

The Seven Levels of Judgment - Proper Response Part 2

by Dan Biser

The sermon emphasizes the importance of a proper response to God's word, which involves seeking knowledge and understanding, acknowledging sin and offense, and turning to God and seeking his face.

Duration: 34:31

Scripture: Daniel 9:3, Hosea 4:6, Hosea 6:1, Hosea 10:12-13, Hosea 11:9, Joel 1:13-14, Joel 2:1, Joel 2:12-17, Amos 5:4, Amos 6:6, Amos 7:2-3, Jonah 3:2, Micah 5:3

Topics: "Repentance", "Spiritual Revival"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of a proper response to God's word, focusing on seeking wisdom, knowledge, and understanding from God, repentance, acknowledging sin, seeking God's face, and returning to the Lord with fasting, weeping, and mourning. It highlights the need for humility, intercession, and prevailing prayer in the face of judgment and the call for the church to respond appropriately to God's instructions.

Transcript

Now I want to go from Daniel with that proper response into the book of Hosea and we'll go from Hosea to the end of the chapter and I'm going to give you quickly some of these verses that have shown a proper response that either the people of the children of Israel did it or that it was declared by the prophet that you and I need to glean from tonight that we can identify with these verses. And so pen and paper, marking in your Bible, whatever it is, that as I gave you an improper response I'm going to show you tonight the proper response and that as we see these things that we need to have that understanding. Am I doing this? Are we doing this? And if it doesn't begin here it will never take place out there in the world.

Here's where it begins tonight. A proper response that when God's people hear the word of God as Daniel that I had an understanding and I saw by reading and I had an observation and I had a wisdom that comes from God. Wisdom is a gift from God.

If any man lacked wisdom let him ask of God who gives to all men liberally, freely and upbraideth not and it shall be given to you. So it is to ask for wisdom to discern these things. Oh may the church understand it because we're running out of time with the hand, the cloud the size of a man's hand on the horizon even now.

So take in your Bible now from Daniel chapter 9. Let's go over to the next book Hosea chapter 4 and we'll see in this, again we looked at chapter 4 verse 6 for an improper response because it says in this verse, let's read it. My people are destroyed for a lack of knowledge. Now if the people and I'm going to do a contrast again as I did with an improper I'm going to do it here with proper.

If the people are destroyed because of a lack of knowledge then we are to look at this and we are to say we don't have to be destroyed if we have knowledge. So because thou has rejected knowledge well then don't reject knowledge. If this is the word of God being presented and there are some that throw their hands up and I know that because of doing the seven levels is that there's been feedback that I don't agree with that, I don't like that.

Well that's rejecting knowledge, not rejecting me, rejecting the word of God, the consistency of God who changes not. So in verse 6, my people are destroyed for a lack of knowledge. They can get knowledge.

Study to show that I saw them prove and workmen need not to be ashamed rightly dividing the word of God. But I therefore because you have rejected knowledge I will reject you. It is key that we understand knowledge about the word of God and the ways of God.

And once that is in place then you're on a proper route to get to where God wants us to be. Chapter 4 of Hosea verse 10. And they shall eat and not have enough, they shall commit whoredom and they shall not increase because they have left off to take heed to the Lord.

Wonderful word study that I did as I read through the Bible. In five months I do these word studies. Take heed was one of them.

And in that study it is take heed to these specific things in your life. Well, proper response again. Take heed.

Sit up and take notice. Pay attention to these things of what's going on. Having eyes that you cannot see.

Well, have eyes to see. Understand by knowledge and take heed to the things that God is speaking, sharing, and revealing his own nature to us. And then we, chapter 5 verse 15.

I will go and return to my place till they acknowledge their offense and seek my face. Right there. Proper response that God is instructing of his people that they acknowledge their offense.

And we covered that in the first level, the first night, that sin is the issue, sin is the problem. Well, let's identify that. Let us acknowledge their offense.

