

A Qualified Mediator

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Amos 7. I tried to go further but as my heart and mind meditated on the first six verses, I knew I just had to stop here. Amos 7, beginning in verse 1, going through verse 6.

1 Thus the Lord GOD showed me, and behold, He was forming a locust-swarm when the spring crop began to sprout. And behold, the spring crop was after the king's mowing. 2 And it came about, when it had finished eating the vegetation of the land, that I said, "Lord GOD, please pardon! How can Jacob stand, For he is small?" 3 The LORD changed His mind about this. "It shall not be," said the LORD. 4 Thus the Lord GOD showed me, and behold, the Lord GOD was calling to contend with them by fire, and it consumed the great deep and began to consume the farm land. 5 Then I said, "Lord GOD, please stop! How can Jacob stand, for he is small?" 6 The LORD changed His mind about this. "This too shall not be," said the Lord GOD.

"A Qualified Mediator." That's what I've entitled this section as we'll try to unpack it phrase by phrase. A qualified mediator. You know, it seems that there is a – note the word "seems" – that there is an irreconcilable conflict in the quest to save man. The God who created us, to whom we are accountable, is just and his justice demands full punitive wrath against sin. But he's not only just, this God is also a God of grace and he chooses to extend undeserved blessing and forgiveness to unworthy sinners, but how can he bless and forgive sinners and at the same time uphold his justice? Well, there is an answer.

Now, going back through where we've come from and where we're going to in the book of Amos, we remember back that in the first part of the book of Amos we saw the lion roar, the roaring of wrath and coming judgment. Then sort of the middle part of Amos, a little bit difficult to be real specific but generally in the middle part, we see the enemy, speaking specifically of Assyria, begins to encircle the land. Now we come to part three and we get into it actually in this text, and that is that the blow begins to fall. Judgment is here.

Now, another thing that's interesting as you get to the end of Amos is the phrase "the Lord GOD," and that can be translated, "the sovereign Yahweh." That phrase, "the Lord GOD," or "the sovereign Yahweh," you could use the word Jehovah, "sovereign

Jehovah." I'll use them interchangeably. Anyway, that word is used 20 times in all of Amos but it's used 11 times in the last three chapters as if Amos is warning to remind you, "Jehovah is sovereign. Jehovah is sovereign."

Now, Motyer who wrote a great commentary on the book of Amos said this phrase, "the Lord GOD," or "the sovereign Yahweh," speaks of the absolute liberty of Yahweh to implement his own will and to do that which is in accordance to his own name. The absolute liberty to implement his own will and to act in accordance to his own name. Now when we say "name," in the biblical sense that means his own character, his own nature or attributes. He does what is true to himself. And by the way, when God does what is true to himself, nobody gets to vote on it nor negotiate about it or discuss it. It's always right or righteous and good.

Now, when God uses the word "Yahweh," the name "Yahweh" was that unique personal and special name by which God revealed himself to his chosen elect nation, Israel. Now to the other nations, he was just known as Elohim perhaps. I'm not saying they didn't know Yahweh but they were not in covenant with the Yahweh aspect. They knew Elohim which speaks of majesty and authority and dominion. But to the Jews, to Israel, he was Yahweh or Jehovah which means that he is the sovereign one who is – listen now – as sovereign to save as he is sovereign to judge. Now don't miss that. God is sovereign in judgment and he's fully sovereign in salvation and that's what Jehovah communicated.

Now you can expand that out a little bit when God spoke to Israel and said, "I am now Jehovah to you. I am Yahweh." He was communicating to them that, "I am holy and just. I do righteously punish sin but I also will redeem my own children and keep them secure for eternity." Holy and just, will punish sin, but will save my children and keep them for all eternity.

So when Jehovah here visits his people, we're seeing this unfolding now as we get to chapter 7, when he visits his people, we find that those who are counterfeits and not truly his, and that was the majority of the nation according to the preaching of Amos, those will perish, but those who do know him in saving faith from their hearts and love him, for them eternal security.

