

our love for Him, and all He has given us. Let us thank Him for the Prophet (p). After all, God says in the Quran 33:56 “indeed God & the angels send blessings on the Prophet”. If they can send their blessings, surely we can do the same for the one we love more than ourselves.

Do not rally behind attractive slogans, false claims & deceptive appearances, which aim at luring the young to indulge in widespread corruption. We appeal to those who are responsible for the press & media, audio & visual, to stop presenting movies & TV series that make “love” appear attractive, and depict it as something necessary for a successful marriage. Such things firmly establish fantasies in the minds of young girls that make them prone to error & easy prey for foolish & lost youth.

They destroy homes by arousing desires & temptation among its members & raising divorce rates. For instance, a girl may think after marriage that her marriage has failed because she stops experiencing “intense” feelings of love, when the reality of marriage appears & the marital responsibilities increase. Likewise, a youth who finds his wife busy with her home & children may think that she no longer shows the redhot emotions & feelings of love that she showed in the early days of their alliance, and may feel that his marriage has failed. Thereafter, disputes arise for trivial reasons, differences worsen & discord rages. And they foolishly seek another...caught in a trap of needing romantic “love” without knowing their responsible goals.

Love has many facets. One of them is covering sins. Love overlooks offences against it; hatred gets offended, holds bitterness, plots revenge. Love forgets & hides the sins of the repentant; hatred remembers them or spreads them to others. Love hears rumors, or even factual news of others’ sins, but never repeats them; hatred craves private information & spreads it.

The Prophet (p) said: “If a person loves someone, let them tell them that they love them.” His Rose was Khadija. He loved her despite her being older. **The fact that there is no age barrier when it comes to love is Prophetic!** Their flower bore four fruits together. After her death he would still send gifts to her friends! Being open to one’s partner’s friends & treating them well was practiced by this desert dweller 1400 years ago. He also said: “By the One in Whose Hand is my soul, you will not enter Paradise until you truly believe, and you will not truly believe until you love one another. Shall I not tell you of something that, if you do it, you will love one another? Spread the greeting of peace (salaam) amongst yourselves.” That’s guidance.

He called men, who would abuse their wives,

## Love is to care.

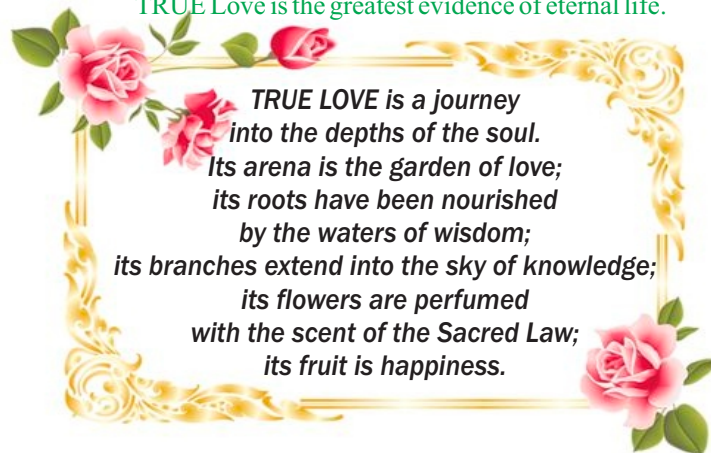
animals! He reminded the wives that your husband is either your Heaven or your Hell depending on how you treat them. Love is a special gift. Don’t take it for granted. Nurture it with kindness, pray for its protection, sprinkle it with laughter. On Eid bring on the Red Roses & chocolate. Everyday let’s enter the universal garden of the Prophet (p) & smell the fragrantly scented flowers of his words which will lead us to the flowering as perfect humans.

Imperfection or perfection...it’s your choice. On Feb. 14th or on any day of the year...for temptations snap at your heels at every moment. So how did Prophet Yusuf (p), of whom the Prophet (P) said he was given half of all beauty, deal with sexual temptation. Let all young men learn the wisdom from these Quranic verses (12:23-24): “But she in whose house he was, sought to seduce him from his true self: she fastened the doors, and said: ‘Now come, dear one!’ He said: ‘Allah forbid! Indeed, he is my master, who has made good my residence & my sojourn agreeable! Truly to no good come those who do wrong!’ With passion did she desire him, and he would have desired her, but that he saw the evidence of his Lord: thus did We order that We might turn away from him all evil & shameful deeds: for he was one of Our servants, sincere & purified.” The choice: **Cupid’s poisoned arrow** or **Yusuf’s heavenly dart**.

