

How Do You Know?

Part One

(Beyond Faith)

Mankind is a paradoxical creation; in that, mankind wants to know things, and, yet, knowledge must be based on a certain thing that cannot be known. The thing that cannot be known is this: reliability. In the scientific community, for instance; there are things known as, the Laws of Thermodynamics. These have been accepted as being somewhat immutable. However, let me place a theory beside those Laws. Let us add the theory of evolution to the Laws of Thermodynamics. When we make this combination, then we have a thing that can change. The thing that we cannot totally rely on is that the Laws of Thermodynamics are not evolving. So, if these Laws are evolving, then we have no hope of knowing how to approach reliance on a long-term relationship with nature.

Think about this: what if adhesiveness decides to evolve and, concreteness follows suit. Then, we would not know that a building that has been constructed will always have the kind of adhesiveness that keeps the joints glued together. Moreover, we will not know that the bricks will retain their solidity, and not become as mud, again. The reason that this would become a problem is because; we would have no way of controlling the evolution of these accepted facts of our universe. Indeed, there have been several science fiction writers that have presented views of what might happen when our, assumed to be solid, proofs of the universe do not apply. Nonetheless; in spite of that potential fluidity of science, we must do something; mustn't we?

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Previously, we introduced that, exercise in logic, because that is the same type of analysis that must be done when we are approaching a lasting love relationship. In this analysis, we are speaking of the relationship that precedes marriage. In this analysis, the assumed facts that come from this relationship are what form the basis for imagining that there will be a lasting marriage. As an additional benefit of the analysis, we may build on our knowledge of why we see so much time spent, in the Bible, trying to establish the dimensions of a pre-marriage commitment. As I think about this, I am reminded of this; one of the longest courtships of record, in the Bible.

*And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying, How long shall I bear with this evil congregation, which murmur against me? I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel, which they murmur against me. Say unto them, As truly as I live, saith the LORD, as ye have spoken in mine ears, so will I do to you: Your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness; and all that were numbered of you, according to your whole number, from twenty years old and upward, which have murmured against me, Doubtless ye shall not come into the land, concerning which I sware to make you dwell therein, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun.*

*But your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, them will I bring in, and they shall know the land which ye have despised. But as for you, your carcases, they shall fall in this wilderness.*  
(Numbers 14:26-32)

No, we are not saying that, this is the longest courtship, ever. Among mankind, I can believe that, there have been longer courtships. Also, I am not saying that this is the only somewhat lopsided courtship, ever. Among mankind, there are some men who have devoted their life to a much younger girl child, and passed through the time required for her to mature, for her to be able to fully participate in the marriage relationship. That is what the Man, the LORD, did for the child, the *little ones* of Israel. It was a most unique motivation process, as joined with, necessary purification and excising of a certain cancer.

*And your children shall wander in the wilderness forty years, and bear your whoredoms, until your carcases be wasted in the wilderness. After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, even forty days, each day for a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, even forty years, and ye shall know my breach of promise.*

*I the LORD have said, I will surely do it unto all this evil congregation, that are gathered together against me: in this wilderness they shall be consumed, and there they shall die.*

(Numbers 14:33-35)

In that time, the children of Israel had to prove something to the One THAT formed their courtship relationship with the LORD. The children of Israel had to come through the forty year courtship with a clear signal that they were ready to join with the LORD God, in the development of a home for the next set of children of that congregation. The children of that marriage relationship, with the LORD, would be the next generations that would come from the mixed multitude. The "parent" of these children had to be ready to nurture their offspring, in the following pattern.

*Keep therefore and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.*

*For what nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the LORD our God is in all things that we call upon him for? And what nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day?*

*Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life: but teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons;*

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(Deuteronomy 4:6-9 . . .)

Please note that the basis for the proper raising of the children of the union of Israel, with the LORD God, was the experiences that had occurred during the pre-marriage courtship.

*Specially the day that thou stoodest before the LORD thy God in Horeb, when the LORD said unto me, Gather me the people together, and I will make them hear my words, that they may learn to fear me all the days that they shall live upon the earth, and that they may teach their children. And ye came near and stood under the mountain; and the mountain burned with fire unto the midst of heaven, with darkness, clouds, and thick darkness. And the LORD spake unto you out of the midst of the fire: ye heard the voice of the words, but saw no similitude; only ye heard a voice. And he declared unto you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, even ten commandments; and he wrote them upon two tables of stone. And the LORD commanded me at that time to teach you statutes and judgments, that ye might do them in the land whither ye go over to possess it.*

(Deuteronomy 4:10-14)

Please, do not think that I am stretching the relationship beyond the boundaries that it was intended to have; in that, I use the term, marriage, to identify the relationship. If you do feel that thought; please, consider the following designation that the LORD placed on His Self, as recorded in Scripture.

*Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child: for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the LORD. Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes; For thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited. Fear not; for thou shalt not be ashamed: neither be thou confounded; for thou shalt not be put to shame: for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more. For thy Maker is thine husband; the LORD of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called.*

(Isaiah 54:1-5)

As we go further in this analysis--How Do You Know--we will see that the relationship that the LORD described, above, is very much like the relationships that lead up to our own marriages. We, too, are forming a covenant such as this one.

*Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.*

(Jeremiah 31:31-33)

The protocol for preparation for marriage also includes the timeframe of forty years, at least. No, I am not saying that everyone ought to wait until they have known one another forty years, prior to joining in marriage. Though, I am saying that; for most combinations of, men with women, in marriage, forty years may have been consumed in gathering the necessary experience that will make a successful union. In my thinking on this, the counting starts at birth. In the easiest counting, I can use the fact that two people who are about twenty years of age, each, have accumulated forty years of life experience; for a total of forty years, or more.

I will, let you consider that; diligence, during that time, is a good way for both sides of the preparation to show the great importance marriage as a future commitment. In considering both sides of the preparation, let us think through the two sides of preparation that preceded the first marriage. I do not present this as a count down to forty, but, rather, as a way of showing that there are, indeed, two paths of preparation that must be completed, in order for the marriage to be successful.

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In the Beginning, this is the male path that was traversed, as part one of two.

And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed.

(Genesis 2:7-8)

In the Beginning, this is the male path that was traversed; part two of two.

And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.

And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof.

(Genesis 2:18-19)

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In the Beginning, this is the female path that was traversed.

*And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him.*

*And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.*

*And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.*

(Genesis 2:20-23)

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From the Beginning; this is the joint arrival point that must exist.

Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.

And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

(Genesis 2:24-25)

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The principle, *they were both naked*, is more than a matter of, being without clothing. The nakedness that must exist between a man and a woman, after the joining that constitutes marriage, is a nakedness of the entire soul, along with the spirit. This is not a process that can be undergone before marriage. Prior to marriage, there will be some cover that must be maintained; so as, to move from stranger, to trusted friend. Surely, in the prior time, there will be thought about the nakedness of the person that is before you, but, it must only be a thought about how you will accept it, regardless of how it appears. This is a complex matter that will become clearer as we proceed further.

Yes, in the more direct statement of things; this does mean that nakedness of body should never precede marriage. This includes all of the body parts, besides generally accepted one; such as, the hands, face, acceptable portions the legs, and, generally, the arms. Yes, there is Scripture that addresses this matter, too. As a word of pre-caution; as you lay the following Scripture over this search for union, do not modernize these words: *near of kin*.

*And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,  
Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, I am the LORD your  
God. After the doings of the land of Egypt, wherein ye dwelt, shall ye not  
do: and after the doings of the land of Canaan, whither I bring you, shall  
ye not do: neither shall ye walk in their ordinances. Ye shall do my  
judgments, and keep mine ordinances, to walk therein: I am the LORD  
your God. Ye shall therefore keep my statutes, and my judgments: which  
if a man do, he shall live in them: I am the LORD.*

*None of you shall approach to any that is near of kin to him, to  
uncover their nakedness: I am the LORD.*

(Leviticus 18:1-6)

Specifically for men, they need to apply the restriction that was imposed on the  
priests, thusly.

*And thou shalt make them linen breeches to cover their nakedness; from  
the loins even unto the thighs they shall reach: And they shall be upon  
Aaron, and upon his sons, when they come in unto the tabernacle of the  
congregation, or when they come near unto the altar to minister in the  
holy place; that they bear not iniquity, and die: it shall be a statute for  
ever unto him and his seed after him.*

(Exodus 28:42-43)

Let us get more specific, here. Men, let us review more direct Scripture that pertains  
to the pre-marriage time. Consider this following portion of the law of Moses.

*The nakedness of thy sister, the daughter of thy father, or daughter of thy  
mother, whether she be born at home, or born abroad, even their  
nakedness thou shalt not uncover. The nakedness of thy son's daughter, or  
of thy daughter's daughter, even their nakedness thou shalt not uncover:  
for theirs is thine own nakedness. The nakedness of thy father's wife's  
daughter, begotten of thy father, she is thy sister, thou shalt not uncover  
her nakedness.*

(Leviticus 18:9-11)

I hear voices of protest, saying that; these things only apply to the biological family  
relationship. Well, that is not so. The family relationship is, in this case, the point of  
departure for the pre-marriage relationship--at least, that is so for the ones that hold to the  
New Covenant principles of the New Testament. Among those principles is this one,  
which extends the family relationship beyond biology.

*Rebuke not an elder, but entreat him as a father; and the younger men as  
brethren; The elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, with all  
purity.*

(1 Timothy 5:1-2)

No, this does not dismiss biology, as being a consideration. The Scripture that follows the one that is above reinforces the need to maintain biological sensitivity.

