

Overt statements regarding a remnant are strikingly absent in the book of Amos, leading many scholars to find sentiments therein that might lend credence to Amos' vision for an Israel that survives judgment. In this paper, I analyze the manner in which Amos 3:12 has functioned in this endeavor to find a remnant of Israel in the book. I argue that no such remnant is in view in Amos 3:12 specifically, nor in the book generally. I examine the rhetorical context of Amos 3:12, as well as the syntactical properties of the verse, which help to underscore the role of divine judgment. I place the verse in the setting of ancient Near Eastern legal culture to show how Amos 3:12 functions in terms of Israelite guilt and punishment relative to divine innocence. Finally, I explore how the reading herein is consistent with the rest of the book of Amos.

The paper discussed today will become the basis of a third monograph-length project. It explores how the concepts of law, covenant, and remnant relate to each other in prophetic discourse in the Bible, as well as in the interpretive imagination of subsequent Jewish and Christian interpreters.