

Matters of Conscience

The Believer's Relationship with the State

Mid-Atlantic Bible School, Shippensburg, 2017

[MSC National Awareness Day, UK, September 19, 2015]



Bible Principles:

[1]. We are to be separate from the world

[2]. Our true citizenship belongs in heaven

Ready to **give an answer**

- 1 Peter 3:15* But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to **give an answer** to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:
- [Strong's 627] **απολογία** *apologia*; 'a speech in defence'.

The meaning of 'conscience':

- "conscience" [Strong's 4893] **συνειδησις** *suneidesis*, 'knowing oneself, being one's witness'
- From [Strong's 4894] **συνειδον** *suneidon*, 'to see together, hence to comprehend'
- Translated 32 times in the New Testament as "conscience".

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[2]. Our true citizenship belongs in heaven

[1] Strangers and Pilgrims

- Hebrews 11:13* These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were **strangers and pilgrims** on the earth.
- 1 Peter 2:11* Dearly beloved, I beseech you as **strangers and pilgrims**, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;

Being a 'stranger' (i):

- Hebrews 11:13* These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were **strangers** and pilgrims on the earth.
- [Strong's 3581] **ξένος** *xenos*; a prim. word; 'foreign, a foreigner, guest'.

Being a “stranger” (ii):

- 1 Peter 2:11 * Dearly beloved, I beseech you as **strangers** and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;
- [Strong's 3941] **παροικος** *paroikos*; 'dwelling near, foreign'.

Being a “pilgrim”:

- 1 Peter 2:11 * Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;
- [Strong's 3927] *παρεπιδημος* *parepidemos*; 'sojourning in a strange place'.

The Truth vs. 'the world'

- John 17:14* I have given them thy word; and **the world** hath hated them, because they are not of **the world**, even as I am not of **the world**.

[2] Heavenly Citizenship

- Philippians 3:20* For our **conversation** is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:
- [Strong's 4175] **πολιτευμα** *politeuma*; 'a form of government, citizenship'.

Dual citizenship

- So as Christadelphians, as followers of the Lord Jesus, we have dual citizenship. A heavenly and an earthly citizenship. Yet, both of these citizenships are governed by the Lord Jesus.

Being obedient to government

- Romans 13:1 * ¶ Let every soul be **subject unto the higher powers**. For there is no power but of God: **the powers that be are ordained of God**.
- 2* Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.

Verses

Earthly Citizenship

Heavenly Citizenship

vv 1-2

To obey the laws of
the State ...

... but we cannot fight to
preserve them
(1 Peter 2:13)

vv 1-2

To respect and obey the
powers that be ...

... but we cannot become
involved in voting them in or
out of office (v1)

vv 6-7

To pay our taxes
to the State ...

... but we cannot give
an oath of allegiance
(Matthew 22:21)

Our 'heavenly' is to take precedent over our 'earthly' citizenship

- Acts 5:29* Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, **We ought** to obey God rather than men.
- [Strong's 1163] **δει** *dei*; 'it is necessary'.

Three demands on our conscience:

[1] Conscience demands that we are "subject unto the higher powers" (Romans 13:1), but at the same time we "Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's" (Matthew 22:21).

Three demands on our conscience:

[2] Conscience demands that we are faithful stewards in the Truth, serving one another with a fervent heart, and missing no opportunity to tell others about our beliefs (1 Corinthians 4:1-2, 1 Peter 1:22; 3:15-16).

Three demands on our conscience:

[3] Conscience demands that we are faithful stewards in the world, diligent in business, serving heartily our masters and looking after those that serve us (Romans 12:11, 1 Peter 2:18-19, Colossians 3:22-23, 1 Timothy 6:1-2).



Nebuchadnezzar was looking for the very best talent

- “the children of Israel” (Daniel 1:3)
- [Strong’s 1121] בן *ben*, can mean ‘young, child’
- Daniel 1:4* Children in whom was no blemish, but well favoured, and skilful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science, and such as had ability in them to stand in the king’s palace, and whom they might teach the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans.

