



# Which Marriage Is More Promising?

Imagine that you know two engaged couples and that each couple has decided to write down the terms of their marriage agreement. The couples show you their “covenants,” which are offered below. As you read, consider the pluses and minuses of each type of agreement.

## Agreement 1

1. Each of us will be allowed to go out without the other only one night a week.
2. Each of us will wear a wedding ring.
3. If one of us becomes seriously ill, the other will stay home two days a week to help out.
4. We will divide our property in half so that if we divorce some day, each of us can take an equal amount.
5. We will not have sex with anyone but each other.
6. If one of us is left without a pension at retirement, the other will give one-fourth of her or his pension to the pensionless one.
7. Each of us will cook three evening meals a week. One night each week we will go out to dinner.
8. If children are born from this marriage, we will split the child-care responsibilities exactly in half, both of us working at a job for the same number of hours and caring for the children for the same number of hours.

## Agreement 2

1. Each of us will be the other’s closest companion.
2. We will let others know by our attitudes and behaviors how important we are to each other.
3. We will compassionately care for each other in times of need.
4. We will completely share our belongings.
5. We will be faithful to each other in mind, heart, body, and spirit.
6. We will look after each other’s well-being in our old age.
7. We will share our household tasks in a spirit of equality.
8. If children are born from this marriage, we will do whatever is necessary to care for them while allowing for each other’s growth as a person.

**Answer these questions on loose-leaf paper.**

- a. What are the advantages and disadvantages of each agreement?
- b. Which agreement will be easier to keep? Why?
- c. Under which agreement will it be harder to know if the partners are doing their part? Why?
- d. Is anything wrong with agreeing on definite, external signs of love, such as in agreement 1? Under what circumstances would such an agreement help a marriage? Under what circumstances would it hinder a marriage?
- e. How do each of the marriage agreements correspond to the Israelites' misinterpretation of the Sinai Covenant?
- f. How do each of the marriage agreements correspond to the new Covenant proclaimed by Jeremiah and Ezekiel?