

Marriage Covenant Ceremony

Normally parents and family are seated on opposite sides of the auditorium. At the conclusion of the ceremony, the husband and wife will pass through the middle of them. This is reminiscent of the sacrifice in covenant where the animal is split in half and the partners walk through it.

Normally, the groom enters the auditorium first – symbolically proclaiming a greater role in initiating the covenant; and thus assuming greater responsibility for keeping it in force.

Often the father walks down the aisle with the daughter. In effect, he is saying to the daughter that he is transferring his responsibility for her care to the one who has initiated the marriage covenant to become her husband.

Verbal wedding vows and rings are exchanged – symbolizing the exchange of selves and the exchange of strengths. The wedding ring takes the place of the belt depicted in the covenant between Jonathan and David centuries ago. The “vows” (or promises to each other to care for each other “till death do us part”) are administered often by a minister who stands as a servant or representative of God.

The ceremony is concluded with an introduction of the couple to the audience in a new identity – Mr. and Mrs. (whatever the name is). In covenant, the partners often take on part of the name of the other. God, for example, in His covenant with Abram, Isaac and Jacob, renames Abram (exalted father) to become Abraham (father of many nations) and Jacob is renamed “Israel” (one who strives with God).

Guests sign the register – symbolizing their interest as “witnesses” in helping to keep the covenant partners accountable to each other.

Finally, the new husband and wife usually eat cake at a reception – in effect taking a memorial meal together. This is symbolic of feeding a part of self to the other. The sharing of food in both the Old and New Testament times was considered to be proof of agreement of shared union. In other words, sharing meals together was a statement of acceptance – an acceptance of each other with no strings attached.

Covenant Element Process

1) Take jacket off.
Symbolizes removing shield – taking off what you are – baring the self. In 2 person covenant, both remove self and give self to each other

2) Take off belt (symbol of strength). All my ability to fight given to you if need exists

3) Sacrifice animal by splitting down the middle. Includes head. Only done in Covenant

4) Both partners stand in 2 walls of blood & walk through in figure 8 symbolizing walk thru death (die to right to life which I give to you). If break covenant, may what happened to the animal happen to me. Demonstrates that what has been divided now is considered as one

5) Include name of other person in your name. Have become one person

6) Cut mark of covenant and let scar remain as visible proof to remind of responsibility and blessing

7) Discuss assets explaining what is mine is yours and what is yours is mine. (Known as “friend”)

8) Eat memorial meal (symbol of serving self to each other) – to remember

9) Implied in Covenant is fact that all children, whether born or unborn are included and can choose to accept