

The Nine Commandments

David Noel Freedman. *The Nine Commandments: Uncovering a Hidden Pattern of Crime and Punishment in the Hebrew Bible.* New York, NY: Doubleday, 2000.

The Thesis:

Beginning with the declaration of the Decalogue and the sealing of the covenant, the story of Israel would bear out the solemn warnings provided by Moses in his farewell speech in Deuteronomy: persistent violation of the covenant would result in the destruction of the nation. As it happens, their violation of each commandment – one by one – until they run out of both books and commandments, they seal their doom. By then they are back in Babylon where they started, having lost everything that had been given to them by a kind, gracious, merciful God, who nevertheless insists on behavior worthy of the chosen people.

David Noel Freedman, p. xiii

Texts

Exodus 20:1-17

Deuteronomy 5:6-21

- 1. Shall have no other gods before me.**
- 2. Shall not make idols**
- 3. Shall not take the name of Yahweh in vain**
- 4. Shall remember the Sabbath and keep it holy**
- 5. Shall honor father and mother**
- 6. Shall not murder**
- 7. Shall not commit adultery**
- 8. Shall not steal**
- 9. Shall not bear false witness**
- 10. Shall not covet ...**