

Should
MEN
Wear
Earrings?

by
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The Wearing Of Earrings (and other jewelry)

Introduction

In days gone by, our society accepted only females wearing earrings. Why? Today, our society is beginning to accept males wearing earrings. Why? Does the Bible say it is right for females to wear earrings, and wrong for males to wear them?

We **are** living in a time when the Bible is being rejected as a guide for our daily lives. Secularists and “Christian” alike are rejecting it. I believe it is **time** for the people called “Christian” to return to the Bible for **God’s** input about wearing earrings. I want to issue this challenge to both male and female: If the Bible states the wearing of earrings is wrong, will you stop wearing them? If the Bible states that God’s people **should** wear earrings, will you wear them?

What is an Earring?

In the days of the Old Testament, an earring was usually made of gold, and circular in nature. They were worn as an ear or nose decoration, and sometimes worn in the center of the forehead. Earrings, as well as other articles of jewelry, were also used as a medium of exchange, or money. Sometimes earrings are referred to as “rings of earrings” because they were circles of gold.

The purpose of this article is to examine every passage in the Bible that speaks about earrings. Most of these are in the Old Testament. This shouldn’t present a problem because I Cor. 10:11 declares that the Old Testament was given to us for an example.

Earrings Used For Good Things

Proverbs 25:11,12 shows that earrings can be an enhancement. *A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver. [As] an earring of gold, and an ornament of fine gold, [so is] a wise reprovew upon an obedient ear.*

This verse speaks for itself, comparing an earring of gold, and an ornament of gold; to a wise reprovew upon the hearing ear. This verse clearly shows that the **proper** wearing of earrings is not wrong in the sight of God.

God really doesn’t care if we have items of value, even jewelry. He doesn’t want us to put too much stock in them. Money is not the root of all evil; it is the **love** of money that is the root of all evil.

Abraham’s servant gives jewelry as a token of Abraham’s promise

Genesis 24:22 tells about the earrings Abraham’s servant gave to Rebekah, *And it came to pass, as the camels had done drinking, that the man took a golden earring of half a shekel weight, and two bracelets for her hands of ten [shekels] weight of gold;* (If a

shekel weighed .351 ounces, the earring would weigh .1755 ounces, and the bracelets would weigh 3.51 ounces each.) It seems obvious there is nothing wrong with this gift, or with having this jewelry. The Bible always says exactly what went on, and whether it was right or wrong. I don't find anywhere that God disapproved of this gift.

Genesis 24:30, *And it came to pass, when he saw the earring and bracelets upon his sister's hands, and when he heard the words of Rebekah his sister, saying, Thus spake the man unto me; that he came unto the man; and, behold, he stood by the camels at the well.* Rebekah is very excited at these marvelous gifts, and runs home to tell her family. Laban, her brother, is very impressed by the jewelry (he's sort of a "money mongrel" anyway) and called the servant "...thou blessed of the Lord..." Abraham is blessed of the Lord, isn't he? The wealth God has given to Abraham is a symbol of his spiritual blessings.

The servant is brought into the house and he explains his mission and how God has blessed him on his journey and how God has answered his prayer when Rebekah not only offered to give him drink, but also to draw water for his camels. It is only after his prayer is answered that he asks Rebekah's name. Genesis 24:47, *And I asked her, and said, Whose daughter [art] thou? And she said, The daughter of Bethuel, Nahor's son, whom Milcah bare unto him: and I put the earring upon her face, and the bracelets upon her hands.* The servant then worships God, rejoicing in His leadership. He tells this entire story so Rebekah and her family will know this matter is of God, and not some happenstance. He rehearses the giving of the gifts; indicating he put the earring upon her **face**. There is some dispute whether this earring was placed on her forehead, or in the left nostril, which was the custom in almost all the east. For me, it really doesn't make any difference. The fact is that God, Abraham, Abraham's servant, Rebekah, and her family accepted earrings wherever they were placed.

The bracelets Rebekah received are ornamental rings of gold that are worn on the small part of the leg, and the whole arm from the shoulder to the wrist. The Bible states that the bracelets were for Rebekah's hands; therefore they are not for the small part of the leg.

There is no doubt in my mind that the earrings Abraham's servant gave to Rebekah are acceptable in the sight of God. God doesn't mind his people having wealth, even jewelry (earrings, rings, necklaces, bracelets, etc.) He just doesn't want these items to be worshipped, or thought to be **necessary** to successful human existence.