Zulekha eventually diagnoses the root cause of her disease when she says: “Yet I claim not that my soul [nafs] was innocent – surely the soul incites to evil – except inasmuch as my Lord had mercy. Truly my Lord is All-forgiving, All-compassionate.” [12:53] Let all young women, feeling the intense pull of temptation, seek refuge in the Merciful God. Banish the thoughts of seduction & teasing. Let’s reclaim True Love for this type of love has everything to do with it. Let our spouses light up our lives.

Demonstrate & redeem your love as often as you want. **Do not follow mush sentimentalism**. Love is to care.

**TRUE Love is the greatest evidence of eternal life.**



## Valentine’s Day: Vice disguised as virtue

# What’s Love

Got to do with it

How many young people have suffered, cried, or committed suicide, because of “love”?

The many-splendoured reality of love is only realized through God and not Cupid. When you are in love; to you the whole world revolves around the person over whom your heart flutters. Marriage might then come to prove the opposite & destroy all your romantic perceptions. This is because you discover that there are other worlds that you have to be aware of. It is not the world of sexy bodies, but the worlds of concepts, values & habits which you paid no attention to before. Before you mistake love with sinful sex study the story of Yusuf (p) & Zulekha. It explores the nature of desire, temptation, and envy that occupies space in all of our souls & leads many of us astray. Her attempt to seduce him was fruitless, and his desire to remind her of God was falling on deaf ears. Instead of Valentine’s day which has become synonymous with illicit sex, we should celebrate Yusuf’s Day...A Triumph of Moral Character. His faith was a foolproof algorithm against the wiles of feminine seduction. True love is more than the mushy sentimentality of the modern heresy of unconditional love. True love is the sacrificial desire for the personal & spiritual welfare of another; it is doing what is necessary to help another person please God. Love has a more defined place in our faith, than mere gift-giving as a ruse for sex. Love, the deepest human commitment, the force that defies empirical examination & yet is the defining & most glorious element in human life, the love between two people, between children & parents, between friends, reminds us of why we have been created for our brief sojourns on the planet.

When asked, “Teacher, which commandment in the law is greatest?": Jesus said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the greatest & first commandment. And a second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”

– Matthew 22:36-40

She lies there, gazing at the ceiling. Biting her lips. Flowers, chocolate wrappers, her brand-new sexy teddy, lie strewn on the carpet...like her disarrayed thoughts on the carpet of her mind. Roberta Flack's "Feel like Makin' Love" is playing from her mobile, but to ears that didn't hear. She turns off the "love music" that had driven them on in their unlawful passions. What had she, an **unmarried** girl, done? A tear quietly rolls down her cheek. It wasn't like the imaginative stimulus she saw in "love movies." At that moment she felt anything but loved. His sugar-coated words now tastes like poison...worse than third grade cheap hallmark cards poetry. Her mind & heart had become polarized so that the two appear mutually exclusive. This schizoid split between reason & emotion has yielded precisely what is expected when you sin: uncontrolled oscillation between the poles of good & evil. All her earlier oscillations are terrifying memories. **His condom might have prevented an unwanted pregnancy but it cannot prevent unwanted thoughts from giving birth to horrible anxieties.** She pulls the sheet to cover her face as soulful sobs begin to wrack her body. Sexual sinning can **never** bring joy. Such "sexual love" withers as there is no meaning.

He lies next to her...already asleep. A temporary narcotic to stem the waves of sin washing over his soul. If both of these were to be spiritually X-rayed they would be found to be seriously diseased. Both their spirits have fallen into a coma. The most expert doctors of the soul have to give it straight without sweetening the bitter pill of truth. It is difficult, in these times, to explain the pill in simple words without having to resort to extended sociological analysis. For God, for all times, it's not difficult at all...**"Do NOT come near to fornication."** 17:32 So simply said & if adhered to you will avoid all the complex pitfalls. Illicit sex is **selfishness**...and **that** is the mainspring of all the woes of humanity.

And, tragically, the above scenario is repeated by millions of misguided humans. Year after year. This pseudo-love that at once diminishes its grandeur and trivializes its meaning. He bears gifts (but he is not wise). Red roses. Chocolate. Bottles of wine. A fake Valentino – a deceitful spermatozoa. **You don't need to be validated with a cheap balloon bouquet & some plastic flowers.** She wears skimpy red clothes & even skimpier underwear. The seductive smile from full red lips

### Those incapable of love never live.

ensnares him. So much makeup on, you could actually sink your fingers in & take prints – digital prints. She looks like a **siren, for this moment!** He cannot resist, at this moment. They are about to sin on the story of a Saint. What a paradox!

