

# MATERIALISTIC KNOWLEDGE V/S SPIRITUAL KNOWLEDGE

By Curset M. Patel

(In this article it is not the author's wish to condemn Materialistic Knowledge, but to encourage people to acquire spiritual one and to give it, its due importance. The cry is only — why can't the elders struggle with patience, love and care (with the children) for Spiritual Knowledge as they do for material knowledge?)

The sphere of materialistic knowledge is quite narrow as compared to that of spiritual knowledge which is unlimited. Still, one finds in to-day's world that men, intellectual or otherwise, have given much more importance to base materialistic knowledge than to the sublime, spiritual one.

It is regrettable that, in our Community over 80% of parents neglect to give their children the basic spiritual knowledge in its proper perspective. This is because: (1) They do not themselves possess any religious knowledge. (ii) They have no time from their clubs and office, and the rat-race they themselves fall into. (iii) They can't read Gujarati - but, these very same parents will move heaven and earth (years before the little one goes to school), to send their children to some English-medium school, and keep a tutor to coach their children. They will struggle with Modern Maths, which their children have to learn, etc. but, it will seldom occur to them to teach their children Gujarati or at least coach them during their vacation in the same, so they can pray properly and read about our religion. They seldom take children to religious lectures and classes or to visit often Iranshah, Atashbehram, Agiary, etc. The slavish mentality has made us such ardent devotees of Western Concepts, that we are driven away from peace and purity; materialistic knowledge is the speciality of

the Western World.

Spiritual knowledge makes a man humble. Whereas, materialistic knowledge develops Egoism in him. As man progresses and enters deeper and deeper into the folds of spiritual knowledge, he acquires realization in the true sense of the term, of his smallness, his limitations in the vast expanse of Nature and its bounty.

Materialistic Knowledge is of no use or help whatsoever, when our time comes to bid adieu to this world and meet our Maker. On the contrary, according to our Zarathushtri Din, this kind of knowledge instead of giving any comfort, makes our soul tied down to worldly things rather than to heavenly ones. Spiritual knowledge, on the other hand is able to conquer the evil that is within us and that which is without, and can procure for us the solace of beholding the gates of heaven rather than the abyss of hell.

Our community is not going to step out of the rut it has fallen into till every parent, every mobed and Dastur, every well-wisher and 'Akabar' of the community starts giving his or her true and proper attention and encouragement in advocating the cause of spiritual knowledge as much as they to-day give for the acquisition of materialistic knowledge.

★ ★

The spirit of the West is our friend if we accept him, but our enemy if we are possessed by him; our friend if we open our hearts to him, our enemy if we yield him our hearts; our friend if we take from it which suits us, our enemy if we let ourselves be used to suit him.

Khalil Gibran