

Romans 3:3 contains another question directed toward Paul by his Jewish opponents:

What then? If some did not believe, their unbelief will not nullify the faithfulness of God, will it?" (Romans 3:3)

These Jews were asking: "Suppose that Christ is the Messiah spoken of in the Law and the Prophets, and yet some of us do not believe. Will not God be obligated to save the whole Jewish nation?" Their goal was to prove that should God condemn a portion of the nation, He would be required to condemn the whole nation. They believed the converse as well, that should God save a portion of the Jewish nation, He would be obligated to save the entire nation. They perceived God in this manner due to an improper view of their chosenness/election. We will dig deeper to discover where and why they went awry.

As has already been verified, Paul's Jewish opponents perceived Jehovah as having chosen the Jewish nation to salvation due to having chosen them as His covenant people. In other words, they viewed themselves as part of God's family due to a choice God had made prior to their arrival on the earth. After all, several passages speak of God as having chosen the nation, some of which are listed below:

"For you are a holy people to the LORD your God; the LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for His own possession out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth. (Deuteronomy 7:6)

For you are a holy people to the LORD your God; and the LORD has chosen you to be a people for His own possession out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth. (Deuteronomy 14:2)

"The beasts of the field will glorify Me; The jackals and the ostriches; Because I have given waters in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert, to give drink to My chosen people. (Isaiah 43:20)

And Thy servant is in the midst of Thy people which Thou hast chosen, a great people who cannot be numbered or counted for multitude. (1Kings 3:8)

O seed of Israel His servant, sons of Jacob, His chosen ones! (1Chronicles 16:13)

And He brought forth His people with joy, His chosen ones with a joyful shout. (Psalm 105:43)

For the LORD has chosen Jacob for Himself, Israel for His own possession. (Psalm 135:4)

All Jews have been chosen/elected by God, for God chose to marry the nation of Israel at the base of Mount Sinai (Exodus 24). Were they chosen/elected so all Jews could be

saved, or were they chosen/elected to office? Their office would be taking the good news of the Messiah, Who would be born a Jew, to the Gentiles.

Exodus 19:6 confirms that Israel was declared to be “*a kingdom of priests,*” the priests being the teachers of God’s truth:

and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’ ...
(Exodus 19:6)

The Jews failed to accept this responsibility and kept the truth to themselves, for they viewed the Gentiles as unworthy of hearing the great news of the coming Messiah. Therefore, they sat on the truth instead of taking it to the Gentile nations. In fact, they worshipped the truth rather than the Source Who spoke it. Due to the disobedience exemplified by the Jews in their storied past, the seven years of Tribulation will be in progress before they will fulfill, in fullest measure, that to which they were originally chosen (elected). The 144,000 Jewish evangelists, empowered by God, will assist in bringing about this fulfillment by taking the good news of the gospel to the Gentiles. At that time, God’s original covenant with Abraham will be fulfilled to an even greater degree. This covenant guaranteed the patriarch the privilege of not only being the father of the Jewish nation, but the father of a multitude of nations:

Now the LORD said to Abram, “Go forth from your country, and from your relatives and from your father’s house, to the land which I will show you; and I will make you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great; and so you shall be a blessing; and I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.” (Genesis 12:1-3)

Israel’s chosenness/election has nothing to do with the eternal destiny of the individual Jews who make up the nation, for the whole nation is chosen/elected—yet many Jews have failed to repent and believe. These realities explain why Romans 9:27 and 30-33 teach that only a remnant of the Jews will be saved:

And Isaiah cries out concerning Israel, “Though the number of the sons of Israel be as the sand of the sea, it is the remnant that will be saved;
(Romans 9:27)

What shall we say then? That Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, attained righteousness, even the righteousness which is by faith; but Israel, pursuing a law of righteousness, did not arrive at that law. Why? Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as though it were by works. They stumbled over the stumbling stone, just as it is written, “Behold, I lay in Zion a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense, and he who believes in Him will not be disappointed.” (Romans 9:30-33)

