

THE PARADISE PARADIGM

**On Creating a World of Compassion,
Freedom, and Prosperity**



BY G. D. ALLPORT



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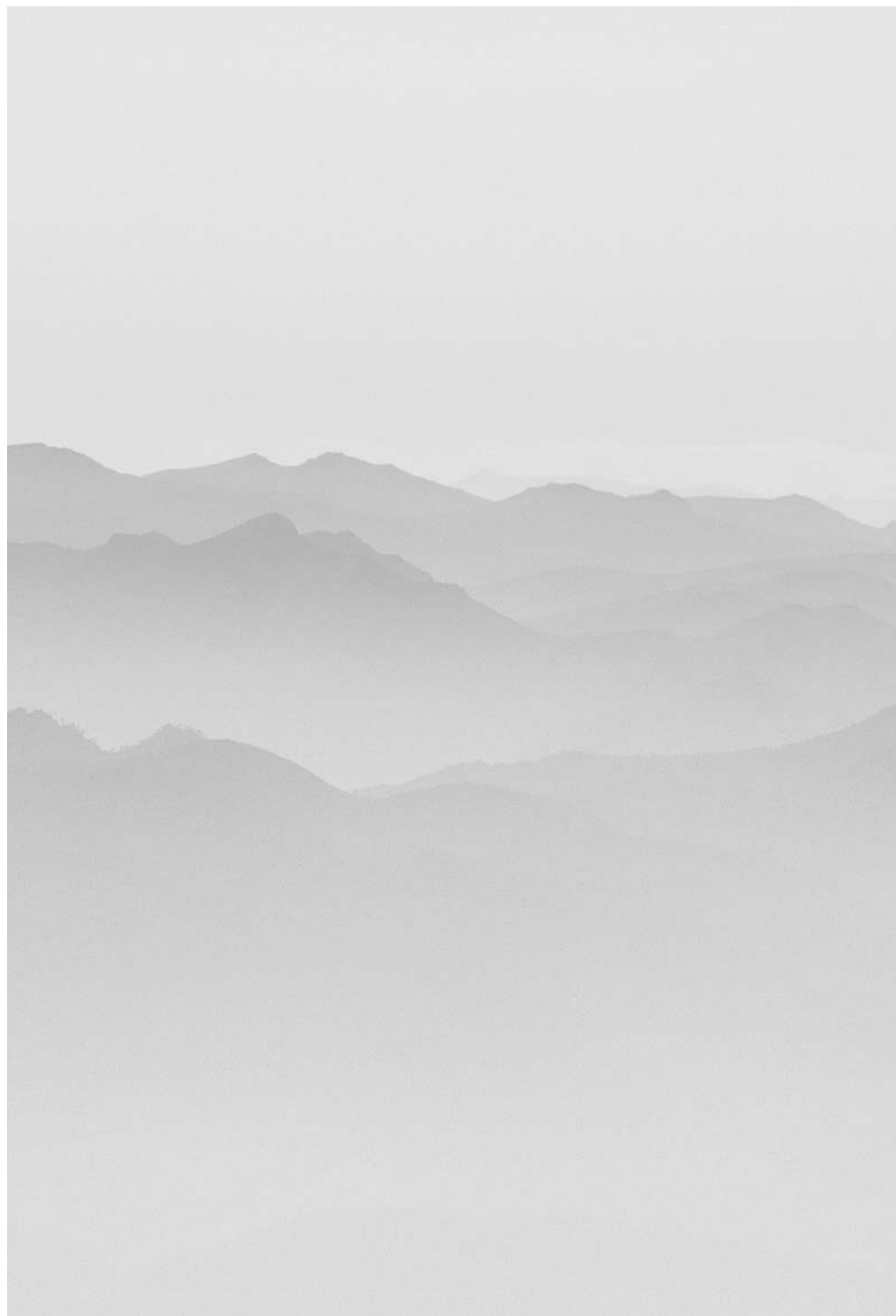
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To a world that *could* be—and which
slumbers within us all, waiting.



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P R E F A C E

THE PARADISE PARADIGM was written to spread the idea that a better world is possible, to provide a glimpse of that world and a conceptual framework for understanding it, and to encourage readers to adopt the framework and to share it with others. Ultimately, the goal is to change the world for the better, widely and dramatically.

This “better world” is one you already know, because it is the world of your heart. It is the world you *expected* to find when you arrived on this earth. Regardless of your race, religion, or nationality, you were born for a world of love and compassion. You were born for a world without war, genocide, or other human cruelty. You were born for a world of reasonable abundance—not of neurotic over-supply and greed, but a world where the basics of life are met, reliably and without trauma.

You needed and expected such a world at birth because nature designed you for that world and for no other.

Our primary needs, strengths, and desires are clearly best suited to an environment of compassion, freedom, and prosperity. A moment’s reflection will confirm this: such a world is the one in which you would feel most at home. It is the world that would bring out your best, especially had you lived in it from the start. A free, compassionate, and prosperous world would be the safest and healthiest world for your children. It would be the best environment for your neighbors and friends.