Three points here. Very simple outline. I. The locust judgment. The locust judgment. Amos is seeing this and Amos says as he writes down in what we have as chapter 7, verse 1, "Thus the Lord GOD showed me, and behold, He was forming a locust-swarm." He was forming. God was making something special. This teaches us a truth and that is that our great Creator is still creating. He's forming a locust swarm. God is active and he is intimately involved in all of his creation. In John 5:17, Jesus said, "My Father is working until now, and I Myself am working." There is this false notion that even gets tangled up in Christendom today that somehow God just sort of made everything, set up some natural laws and now he's just sort of distant and not involved. No, listen to me: God is personally actively involved in creation and in context of Amos pronouncing judgment, the Scripture makes it very clear that God is actively involved in building up the wrath that will come against sinners in the final days. God is active. He's involved.

So as we see here, Amos says, "I saw God forming a locust swarm." You know, that's a type of grasshopper. It might be technically not considered a grasshopper but it looks like one to me when I see them. But he's making this locust swarm not for the good of nature but to serve his moral government in the correction of men. Psalm 148:8 the Psalmist reminds us that, "Fire and hail, snow and clouds; Stormy wind, fulfilling His word." Friend, things just don't happen on planet earth, it's all because of the sovereign Jehovah. It's all controlled by him.

Now foolishly, men grow angry at a pestilence, men can grow angry at some sort of natural disaster when it comes, but they're like a dog that bites the rock that hit them instead of looking for the hand that threw the rock. You're focused on the wrong thing.

Now we see in verses 1 and 2, Amos says here's this locust swarm God is forming and "when the spring crop began to sprout," that's when the locust swarm came, "And behold, this was after the king's mowing." Their growing season actually was through the winter and then early spring, sort of like we have winter wheat around here. When I was a boy, you never heard of winter wheat in the South but we have it growing around here now and that's harvested early, really in the springtime and then they can put in another crop. Well, the winter crop had already come in and the king always mowed that for his own use and for his kingdom's use. The people depended on the second, the spring crop and that's when the locust was coming, when the people needed to get their crops in for their own sustenance and, in most cases, even survival.

Now, verse 2 tells us, "And it came about, when it had finished eating the vegetation of the land." So here's this natural disaster, a judgment of God coming against Israel, and here's what Amos does, Amos said, "Lord GOD, please pardon! For how can Jacob stand, He is so small?" So the picture is that a portion of judgment has been completed and then Amos steps in, he intercedes for the Lord and asks the Lord to stop at that point and at the pleading of this faithful preacher, God stays his hand and does not extend the pestilence to the length he had previously intended.

So what's going on here? The Bible even says, you can translate it, "The Lord changed his mind." There is something of providence and paradox here. If he is the God of sovereignty and he is providential, that means he knows everything, his will cannot be thwarted, his mind cannot change. True, but here the man of God intercedes and prays and says, "O God, please stop!" and God says, "Okay, then, I'll stop." Providence but paradox.

Well, the truth of the matter is, church, the subject outstrips our poor logic. Until glorification, God uses the woefully limited vehicle of man's mental understanding to illustrate to us something of the glories of his person and work. In other words, God at this time by his own choices, hasn't got anything better to work with than our puny brains and our puny brains can't take in the magnanimous, stupendous, wondrous mysteries and glories of the Godhead. He taught us this when he tried to teach us about his own person, does he not? He teaches us in the Scripture that he is a Trinity. He is God the Father, at

the same time he is God the Son, and at the same time he is God the Holy Spirit. Three distinct persons but he says, "But I am one. I'm one God in three personalities." We can't grasp that. We try to say, "Well, he's like water and then water can be steam and water can be ice." All of that fails to illustrate. He's beyond finding out.