Let's acknowledge our offense. It begins with that acknowledgement. But if there are people sitting in the church today that say to themselves and say in prayer meetings, well, I don't know that I have any big sin.

Well, yes you do. Well, I don't know that that is really such a bad thing. Well, yes it is.

If it doesn't bring glory to God, whether you eat or drink or whatsoever you do, do for the glory of God. If it's not for God's glory, then it's for your glory. If it's not for God's glory, then it's for your desires and your pleasures.

And that is contrary to the things of God. Acknowledge your offense. Too many people want to sweep it under the rug.

Too many people want to bury it. Too many people don't want to bring it to the present to deal with it and so it festers. And so that they don't acknowledge their offense and therefore the offense remains.

There are numerous Bible verses that goes along with that. Acknowledge your offense and seek my face. Now we see that verse as we've gone through these studies.

We've used 2 Chronicles 7.14 numerous times. We're going to see more of that as a proper response. Don't seek the face of men.

Don't set your affections on your own face. Set your affections on things above. Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith.

Seek him. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus. Seek my face, the Lord's face.

Proper response. 5.15. Chapter 6, verse 1. Come, let us return unto the Lord. Oh, there's the call.

Come. Now the word study. Come came, cometh throughout the scripture.

Numerous times this verb is energized there. All you that are thirsty, come unto me. Over and over he gives that as a mandate for this principle.

Come, let us return unto the Lord. For he has torn, he will heal us, he has smitten, he will bind us up. Look at what the Lord promises us.

If you return. There again we come to that. If my people return unto me, then I will return unto them.

God is waiting for us to come unto him. Come unto me, all you that labor heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Come unto me and seek me and find me.

So, chapter 6, verse 1. Proper response in the scripture there. Chapter 10, verse 10 and 12. This is a wonderful verse that, two verses that if you don't have memorized or marked, please do that tonight.

This is so important. In Hosea, chapter 10, verse 12 and 13. So do yourselves in righteousness.

Reek in mercy. Righteousness and mercy does not come from the efforts of men, does it? We saw by the attributes of God, the nature of God, the response of God, numerous times over we've seen it. Righteousness comes from God.

The Lord our righteousness in the book of Lamentations and Jeremiah tells us. So do yourselves in righteousness unto him. Do right to God.

Reap mercy. Proper response. Be righteous.

Blessed are the righteous. Those are the things that God has ordained. Break up your fallow ground.

Do not rest content for where we are presently. We've come a long way, but don't stop. Keep plowing.

Keep going forward. Things in our life of self, things in our life of the world, things in our life of religion, of tradition, it needs to be plowed up so that it can be gotten rid of. For it is time to seek the Lord.

There's where we argue. Seek my face. Seek the Lord.

It's time. Till he come, bring righteousness upon us. Perseverance, steadfastness, until he comes.

We don't do this just tonight and we'll say, okay, we're done. We do this until God comes. Faithfulness.

When God's people get faithful, steadfast, persevering, long-suffering, just as he has been with us, then God says, now I'm ready to come. Proper response. You plow wickedness, good, wreak iniquity.

You've eaten the fruit of the lies because of its trust in your way. Proper response. If improper response is trusting in our way, then a proper response is trusting in God's way.

In the multitude of your mighty men. So chapter 10, verse 12 and 13, proper response laid out for us there. Chapter 11, verse 9, I will not execute the fierceness of my own, God speaking.

I will not return to destroy Abraham, for I am God and not man, for the Holy Ghost is in the midst of you. Promise. Promise of hope.

Proper response is that you hold on to hope. I do not need to walk around out here saying the sky is falling, the sky is falling. There's no hope, there's no chance.

Let's go get a bomb shelter and just bury ourselves or let's go join some monastery and save ourselves. But no. God is in the midst.

We are not a people unto ourselves. We are the Lord's people. The church is the Lord's.

