

A few Highlights from Kazuhiro Enomoto's message:

Title: To Hear Ten and Know (the) One

In Japanese, people often say you can hear one thing and then figure out 10 things. Today's theme is kind of the opposite.

We normally call today's passage from Exodus the 10 commandments. At some churches in Japan they study this in Hebrew. The original is not given as commandments but 10 "Words," or 10 sayings (groups of words). We often think this is a list of orders, and that they are burdensome. But, they are more intended to give freedom.

The first part, "I am the Lord your God who brought you out of Egypt" is the first saying. It introduces God. It's not actually a command. The rest of the words likely depend on this first line. It shows God's care.

By acting, by loving God and our neighbours we learn to know God. Our knowing is relational, or experiential rather than just seeing and following commands.

The Hebrew people stayed in Egypt over 430 years. They were exposed to Egyptian ways and they saw how the Egyptians worshipped the Egyptian gods (many gods). That is all they saw in how to worship. Now, the one true God was showing them a different way.

Before their slavery in Egypt the Israelites knew about Abraham. During the 430 years of slavery, they may have forgotten a lot about God, so God needed to be reintroduced to them. The gods of Egypt were thought to support Pharaoh's dictatorship. The one true God was different from the gods/idols worshipped by the Egyptians.

God gets personally involved in people's lives, and he expects people to behave rightly between them and him, and with each other – for our benefit. God walks with us. God gives us grace.

"Keep the Sabbath" – We may see this as a command, feeling like we can't have fun, have to go to church. It feels like a burden. But, the original text was given to people who were slaves in Egypt. There were no holidays for them for 450 years! There was no holiday pay. The Sabbath was to help the Israelites. Gives grace. It makes us vulnerable, but it means God will take care

"Come to me all you who are weary and carrying heavy burdens and I will give you rest." Jesus said this in Matthew 11:28.

We need to seek first God's kingdom and his righteousness and all our needs will be cared for.

The "10 Commandments" give us a vision of a new community when people can live at peace with each other, have no fears of stealing, killing, or someone taking your wife, etc. We need only trust God who makes this new community possible. This isn't textbook knowledge. Instead, it's through our relationship with each other and God. In listening to and following these 10 sayings we actually end up knowing one thing – God himself.