Is such a world really possible?

Oh, yes: such a world *is* possible, without question. Indeed, *preventing* it from coming into being takes real work. Small portions of this world, and partial implementations of it, are available for all to see. However, most of us do not see these glimmers of Paradise and often we do not understand their importance when we *do* see them. But these micro examples and partial implementations of Paradise do exist, and we will discuss their significance later in this book.

It is an important point that this Paradise—this “better world”—is no supernatural daydream or unworkable, neurotic, coercive utopia. The free, compassionate, and prosperous society we seek is *real* and it is here, now, in this world, for a fortunate few already. Not only is it practical and realistic: it is far *more* practical and realistic than the systems we endure today.

In the near future, technology will be powerful enough that a healthy, real Paradise may be the *only* world in which we can survive.

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NONE OF THE MATERIAL in this book is complicated or difficult to grasp. My goal is certainly audacious, but it is also simple and straightforward. In any case, we are all human beings and each of us has the equipment to understand the human condition.

That is good, because “experts” are famous for being at odds on human issues. Even those inclined to accept expert opinion uncritically must make their own decisions in this area, if only to choose among the various schools of thought. At any rate, I have no more authority here than you do: I am a human being and am interested in the human condition.

The questions I would ask before you begin are these:

- Are you happy with the *human* world as it is? Not only in your home or neighborhood, but in the world at large?
- If not, what would make it better?

○ And finally: how important is this topic?

Those questions, along with my own longing for a healthier, saner, and more compassionate world, led to the book you hold in your hands.

Because feelings are the key element here, it is important to take enough time with the material to open up to it. The concepts are not complicated, but they do push against our emotional defenses. To get the most out of this book, give it time to percolate down, to settle in, to become a part of your inner landscape.

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REAL CHANGE will require perceptual shifts of great magnitude.

The approaches we have tried for creating a better world—and in particular for ending evil via politics, religion, education, etc.—have failed, utterly, despite all the hard work, despite the earnest activism, despite genuinely good intentions, despite the many small victories, and despite the astonishing success we have had in areas such as technology. The world is still run nearly everywhere by tyrants (elected or otherwise), hundreds of millions are starving needlessly, torture and other atrocity is commonplace in many nations, genocide and war are in the news frequently, people are miserable enough to use drugs (legal and otherwise) by the trainload in nations around the world, and the sorry list of such symptoms is nearly endless.

Prediction: Traditional efforts to end evil, misery, and tyranny in this world will continue to fail. They will fail because they do not take fundamentals sufficiently into account. They will fail because they are based upon perceptions of reality that are largely inaccurate.

If we are to succeed, we must replace old paradigms with new and more accurate paradigms. That change of view will make this book seem jarring at times, and I hope you will allow the framework to take shape in your mind. It may help to know that the book's message is neither "liberal" nor "conservative." It won't

matter whether you are Christian, atheist, Buddhist, Muslim, Hindu, or any other religion. The guiding star for this book is simply that a healthier world is both possible and necessary, and that we must actively create that world if it is ever to exist.

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I AM CERTAINLY NOT ASKING you to take what I say uncritically; I ask instead that you think for yourself, and decide whether the ideas here make sense to you. That will be easy to do because we are talking more about *preferences* than about science. Science can tell us what happens in response to one approach or another, but it cannot tell us *what we prefer*.

Love or hate? Compassion or cruelty? Freedom or tyranny? These are issues of the heart, not of science. They are issues of preference, in other words. Throughout history, societies have differed in their dominant preferences. In ancient Greece, for example, Athens was democratic, literate, and artistic, while Sparta was austere, authoritarian, and militaristic. Human character and behavior were channeled in the direction of the locally dominant preferences. In turn, these two societies mirrored the preferences of their inhabitants. Living in Athens was a very different experience than living in Sparta; in Sparta, regimentation, obedience to authority, and stoic acceptance of pain and hardship were not merely ideals: they were common features of everyday life.

If science cannot tell us *what* we prefer, it *can* tell us how to move things in the direction we *do* prefer. If we want a world where people feel more connected to each other and show more compassion than is typical today, then science—along with simple observation—tells us that we need to increase the number of infants and children who are treated warmly, lovingly, and compassionately as they grow up. If we'd prefer more adults who are unconnected, violent, and cold—hearted or insensitive, then science can tell us how to bring about *that*. The same is true for other preferences we might have for society.

There is a tremendous amount of material to support the book's thesis—in these pages, at the website (<http://www.paradise-paradigm.net>), and in your daily newspaper, as well as in scientific and medical journals. Entire books have been written, for example, about the importance of early experience in creating the tone and character of later life; some are quoted in this book and several are listed in the “Further Reading” section.

But you won't need any of that, I suspect. You've seen the material, or enough of it, already. The purpose of this book is not so much to provide *new* information as to put the information you already *have* into a particular framework.

That framework is the message of this book. I offer it as sincerely as I know how, in hopes that you will consider it with an open mind and an open heart.

March 14, 2006