So Amos here and again as we'll see in just a moment in the fire judgment, says that, "I interceded in prayer and the Lord changed his mind." At the intercession of Amos, God holds back what he had proclaimed he would do, at least due to the full. Now, let's remind ourselves: God is omniscient, knows all things, and God changes not. Truth. Yet he responds to the prayer of his people and things ordained change. Yet in the end of it all, his perfect foreordained will is achieved. It's beyond our capacity to grasp. Listen to me, church: we do not shrink back one iota from the abundance of clear biblical teaching on the sovereignty of God but the sovereignty in God includes his people praying and God acting on those prayers. Don't you ever stop seeking God. Don't you ever stop praying. Don't you ever stop interceding for that lost spouse or loved one or friend or whoever it may be, because God hears and God moves and God answers his children. "I thought he was sovereign?" He is, he's just bigger than your brain. By the way, aren't you glad of that? I am presently living in a culture and in a society that has decided it will be its own god. Every man can be his own god and every man can do what's right in his own eyes and all I'm seeing is filthiness, vileness, perversion and wickedness. Aren't you glad he's above us?

Now, as Amos is interceding here, God stays his hand. I think we see three powerful things and I'm going to weave these through hopefully the rest of the message. Three great truths of the way God deals with humanity. 1. His holy justice must be satisfied through the punishment of sin. Holy justice must be satisfied through the punishment of sin. 2. Holy grace must be satisfied through the saving and securing of the children. Holy justice must be satisfied, punishing all sin and all have sinned, but holy grace must be satisfied through the saving and securing of the children forever and Israel, they're his elect children, they're his elect nation. 3. Amos shows us this can only be achieved through a qualified mediator. Amos stands in the gap. He mediates between God and the people and this problem is resolved. Justice and grace both are achieved.

Let's go now to the fire judgment. The locust judgment, a natural calamity God sent on Israel in judgment but now the fire judgment. I'm convinced this is a symbolic expression of Tiglath-Pileser, the king of Assyria, and his mighty warring army that left no mercy on anyone. Notice how he words it there, verse 4, "Thus the Lord GOD showed me, and behold, the Lord GOD was calling to contend with them by fire." So notice though the instrument is Tiglath-Pileser and the Assyrian army, God is calling them to do this. Sovereign. Assyria is the instrument in God's hand to do his bidding. "And it consumed the great deep." It's just an expression of how thorough and how great the might of Assyria's destruction was. "And it began to consume the farm land."

So when he says he's calling to contend with them by fire, I think there's a lot here we need to talk about right quick. You see, when men rebel and Israel was in full bore rebellion, when men rebel, in effect they take on God. When man rebels, he challenges

God. "I'll take you on. I don't have to humble myself to you." In rebellion, man says, "I'll have none of you, God. I'll find my own purpose for my life. I'll seek my own pleasures apart from any influence by you. I will defy your laws and I will reject any notion of sovereign authority over me. I will be my own god."

Further in rebellion, man prides himself as wise, parading before all his success, his wealth, his power that he's amassed in proof of how wise he has been. "Look how good I'm doing!" Remember how good Israel was doing? Her borders are spread beyond anything they've known since the glory days of Solomon. They have new wealth, new power, new authority. The nations of the earth have begun to esteem them and admire them for their new open-mindedness to everything that the other nations were about instead of their commitment to the confines of holy truth and morality. Oh, they were just so successful and they were priding themselves on that and God is patient but sooner or later God takes the challenge. Man picks the fight, God patiently waits and sends warnings but finally God finishes the fight that he didn't start. Are you hearing me? So when men rebel, they challenge the omnipotence of God.

Some of you men, perhaps you work with guys, you've got relatives you respect and we can respect men who don't know God, in common grace they may have achieved things that are of some esteem, in the world that is, but you wonder, "Do we really have to stand on what we stand on? Do we really have to believe what we believe down at Grace Life? Do we really have to have these convictions?" You listen to me: every rebellion is a contention against God. You stay with the stuff, you stay on the truth, you keep standing, you stay anchored in truth because the day will come when God will take up the challenge.

That's what this is about. Now, remind ourselves: 150 years of this open Baal Jehovah cult worship has been going on, a rejection of the standards of morality, abusing and destroying the poor and the dependent for their own glory and their own wealth, and God's been patient but God says, "Okay, it's time for me to finish this fight that I didn't start." At this point, God enters into judgment and man finds that short-lived were his gains and eternal are his losses.