And so it is that his people ought to understand that promises that he has given, it is that he is going to fulfill. Hope is found in verse 9. Chapter 12, verse 6. We go to the next proper response. A very short verse.

Therefore turn thou to thy God. Again, the action. Understanding this in an illustration is that if we're going this way and God says wrong way, then turn and come back.

It's the act of repentance. You're going this way towards hell, towards sin, towards the world, towards the things of self. And God says turn back to me, repent.

Come back to me. Keep mercy and judgment. You see the beginning now of just this one book of this repetition of seeking, of mercy, these things of proper response that is going to be illustrated over and over again.

God's consistency. If we understand this and make the application, then we shall receive from the Lord. Keep mercy, judgment, and wait on thy God.

Not haphazardly. Wait on thy God continually. Now, the call for united extraordinary prayer is by doing it in a way that hasn't been done in a long time.

I've heard of different times for prayer meetings. The church in North America has been based for a long time. And I grew up with this in the 70s and the 80s as I was a kid.

Came to the Lord at the age of seven where God touched me, drew me, and said you're mine. And from that beginning, it was always Sunday school, Sunday morning worship, evening worship. We had training discipleship class on Sunday night.

But Wednesday night, apart from choir practice, was prayer meeting and Bible study. That's the way it was always printed up. And churches across the Southern Baptist Convention, prayer meeting and Bible study.

And those that have studied in the history of the church have found is that we went from prayer meeting once a week, where the corporate body came together to pray, to divided, where it became half Bible study, half prayer. And then because of other activities, youth programs, music, other things happening, business meetings, prayer was forced out and everything became with what the church wanted. Now you've slowly over decades eroded that aspect of waiting on God continually.

So much so that now presently today, most churches in North America, over 80% have no prayer meeting of any kind for the body of Christ. They might open in prayer, they might pray over the offering, they might have a church call down prayer of sickness and needs and things like that. But there are very few churches that have a prayer room.

There are very few churches that have prayer meetings. Now, if that's not done locally, in a local church, then you know that there is not this united, extraordinary prayer happening of all the body of Christ coming together. Now in Hampshire and Mineral County, we have worked and labored and began to try to fuse this together.

Reaching across and saying, we're going to do this every week. We're going to meet just for prayer. And we're inviting you of all the body of Christ to come together to meet this proper response.

That it is that we correct that which is wrong and that which is offensive to God and that which has cost us so much in this present day. Now, Hosea chapter 12 verse 6, we see the instructions that are there. Wait on your God continually.

Do it and be faithful with it. Chapter 14 verse 1, getting bogged down here, I'm going to have to pick it up here a little bit more quicker here on these verses to get to the summary of all this. Oh Israel, return unto the Lord thy God, for thou hast fallen by thy iniquity.

Recognition. We have fallen by our iniquity. We confess to that.

We see that, we understand that. Now he says return. Return unto me, I will return unto you.

Yes Lord. Yes Lord, we will obey you and follow through with that. Verse 2, in the following response, chapter 14 verse 2, take with you words and turn to the Lord.

Return verse 1, turn to the Lord. Verse 2, take away all iniquity. Receive us, so will we render the cast of our lips.

Faithfulness to turn away, turn to God, return to him and he will take away our iniquity. As we confess it, as we repent and forsake it, God is faithful in his promises. Joel chapter 2, I'm going to get bogged down here a little bit but I'll do the best I can to hasten this.

In chapter 1 of Joel, very next book, Minor Prophets here, Joel chapter 1 verses 13 and 14, proper response, corporately. Okay? Gird yourself, lament you priests, how you ministers of the altar, leadership in the church, pastors, deacons, elders, teachers, those that how and weep. There's an anguish, there's a burden there, there's corruption, there's been dropping down into hell faster than we can reach them and no power can reach them.

As we saw in one of the judgments and God is responding. This is your response. Gird yourselves, lament you priests, how you ministers of the altar, come, lie all night, all night in sackcloth, you ministers of my God.

