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

**ISAIAH-050. THE BLIND MAN'S GUIDE by ALEXANDER MACLAREN**

*"I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them."*

*Isaiah 42:16*

The grand stormy verses before these words, with all their dread array of natural convulsions, have one object--the tender guidance promised in the text. So we have the combination of terror and love, the blending in the divine government of terrible judgments and most gentle guidance. The words apply, of course, primarily to the redemption of Israel; but through them shines a picture of the greater redemption of humanity.

**I. The blind travellers.**

They are blind, and their road is unknown to them. It is a symbol of our condition and of our paths in life. Our limited foresight cannot discern certainly even the next moment. It is always the unexpected that happens. We cannot tell what lies behind the next bend in the road, and there are so many bends; and behind one of them, we cannot tell whether it may be the next, sits the Shadow feared of man. Life is like the course of the Congo, which makes so mighty a bend northward that, till it had been followed from source to mouth, no one could have supposed that it was to enter the ocean far away to the west. Not only God's mercies, but our paths, are new every morning. Experience, like conscience, sheds light mainly on what lies behind, and scarcely doth attain to something of prophetic strain.

**II. The Leader.**

How tenderly God makes Himself the leader of the blind pilgrims! It does not matter about being blind, if we put our hands in His. Then He will be to us instead of eyes. Jesus took the blind man by the hand.

So here is the promise of guidance by Providence, Word, Spirit. And here is the condition of receiving it, namely, our conscious blindness and realisation of the complexities of life, leading to putting ourselves into His hands in docile faith.

**III. The gradual light.**

Darkness is made light. We receive the knowledge of each step, when it needs to be taken; the light shines only on the next; we are like men in a fog, who are able only to see a yard ahead.

**IV. The clearing away of hindrances.**

Crooked things straight. A careful guide lifts stones out of a blind man's way. How far is this true? There will be plenty of crooked things left crooked, but still so many straightened as to make our road passable.

**V. The perpetual Presence.**

If God is with me, then all these blessings will surely be mine. He will be with me if I keep myself with Him. It is His felt presence that gives me light on the road, and levels and straightens out the crookedest and roughest path.