Fire is a symbol of the most severe of God's judgments and here it's a symbol again of Tiglath-Pileser and the mighty Assyrian army. The Assyrians would bring great and extensive destruction to the nation of Israel but – listen – not complete destruction. Why? Let me look at it again, verse 5, "Then I," that's Amos, "said, 'Lord GOD, please stop! How can Jacob stand, for he is small?' The LORD changed His mind about this." Again, through the intercession of this faithful preacher, a remnant of the land and of the people is spared. And again, because we have no better way of trying to describe God, we have this anthropomorphic expression, that is, describing God in human terms because we don't know any other way to describe him; that he changed his mind like men but he doesn't change his mind in the way men change their mind, it's just the best way we have of saying what's happening because we can't grasp it. Like we say the strong arm of God or whatever we use, that anthropomorphic designation for God that we might understand him the best we possibly can.

So Amos stands in the gap. He is the mediator that stands between God and the people and intercedes for them and this leads us to III. Jesus, the qualified Mediator. You cannot read this text and not see Amos as a type of Christ. What a powerful and wonderful portrait of Christ and salvation we see in this text. You see, the qualified mediator, notice how we used the definite article there, "the" qualified mediator. He performs a feat that we could never ever have even fathomed in a million years of contemplation and research. He takes the seemingly contradictory attributes of holy justice and holy grace and he brings them together in a beautiful oneness and harmony. Divine wrath against sin has the might of holy justice behind it, divine saving power has the might of holy grace behind it, and God resolves the issue through a qualified mediator.

When wrath backed by holy justice meets saving power backed by holy grace, what's going to happen? Well, holy wrath must serve the ends of holy justice and holy saving power must serve the ends of holy grace. It seems like they're on a collision. It seems like they're irreconcilable. It seems like those two both can't stand but grace has a secret ally. Grace has, if you will, a secret key. Grace has the rook card. Have you ever played rook? No matter where you are in the game, what hand you're playing, when somebody throws the rook down they win that hand. Grace has the rook card, the secret key, and that secret key, that special ally, that if you will rook card is love. Love. Love is that aspect, that capacity that can come embodied in the person of Jesus Christ, the one and only Mediator between God and man. Listen to Jeremiah 31:3, he says, "I have loved you with an everlasting love." So love trumps the whole thing. Love gets the job done. Love makes all the attributes of God at peace and satisfied. Through the embodiment of love, Jesus Christ, the one Mediator. 1 Timothy 2:5, "For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."

That's why I say that pluralism is a lie. Pluralism can never work. America only worked because America was built on the Judeo-Christian ethic. America would never be America and America will never work built on the doctrines of Islam or any other religion, and when you bring the two together, there are contradictions and conflicts that cannot be resolved. The only resolving would be if we are forced to deny all of our beliefs and become secularists, then we'd have to find some super-duper smart elitist to tell us now what should our values and principles be since we've disregarded what our forefathers established.

There is one Mediator. Not Buddha. Not Confucius. Not Mohammed. Not anyone else. Not Karl Marx. There is one Mediator, the man Christ Jesus. If there's more than one way, Christianity fails completely. It cannot be one of many good ways because there can only be one Incarnate Son of God. We should be loving. We should be kind. And to some extent, we should be fully open to others to practice their religious beliefs according to their conscience. But we must be irrefutably clear about our doctrines. They cannot be bartered or bought or changed. Period. Christian truth is eternal truth. It cannot change.

There is one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus and he is the embodiment of love and because of his person and because of his work in love for the

children, Revelation 1:18 tells us the he is the one who has "the keys of death and Hades." Eternal destinies are in – listen – his hand. His hand. Men today keep looking for the keys. Don't look for the keys, look for the one who holds the keys. "Maybe we can find the answer here and the answers there and the answers this guy's viewpoint and this person's philosophy and this guy's ideas. Listen to him." No, you find him, Jesus, and you'll find the key.