Love outside the framework of marriage. It is a mistake to confuse what is called Valentine's day with what the real intentions are behind it. The love referred to on this day is romantic love, taking mistresses & lovers, boyfriends & girlfriends. It is known to be a day of promiscuity & sex, with no restraints or restrictions. They are not talking of pure & true love between a man & his wife or a woman & her husband. They do not distinguish between the **legitimate love** in the relationship between husband & wife, and the **forbidden love** of mistresses & lovers. This day is a means for everyone to express "love." A love mostly skewed. Many websites talk about virtual boxes of chocolate, virtual roses & virtual cards. Ahhh, love is in the air. Sloppy, sentimental, tear-jerking heart shaped wishes. Millions of dollars are made in profit out of "Love" for one day. Supposing we were to "celebrate" the abominations that characterize "human" relations for the rest of the year: such as, verbal abuse, slyly manipulating, grotesquely using, parasitically living off, willfully lying, deception.

What is the story of Valentine's day? The Romans used to celebrate a festival named Lupercalia on Feb. 15th every year. This festival included idolatrous customs & rituals. They used to offer sacrifices to their false gods to protect their flocks from wolves. That day coincided with the spring break according to the calendar adopted by them, that differs from the one currently in use. Later on, this day was changed to Feb. 14th in Rome in the third century CE.

At that time the religion of Christianity was at its inception. The ruler of the Roman Empire at that time was the Emperor Claudius II who **outlawed marriage for young soldiers** so that they would remain "strong". **Valentine objected to this decree & started secretly concluding marital contracts.** However, this was soon revealed & he was sentenced to death. He is still revered by the Christians because of his steadfastness in adhering to Christianity. The Emperor offered to pardon him if he forsook Christianity & took to worshipping the Roman gods; and promised to make him one of his closest confidants & his son-in-law. Valentine refused & preferred Christianity, so **he was executed on Feb. 14th**, 270 CE, on the eve of Feb. 15th, the festival of Lupercalia. Thus, this day was named after this saint. Valentine is killed on Feb 14th...hmmm... shouldn't

### Hell is the inability to love.

this be a day of mourning? Or...after all the illicit sex, u are left to mourn the dire consequences?

People don't seem to understand that they are psychologically trained/prepared in advance, before that St. Valentine day, to go into amorous mode so they can **buy** that card, that ring, that bouquet. **Buy.** Love made cheap via expensive trinkets. Hell awaits the man who offers a well-intentioned "I Love You" without the glitter. **Sleep on the couch...make your own dinner...**

Every year Valentine's day brings a discussion about whether Muslims should participate in this consumerist celebration. Reclaim it from its current tacky representation of love as red roses, staged meals for two & mandatory present-giving. And the illicit sex.

The roots of Valentine's Day should give us pause to rethink our approach to love & its celebration. **Love should be celebrated.** It is one of the greatest gifts we have been given from God. It is what brings joy to life, binds parents to children, holds families together, creates the threads which unite; and love is what gives us compassion & connection with all other human beings. **It ignites powerful forces of growth in our lives.** Being lost in pure love for God is our ultimate goal. Let us rejoice in love! Let our love for those around us be an expression of our love for the Divine.

Love for other than the self underpins the quest to be human. In Valentine's Day this quest meets its destination in romance. For the Prophet (p), and in Islam, this journey reaches its home in God. In fact, God often refers in the Quran to the fact that "to Him is the final destination." In colloquial parlance when we find a partner to love, we describe the emotion as feeling 'at home.'

This feeling of rushing towards God out of pure love needs more emphasis. The feelings of joy, contentment, peace & wisdom are born from tasting this Divine Love. This talk of reclaiming Valentine's Day for love, marriage or belief in God is to flag up a much bigger, more significant discussion. It's the need to talk more about love – human, romantic, Divine, humanitarian, parent-child. **Islam is not about fear, it is about love.** God's Compassion & Mercy which we talk of so often are expressions of His Love. If God talks often of His Love, **why are we so loathe to do the same?** Invoke al-Wadud – The Loving God.

Let those who believe thank God & express

**Do Not come near to fornication**  
**for it is a shameful deed & an evil path**

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