



Sad-Vichara, Right Enquiry

Radiant Divinities! The spiritual way, which leads to true peace, everlasting joy, divine perfection, Illumination and Liberation, commences with *sad-vichara*, right enquiry, into: "Why are we here? What is the thing called life? With what objective are we to live? 'Kastvam Ko'ham Kuta Ayatah' (Who are you? Who am I? Whence have I come?)" It also leads to enquiry about the ultimate goal and meaning of life. There is something within you, which is timeless, beginning-less and endless, which is immortal and imperishable, deathless and indestructible. Enquiry leads to the inner depth of your being. And that gives significance and a deeper meaning to your life. There is something that is not affected by birth and death, which continues to be even after the body perishes. And that is real You. *Sadvichara* brings out all these things and launches the *jivatma* upon a quest, upon a determined seeking. *Sadvichara* is the entry point.

But if you are not able to control the urge of the outgoing senses towards enjoyment of sense-objects, the *Sadvichara* will come and go away. You must have *samyam* or *dama* (restraint or control of senses). One must resolve: "I must resolutely turn away from these outer attractions." You must discriminate between the merely pleasant and attractive (*preya*), and the really good and sublime (*shreya*). So the steps are right enquiry, restraint, discrimination and right resolution. Thus one launches upon a course of good conduct, not allowing oneself to be enslaved by desire. Rather one is led by reason, *samyak-drishti* (right vision) and *viveka*. Thus, one becomes *sadachari* (a person of good conduct). One's conduct and character become as they ought to be.

Do not delude yourself into thinking the need for enquiry, restraint, discrimination and resolution is only at the commencement. "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty." They have to be with you until you attain Illumination.

All sincere *sadhakas* must, therefore, be *vicharashila*, *vivekavan*, *samyami*, *sadachari* (engaged in enquiry and discrimination, be self-controlled, with right conduct). These are to be constant companions. You cannot afford to enter the battle with all your weapons and armour, and then in the middle of the battle give them up. They are more necessary then, than they were at the beginning. If you fulfil the conditions, there is no doubt that you will move steadily towards the goal of Liberation and Divine Perfection. Think deeply, be wise and attain Perfection. Then rejoice.

May God Bless You All!

■ Swami Chidananda