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

**ISAIAH-059. THE MOUNTAIN ROAD by ALEXANDER MACLAREN**

*"And I will make all My mountains a way, and My highways shall be exalted."*

*Isaiah 49:11*

This grand prophecy is far too wide to be exhausted by the return of the exiles. There gleamed through it the wider redemption and the true return of the real captives. The previous promises all find their fulfilment in the experiences of the soul on its journey back to God. Here we have two characteristics of that journey.

**I. The Path through the mountains.**

My mountains. That is the claim that all the world is His; and also the revelation that He is the Lord of Providence. He makes our difficult and steep places. Submission comes with that thought, and even for the strength of the hills we bless Thee. There are mountains which are not His but ours, artificial difficulties of our own creating.

**(a)** Our way does lie over the mountains. There are difficulties. The Christian course is like a Roman road which never turned aside, but went straight up and on. So much the better. A keener air blows, bracing and health-giving, up there. Mosquitoes and malaria keep to the lower levels.

**(b)** There is always a path over the mountains. Some way opens when we get close up, like a path through heather, which is not seen till reached. We walk by faith. We foolishly forebode and fancy that we cannot live if something happens, but there is no cul de sac in our paths if God's mountain-way is our way, nor does the faint track ever die out if our faith is keen-sighted and docile.

**II. The Pasture on the mountains--lit. bare heights.**

Pastures in the East are down in bottoms, not, like ours, upon the hills. But this flock finds supplies on the barren hill-tops.

Sustenance in Sorrow and Loss.

**(a)** Promise that whatever be our trials and losses we shall be taken care of. Not, perhaps, as we should have liked, nor as abundantly fed as down in the valleys, but still not left to starve. No carcases strewed on the bleakest bit of road as one sees dead camels by the side of the tracks in the desert.

**(b)** Promise of sustenance of a higher kind even in sorrow. The Alpine flora is specially beautiful, though minute. The blessings of affliction; the more intimate knowledge of His love, submission of will. Out of the eater came forth meat.

Passing through the valley of weeping they make it a well; the tears shed in times of rightly borne sorrow are gathered into a reservoir from which refreshment, patience, trust and strength may be drawn in later days.

But the perfect fulfilment of the promise lies beyond this life. On the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be, and they who have found pasture on the barren heights of earthly sorrow shall summer high in bliss upon the hills of God, and shall at once both lie for ever in a good fold, and follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth, and find fountains of living water bursting forth for ever on these fertile heights.