**THE EXPOSITION OF HOLY SCRIPTURE BY ALEXANDER MACLAREN**

**ISAIAH-037. JUDGE, LAWGIVER, KING by ALEXANDER MACLAREN**

*"For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our King; He will save us."*

*Isaiah 33:22*

There is reference here to the three forms of government in Israel: by Moses, by Judges, by Kings. In all, Israel was a Theocracy. Isaiah looks beyond the human representative to the true divine Reality.

**I. A truth for us, in both its more specific and its more general forms.**

**(a)** Specific. Christ is all these three for us--Authority; His will law; Defender.

**(b)** More general. Everything that human beings are to us, they are by derivation from Him--and He sums in Himself all forms of good and blessing. Every name among men for any kind of helper belongs to Him. All tender, helpful relationships are but broken lights of Thee.

**II. A lesson hard to learn and to remember.**

One knows not whether it is harder for faith to look beyond the visible helpers or delights to the Unseen Real One, or to look through tears, when these are gone, and to see Him clearly filling an otherwise empty field of vision. When we have a palpable prop to lean on, it is difficult to be clearly aware that, unless the palpable support were held up by the Unseen, it could not be a prop, and to lean on it would be like resting one's weight on a staff stuck in yielding mud. But it is no less difficult to tell our hearts that we have all that we ever had, when what we had leaned on for many happy days and found to hold us up is stricken from beneath us. Present, the seen lawgiver, judge, or king stays the eyes that should travel past him to God Himself; removed, his absence makes a great emptiness, in whose vacuity it is difficult for faith to discern the real presence of Him who is all that the departed seemed to be. The painted glass stays the eye; shattered, it lets in only the sight of a void and far-off sky.

Israel could not breathe freely in the rarefied air on the heights of a theocracy, and demanded a visible king. It had its desire, and as a consequence, leanness in its soul. Christendom has found it as difficult to do without visible embodiments of authority, law, defence, and hence many evils and corruptions in the institutions and practices of organised Christianity.

**III. A conviction which makes strong and blessed.**

To have dominant in our minds, and operative through our lives, the settled conviction that God in Christ is for us judge, lawgiver, and king, and that the purpose of all these offices or relationships is that He will save us is the secret of tranquillity, the fountain of courage, the talisman which makes life all different and us who live in it different. Fear cannot survive where that conviction rules and fortifies a heart. We shall not be slavish adherents of men if we are accustomed to take our orders from our Lawgiver. Earthly prizes or dignities will not dazzle eyes that have seen the King in His beauty. We shall pay little heed to men's judgments if there flames ever before conscience the thought, He that judgeth me is the Lord. He will save us; who can destroy what His hand is stretched out to preserve? If God is for us, who is against us? It is God that justifieth; who is He that condemneth?