For the meat offering and the drink offering is withheld from the house of God. If the house of God, the church of God is not doing what God's house is supposed to be doing, then it is the minister's response to make sure that it does get done. And the response here of this lamentation by God's men and God's servants is what's supposed to be done.

Verse 14, sanctify fast. We're going to fast once a week. Now Jesus said, by this issue of fasting here, he said, the righteousness of the Pharisees, you must do better than what they are.

Now what was the righteousness of the Pharisees? They fasted twice a week? We don't even fast once a week. They gave their tithes, people were stealing their tithes left and right from the church. The Pharisees, he said, your righteousness must exceed the righteousness of the Pharisees.

For what purpose? That you might work the works of God. There's going to be a separation where we are elevated out of our status quo, out of our contentment and apathy, is to say, this is what's our response. All night we're going to labor.

We're going to fast. Sanctify fast. We're going to lay all night and weep and cry unto the Lord.

Gather the elders and all the inhabitants of the land into the house of the Lord your God and cry unto the Lord. We're all to lift up a cry. The only time that I've ever seen, in my short life, is when Jim Simla gave a altar call invitation and heart cry for revival a number of years ago.

And it was based on a very emotional, touching fabric in our life, children and grandchildren. He told the story of his daughter, how she had departed from the Lord, how they had an exceptional prayer meeting that Tuesday night for his daughter to be brought back. Two days later she shows up back at the house and Jim Simla turned to those 500 pastors and wives that was there and he said, Do you have a wayward son or daughter? Do you have a wayward granddaughter or grandson? Would you come to the Lord? And I heard wailing.

I heard screaming. I heard this howling because of that lamentation that their children and grandchildren were not where they were supposed to be. And they knew, and again, God's people ought to know, they're going to die and go to hell because of their rebellion.

And you and I, as knowledgeable of these things, can intercede and have a proper response to God on their behalf. So Joel chapter 1 verse 13 and 14, then in chapter 2, below the trumpet and sound, verse 1, Sound the alarm of the Holy Mount, let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the day of the Lord comes, and it is nigh at hand. Sound the word, the warning.

Now again, I don't want to give too much on this, but I'm just going to say a series like what we've studied, these seven levels of judgment, improper response, proper response, calling and account to us presently here today is fulfilling chapter 2 verse 1, It's to get the word out. It's to get it in our hearts and our minds that when we wake up in the morning, we're thinking about this. When we see activities during the day, when we see news headlines, where we hear about things happening in our local communities, it hits us and we see this.

Now proper response is that we cry out to God to respond to us as we're responding to Him. Proper response. Now, a long-living call to action here is verse 12 through 17.

Therefore also now say it to the Lord. Again, turn to me, description here, with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, with mourning. Do you begin to see? Here again is the continuation of a proper response.

Fasting is mentioned in all these books. Weeping, mourning, anguish, over the sin, over the condition. I've been in prayer meetings where not one tear was shed.

And I don't believe that you had a healthy, proper prayer meeting without weeping. And not worked up, not emotionally charged, but by God breaking of us because of where we're supposed to be. With all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, mourning.

Rinse your heart, not your garments. Turn unto the Lord your God. He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, great kindness, and repents him of the evil.

Who knows if he will return and repent and leave a blessing behind him. Even a meat offering and a drink offering unto the Lord your God. Again, blow the trumpet in silence.

Sacrifice the fasting. Call the solemn assembly. Gather the people together.

Gather them together to teach them this, to let them know these things and to respond to these things. Sacrifice the people, the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children, those that suck the breast. Let the bridegroom go forth in his chamber and the bride out of her closet.

Let the priest, the ministers of the Lord, weep between the porch and the altar and let them say, spare thy people, O Lord. Give not thy heritage to reproach, that the heathens should rule over them. Wherefore should they say among them, the people, where is their God? Proper response, you see it now, beginning to shape up in these different verses.