Just some thoughts on his love. This love that God has for his children has an eternal aspect to it. John 15:9, Jesus says, "Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you." The Father loves me and I love you. When did the Father start loving Jesus? For all eternity. The Scriptures make us enter into an eternal perspective and it causes us to be forced to begin to grasp that God the Father and God the Son and God the Holy Spirit had their loved ones in their heart for all eternity. I'm not denying that God has a love for all mankind but listen to me: if you leave out the sovereignty of God in having a special love for his children from the foundation or before the foundation of the world, you rip out a great portion of the truth of Scripture. You'll find it does not make sense and it does not work nor does it fit. There is an eternal aspect to this love.

Ephesians 1:4, "just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love." Love for all mankind? Absolutely the Bible teaches that but there is this love for the children that God the Father and God the Son and God the Holy Spirit had. This takes this from before the foundation of the world. It's a sacrificial love.

Romans 5:8 that, "God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." There came a day, there came that point in time foreordained from the foundation of the world when God would step out of eternity and God would put on human flesh, he would be born of the virgin Mary and he would tread this sinful trod with one major objective on his mind – listen to me – that he would suffer and redeem the children that he and the Father had loved for eternity. Wow.

Sacrificial love. It's an infinite love. We can't put our arms around it. Ephesians 2:4, "But God, being rich in mercy," and Paul just says, "I've got to say it the best way I know how to say it, because of His great love with which He loved us." What he's saying is you've got to understand, the way God loves those who are his is just beyond anything we know in the natural realm. It's just a great love. It's eternal. It's sacrificial. It's infinite. And it's enduring.

Just a couple of thoughts from Romans 8. Romans 8:35, "Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" Nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing will be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Can I say something to you, child of God? Don't impose on me that somehow in time and space history God chose to love me with the redeeming love because I somehow performed some hoop jump and caused him to begin to love me like one of his own, like

I was one of his own. Don't tell me, don't tell me that, don't tell me that somehow in Jeff Noblit or in you there was some sort of inherent good virtue and whereby you created, you provided, you performed the act that caused God to give you redeeming saving love. Don't tell me that because one day I'll be dying and I'll see my weakness and I'll see my want, I've got to know something bigger than me sealed this deal. I've got to know. I've got to know on that deathbed. I've got to know! I've got to know that with an infinite enduring and in Paul's words great love, God loved me before the world began, and if he loved me like that and sent his Son to suffer for me and pay my redemption's cost to satisfy the justice that was against me so I could be his own, then I know he will keep me all the way through death's door.

Now you listen to me: that's the only real basis – now listen to me – that's the only, the sovereignty of God, the eternal purpose of God for his children, that's the only real basis for the eternal security of the believer. That's the only real sound basis for once saved, always saved. I can't believe someone would want to tell me.... How do you do that? "Well, you jump through these four hoops and you're in." Are you kidding me? You mean my eternal salvation depends on me? Me?

Love. Love is what was in God's heart that moved his hand to initiate our salvation. Love was in God's heart that devised the plan of salvation. And love was in God's heart that sent to us the man of salvation, Jesus Christ. The hand, the plan and the man that made it all happen was happening because of love. Love is the key to salvation. It would seem to our finite understanding that God's justice and God's grace were at an impasse but love shows that they were in perfect oneness and harmony all along because there was never a time when the Son was not willing to obey the Father's will to be the provision for the sins of the children. So there was never – listen – there was never a time in eternity past within the Godhead, justice wasn't fully happy with grace because Jesus, the love one, the love man, made them both work. Jesus hangs on a cross and there holy justice pours out the just punitive judgment that should fall upon us sinners and when that judgment and that justice is poured out as he's hanging for us on the cross, then grace rejoices and says, "Yes! Yes! Now justice is satisfied and we can shower the unmerited favor, blessing and forgiveness on the children we've intended from the foundation of the world." What made that happen? Love. Love.