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The true daily portion

- “daily provision” (1:5); RV: “a daily portion”
- This is “the portion of the king’s meat” (v8, 13, 15, 16)
- Exodus 16:4 “a certain rate every day”; RV: ‘a day’s portion’
- “a certain rate”: [Strong’s 01697] דָּבָר *dabar*
- KJV - word 807, thing 231, matter 63, acts 51, chronicles 38, saying 25, commandment 20
- They were to gather the ‘word’ daily (see Deuteronomy 8:3-4)

Re-education (Dan 1:7)

Daniel	'God is my judge'	Belteshazzar	'May Marduk or Bel protect my life' or ' Keeper of the hidden treasures of Bel '
Hananiah	'Yah who is gracious'	Shadrach	'The command of the moon' god Aku'
Mishael	'Who is like God?'	Meshach	'Who is what Aku is'
Azariah	'Yah has helped'	Abednego	'The servant of Nebo'

Daniel was going to protest

In 1:7 the prince of the eunuchs “gave” names

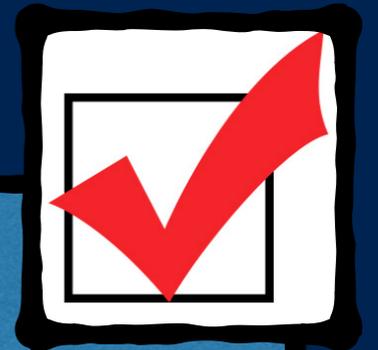
In v 8, Daniel “purposed” in his heart

The words are the same; [Strong's 07760] שָׁרַם
suwm, 'to put, place, set'

Daniel had made his mind up before the food had been offered him.

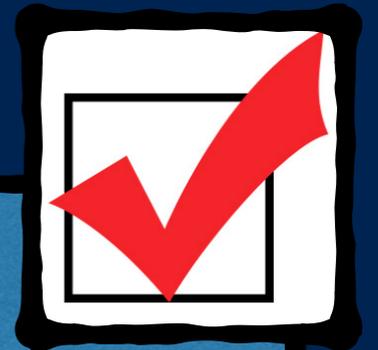


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'You have to fall down!'

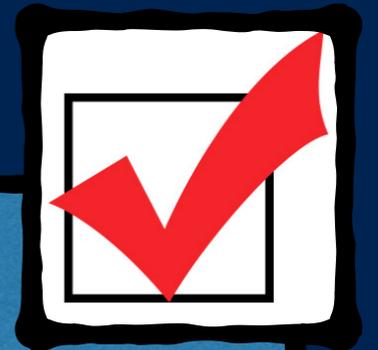
"fall down" (v5, 10 & 15)

Demanding their heart, mind, soul & strength!





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How the word “**conscience**” is used in our Bibles:

- Acts 23:1* And Paul, earnestly beholding the council, said, Men and brethren, I have lived in all good **conscience** before God until this day.
- Acts 24:16* And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a **conscience** void of offence toward God, and toward men.
- 1 Peter 2:19* For this is thankworthy, if a man for **conscience** toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully.

Daniel was “preferred”

“preferred” (Daniel 6:3)

[Strong's 5330] נָצַח *natsach* (Aramaic)

'to excel, distinguish oneself'

Root: 'to be bright, be preeminent,
be perpetual'

Finding fault with Daniel

“error” (Daniel 6:4)

[Strong’s 07960] שָׁלוּךְ *shaluw* (Aramaic)

KJV - fail 2, anything amiss 1, error 1
'neglect, remissness'

“fault” (v4)

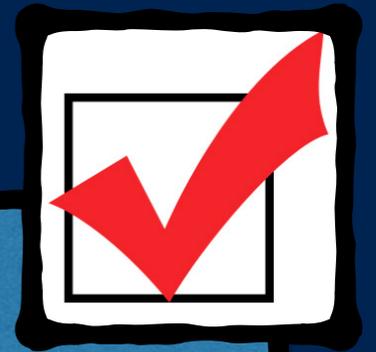
[Strong’s 07844] שָׁחַת *shachath* (Aramaic)

KJV - fault 2, corrupt 1
'to corrupt'



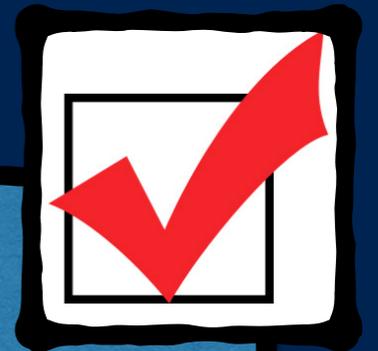


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See vv 10, 11, 16, 20, 22, 26 and 27.