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

**EXODUS-027. RANSOM FOR SOULS: PART 1. by ALEXANDER MACLAREN**

*"Then shall they give every man a ransom for his soul."*

*Exodus 30:12*

This remarkable provision had a religious intention. Connect it with the tax-money which Peter found in the fish's mouth.

**I. Its meaning. Try to realise an Israelite's thoughts at the census. I am enrolled among the people and army of God: am I worthy? What am I, to serve so holy a God? The payment was meant--**

**(a)** To excite the sense of sin. This should be present in all approach to God, in all service; accompanying the recognition of our Christian standing. Our sense of sin is far too slight and weak; this defect is at the root of much feebleness in popular religion. The sense of sin must embrace not outward acts only, but inner spirit also.

**(b)** To suggest the possibility of expiation. It was ransom i.e. covering, something paid that guilt might be taken away and sin regarded as non-existent. This is, of course, obviously, only a symbol. No tax could satisfy God for sin. The very smallness of the amount shows that it is symbolical only. Not with corruptible things as silver is man redeemed.

**II. Its identity for all. Rich or poor, high or low, all men are equal in sin.**

There are surface differences and degrees, but a deep identity beneath. So on the same principle all souls are of the same value. Here is the true democracy of Christianity. So there is one ransom for all, for the need of all is identical.

**III. Its use.**

It was melted down for use in the sanctuary, so as to be a memorial permanently present to God when His people met with Him. The greater portion was made into bases for the boards of the sanctuary. That is, God's dwelling with men and our communion with Him all rest on the basis of ransom. We are brought nigh by the blood of Christ.