



ISSN:3049-2017

IJMH 2025; 2(2): 04-06

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www.themultijournal.com

Received: 03-03-2025

Accepted: 08-03-2025

Publish : 10-03-2025

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## Forces of Life: The Cosmic Balance between Dharma and Karma

**Dr. Krishna Panda****Preface**

Life is a journey shaped by the interplay of opposing forces—good and bad, virtue and vice, light and darkness. These dual forces govern our existence, presenting us with choices that define our destiny. The poem "**Forces of Life**" explores this eternal struggle, emphasizing how goodness uplifts the soul while negativity drags it into despair.

Rooted in **Upanishadic and Vedantic wisdom**, this poem resonates with the **Katha Upanishad's** teaching on the two paths—**Shreyas (the good) and Preyas (the pleasurable)**—and the **Bhagavad Gita's** discourse on divine and demonic qualities. Drawing inspiration from **Vedic scriptures, the Vachanamrut, and the Bhagavatam**, it reminds us that choosing righteousness leads to spiritual liberation, while succumbing to negativity results in suffering.

Through rhythmic verses and profound symbolism, the poem serves as a reflective meditation on life's **moral, philosophical, and spiritual dimensions**. It invites readers to contemplate their own choices and align their lives with **Dharma (righteousness)**, ultimately leading them toward divine realization.

**Keywords:** Poetry analysis, morality, Vedanta, Upanishads, Bhagavad Gita, spirituality, duality in literature, dharma, karma.

**Abstract**

Poetry serves as a reflection of human thought, emotions, and the eternal questions surrounding existence. "Forces of Life" explores the dualistic nature of good and evil, presenting a philosophical meditation on morality and spiritual enlightenment. This research paper provides a literary and analytical study of the poem, examining its structure, thematic depth, and philosophical alignment with Upanishadic and Vedantic wisdom. Through a critical lens, we analyze the poem's literary devices, tone, and spiritual significance.

**1. Literary Devices and Figures of Speech**

The poem utilizes a variety of literary devices to enrich its meaning and aesthetic appeal:

- **Metaphor:** The poem metaphorically represents good and bad as opposing forces governing life's journey.
- **Personification:** Good "uplifts" and bad "pulls down," imbuing these abstract concepts with human-like actions.
- **Imagery:** Vivid imagery is used to contrast the uplifting nature of good with the darkness of evil.
- **Alliteration:** "Set free your soul" and "safe and sound" create a rhythmic appeal.
- **Symbolism:** The poem symbolizes good as a path to God and bad as a descent into suffering, aligning with dharmic philosophy.

**2. Structure and Form**

- **Rhyme Scheme:** The poem follows an AABB pattern, providing a structured and rhythmic flow.
- **Meter and Rhythm:** The poem maintains a steady rhythm, reinforcing its reflective tone.
- **Stanza and Line Breaks:** The division of stanzas helps in emphasizing contrasting forces.
- **Enjambment:** The continuation of ideas across lines maintains fluidity.

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### 3. Theme and Subject Matter

•**Philosophical Inquiry:** The poem explores duality—good vs. evil, joy vs. suffering.

•**Spirituality:** The piece resonates with spiritual traditions that emphasize moral choices.

•**Moral Guidance:** It serves as a didactic work, urging readers to choose righteousness.

### 4. Tone and Mood

•**Tone:** The poem maintains a contemplative and moralizing tone.

•**Mood:** It evokes introspection, compelling the reader to ponder life's ethical dilemmas.

### 5. Philosophical and Spiritual Interpretation

The poem "Forces of Life" beautifully aligns with Upanishadic and Vedantic wisdom by illustrating the eternal duality of good and bad forces in life, a theme deeply embedded in Hindu scriptures. Below is an analysis of how this poem resonates with Vedic, Upanishadic, and other scriptural teachings.

#### 1. Duality of Life: The Battle Between Good and Bad

The poem presents two opposing forces—good and bad, upliftment and downfall—which is a fundamental concept in Vedanta. The Katha Upanishad (1.2.2)<sup>i</sup> mentions the two paths of Shreyas (the path of good) and Preyas (the path of pleasure), highlighting how one must choose wisely.