*Honour widows that are widows indeed. But if any widow have children or nephews, let them learn first to show piety at home, and to requite their parents: for that is good and acceptable before God.*

*Now she that is a widow indeed, and desolate, trusteth in God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day. But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth.*

(1 Timothy 5:3-6)

Ah, so that means that we cannot kiss one another; doesn't it?

No, it does not. For instance, when I was younger, I would kiss my sisters and my mother. When I did that, I made sure that I was in conformance with certain portions of Scripture that allows this, as follows (there are several of them):

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Likewise greet the church that is in their house.

Salute my wellbeloved Epaphroditus, who is the firstfruits of Achaia unto Christ.

Greet Mary, who bestowed much labour on us.

Salute Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen, and my fellowprisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me.

Greet Amplias my beloved in the Lord.

Salute Urbane, our helper in Christ, and Stachys my beloved.

Salute Apelles approved in Christ.

Salute them which are of Aristobulus' household.

Salute Herodion my kinsman. Greet them that be of the household of Narcissus, which are in the Lord.

Salute Tryphena and Tryphosa, who labour in the Lord. Salute the beloved Persis, which laboured much in the Lord.

Salute Rufus chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine.

Salute Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, and the brethren which are with them.

Salute Philologus, and Julia, Nereus, and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints which are with them.

Salute one another with an holy kiss.

The churches of Christ salute you.

Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.

(Romans 16:5-17)

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*The churches of Asia salute you. Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord, with the church that is in their house.*

*All the brethren greet you.*

*Greet ye one another with an holy kiss.*

(1 Corinthians 16:19-20)

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Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you.

Greet one another with an holy kiss.

All the saints salute you.

(2 Corinthians 13:11-13)

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*And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.*

*Brethren, pray for us.*

*Greet all the brethren with an holy kiss.*

(1 Thessalonians 5:23-26)

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The common thread is this: *an holy kiss*. Undoubtedly, all those who shared *an holy kiss* were not married to one another.

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Recall that; earlier, we mentioned the need to evaluate the maybe-evolving set of principles, in the Law of Thermodynamics. The same need for this type of analysis is present in marriage. We need to find truly immutable principles that are not beset by the flux of evolution. For marriage, as it is served in the LORD, there must be, and there are, immutable principles and practices. Our location of these principles is only done in the Bible. Therefore, this written presentation of the analysis serves as an introduction to Bible constrictions that apply to marriage.

We are not arguing as to the applicability of the Bible's principles and practices for marriage. Nor are we negotiating as to their lack of evolution; as might be done in an attempt to lay modifying operatives on them, as might be done to fit them to the modern



time. Here, we accept them as by faith. This is that type of faith, which is described here.

*Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a good report. Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.*

(Hebrews 11:1-3)

To give you a clear image of the Law that applies, we present the following extract from the Law of Love, as presented by Jesus Christ.

*The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?*

*And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.*

*They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away?*

*He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so. And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.*

(Matthew 19:3-9)

This portion of the Law of Love does understand that we are human. Therefore, the Law of Love allows that; not all faith is associated with full awareness. Thus, there will be some people who will not be at the point of accepting the full strength of this Law. For such ones, they will still be able to cling to their faith in other areas of the Law. The disciples pursued the words of allowance that pertain to these ones.

*His disciples say unto him, If the case of the man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry.*

*But he said unto them, All men cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given. For there are some eunuchs, which were so born from their mother's womb: and there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men: and there be eunuchs, which have made themselves*

*eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it.*

(Matthew 19:10-12)

No, this is not; either, a waiver of obligation, or, a get-out-of-marriage-free card. This is an allowance for weak variance from the best path to follow. When one enters this area of faith, they are in another portion of the requirement of the LORD God, as set in the frame of the Law of Love. It is a place that has rules that are similar to the ones that are applied here.

*And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he hath.*

*But and if that servant say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the menservants and maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken; The lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers. And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes.*

*But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes.*

*For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.*

(Luke 12:42-48)

A better course of action is this: to seriously consider the weight of marriage as one is in the pre-marriage phase of the relationship. Even more preferable is this: to settle in ones mind that this wisdom applies to all consideration of marriage, as that word--marriage--is extended to cover any long-term relationship, whatsoever . . .

*But I would have you without carefulness. He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord: But he that is married careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please his wife.*

*There is difference also between a wife and a virgin. The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit: but she that is married careth for the things of the world, how she may please her husband.*

*And this I speak for your own profit; not that I may cast a snare upon you, but for that which is comely, and that ye may attend upon the Lord without distraction.*

(1 Corinthians 7:32-35)

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-- Next, in How Do You Know --
Carnal Participation
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