Amos: Lesson 10 Homework

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1. The Anchor Bible- Amos- A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary by Francis I. Andersen and David Noel Freedman- pages 739-789
   Dr. Constable's Notes- pages 69-81

2. The first astounding lesson from this week's learnings was that it is okay to fail. "Again he intercedes and once again Yahweh relents, to give Amos a chance once more to preach repentance. And again the mission is a failure" (Andersen and Freedman 750). The mission of Amos was a failure in the sense that the people of Israel did not repent, but that did not mean Amos' ministry failed. In fact, it was a success because Amos fully obeyed God in what He wanted Amos to do. So many times, ministry success is determined by how many people repented and are turning to God. That is important, but on the minister's behalf, it is more important to ask: am I obeying God fully in what He wants me to do?
   Going further, it was an encouraging challenge for myself to be a leader that truly pleases God. "In the opening oracles punishment of the ruler and punishment of the nation are the same" (Andersen and Freedman 762). When the ruler is directly connected to the health of a nation, God sees both actions as the same. If a ruler disobeys God, He punishes both ruler and nation. If a ruler obeys God, He blesses both ruler and nation. A ruler must stand right before God first and foremost.
   This also led me to learn a lesson on the power of intercession. Dr. Constable states, "God loves to be entreated. He delights to answer when He hears the cry of such as bear His needy people on their heart" (71). Even when a ruler or nation is in the wrong, if they repent and sincerely turn to God, God loves to be asked for the things that please His heart. He delights to show love, grace, and mercy and not His judgments and wrath. "It is important, therefore, that we understand, from Scripture, what aspects of His will are fixed, and which are negotiable" (Constable 72). In the cases of God predicting judgment, in most cases, it is judgments that God does not desire to fulfill only if God's people would turn back to Him. As long as intercession does not go against God's revelation as shown through Scripture's authority, it is God's delight for His people to intercede and pray on behalf of His heart for His people.

3. What is the biblical and proper way to practice intercession?