God Uses Jewelry Intended For Evil For Good

In Exodus 35:21, God accepted earrings from both men and women for use in building the tabernacle. *And they came, both men and women, as many as were willing hearted, [and] brought bracelets, and earrings, and rings, and tablets, all jewels of gold: and every man that offered [offered] an offering of gold unto the LORD.*

A careful reading of this passage reveals that these men and women were not commanded to bring earrings out of their ears, or the rings off their fingers, or the bracelets and tablets off their arms. Compare this passage to Exodus 32:2 which shows that in the Israelite women, daughters and sons broke the earrings out of their ears, and brought them to Aaron, who made the golden calf.

A second point is that Israel is in the wilderness when Moses received instructions from God as to the building of the tabernacle. Israel had been a slave nation in Egypt. Where did they get all this gold? There is no doubt that the vast majority of it came from Egypt when Israel spoiled them when they left. God is **always** able to give His people exactly what they need to worship Him, and build a suitable place of worship. God is well able to take something that is used for bad and use it for good.

It should also be remembered that Israel had been in Egypt for a total of 215 years. During this time, they had no doubt collected some of the jewelry used by the Egyptians. It should be noted that Israelite men had the jewelry in their possession, but there is no record of any Israelite man **wearing** earrings. Remember that these earrings are gold, which is wealth. **If** they did wear earrings, under influence of the Egyptians, there is no record that God approved.

Numbers 31:50 records Israel's thanksgiving offering for safety during war. *We have therefore brought an oblation for the LORD, what every man hath gotten, of jewels of gold, chains, and bracelets, rings, earrings, and tablets, to make an atonement for our souls before the LORD.*

For a complete understanding of this passage read verse 48-54. Israel has just won a great victory in battle, and when they take a census at the end of the battle, they discover they haven't lost a man. This so amazes them that they come to Moses and Eleazar and give an offering for the atonement of their souls. This offering consists of articles of jewelry taken as a spoil from the enemy. There is no doubt in my mind that the Midianites wore some of these earrings. God can take something men use for evil and use it for good. There is nothing evil of itself, but many things can be used for evil. Notice that the Midianites were pagan men who wore the jewelry for the wrong reason, but God used that which was for evil, and used it for good.

The "tablet" of verse 50 is an armlet that fits around the upper arm. This tablet is probably very similar to the bracelet worn by Judah in Gen. 38:18 and Saul in II Sam. 1:10.

The principle of Israel giving earrings to God as a thanksgiving offering will also offer a solution to some "modern" problems. For example: some people say television is of the devil. I say it is not, but much of the programming is. There is nothing wrong with a radio, but there is something wrong with many of the songs played over the radio. There is nothing wrong with an automobile being able to travel 100 MPH, but that doesn't mean it has to be driven that fast.

Job 42:11 mention some of the gifts given to Job after his trial of fire. *Then came there unto him all his brethren, and all his sisters, and all they that had been of his acquaintance before, and did eat bread with him in his house: and they bemoaned him, and comforted him over all the evil that the LORD had brought upon him: every man also gave him a piece of money, and every one an earring of gold*

God here gives to Job twice as much as he lost. A part of what people give to him is earrings. These men bring earrings to Job as a sign of their apology and to help him get back on his feet. These earrings were very likely "rings of earrings." At any rate, I do not find any place in the Bible where a man of Israel wore an earring. The only men wearing earrings are **pagan** men, Numbers 31:50, Judges 8:24. I **have** found where young girls, women, and young boys

who were under the control of their mothers wore earrings, but never men who were following Christ, Ex. 32:2. It should also be noted that the friends of Job weren't necessarily followers of God. They did forsake Job during the worse of his sufferings, all condemning him.

God Gives And God Takes Away Jewelry As A Sign Of His Blessing And Chastisement

Ezekiel 16:6-12 declares that God will give jewelry *if* His people will obey Him. *And I put a jewel on thy forehead, and earrings in thine ears, and a beautiful crown upon thine head.*

God here describes how He found Israel and what He did to her to clean her up and make her beautiful. One of the things God gave to Israel was earrings or decorations for her to wear. The point is that God doesn't care if His people have many beautiful things. He just doesn't want them to worship those things, or think life can't go on without them. God gave Abraham all the riches he had and Abraham was able to buy some earrings that he gave to Rebekah through his servant. God enjoys seeing His people prosper, as they worship and serve Him.

Isaiah 3:16-20 declares that God will take away all our decorations as a sign of his displeasure with our rebellious ways. *Moreover the LORD saith, Because the daughters of Zion are haughty...will take away...The bonnets, and the ornaments of the legs, and the headbands, and the tablets, and the earrings,*

This verse can be compared to Ezekiel 16:6-12. God said that if Israel disobeyed Him, there would be some things He would take away from them as a sign of His chastisement upon them. One of the things that would be taken away is the earrings. Of course, the earrings are not bad, but Israel has forsaken **Him**, using the earrings (and other articles of clothing) to entice to wickedness.

