

# Psalms 116:16

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

O LORD, truly I am thy servant; I am thy servant, and the son of thine handmaid: thou hast loosed my bonds.

## Analysis

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**O LORD, truly I am thy servant; I am thy servant, and the son of thine handmaid: thou hast loosed my bonds.** This confession of servanthood acknowledges covenant relationship and divine deliverance. The double declaration **truly I am thy servant; I am thy servant** (ani avdekha ani avdekha, אַנְיָעַדְךָ אַנְיָעַדְךָ) emphasizes wholehearted commitment through repetition. Eved (עבד) means servant, slave, one bound in service.

**And the son of thine handmaid** (ben-amatekha, בֶן־אַמְתָּחָה) adds generational dimension. Born into a believing household, the psalmist inherited covenant relationship. This echoes the household servant concept—those born in the master's house possessed permanent status (Genesis 15:3, 17:12-13). It suggests both heritage (raised in faith) and permanence (lifelong commitment).

**Thou hast loosed my bonds** (pittachta lemoserai, פִּתְחָתָ לְמוֹסֵרָי). Patach (פָּתָח) means to open, loose, free. Moserot (מוֹסְרוֹת) means bonds, fetters, restraints. God broke the death-cords that bound the psalmist (v. 3). Liberation from death produces voluntary servanthood to God—the paradox of Christian freedom: freed from sin's slavery to become slaves of righteousness (Romans 6:17-18).

## Historical Context

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In ancient Israel, permanent servanthood was chosen by servants who loved their masters (Exodus 21:5-6; Deuteronomy 15:16-17). A servant could go free after six

years but might choose permanent service, declaring, 'I love my master...I will not go out free.' This voluntary, love-motivated servanthood pictures covenant relationship. God delivers believers from sin and death, and grateful believers voluntarily commit to permanent service. Paul calls himself 'servant of Jesus Christ' (Romans 1:1), Mary declares herself 'the handmaid of the Lord' (Luke 1:38).

## Related Passages

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**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

**James 2:17** — Faith and works

**John 15:13** — Greatest form of love

**1 John 4:8** — God is love

## Study Questions

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1. How does being 'loosed from bonds' paradoxically lead to voluntary servanthood rather than autonomous freedom?
2. What does it mean to be 'son of thine handmaid'—inheriting faith from previous generations?
3. In what practical ways can you demonstrate that you are God's servant by choice, not coercion?

## Interlinear Text

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אָתֶה	אָתֶה	אָתֶה	אָתֶה	אָתֶה	אָתֶה	אָתֶה	אָתֶה
truly	O LORD	H3588	H589	I am thy servant	H589	I am thy servant	H5650
H577	H3068			H5650		H5650	

בָּן	בָּן	אֶמְתָּת בָּן	פָּתַח חֹתֶם	לְמַסְכִּין
and the son	of thine handmaid	thou hast loosed		my bonds
H1121	H519		H6605	H4147

## Additional Cross-References

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**Psalms 86:16** (Parallel theme): O turn unto me, and have mercy upon me; give thy strength unto thy servant, and save the son of thine handmaid.

**Psalms 143:12** (Parallel theme): And of thy mercy cut off mine enemies, and destroy all them that afflict my soul: for I am thy servant.

**Psalms 119:125** (Parallel theme): I am thy servant; give me understanding, that I may know thy testimonies.

**James 1:1** (References Lord): James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting.

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