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

**LEVITICUS-008. GOD'S SLAVES by ALEXANDER MACLAREN**

*"For they are My servants, which I brought forth out of the land of Egypt; they shall not be sold as bondmen."*

*Leviticus 25:42*

This is the basis of the Mosaic legislation as to slavery. It did not suppress but regulated that accursed system. Certainly Hebrew slavery was a very different thing from that of other nations. In the first place, no Jew was to be a slave. To that broad principle there were exceptions, such as the case of the man who voluntarily gave himself up to his creditor. But even he was not to be treated as a slave, but as a hired servant, and at the jubilee was to be set free. There were also other regulations of various kinds in other circumstances on which we do not need to dwell. The slaves of alien blood were owned and used, but under great mitigations and restrictions.

Of course we have here an instance of the incompleteness of the Mosaic law,--or rather we may more truly say of its completeness, regard being had to the state of the world at the time. All social change hangs together. Institutions cannot be altered at a blow, without altering the stage of civilisation, of which they are the expression. Raw haste is half-sister to delay. What is good and necessary for one era is out of place in another. So God works slowly, and lets bad things die out, by changing the atmosphere in which they flourish.

All servitude to men was an infraction of God's rights over Israel. God was the Israelites Master; they were His slaves. He was so, because He had broken the bands of their yoke, and set them free. There is, then, here--

**I. The ground of God's rights. I brought you forth.**

**II. Our servitude because of our redemption. Ye are My servants.**

**III. Our consequent freedom from all other masters. Ye shall not be sold as bondmen.**