

# Deuteronomy 15:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then thou shalt take an aul, and thrust it through his ear unto the door, and he shall be thy servant for ever. And also unto thy maidservant thou shalt do likewise.

## Analysis

**Then thou shalt take an aul, and thrust it through his ear unto the door, and he shall be thy servant for ever**—The ear-piercing ceremony created permanent, visible identity. The **door** (דְּלֵת, deleth) represented the household; the pierced ear signified: 'I belong here.' The once-freed servant now bears voluntary marks of devotion.

Paul echoes this: **I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus** (Galatians 6:17). Baptism serves similarly—public identification with Christ's death and resurrection (Romans 6:3-4). The pierced ear taught Israel that covenant relationship involves visible, permanent commitment. We're not secret disciples but branded sheep: **The Lord knoweth them that are his** (2 Timothy 2:19). Christ Himself bears permanent marks—**Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails** (John 20:25)—scars of His voluntary submission to the Father's will.

## Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern documents record various ownership marks (tattoos, brands, ear-piercings). Israel's practice was unique in being voluntary (not forced) and domestic (household belonging, not chattel slavery). The pierced ear became a visible testimony to the master's benevolence.

## Related Passages

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**Genesis 1:1** — Creation of heavens and earth

**Psalm 19:1** — Heavens declare God's glory

## Study Questions

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1. What 'marks' (habits, commitments, sacrifices) visibly identify you as Christ's willing servant?
2. How does Christ's permanent scars (nail prints) demonstrate His voluntary submission to redeem you?
3. In what ways does baptism function as your 'ear-piercing'—public, permanent identification with Christ?

## Interlinear Text

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וְבָקַח לְתֵבֵד בְּאַזְנוֹ אֶלְקָנָה אֶת עַלְמָצָא אֶת תְּמַתֵּת הַמִּרְצָא עַל אֶת  
Then thou shalt take      H3947      an aul      H853      and thrust      H5414      it through his ear      H241      unto the door      H1817

וְיִתְּבַּחַד לְבָקָד עַל עַל עַל עַל עַל עַל  
H1961      H0      and he shall be thy servant      H5650      for ever      H5769      H637

וְעַמְתָּךְ תְּמַעַשָּׂה תְּמַעַשָּׂה תְּמַעַשָּׂה  
And also unto thy maidservant      thou shalt do      H3651  
H519      H6213

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