A Jew is chosen/elected (to office) only because he is born into the nation that Jehovah chose/elected to office. Yet, it was commonly taught in Paul’s day that a Jew was righteous before Jehovah due to his/her Jewish heritage. Even Gentiles, such as Ruth,

were perceived as right before the Father solely due to their having become a proselyte to Judaism. This assumption could not be further from the truth, for Ruth received God's salvation through believing in the "seed" of Genesis 3:15. This "seed" is Christ (Galatians 3:16). Abraham, Moses, Joshua, David, Isaiah, John the Baptist (all Old Testament believers), and, yes, all who repent and believe during the church age (which began in Acts 2) have been saved in the same manner—through believing in the "seed," Jesus Christ.

This truth is critical, for the Jews who rejected Jesus perceived themselves as right with Jehovah on the basis of ancestry. Yet, they viewed Jehovah as requiring unwavering obedience to the Law if they were to maintain their covenant position and chosenness (election). The hollow deeds of the Law, no matter how righteous and sincere, cannot verify that the performer of the deeds is right with God (Romans 3:20; James 2:10). After all, how many deeds would Jehovah require under such an arrangement? He does not specify because the theology behind such a mindset is totally unscriptural. How could a man who had previously sinned ever hope to live by the righteous standard of the Law when the Law is broken in all points at the first hint of disobedience (James 2:10)?

Also, as a result of Jehovah having chosen (elected) Israel (the nation) to office, He, according to Numbers 6:27, put His "name upon the" nation:

And they shall put my name upon the children of Israel; and I will bless them. (Numbers 6:27 KJV)

Paul, in speaking of the disobedience of Israel, wrote:

For "the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you," just as it is written. (Romans 2:24)

God's name has been "blasphemed among the Gentiles" due to Jewish disobedience, for the Jews have misunderstood the purpose of God's election. They have viewed God's choice/election of the nation as being to salvation rather than to office. This fact brings us to a fork in the road, a fork impossible for the New Testament believer to bypass. In fact, the branch of the fork which one pursues is dependent on how one answers the following question: "Can God's name be blasphemed by church saints through misunderstanding and, therefore, misrepresenting what the Scriptures teach regarding the believer's chosenness/election during the church age?" As you ponder this question, realize that the Jews "blasphemed" God's name (made Him out to be something that He is not) by misunderstanding and, therefore, misrepresenting His view of the election of Israel. We, as church saints, must make certain to avoid this same error. Consequently, how we view the following passages is critically important:

"For the sake of Jacob My servant, And Israel My chosen one, I have also called you by your name; I have given you a title of honor though you have not known Me. (Isaiah 45:4)

The LORD did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any of the peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples, (Deuteronomy 7:7)

“The God of this people Israel chose our fathers, and made the people great during their stay in the land of Egypt, and with an uplifted arm He led them out from it. (Acts 13:17)

From the standpoint of the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but from the standpoint of God’s choice they are beloved for the sake of the fathers; (Romans 11:28)

Israel was not “*chosen*” (elected) to salvation, for many Jews have died unsaved. Thus, the word “*chosen*” (or election) can point to something other than God choosing/electing certain persons (or nations) to salvation from eternity past. In fact, the Scriptures have confirmed that Israel’s chosenness/election granted her an office, a special office indeed—that of bearing the Messiah and taking the news of His coming to the Gentiles.

Paul strongly taught that the chosenness/election of the nation (Israel) to the office of a kingdom of priests was not enough. The Jews of his day were in need of entering into the “*election of grace*” (Romans 11:5 KJV)—that which God bestows upon all individuals who accept His grace (by exercising personal repentance and faith while depraved) during the church age.

Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. (Romans 11:5 KJV)

All individuals during the church age who choose to repent and believe while depraved are placed into Christ (1Corinthians 12:13)—the “*chosen one*” of Isaiah 42:1 (NASB), the “*Elect one*” of Isaiah 42:1 (NKJV). Through this means they enter into His chosenness/election. They also become “*new*” creations in Christ (2Corinthians 5:17). Jesus was not chosen/elected to salvation. He was chosen/elected to the office of Messiah, a very special position (office) indeed. Thus, once New Testament believers have been placed into Christ and have become part of His body (1Corinthians 12:18-20), they enter into His chosenness/election and receive a special position (office) as well. This position (office) is used by God to accomplish His purposes, just as Jesus was elected/chosen as Messiah to accomplish, through the Father’s strength, the most important purpose of all.

The Jews who rejected Paul’s message failed to realize that God is faithful to His promises regarding salvation no matter how few Jews accept Christ, the “*seed*” of Genesis 3:15, as Savior. Isaiah spoke of this fact some 700 years before Christ’s First Coming:

And Isaiah cries out concerning Israel, “THOUGH THE NUMBER OF THE SONS OF ISRAEL BE AS THE SAND OF THE SEA, IT IS THE remnant THAT WILL BE SAVED; (Romans 9:27)

God is faithful and will remain faithful throughout eternity. He is faithful to every Jew or Gentile who has placed faith in the “*seed*” of Genesis 3:15, the “*seed*” being “*Christ*” (Galatians 3:16). Consequently, if all of your friends reject the gospel, deny Christ, curse

Him, walk away and never look back, His faithfulness to you will remain steadfast. God reminded Elijah of this truth in Romans 11:2-4:

Or do you not know what the Scripture says in the passage about Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel? "Lord, THEY HAVE KILLED THY PROPHETS, THEY HAVE TORN DOWN THINE ALTARS, AND I ALONE AM LEFT, AND THEY ARE SEEKING MY LIFE." But what is the divine response to him? "I HAVE KEPT for Myself SEVEN THOUSAND MEN WHO HAVE NOT BOWED THE KNEE TO BAAL." (Romans 11:2-4)

Paul's gospel was rejected by Jews on numerous occasions. No better example is found than in Acts 28:23-26:

And when they had set a day for him, they came to him at his lodging in large numbers; and he was explaining to them by solemnly testifying about the kingdom of God, and trying to persuade them concerning Jesus, from both the Law of Moses and from the Prophets, from morning until evening. And some were being persuaded by the things spoken, but others would not believe. And when they did not agree with one another, they began leaving after Paul had spoken one parting word, "The Holy Spirit rightly spoke through Isaiah the prophet to your fathers, saying, 'GO TO THIS PEOPLE AND SAY, "YOU WILL KEEP ON HEARING, BUT WILL NOT UNDERSTAND; AND YOU WILL KEEP ON SEEING, BUT WILL NOT PERCEIVE;" (Acts 28:23-26)

Only a portion of the Jews have accepted the gospel, meaning that many have died unredeemed. The unredeemed will not be given a second or third opportunity to "get it right" through *gilgul* (reincarnation), for this falsehood is taught nowhere in the Scriptures. Is it not amazing the hoops through which an incorrect system of thought must jump in an attempt to justify their contradictory reasoning? Now back to Romans 3:3:

What then? If some did not believe, their unbelief will not nullify the faithfulness of God, will it? (Romans 3:3)

Paul's Jewish opponents asked this question because they believed they were right with Jehovah due to their belonging to the chosen/elect nation of Israel. In their minds, God's "*faithfulness*" would be nullified should He save some of Israel and not all. Yet, according to 2Kings 22-23, a time existed when a majority of the Kingdom of Judah had submitted to sin. In fact, the Law of God was no longer perceived as the standard for righteous living. Then Josiah, a godly king, reinstated the Law. God, however, needed no reinstating. He had remained faithful to the believing remnant even while the majority of the nation floundered in disobedience. Time and time again God has displayed His relentless faithfulness; the magnificent news is that faithfulness continues today! In fact, when "*we are faithless, He remains faithful*" (2Timothy 2:13). Read about His

faithfulness in 2Timothy 1:12, 1Corinthians 10:13, 1Corinthians 1:9, 1Thessalonians 5:24, 2Thessalonians 3:3, Hebrews 2:17, Hebrews 3:6, and other similar passages.