

# The Logically Sound Temperamentally Deficient (Jonah 4:1-4)

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## I. Introduction

**A.** Let's consider this morning the second prayer of Jonah.

1. The first prayer is in Chapter 2 and took place in the belly of the fish.
2. In chapter four we find him praying again, this time in Nineveh.
3. Note the contrast between the two prayers. The first was in humility, the second in carnal pride.
4. In the first prayer we find him crying unto the Lord in the second we find him angry with the Lord.
5. In the first, he was empty of himself, in the second, he is full of himself.
6. In the first he is found justifying God and accusing himself, in the second he is found accusing God and justifying himself.

**B.** In both prayers Jonah was desperate.

1. In the first he was praying to live, in the second praying to die.
2. In both chapters, God is teaching him a lesson.
3. During his first lesson he was partly motivated by the fear of losing his life in the second there was the fear of losing face.

**C.** In his first Lesson, the circumstances involved physical pain - being digested by that great fish.

1. In his second it involved psychological pain - he was going to lose his reputation
2. He was humiliated both times but in different ways.
3. Physical pain isn't always the worst kind of pain nor is the fear of death always the worst kind of fear for this time Jonah is  
praying to die.
4. If he really wanted to die he could have done so in the belly of the fish.

## II. Jonah's Knowledge of God

**A.** Let's digress a moment to focus upon Jonah's knowledge of God.

1. Did he act this way because he was theologically deficient or was it a deficiency in his temperament.
2. In verse 2 he discloses his views on his theological grasp of God. We actually have a synopsis of his systematic theology.
3. Here is a man who discloses his theology and his carnality at one and the same time.

**B.** Here is a man who has experienced forgiveness but now raises the issue of the very sin of which he had been forgiven and even justifies it.

1. Have you ever done that?
2. Jonah is forgiven and given a second chance. He preaches to Nineveh and they repent.
3. God passes over his judgment and forgives them.
4. Jonah comes to God and says, "I told you so" This is why I fled in the first place. I knew you would do this.
5. We have in this statement the disclosure of his theology and the exposure of his carnality in the same sentence.

**C.** Is there a connection between the two?

1. We must look carefully at Jonah's knowledge of God. We ask ourselves what about his doctrine, is it sound?
2. Our first response would be to say - a carnal person like Jonah must have a defective theology or he wouldn't act like this.
3. But I assure you; there was nothing wrong with his theology.
4. Jonah acknowledged that God was a God of grace - that He was compassionate, forgiving and slow to anger.
5. Nothing wrong with that belief system but there was plenty wrong with Jonah.
6. Jonah had a correct and precise knowledge of God but he deduced from that knowledge wrong conclusions.

### **III. One Wrong Conclusion was - Evangelism is Unnecessary**

**A.** Jonah felt that because God so readily forgives sin then evangelism is unnecessary. He thought because God could forgive so

easily he wasn't really needed.

1. God he felt could have forgiven Nineveh apart from his preaching. It was that deduction

that led to his sin.

2. What we have before us are the two scandal of Christian Theology.

**B. The Two Scandals are Passivity and Antigonish**

1. The moment the carnal mind fastens upon the concept of God's grace it concludes that we have a license to sin.

2. Or take the doctrine of God's Sovereignty. His right to save whoever He chooses.

3. The carnal mind says, there is no need to preach the gospel nor any need for a missions program.

4. What we have then is a knowledge of God which is right but conclusions drawn that are wrong.

5. Jonah was really saying since you are such a forgiving God and really wanted to forgive them anyway, why didn't you just

forgive them. Why did I have to be a part of it.

**C. Embodied in Jonah's objections are the scandal I have just mentioned but they were faced and dealt with by Paul.**

1. Paul in Romans after dealing with justification by faith knew that somebody would say; Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound (Rom 6.1)

2. Then in Chapters 8 and 9 he deals with the doctrine of predestination. Paul is wise enough to know that someone will raise the question- Well why go preach?

3. So in chapter 10 he makes this statement Faith comes by hearing the Word of God but how can they believe unless they hear and how will they hear without a preacher.

4. There it is - preaching and faith are united forever together.

5. Was it William Carey who was told after appealing to his denomination to send him out as a missionary - Young man when God gets ready to save the heathen, He will do it without you.

6. Jonah's sin was to apply natural reason to revealed knowledge.

7. He was using worldly wisdom to explain the Word of God.

8. Jonah even made the statement - Back in my country.

9. How often I have heard that - Back north we do it this way.

10. When something goes against our tradition we reject it for that reason alone. Not on the basis of biblical premise.

#### **IV. Jonah's Conclusions led to psychological problem**

**A.** He said I am not needed and led him into self pity.

1. He concluded it was better to die than live.
2. God meant for the gospel to produce a dignity and a feeling of worth.
3. Jonah forgot that - He forgot the fact that he was needed.
4. He was a part of the whole equation - preached and as a result people repented and God forgave.

**B.** I have heard preachers say - God doesn't need you He doesn't need anyone - In a sense that is true.

1. We must stop at this point and see the antimony.
2. By that we mean two parallel principles that are irreconcilable but true.
3. God does not need us - Yes God does need us. Both are true.

**C.** God needs you - maybe you feel worthless and untalented.

1. Maybe you feel you are- not needed because you are getting older. Maybe you are ill and feel in the way.
2. When you feel worthless it is that feeling that produces self pity.
3. Self pity often produces anger toward God.
4. Have you ever felt depressed and snapped at God with something like this; "Why did you let that happen to me"

**D.** When you begin to blame God it isn't that the fault is with God but with you and the false conclusions you have drawn from your

beliefs.

1. There is one final thing I want to mention about Jonah's two prayers.
2. In the first he cried by reason of affliction and God heard him.
3. In the second he prays in anger and yet God heard him.
4. Does that surprise you? God doesn't even get angry he merely asked Jonah a question (verse 4)
5. The Lord is exceedingly kind and gentle.

**E.** Do you know the reason for that? We have one at the right hand of the Father who has already satisfied God's justice and His

anger.

1. Because He lives and loves God can deal tenderly with us.
2. The psalmist said; There is forgiveness with thee that thou mayest be feared. (Ps. 130:4)