

The Decalogue explained:

(From -Sowing the Seed- by Verna A. Holyhead)

The saying, "You keep the law and the law will keep you," is overturning a reading of the Exodus version of the Ten Words - the Decalogue or the Ten Commandments.

Obedience to the commandments is a response to God's love that has already been shown to Israel by their liberation from slavery. Such obedience is not a kind of ethical trade-off: you do this and I'll do that.

Rather, the commandments are for the sake of freedom from slavery: from the worship of false gods, including ourselves, and from distorted relationships with God and one another.

The contemporary "gods" such as nationalism, racism, sexism, individualism, consumerism, militarism, and numerous addictions, attract slaves, not free worshippers.

The God of the Decalogue is not domesticated, not a slogan or a formula, not to be manipulated as a patron of politics or projects.

Likewise, communities who are obedient to the Decalogue are called to live as a grateful and liberated covenant people, bound together by their obedience to God.

This is expressed in loving and just human relationships within family and society, with the acceptance of clearly defined boundaries and an awareness of human limitation, including sin.