

 search[Discuss](#)

Tell a
friend
about
our site!

[PDF](#)

Islam & Valentines

By Amal Sohail

How did Valentine's Day originate?

Valentine's Day also known as the 'Festival of Love' of the pagan Romans dates back to the 17th century when paganism was on the rise in Rome. The Christian heirs of the era have associated many myths and legends with this Roman festival based on 'spiritual love'. The most popular of these myths was about Romulus who was the founder of Rome. Romans believed that once he was suckled by a female wolf.

Every year this event was celebrated by Romans in mid-February with a big festival in which a goat and a dog was sacrificed. The blood of these sacrificed animals was then smeared on the bodies of two strong, muscular youths and washed away with milk. After this ritual the two men would lead a huge parade on the streets with pieces of leather in their hands. They used the leather pieces to hit anyone who came in their way. Roman women welcomed these blows as they believed that it would cure or prevent infertility.

The link between St. Valentine and pagan Roman festival:

The name St. Valentine is given to two of the ancient ‘martyrs’ of the Christian Church. Some say there were two of them while others say there was only one who was martyred by the Gothic Leader Claudius in 296 CE. Half a century later a church was built in the honor of St. Valentine on the site of his death.

The celebrating of the Feast of Love continued by the Romans even after they embraced Christianity, however the pagan concept of ‘spiritual love’ was now changed to ‘martyrs of love’. This was done to commemorate the massacre of St. Valentine who was a promoter of peace and love and was supposedly martyred for the same cause. The festival was also called Feast of Lovers and Saint Valentine was considered to be a supporter of lovers.

A false belief connected with this festival was that the names of young unmarried girls would be written on pieces of paper and placed in a dish on a table. A young man who wanted to marry would be called to pick a piece of paper to draw a name of a girl. He would then hangout with that girl for a year so that the couple gets to know each other, and then get married. This process was repeated every year during the festival.

The Christian clergy abolished this tradition in Italy, as they believed it would cause corruption of the society. In the 18th and 19th centuries it was revived again in some Western countries where they sold books of love poems in shops. These books were called “Valentine books” and had suggestions for writing love letters.

Islam’s stance on the celebration of Valentine’s Day

Islam teaches us true love and cooperation for that which is good and righteous. There are forms of love in Islam that are acceptable while others are not. We must be aware that love for Allah and His Prophet (PBUH) must be given the highest priority over all other forms of love.

There are occasions in Islam that increase love between people and bring them closer to each other. However, Islam prohibits us to blindly follow the West by adopting their customs and traditions such as the celebration of the Valentine’s Day. Therefore commemorating and promoting that special occasion of Valentine’s Day is Biddah or innovation and has no place in our religion. Islam totally rejects all such innovations. Islam encourages us to love one another all the time throughout the year, and limiting the whole year to a single day is illogical.

There is evidence in Quran and Hadith that supports the statements mentioned above: “And whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it will never be accepted of him, and in the Hereafter he will be one of the losers [Aal ‘Imraan 3:85]

And the Prophet (PBUH) had said that groups of his ummah would follow the enemies of Allah in some of their rituals and customs, as it is stated in a hadith of Abu Sa’eed al-Khudri, who narrated that the Prophet (PBUH) said: “You will certainly follow the ways of those who came before you, span by span, cubit by cubit, until even if they were to enter a lizard’s hole, you would follow them.” We said, “O Messenger of Allah, (do you mean) the Jews and Christians?” He said, “Who else?!”

(Narrated by al-Bukhaari in al-I’tisaam bi’l-Kitaab wa’l-Sunnah, Baab Qawl al-Nabi (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) La tattabi’unna Sanan man kaana qablakum, 8/151; and by Muslim in Kitaab al-‘Ilm, Baab Ittibaa’ Sanan al-Yahood wa’l-Nasaara, 4/2054)

What the Prophet (PBUH) told us 1400 years ago has indeed come true in recent times. Many Muslims today follow the enemies of Allah by imitating some of their rituals, customs and that includes the celebration of Valentine's Day.

Muslims should avoid celebrating this occasion by:

- 1- Not expressing joy and happiness on this occasion.
- 2- Not exchanging red roses, which represent the 'spiritual love' of the pagans or the 'love' of the Christians. Hence it is known to them as the Feast of Lovers.
- 3- Not sending greeting cards as some of their cards have pictures of "Cupid" (a child with two wings carrying bows and arrows). This was the god of love of the pagan Romans.
- 4- Not exchanging words of love and desire in the cards or verbally. Some of the cards contain the words 'be my Valentine'. This is the Christian concept of this festival after they adopted from the pagan Romans.
- 5- Not attending dance parties with mixed gatherings.

Why Muslims should not celebrate this festival.

In Islam, the festivals are clearly defined and well established, and no additions or subtractions may be accepted. They have been prescribed for us by Allah and His Messenger (PBUH).

'To each among you, We have prescribed a law and a clear way [al-Maa'idah 5:48]
'For every nation We have ordained religious ceremonies which they must follow' [al-Hajj 22:67]

Agreeing with the whole festival is like agreeing with kufr. Agreeing with some of their minor issues is the same as agreeing with them in some of the branches of kufr. Festivals are the most distinctive things which differentiate religions, so participating in their festivals is like agreeing with the most distinctive rituals of kufr.

Imitating the non-believers in general –whether they are idol-worshippers or People of the Book is unlawful. This is indicated by the Qur'aan, Sunnah and ijmaa' (scholarly consensus):

"And be not as those who divided and differed among themselves after the clear proofs had come to them. It is they for whom there is an awful torment" [Aal 'Imraan 3:105]

From the Sunnah: the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said:

"Whoever imitates a people is one of them." (narrated by Ahmad, 2/50; Abu Dawood, 4021)

Prohibition of imitation the Non-believers is one of the basic tenets of the Islamic law. Allah sent His Messenger with guidance and the true religion so that it might prevail over all other religions, and Allah has perfected His religion for mankind.

"This day, I have perfected your religion for you, completed My Favor upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion" [al-Maa'idah 5:3].

Allah has made Islam perfect as it satisfies all human interests at all times, in all places and for all people. Why then do we need to adopt the ways of the Non-believers?

May Allah guide us all and protect us from evil.

There are many important aspects regarding the Islamic perspective of the celebration of this festival that have not been mentioned here. For more details please visit: http://63.175.194.25/topics/hobb/Valentines_eng.html

Sources:

www.islamqa.com

www.islamonline.net

GALLERY - CHAT - GREETINGS - WIKI - FORUMS - SITEMAP - HELP

The content of this website is licensed under a
Creative Commons Developing Nations License unless stated otherwise.