Weeping, fasting, crying out, minister's responsibility. Again, it's founded in the church. Revival does not come to the lost.

Revival comes to the church. Proper response happens in the church. It is on our shoulders.

It is on our backs right now that this judgment that is destroying this nation is found in the body of Christ. And either we will respond to it and we will see revival and we will see God's mercy or we will improperly respond and we will be destroyed and we will be singing ashes to ashes, dust to dust. These characteristics are declared over and over in this way.

Proper response. I want to move on into the book of Amos. We get it.

And there are numerous verses here, not a whole host compared to improper. But I want to give these to you so that you see we begin to continue to culminate the characteristics here described. In chapter 5 of Amos, verse 4 and 6, a word that we've already looked at, that we've already seen.

And again, we're going to start to see repetition here of the same proper response that God is demanding. Now again, get it. Understand it.

But don't walk out of here tonight without doing it. In chapter 5, verse 4, verse 6, seek me and you shall live. How many times have we just said this? 2 Chronicles 7.14. In the book of Hosea.

If you seek him, you will find him. Jeremiah 29.13. When you do it with all your heart, ask and it shall be given. Seek and you shall find.

Matthew 7.7 and 7.8. All throughout the Bible. Seek me. Why? Because he is life and you shall live.

Is the church seeking him? They don't say, yes, they're seeking him. They're not. They're seeking hot dogs and marshmallows.

They're seeking entertainment and movies. The answer to our problem of judgment is not in Hollywood or having a bigger box office draw by the most local church movie. Proper response of God is when God's people are seeking him the way that he has instructed us.

And you can't find it in a movie theater. You can't find it in front of the television set. That occupies an hour and a half, two hours of your time that keeps you from properly responding to God.

Yes, you might hear the gospel. Yes, you might see an illustration. But it does not do it the way God said this is a proper response.

And therefore we are doing it improperly and continuing to provoke God by man's way. Humanistic ways instead of the way that the Lord said. Seek me and you shall live.

Chapter 5 verse 14 another instruction. Seek good. Seek good.

Find it here. Seek good and not evil that you may live. There it is again.

Life. I am the way, the truth, and the life. Jesus said in John 14.

Seek good and not evil. We're trying to seek both things. I've seen this snowballing in the church.

They want God for salvation. I guess when I was growing up in the 80s and 90s, I faced this a little bit. And some of the activities that I was at in different churches and organizations.

But it was the issue was still out there. People that wanted Jesus as their Savior, but they didn't want him as their Lord. And I thought the Tozer back in the 50s and 60s dealt with that.

And I thought it was pretty much to rest. But I still could see it in here. And I still see it today.

They want God on Sunday morning. But by Sunday afternoon, they want a pigskin underneath the banner of the NFL. They don't want God in the way that God said.

Seek me. Seek good, not evil. But men are seeking evil things.

They're seeking money. They're seeking popularity. They're seeking fame and riches.

And everything's about the dog. None of it is about God's glory. We come back to that again.

Proper way of the church to respond is for God's glory. If I glorify God through him judging me and me, going through cataclysmic events, and doing all these things of judgment, then so be it. Job lost his ten children, lost his possessions, lost his health.

The only thing that he had left was his own ability. And his wife comes out to him and says, curse God and die. But his words were, God gives, God takes away.

Blessed be the name of the Lord. God was glorified in the midst of those judgments. Seek good, not evil, and you shall live.

Not reverse it. Chapter 6 of Amos, verse 6. That drink wine in bowls and anoint themselves with the chief ointments, but they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph. Not grieved for the affliction that's happening.

Lack of compassion. Lack of not being broken. My eyes are dry, as Keith Green wrote that song.

My eyes are dry. Why in the world does anybody in the church today have dry eyes with the condition that we're at? I go back to Joel. The instruction of Joel is primary to these verses that I'm giving to you now.