Hosea 2:13 affirm that God will judge Israel for forgetting Him. *And I will visit upon her the days of Baalim, wherein she burned incense to them, and she decked herself with her earrings and her jewels, and she went after her lovers, and forgat me, saith the LORD.*

God will judge Israel because they used the good things He gave her for bad purposes. God caused Israel to have much wealth that she used to attract wicked lovers. God will remove all her riches from her, causing her to be abhorred in the sight of all her lovers.

This verse concludes again that pagan men wear earrings, but there is no verse in the entire Bible that shows a "Christian" man wearing an earring.

Earrings Used For Evil Purposes

Genesis 35:4 *And they gave unto Jacob all the strange gods which [were] in their hand, and [all their] earrings which [were] in their ears; and Jacob hid them under the oak which [was] by Shechem.*

It must be noted that in Genesis 35:2, Jacob commanded his household and those that were with him to put away the strange gods that were among them. When they did this, they also gave all their earrings that were in their ears. It must also be noted that a strange god is an idol,

but a strange god doesn't **have** to be an idol. It could be anything that is worshipped, or that is called upon for help. Sometimes we "feel" as if we pray better if we can picture Christ in our minds, but that is praying to an idol, an idol in our minds. No man knows what Christ looks like.

It is very noteworthy that there seems to be plenty of strange gods with them, and the people know what the strange gods are. Nobody came to Jacob, asking if this or that was a strange god. People know who the true God is because God has put that in them. However, they won't worship God because they know their own sinfulness. They are hoping their religion will get them into heaven, but they ought to know better.

Not only do these people give Jacob their idols, which are strange gods, they also give him their earrings, which are probably strange gods, or at least a symbol of or to a strange god. They are very thorough, making sure they approach the true God with no false gods. The false gods represented will probably include the idols Rachel stole from her father, and the gods of the Shechemites, who were evidently traveling with Jacob at this time, Gen. 34:37-29.

These people realize that Jacob is their leader, and do not hesitate to give him their strange gods, which included the earrings that were in their ears.

Genesis 35:4 makes it very clear that these earrings had Satanic symbols on them. I don't know what the symbols were, but these people knew. The only thing they were good for is for melting down. There is nothing wrong with the gold in the earrings, but the symbol is wrong. These earrings shouldn't be worn by anybody. These people knew these earrings were strange gods. They took the earrings as a symbol of a false god.

Exodus 32:2 is another passage that shows that an earring can be used for an evil purpose. *And Aaron said unto them, Break off the golden earrings, which [are] in the ears of your wives, of your sons, and of your daughters, and bring [them] unto me. 3 And all the people brake off the golden earrings which [were] in their ears, and brought [them] unto Aaron.*

This passage shows two things.

(1) The Israelites wore earrings in their ears. But notice **who** wore the earrings. It was the wives, the daughters, and the **sons**. There is no record in all the Bible of believing adult men wearing earrings. It is repulsive to us to think of young boys wearing earrings, because we believe that might cause them to wear them when they get older. But it didn't work that way with them. A male wearing an earring carried with him a symbol that they were under the authority of their mother. When a male becomes a man, he isn't under the authority of his mother or dad, but is on his own. So a man **not** wearing an earring is a symbol of his manhood.

(2) It is possible to take something intended to be good, and use it for something that is bad. I have repeatedly shown that the Bible is not against the proper use of earrings, but in this place, Israel takes what God allows, and uses it to make the golden calf (a god that supposedly led them out of Egypt). This is decidedly wrong, a wicked sin in the sight of God.

Judges 8:24 reveals that **pagan** men wore earrings. There is no record that any Israelite

man or any Christian man ever wore an earring! *And Gideon said unto them, I would desire a request of you, that ye would give me every man the earrings of his prey. (For they had golden earrings, because they [were] Ishmaelites.) 25 And they answered, We will willingly give [them]. And they spread a garment, and did cast therein every man the earrings of his prey. 26 And the weight of the golden earrings that he requested was a thousand and seven hundred [shekels] of gold; beside ornaments, and collars, and purple raiment that [was] on the kings of Midian, and beside the chains that [were] about their camels' necks.*

The people of Israel want to make Gideon a king, but he knows this is against the will of God. Instead, Gideon tells them to bring some of the spoil they have taken in battle. Every Israelite brings one earring he has taken from the ear of his spoil. Gideon takes these items, melts them down and makes a golden ephod, which represents the fact that God is their king and He is the one they are supposed to worship, and get their instructions from. Israel, however, uses this golden ephod as an item to worship. Therefore, it is turned into a bad thing.