I was just meditating this week and I discovered there are three inventions that scientists say changed everything. In 1430, the printing press was invented. Now, can you imagine up until that time men had no way to read or accumulate knowledge of themselves, by themselves? Then all of a sudden the printing press and all of a sudden men could take knowledge everywhere and share it and multiply it. Everything we have and do today in the natural world is dependent upon that, not to mention the Protestant Reformation occurred because they finally started printing Bibles where the average man could read it and he began to read it and say, "Wait a minute, the state churches have polluted and manipulated Christianity to control us. Let's get back to what the book teaches." Because of the printing press. And then they said electricity in the latter part of the 18th century. You have no conception, everything you do every day is dependent upon that. The lights in this room, heating, air conditioning, your computer, your automobile doesn't run

without electricity. Just changed everything. And then the third one, the internal combustion engine, automobiles. Wow, you just can't fathom, airplane travel, all of it. The printing press, electricity, these things changed everything.

That's what love did. Love showed up, everything changes. Love changes everything but now listen: love always embraces the truth and, listen, love would never seek to save the elect children without honoring the truth of justice. Love would have never sought to save the elect, Jesus is in the wilderness, he's being tempted by the devil and in effect the devil says, "Jesus, I'll give you everything. You can have the kingdom, you can rule the world, just don't go to the cross. You can still have everything." Jesus just immediately, "No. That's dishonoring the justice of God because for me to have the kingdom and to have a people, their penalty must be paid. Justice demands it. Satan, get behind me. I'm doing my Father's will. I'm going to the cross because I would never attempt to love without honoring truth." We've got a whole age today, a whole world today, including many in the professing church, that want to promote love outside of truth. Love never would dishonor truth to achieve the purpose. So Jesus goes to the cross and fulfills the truth of justice that was against us and takes it out of the way.

So we see in Amos and I'll run through this very quickly, a type of Christ as Amos goes before God and pleads for the people to be pardoned and pleads for God to hold off his wrath. First of all, Amos is a type of Christ because he identified with them. He was one of them. He was a Jew. And Jesus could save us because he identified with us. He put on human flesh. He became one of us.

2. Amos is a type of Christ because he was separate from them. Amos wasn't in the group that counted. He wasn't among the elite of the nation. He wasn't of the lineage of prophets or priests or kings. He was a guy who lived down in a rural rough region with most likely a little band of reformers who hated the wickedness and the hypocrisy of the present religion in Israel. So there was a sense in which he was separate from them, so was Jesus. He was one of us but then he wasn't one of us. He was born of the virgin, he was God Incarnate, not like us at all. And he grew up, he was born in Bethlehem, a nowhere place, and grew up in Nazareth. They'd say, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Just like Amos, there was a separation from them.

3. He interceded for the sinful and the helpless. Amos goes before God as these plagues are coming and Amos doesn't say, "Now God, you know these people are pretty special. Have you seen the accomplishments? Have you see the advancements they've made, God? Have you seen how big Israel has gotten? Did you know, God, that Israel is now esteemed among the nations?" Oh no, he didn't do such a foolish, vile, ungodly thing. Amos goes before God and says, "God, would you please help" – boy, here's a key word – "Jacob because he's small? He's sinful and helpless." That's what he means. "He's just sinful and helpless." That's what Jesus did. Jesus went to the cross and said, "Father, I want us to save this family of children so we'll have our children with us for all eternity but, Father, I cannot come to you and give you one quality recommendation based on their character, their integrity or their righteousness. They have none. I will go to the cross and I will take on their sin and helplessness and I will be their sin-bearer in their

place." Amos interceded on behalf of the sinful and helpless but Jesus interceded on behalf of the sinful and helpless.

