

SUBTLE CEREMONY

The following wedding ceremony was written to provide for Pagans who must of necessity be wed in the presence of the uninitiated who are not pagan and are perhaps unaware that the bride and groom are pagan. Replace the words Bride and Groom below with the names of the happy couple. I recommend the participants rewrite where necessary to form a legal contract that they can and will keep. It is easy to avoid being an oathbreaker if you only swear to that that you will keep and avoid swearing to something just because the other party wants it or because it might be "expected" by the family.

Priestess

[PRIEST] We have come together here in celebration of the joining together of ___bride___ and ___groom___. There are many things to say about marriage. Much wisdom concerning the joining together of two souls, has come our way through all paths of belief, and from many cultures. With each union, more knowledge is gained and more wisdom gathered. Though we are unable to give all this knowledge to these two, who stand before us, we can hope to leave with them the knowledge of love and its strengths and the anticipation of the wisdom that comes with time. The law of life is love unto all beings. Without love, life is nothing. If we learn no more in life, let it be this – Marriage is a bond to be entered into only after considerable thought and reflection. As with any aspect of life, it has its cycles, its ups and its downs, its trials and its triumphs. With full understanding of this, Groom and Bride have come here today to be joined as one in marriage. Others would ask, at this time, who gives the bride in marriage, but, as a woman is not property to be bought and sold, given and taken, I ask simply if she comes of her own will and if she has her family's blessing. Bride, is it true that you come of your own free will?

Bride

Yes, it is true.

Priestess

With whom do you come and whose blessings accompany you?

Brides Father

She comes with me, her father, and is accompanied by all of her family's blessings.

Priestess

Please join hands with your love and listen to that which I am about to say. Above you are the stars, below you are the stones, as time passes, remember... Like a stone

should your love be firm like a star should your love be constant. Let the powers of the mind and of the intellect guide you in your marriage, let the strength of your wills bind you together, let the power of love and desire make you happy, and the strength of your dedication make you inseparable. Be close, but not too close. Possess one another, yet be understanding. Have patience with one another, for storms will come, but they will pass quickly. Be free in giving affection and warmth. Have no fear and let not the ways of the unenlightened give you unease, for God is with you always.

Groom, I have not the right to bind thee to Bride, only you have this right. If it be your wish, say so at this time and place your ring in her hand

Groom

It is my wish.

Priestess

Bride, if it be your wish for Groom to be bound to you, place the ring on his finger. (places ring on Groom's left ring finger) Bride I have not the right to bind thee to Groom only you have this right. If it be your wish, say so at this time and place your ring in his hand.

Bride

It is my wish

Priestess

Groom, if it be your wish for Bride to be bound to you, place the ring on her finger. (places ring on Bride's left ring finger)

(to Groom) Repeat after me: I, (grooms full name), in the name of the Spirit that resides within us all, by the life that courses within my blood and the love that resides within my heart, take thee (bride's full name) to my hand, my heart, and my spirit, to be my chosen one. To desire thee and be desired by thee, to possess thee, and be possessed by thee, without sin or shame, for naught can exist in the purity of my love for thee. I promise to love thee wholly and completely without restraint, in sickness and in health, in plenty and in poverty, in life and beyond, where we shall meet, remember, and love again. I shall not seek to change thee in any way. I shall respect thee, thy beliefs, thy people, and thy ways as I respect myself.

(to Bride) I (bride's full name), in the name of the Spirit that resides within us all, by the life that courses within my blood, and the love that resides within my heart, take thee, (Groom's full name) to my hand, my heart, and my spirit to be my chosen one. To desire and be desired by thee, to possess thee, and be possessed by thee, without

sin or shame, for naught can exist in the purity of my love for thee. I promise to love thee wholly and completely without restraint, in sickness and in health, in plenty and in poverty, in life and beyond, where we shall meet, remember, and love again. I shall not seek to change thee in any way. I shall respect thee, thy beliefs, thy people, and thy ways as I respect myself.

Priestess

(hands chalice to the groom, saying:) May you drink your fill from the cup of love. (Groom holds chalice to bride while she sips then bride takes chalice and holds it to groom while he sips. The chalice is then handed back to the Priest who sets it on the table. Next the Priest takes the plate of bread, giving it to the groom. Same procedure repeated with bread, groom feeding bride and bride feeding groom.)

By the power vested in me by God and the State of [name] I now pronounce you husband and wife. May your love so endure that its flame remains a guiding light unto you.