This chapter begins by gathering evidence for the medieval understanding of hostageship. How did people react when a king received or granted hostages? Or when a hostage was executed? Stray remarks of chroniclers offer some answers. It also examines more closely the words and deeds of the papacy, which provide the closest thing to an interpretation that was meant to be pan-European. Certain words and deeds of the popes, those that were included in the basic texts of canon law and were much discussed by medieval commentators, prove to be at the root of our modern understanding of hostages. The book closes by following the history of hostageship to the present day, tracing the decline of medieval hostageship in the early modern era, and its replacement by the modern form addressed by the Nuremberg courts and the United Nations.