Weep, howl, mourn, cry, all those things. In our supplication, intercession of the ways of the Lord. Because it is proper and received by God.

When God's people weep, Jesus beheld the city and he wept over it. Paul uses that with his description. And I have wept over you in my prayers.

It is the continuation of that for you and I to weep before the Lord on behalf of this. Proper response. They have not been afflicted for these things.

They have not mourned. They have not wept. But a proper response is for you and I to do that.

Chapter 7. Verse 2 and 3. God's responding here. And it came to pass that when they had made an end of eating the grass and the land, then I said, O Lord God, forgive I beseech thee. By whom shall Jacob arise? For he is small.

God's response. The Lord repented for this. It shall not be saved, the Lord.

Why? Proper response. The prophet, when he saw the condition, responded to it brightly, cried out to God for mercy. An intercessor that stands in the gap.

Moses. God says to Moses, step aside, Moses. I'm going to come down and consume them in a moment.

And Moses steps right in front of God and says, I won't let you do this, Lord. You can't do this. You promised that you would bring them to the promised land and that you would fulfill your covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

And it says that God repented because he found an intercessor. And you and I today can mark that in Amos chapter 7. When Amos cried out, God said, I will repent of this. I will not destroy them.

Again, it's mentioned in chapter 7, verses 4 through 6. Same thing. God's going to judge. God is judging in this.

And then Amos cries out in God's response in verse 6. And the Lord repented. The Lord also shall not. This shall not be also saved, the Lord.

Proper response. Now, I want to jump and go over to the book of Jonah. We go from Amos to Obadiah to Jonah.

We saw the improper response. God said to Jonah, rise up, go to Nineveh. And Jonah took off the opposite way.

Improper response. Disobedience. Rebellion.

But a proper response we find by the people that when Jonah did get vomited out by the whale and he arrived in Nineveh and he preached the message, he's doing it right now. In chapter 3, we see verse 2, 5, 6, and 7. Proper response by the city, by the king, by the people. Now, again, this is a contrast where most of this that I've been sharing is to the church.

The response of the church. If we don't get it, they won't get it. But there are also responsibilities laid on them.

Their excuse of ignorance only goes so far. And that when God calls to heathen, to repentance, and they refuse to respond improperly, then God destroys them. But if they respond as a nation, as a people, God will find favor and mercy.

Chapter 3, verse 2. Arise, go to that great city. Preach unto it the preaching that I bid you. And he rose up in obedience and he did it.

Verse 3. Response to the people. Verse 5. To the people of Nineveh. They believed God.

Proclaimed a fast. Put on cycloth. Here again we see it.

From the greatest of them even to the least of them. For word came unto the king of Nineveh and he arose. The leadership here.

The government. The one in charge. Arose from the strong.

Laid his robe. Humility. Covered himself with cycloth and sat in ashes.

Humility by the leadership. Humility by the townspeople. The common people.

Verse 7. Proclamation. They proclaimed and published to Nineveh by the degree of the king and his nobles. Let neither man nor beast.

Herd nor flock. Taste anything. Let them not feed nor drink water.

Fast. Humility. Bowing down before the Lord.

Proper response as we've seen chapter after chapter and book after book. And then God says because they have repented I will not destroy them. Jonah.

Contracts. Improper response at the beginning. But proper response by the city of Nineveh and the men of the city were spared.

Going into the book of Micah. Chapter 5. Verse 3. A lot of improper verses were in Micah. But there's only one verse here that we want to see as a proper response.

In chapter 5. Verse 3. Therefore will he give them up until the time that she which prevailed had brought forth. That then the remnant of his brethren shall return unto the children of Israel. When they prevailed.

Now again that comes back to that description of intercession. Of anguish that's there. Prevailing to bring forth.

Paul uses it. When I prevailed for you. Until you were born of the spirit.

Prevailed in pregnancy and they birthed a child in labor pains. It is that same thing that the church. Proper response is that we must be in anguish.

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