It should be noted that it is possible to take something good and use it for the wrong reason, just as you can take something bad, and use it for the right reason. But if there is a symbol that will lead weak Christians astray, we ought to leave that bad thing alone. This is what is taught in I Corinthians 8 concerning eating that which is offered to idols. For example: The Bible says that we ought to correct our children because we love them, but it is wrong to physically abuse them, or beat them and cause an injury. God might give us a T. V., but He expects us to turn it off when filthy stuff comes on. You can take a computer and get on the Internet and download dirty pictures, but it is possible to use the Internet and not be involved in pornography. Just because you have cable T. V. doesn't mean you have to watch HBO or Showtime.

In Judges 8:22-27, Gideon takes something bad and makes something good out of it. Israel wanted to make Gideon their king, but he knew this was against the clear commands of God. He asked the men of Israel to give him the earrings of their prey, pagan men who had been conquered, and spoiled. Note: Gideon took something bad, made something good out of it, and then Israel made something bad out of something good.

Conclusion

The conclusion I reach about earrings is that some are good and some are bad. It is according to what they represent and what the wearer intends they represent. It is very likely that some earrings would have Satanic symbols on them, so they would be bad, regardless of the wearers' intentions.

I believe God intended for men not to wear earrings. There is no indication that God approves of men wearing earrings, even when Job received earrings (rings of earrings, which is money) from his friends. Remember these friends had forsaken him when God allowed Satan to take away everything he had. These friends walk by sight, not by faith. They are unable to understand the end from the beginning in this case.

Today, men and young boys wear earrings, some symbolizing what they are: homosexuals, available, so forth; and some for fashion. This custom **may** become more acceptable in years

to come. Many people don't understand what the earrings represent or what they mean. They wear earrings because of style or to impress someone. They go to "church" wearing these earrings, and are accepted because some churches accept anything but the Bible. In these congregations earrings become nothing more than a style, and the wearers don't realize God knows what they mean. It could very well be that some "scriptural" churches will soon accept earrings on men and boys because they don't understand: God does.

Did men of God wear earrings?

A short recapitulation might be helpful at this point.

In Ex. 32:2, Aaron desired the earrings of the wives, the daughters and the sons, but didn't say anything about earrings in the ears of the men. The earrings Aaron collected were used to build the golden calf. The Bible indicates very strongly that the custom of the Jewish women, daughters, and sons is to wear earrings while the men do not wear earrings.

In Ex. 35:22, **both** men and women brought their earrings to God to use in the building of the tabernacle. It is important to notice that the Bible did **not** say they took these earrings out of their ears and brought them to God. These earrings, very likely, were some of the bounty God gave Israel when they spoiled the Egyptians. It should also be remembered that earrings represent money or wealth. Moses took the golden earrings and other articles of jewelry and used the gold to make the golden articles God demanded be placed in the tabernacle.

Numbers 31:50 reveals Israelite men bringing earrings to God as a thanksgiving offering for safety during a war. They got these earrings from the ears of the heathens they killed. If God thought anything was wrong with these earrings, I am sure He wouldn't have accepted them of these Israelite men. If there was anything wrong with offering these earrings to God, I'm sure these Israelite men wouldn't have offered them to God.

In II Sam. 1:10, Saul was wearing a bracelet when he was killed. This was a special bracelet that only a king wore, like the crown worn only by a king. Saul's wearing a bracelet didn't mean that all men wore bracelets.

Job's neighbors, Job 42:11, brought earrings to Job as a sign of their apology. These earrings were a sign of wealth and helped establish Job once again as a prince.

As repulsive as it is to me, because of what earrings in the ear of a man stand for today, God evidently didn't see anything wrong with a **boy** wearing an earring (because it showed he was under the authority of his mother) or a man **possessing** an earring (because it represented wealth). I have not found in the Bible where an adult man who was a believer **wore** an earring.

Today men wearing earrings symbolize the worse possible moral condition, and is not recommended, nor will it be permitted, for very long, in the true churches of God. In our society, it is perfectly acceptable for girls and women to wear earrings, because God accepts it. What is important is not whether society accepts it, but if God accepts it.

Exodus 21:5,6 is the only place in the entire Bible where I see a man having anything done to his ear. The servant (slave) desires to stay with his master, plainly saying he loves his master, his wife and his children. The servant and master go to the judge, and they come to the door, to

the post of the door. The master shall bore his ear through with an aul and he will continue with him forever. There is no indication that the slave would wear an earring in his ear. He would have a hole in his ear to indicate he belonged permanently to his master, but there is no indication in all of scripture that he wore an earring or any other decoration in that ear.