1. Reference from the Bhagavad Gita (16.1–16.4)<sup>ii</sup> : Lord Krishna speaks of the Daivi Sampad (divine qualities) that lead to liberation and Asuri Sampad (demonic qualities) that lead to downfall. The poem echoes this contrast, urging the seeker to follow the good path.

2. Vachanamrut (Gadhada I-38): Bhagwan Swaminarayan describes how two forces exist in life—the Satvik (pure), which leads to liberation, and Tamasik (ignorant), which binds the soul. The poem reflects this philosophy by emphasizing that choosing goodness leads to God.

#### 2. Karma and Moral Responsibility

The poem questions whether one chooses to ascend toward heaven (spiritual liberation) or fall into suffering, which aligns with the Law of Karma.

1. Bhagavad Gita (3.9)<sup>iii</sup> : “One must perform actions as a sacrifice to avoid bondage in this world.” This means that by choosing righteousness (good force), one moves towards liberation, just as the poem states.

2. Mundaka Upanishad (3.1.1)<sup>iv</sup> : It describes the two birds on a tree, one experiencing karma (bad force leading to suffering) and the other witnessing in bliss (good force leading to liberation). The poem's theme of life's playground mirrors this analogy.

#### 3. Liberation Through Goodness and Detachment

The poem states: "Certainly, good will turn you around, Towards God's path safe and sound, Set free your soul, from ego's bound." This aligns with Vedantic teachings on detachment and surrendering the ego.

1. Bhagavad Gita (2.47)<sup>v</sup> : Krishna tells Arjuna that one must act selflessly, without attachment to results.

2. Chandogya Upanishad (8.1.1)<sup>vi</sup> : It speaks of the pure self (Atman) being beyond suffering when one transcends ego, which the poem reinforces by urging detachment.

3. Vachanamrut (Gadhada I-56): Bhagwan Swaminarayan says that one must surrender to God and detach from worldly negativity to attain liberation, echoing the poem's message.

#### 4. The Eternal Play of Life (Maya and the Cycle of Samsara)

The line: "This is life's eternal chain." reflects the concept of Maya (illusion) and Samsara (the cycle of rebirth).

1. Brihadaranyaka Upanishad (4.4.19)<sup>vii</sup> : States that the soul is bound by karma and ignorance, leading to repeated births unless liberated through wisdom.

2. Shrimad Bhagavatam (11.3.37)<sup>viii</sup> : “One who understands the play of Maya transcends suffering.” The poem's metaphor of life as a playground mirrors this teaching.

#### 5. The Call for Choosing Goodness: Moksha as the Ultimate Goal

The poem urges the reader to embrace good and reach God's path, which is safe and sound. This aligns with Vedantic teachings on Moksha (liberation).

1. Bhagavad Gita (18.66)<sup>ix</sup> : Lord Krishna says, "Surrender unto Me, and I shall liberate you from all sins." The poem conveys a similar idea—choosing goodness leads to salvation.

2. Vachanamrut (Gadhada I-21): It describes how a devotee should always remain inclined toward good, keeping faith in God, as bad forces only lead to bondage.

The poem "Forces of Life" is a poetic representation of Vedantic dualities, illustrating the constant struggle between Dharma (righteousness) and Adharma (unrighteousness). It echoes the wisdom of Vedas, Upanishads, Bhagavad Gita, Shrimad Bhagavatam, and Vachanamrut—urging the soul to transcend worldly bonds and choose the higher path leading to liberation (Moksha).

#### 6. Historical and Cultural Context

•**Moral Dichotomy in Literature:** The poem draws upon traditional moral frameworks present in religious and philosophical texts.

•**Timeless Appeal:** The struggle between good and evil is a universal theme across cultures and epochs.

#### 7. Poet's Perspective and Emotional Mindset

•**Inspirational Roots:** The poet likely seeks to impart wisdom, drawing from spiritual teachings.

•**Emotional Undertones:** A sense of urgency and ethical responsibility permeates the verses.

### 8. Target Audience and Purpose

•**Intended Readers:** The poem appeals to seekers of spiritual wisdom, students of philosophy, and general readers interested in ethical dilemmas.

