husband’s needs and desires, and in their privacy, she keeps Satyavan ever happy.

But the virtuous woman suffers greatly within. With each rising Sun, or while sleeping in night, at every passing moment, she remembers Narad’s words and feels the cruel day approaching closer.

Savitri’s mission has two sessions. The first, that of preparation and second, that of fulfillment. Savitri, the human embodiment is given only twelve months out of her earthly life and in that short space of time she has
to do all the preparation. She is conscious of her nature and the mission she is entrusted with. Now she is facing the crisis. Death is there standing in front. She is to conquer Death and establish immortal life upon mortal earth.

The Divine voice rings out:

Arise, o soul, and vanquish Time and Death.\textsuperscript{49}

The human Savitri declares: If Death is conquered; it is for the sake of Satyavan living eternally with her. She seems to say: what I wish to see is the living Satyavan and I united with him forever. I do not need an earthly life without him; with him I prefer to be in another world if necessary away from the obscurity and turmoil of this earth here.

Why should I strive with earth’s unyielding laws
Or stave off death’s inevitable hour?
This surely is the best to practice with my fate
And follow close behind my lover’s steps…\textsuperscript{50}

But a thunderous voice descends from above, shaking Savitri to the very basis of her existence.

And what shall thy soul say when it wakes and knows
The work was left undone for which it came?\textsuperscript{51}
Savitri’s soul is now revealed to her in its fullness. She views the mighty
destiny for which she has come down and the great work she has to achieve
here upon earth.

Then begins the second stage of her mission-her work and
achievement, the conquest of Death. Savitri follows Death step by step
revealing gradually the mystery of Death, his personality and his true
mission. Death in its first appearance is utter destruction, nothing-ness, non-
existence. So the mighty Godhead declares in an imperious tone to the
mortal woman Savitri:

This is my silent dark immensity,
This is the home of everlasting Night,
This is the secrecy of Nothingness
Entombing the vanity of life’s desires….
Hopest thou still always to last and love? 52

Indeed Death is not merely a destruction of the body; it is in reality
nothingness, non-being. But Savitri’s vision penetrates beyond and she sees
death, a way of achieving the end more swiftly and more completely. The
negation is an apparent obstacle in order to increase, to purity and intensity
the speed of the process by which the world and
humanity are being remodeled and recreated. So a last cry, the cry of desperate dying Death, pierces the universe and throws the final challenge to Savitri:

O human claimant to immortality,
Reveal thy power; lay bare thy spirit’s force
Then will I give back to thee Satyavan…..
Show me her face that I may worship her…….53

Death’s desire, his prayer too is fulfilled. He faces Savitri but this is not the Savitri against whom he fought. This is certainly not the voice of human Savitri:

I have given thee thy awful shape of dread
............................................................
To force the soul of man to struggle for light.54

What happens thereafter is strange, tremendous and miraculous. Light flashes all around, a leaping tongue of fire spread out and the dark form of Death was burnt,-not to ashes but to blazing sparks of light:

His body was eaten by light, his spirit devoured.55

Thus Death comes to his death,-not to death in reality but to a new incarnation. Death returns to his original divine Reality, an emanation of the
Divine Mother. In that domain of pure transcendent light stood face to face the human Savitri and the transformed Satyavan.

Savitri has entered into the deathless luminous world where there is only faultless beauty, stainless delight and an unmeasured self-gathered strength. Savitri hears the melodious voice of the Divine saying that she has left earth’s miseries and its impossible conditions, she has reached the domain of unalloyed felicity and she need not go back to the old turbulent life. It invites her to dwell there, both of them and enjoy eternal bliss.

This is the last temptation offered to Savitri- and also the last test for her. It is the offer of individual salvation and permanent escape from the inevitable miseries and harsh realities of earth by accepting it. But Savitri answers firmly and clearly:

Earth is the chosen place of mightiest souls;
Earth is the heroic spirit’s battlefield…..
Thy servitude on earth is greater, king,
Than all the glorious liberties of heaven.\(^56\)

She reveals her Divine status and while refusing the offer of heaven reminds the God:

The heaven were once to me my natural home….\(^57\)
Thus she has descended to the earth by choice. She is the Divine Mother who has come here to help her children to reach to their perfection. She says:

In me the spirit of immortal love
Stretches its arms out to embrace mankind. 58

Further she says:

I know that I can lift man’s soul to God,
I know that he can bring the Immortal down. 59

She will not let the inconscient gulf swallow the human race that is struggling towards the enlightenment through ignorance. While working for the world perfection, she knows that the common man for whose perfection she is here is not firm in his quest and she has to bear with his instability.

Savitri has to work for such people. She has to provide them the divine help because without it, they can not uplift their consciousness. Lastly she declares the purpose of her coming and staying on earth which is also the mission of her life:

To raise the world to God in deathless Light,
To bring God down to the world on earth we came,
To change the earthly life to life divine.\textsuperscript{60}

Thus, world perfection is the mission of her life. At last, all humanity, the whole world in joy and greatness, utter this Mantra of thanksgiving:

If this is she of whom the world has heard,
Wonder no more of any happy change.\textsuperscript{61}

Therefore Savitri is the saviour and the most promising character of the epic.

Thus characters in the epic are incarnation of various forces- from ignorance to enlightenment and their life is a set example of different stages on the way to perfection.
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