4. He functions as God's agent. He functions as God's agent. Now this is very interesting. He didn't go to God and say, "God, let's work out a deal here. Let's negotiate what's best for you, what's best for Israel. Let's talk about this." No, here's what he says, "God, stop and help Jacob." You know what that means, don't you? God picked Jacob. God wrestled with Jacob. God broke Jacob. God converted Jacob. God promised Jacob, "Your descendants will be a great nation," and God will have at least a remnant of them with him forever and ever and ever. So Amos goes before God and says, "God, I'm interceding on behalf of your purposes. You called this bunch. You saved their forefather Jacob. You promised to make them a great people. Your glory is on the line. Your purposes are at stake. I'm interceding for you and for what you want to accomplish through this one, Jacob, and his descendants which now make up the nation of Israel." What did Jesus do? He went to the cross and he died. As he said many many times, "I came not to do my own will but the will of my Father who sent me. I am fulfilling my Father's purpose to save for us a family, a children, which we will have with us forever." Jesus interceded and saved us functioning on God's behalf.

As Abraham takes Isaac up the mountain and Isaac begins to realize there's no lamb or ram for the sacrifice and Isaac begins to realize, "I think I'm going to be the sacrifice," and Isaac says to his daddy, "Daddy, where's the sacrifice?" and Abraham says, "God will provide for himself, for himself a lamb." God's got a purpose for himself in this.

Child of God, have you come to rest in and glory in the truth that God saved you first for himself? Not that you might miss hell. That's wonderful, that's a part of his passion certainly but more than that, he saved you that you might be with him and you might be a trophy of his grace, goodness, love and mercy for all eternity. It's for him. That's how you know you're eternally secure because he didn't save you for you, he saved you for him primarily. It's wonderfully good for you but it's primarily for him.

He functions as God's agent. That's the way Amos was also like Jesus. His intercession was heard. His intercession was heard. The locusts are there, they're about to devour everything, Amos pleads, God stops. Intercession was heard. The mighty fire of the Assyrian army crashing into Israel, devastating and destroying, killing and ruining everything but before they completely razed the entire countryside, Amos intercedes and God stops. As a matter of fact, history records that's exactly what Tiglath-Pileser did, he stopped short and didn't finish. The intercession was heard.

That's why Jesus could say as he was ministering on the earth – boy, I love this. I love this. I love this. He said, he's ministering and he said, "Of all that the Father gives me, I lose not one." What he's saying is, "With my death on the cross, I'm interceding for them." Then when he was raised he goes to the right hand of the Father and he continues to intercede and every – are you listening to me – every single one he intercedes for makes it to heaven. His intercession is heard. Woo! That's glory! That's glory! That's glory! Oh, you weak, helpless, wretched, ruinous sinner, I want to tell you Jesus said,

"Father, that one's mine." The Father's good with it. You're secure. What a salvation we have.

Lastly, the harmonization of justice and grace. Amos is there seeing and experiencing the great wrath of God, the justice of God being administered against this nation but then at a point he intercedes and grace comes in. So we see wrath and we see grace all right there together in the land, and when Jesus died on the cross, justice and wrath were administered but grace and forgiveness for unworthy sinners was accomplished and the harmony is seen and enjoyed by all who believe.

Now, if you just read secular history, you'll find that just what the Bible says happened. Tiglath-Pileser stopped. It was a later king that came in and finished the job, but it's just like you think that's all that's going on but behind everything God's doing something. Remember, if you miss Sunday night, you missed something the other Sunday night a couple of weeks ago when I told you that the church is the diamond of history. In other words, everything that happens in history is for the church. It doesn't look like it is but, you see, like the earth rotates on its axis and when it rotates on its axis that creates night and day and the earth tilts on its axis and when it tilts through a calendar year, that creates winter, spring, summer and fall, but every bit of that is dependent upon something, that is the relationship to another, the sun. If the sun is not there holding the earth in its gravitational pull, there is no day and night, there is no winter, spring, summer or fall. It all has purpose because it's connected to a greater entity and everything that's going on on planet earth, everything that God was doing in Israel and everything God's doing now, is all connected to him saving his children and glorifying himself with them forever. It's all about him. Barack Obama was all about him. Donald Trump, all about him. I mean, you name it. The nutcase in North Korea, all about him. I mean, it's all about him and it's all about his church. It's all about the higher purpose he has. Nothing makes sense until you see it that way and Amos is a glorious picture to us of God's purposes to save through Jesus Christ.