•**Objective:** To inspire moral reflection and guide individuals towards virtuous living.

### 9. Personal Interpretation

•**Final Takeaway:** The poem reinforces the idea that life is a moral battleground where one must consciously choose righteousness.

•**Personal Resonance:** Readers may find the message empowering, urging them to align their actions with divine principles.

•**Philosophical Closure:** The poem encapsulates the eternal truth of karma and dharma, mirroring the wisdom of ancient scriptures.

### Conclusion

The poem "Forces of Life" encapsulates the timeless wisdom of **Sanatana Dharma**, reminding us that life is a continuous battle between **good and evil, righteousness and ignorance**. It echoes the fundamental principles of **Vedantic thought**, illustrating how human actions shape their spiritual trajectory—towards **Moksha (liberation) or continued bondage in Samsara (the cycle of rebirth)**.

Through its vivid imagery and reflective tone, the poem serves as a reminder that **our choices define our spiritual journey**. Just as the **Bhagavad Gita (18.66)** urges one to surrender to God for ultimate liberation, this poem encourages the reader to choose the path of goodness, which leads to **inner peace and divine grace**.

Ultimately, "Forces of Life" is not merely a poetic composition but a call to introspection, urging one to embrace virtue, overcome negativity, and embark on the path of **self-realization and eternal bliss**.

### Reference

- i श्रेयश्च प्रेयश्च मनुष्यमेतस्तौ संपरीत्य विविनक्ति धीरः ।  
श्रेयो हि धीरोऽभिप्रेयसो वृणीते प्रेयो मन्दो योगक्षेमाद्वृणीते ॥ २॥
- ii श्रीभगवानुवाच  
अभयं सत्त्वसंशुद्धिर्ज्ञानयोगव्यवस्थितिः ।  
दानं दमश्च यज्ञश्च स्वाध्यायस्तप आर्जवम् ॥ १ ॥  
अहिंसा सत्यमक्रोधस्त्यागः शान्तिरपैशुनम् ।  
दया भूतेष्वलोलुप्त्वं मार्दवं ह्रीरचापलम् ॥ २ ॥  
तेजः क्षमा धृतिः शौचमद्रोहो नातिमानिता ।  
भवन्ति सम्पदं दैवीमभिजातस्य भारत ॥ ३ ॥  
दम्भो दर्पोऽभिमानश्च क्रोधः पारुष्यमेव च ।  
अज्ञानं चाभिजातस्य पार्थ सम्पदमासुरीम् ॥ ४ ॥

- iii यज्ञार्थात्कर्मणोऽन्यत्र लोकोऽयं कर्मबन्धनः ।  
तदर्थं कर्म कौन्तेय मुक्तसङ्गः समाचर ॥ 9॥
- iv द्वा सुपर्णा सयुजा सखाया समानं वृक्षं परिषस्वजाते ।  
तयोरन्यः पिप्पलं स्वाद्वत्त्यनश्नन्नन्यो अभिचाकशीति ॥ १ ॥
- v कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन ।  
मा कर्मफलहेतुर्भूर्मा ते सङ्गोऽस्त्वकर्मणि ॥ 47 ॥
- vi अथ यदिदमस्मिन्न्रह्मपुरे दहरं पुण्डरीकं वेश्म दहरोऽस्मिन्नन्तराकाशस्त-  
स्मिन्यदन्तस्तदन्वेष्टव्यं तद्वाव विजिज्ञासितव्यमिति ॥ ८.१.१ ॥
- vii मनसैवानुद्गृष्टव्यं, नेह नानास्ति किञ्चन ।  
मृत्योः स मृत्युमाप्नोति य इह नानेव पश्यति ॥ १९ ॥
- viii सत्त्वं रजस्तम इति त्रिवृदेकमादौ  
सूत्रं महानहमिति प्रवदन्ति जीवम् ।  
ज्ञानक्रियार्थफलरूपतयोरुशक्तिः  
ब्रह्मैव भाति सदसच्च तयोः परं यत् ॥ ३७ ॥
- ix सर्वधर्मान्परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं ब्रज ।  
अहं त्वां सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः ॥ 66॥