What is claimed is:

1. A coupling for joining pipe elements in end to end relation, said coupling comprising: a plurality of segments attached to one another end to end and surrounding a central space, each of said segments having a channel extending circumferentially around and facing said central space; connection members being positioned at opposite ends of each of said segments, said connection members being adjustably tightenable for drawing said segments toward one another; a seal positioned between said segments, said seal comprising: a ring having a peripheral wall extending circumferentially therearound, said ring being received within said channels; a first lobe attached to said peripheral wall, said first lobe extending circumferentially around said ring; a first sealing surface positioned on said first lobe, said first sealing surface extending circumferentially around said ring; at least a first discrete projection extending from said first sealing surface, said first discrete projection defining a closeable leak path across said first sealing surface; a second lobe attached to said peripheral wall opposite to said first lobe, said second lobe extending circumferentially around said ring; a second sealing surface positioned on said second lobe, said second sealing surface extending circumferentially around said ring; said segments being supported in spaced apart relation sufficient to permit said pipe elements to be inserted into said central space while said segments are attached to one another, said first and second sealing surfaces respectively contacting said pipe elements, said first discrete projection engaging one of said pipe elements and maintaining a portion of said first sealing surface in spaced relation away therefrom; wherein tightening of said connection members draws said segments toward one

another thereby compressing said portion of said first sealing surface into sealing engagement with said one pipe element thereby closing said leak path.

2. The coupling according to claim 1, wherein said segments are supported in a pre-assembled state on said seal in spaced apart relation from one another sufficient to permit said pipe elements to be inserted into said central space.

3. The coupling according to claim 1, wherein said first lobe comprises a free edge, said first discrete projection being positioned proximate to said free edge.

4. The coupling according to claim 1, wherein said first lobe comprises a free edge, said first discrete projection being positioned distal to said free edge.

5. The coupling according to claim 1, further comprising at least a second discrete projection extending from said first sealing surface, said second discrete projection defining a closeable leak path across said first sealing surface.

6. The coupling according to claim 5, wherein said first lobe comprises a free edge, said first and second discrete projections being positioned proximate to said free edge.

7. The coupling according to claim 6, wherein said first and second discrete projections are positioned adjacent to one another.

8. The coupling according to claim 6, wherein said first and second discrete projections are positioned in spaced relation to one another angularly about said ring.

9. The coupling according to claim 8, wherein said first and second discrete projections are positioned 180° apart from one another.

10. The coupling according to claim 5, wherein said first lobe comprises a free edge, said first and second discrete projections being positioned distal to said free edge.

11. The coupling according to claim 10, wherein said first and second discrete projections are positioned adjacent to one another.

12. The coupling according to claim 10, wherein said first and second discrete projections are positioned in spaced relation to one another angularly about said ring.

13. The coupling according to claim 12, wherein said first and second discrete projections are positioned 180° apart from one another.

14. The coupling according to claim 5, wherein said first lobe comprises a free edge, said first discrete projection being positioned adjacent to said free edge, said second discrete projection being positioned distal to said free edge.

15. The coupling according to claim 14, wherein said first and second discrete projections are positioned adjacent to one another.

16. The coupling according to claim 14, wherein said first and second discrete projections are positioned in spaced relation to one another angularly about said ring.

17. The coupling according to claim 16, wherein said first and second discrete projections are positioned 180° apart from one another.

18. The coupling according to claim 1, wherein said first discrete projection has a convexly curved shape.

19. The coupling according to claim 18, wherein said first discrete projection has a hemispherical shape.

20. The coupling according to claim 7, further comprising third and fourth discrete projections extending from said first sealing surface, said third and fourth discrete projections defining respective closeable leak paths across said first sealing surface.

21. The coupling according to claim 20, wherein said third and fourth discrete projections are positioned adjacent to one another proximate to said free edge.

22. The coupling according to claim 20, wherein said third and fourth discrete projections are positioned adjacent to one another distal to said free edge.

23. The coupling according to claim 20, wherein said third and fourth discrete projections are positioned in spaced relation to said first and second discrete projections angularly about said ring.

24. The coupling according to claim 23, wherein said third and fourth discrete projections are positioned 180◦ apart from said first and second discrete projections.

25. The coupling according to claim 1, further comprising at least a second discrete projection extending from said second sealing surface, said second discrete projection defining a closeable leak path across said second sealing surface.