

James Allen

Light on Life's Difficulties

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FOREWORD

WHEN A MAN enters a dark room he is not sure of his movements, he cannot see objects around him, or properly locate them, and is liable to hurt himself by coming into sudden contact with them. But let a light be introduced, and immediately all confusion disappears. Every object is seen, and there is no danger of being hurt. To the majority, life is such a dark room, and their frequent hurts—their disappointments, perplexities, sorrows and pains—are caused by sudden contact with principles which they do not see, and are therefore not prepared to deal with. But when the light of wisdom is introduced into the darkened understanding, confusion vanishes, difficulties are dissolved, all things are seen in their true place and proportion, and henceforth the man walks open-eyed and unhurt, in the clear light of wise comprehension. James Allen

I, Truth, am thy Redeemer, come to Me; Lay down thy sin and pain and wild unrest; And I will calm thy spirit's stormy sea, Pouring the oil of peace upon thy breast: Friendless and love—lo, I abide with thee. Defeated and deserted, cast away, What refuge hast thou? Whither canst thou fly? Upon my changeless breast thy burdens lay; I am thy certain refuge, even I: All things are passing; I alone can stay. Lo I, the Great Forsaken, am the Friend Of the forsaken; I, whom man despise, The Weak, the helpless, and despised defend; I gladden aching hearts and weeping eyes; Rest thou in Me, I am thy sorrow's end. Lover, friends and wealth, pleasure and fame— These fail and change, and pass into decay; I blame thee not, nor turn my face away: In My calm bosom hide thy sin and shame.

1. THE LIGHT THAT LEADS TO PERFECT PEACE

THIS BOOK IS INTENDED to be a strong and kindly companion, as well as a source of spiritual renewal and inspiration to those who aim at a life well-lived and made strong and serene. It will help its readers to transform themselves into the ideal character they would wish to be, and to make their life here that blessed thing which the majority only

hope for in some future life.

Our life is what we make it by our own thoughts and deeds. It is our own state and attitude of mind which determine whether we are happy or unhappy, strong or weak, sinful or holy, foolish or wise. If one is unhappy, that state of mind belongs to himself, and is originated within himself. It is a state which responds to certain outward happenings, but its cause lies within and not in those outward occurrences. If one is weak in will, he has brought himself to, and remains in, that condition by the course of thought and action which he has chosen and is still choosing. If one is sinful, it is because he has committed, and continues to commit, sinful acts. If he is foolish, it is because he himself does foolish things.

A man has no character, no soul, no life apart from his thoughts and deeds. What they are, that he is. As they are modified, so does he change. He is endowed with will, and can modify his character. As the carpenter changes the block of wood into a beautiful piece of furniture, so can the erring and sin-stricken man change himself into a wise and

truth-loving being.

Each man is responsible for the thoughts which he thinks and the acts which he does, for his state of mind, and the life which he lives. No power, no event, no circumstance can compel a man to evil and unhappiness. He himself is his own compeller. He thinks and acts by his own volition. No being, however wise and great—even the Supreme—can make him good and happy. He himself must choose the good, and

thereby find the happy.

And because of this—that when a man wishes and wills he can find the Good and the True, and enjoy its bliss and peace—there is eternal gladness in the Courts of Truth, and holy joy among the Perfect Ones. The Gates of Heaven are forever open, and no one is prevented from entering by any will or power but his own. But no one can enter the Kingdom of Heaven so long as he is enamored of, and chooses, the seductions of hell, so long as he resigns himself to sin and sorrow. There is a larger, higher, nobler, diviner life than that of sinning and suffering, which is so common—in which, indeed, nearly all are

immersed—a life of victory over sin, and triumph over evil; a life wise and happy, kind and tranquil, virtuous and peaceful. This life can be found and lived now, and he who lives it is steadfast in the midst of change; restful among the restless; peaceful, though surrounded by strife.

Should death confront him, he is calm. Though assailed by persecution, he knows no bitterness, and his heart is compassionate and filled with rejoicing. In this supremely beautiful life there is no evil, sin and sorrow are ended, and aching hearts and weeping eyes are no more. The life of triumph is not for those who are satisfied with any lower conditions. It is for those who thirst for it and are willing to achieve it; who are eager for righteousness as the miser is for gold. It is always at hand, and is offered to all, and blessed are they who accept and embrace it. They will enter the World of Truth; they will find the Perfect Peace.