

# Whence came St. Valentine's Day?

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BY GLEN AND ERMA MILLER

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## **IS VALENTINE'S OBSERVANCE CHRISTIAN OR PAGAN?**

As small children we have heard the question asked, "Will you be my valentine?" Merchants make much of the red and white greeting cards for February 14th. They begin to appear immediately after New Year's making sure that their sales will keep up during the so - called winter lull after the storm of Christmas "returns".

Merchants consider February 14th as one of their best days. Sweethearts look very carefully over the millions of Valentine paraphernalia - all the cards, flowers and candy. Tons of candy of every kind is unloaded on the public, most of it heart - shaped. Some little candy hearts have "love sayings" on them and much time is taken to read each one. In days gone by, Glen would always bring me a large box of See's candy packaged in a red velvet or satin box. Sometimes, I would even find a hundred dollar bill inside the lid.

Our church usually had a Valentine's banquet, a box supper, or some sort of a party as young lovers paired off. In the world there is always a Valentine's ball held in a famous ballroom or supper club.

Is there any religious significance to February 14th? Where did St. Valentine's Day come from? Ask your school teacher, but it is doubtful that one out of ten educators would have the slightest idea. All they know is that since childhood they have been involved with passing out Valentines', some comic ones and some serious.

Seldom has anyone stopped to research the why's or wherefore's of all these things. Why did we inherit a pagan custom? Why do we encourage our children to celebrate St. Valentine's Day, to buy them Valentines for their friends and their teachers?

The Scripture is well said, *"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge,*

*I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.” Hosea 4:6*

In the Encyclopaedia Britannica article, “Valentine, Saint”, it reads: “St. Valentine’s Day is a lovers’ festival; the choice of a valentine and the modern development of sending valentine cards has no relation to the saint or to any incident in his life.”

Pagan Romans celebrated February 15th and the evening of February 14th as an idolatrous and sensuous festival in honor of one called Lupercus, the “hunter of wolves.” They called this festival the “Lupercalia.” The custom of exchanging Valentines and all the other traditions in honor of Lupercus, the deified hero-hunter of Rome, was also linked anciently with the pagan practice of teenagers going steady. Going steady is thought to be a very modern custom among teenagers but it isn’t. In ancient times names of young women were put into a box and drawn out by men as chance directed during the “Lupercalia” festival. The relationship usually led to fornication. The Britannica article points out that the custom of exchanging Valentines arose from this “name drawing.”

In today’s culture fornication is as common as apple pie and is not looked on by the majority of people as anything too drastic. Even Christian young people have taken on this custom of going steady and it has often led to fornication. Little is said from the pulpits against this sin.

When Constantine made Christianity the official religion of the Roman Empire in A.D. 313 there was some talk in church circles of discarding this pagan free-for-all, but the Romans would not hear of it! It was agreed that the holiday would continue as it was, except for the most grossly sensual observances. The Romans then introduced the custom to England and it continued into the Christian era. In order to adapt the practice to Christianity the church transferred it to the feast of St. Valentine.

During the reign of Pope Gelasius the holiday became a “Christian” custom. As far back as 496, Pope Gelasius changed Lupercalia on February 15<sup>th</sup> to St. Valentine’s Day on February 14<sup>th</sup>. (Customs and Holidays Around the World, p. 172). St. Valentine, martyred on this day because he would not deny his faith, was renowned for his chastity and appears unconnected with the day’s customs.

I now ask, how did this pagan festival acquire the name of St. Valentine’s Day? Why do little children and young people still cut out hearts and send them to “sweethearts” on a day in honor of Lupercus, the hunter of wolves? As Christians, why have we supposed these pagan customs in honor of a false god are Christian?

According to Smith’s Dictionary of Greek and Roman-Biography and Mythology, Vol. II, the Romans identified Lupercus with the Greek god, Pan. (See “Lupercus.”)

Pan was an Arcadian god of light. As such he was equivalent to the Phoenician sun god, Baal. Baal, mentioned so often in the Hebrew Bible, was a title of Nimrod, the mighty hunter. Nimrod extended his hunting expeditions even to Italy and a mountain known as the Mountain of Nimrod. Valentine’s Day was originally a day set aside by the pagan Romans in his honor.

What part did the site of ancient Rome play in the life of Nimrod? Valentine comes from the Latin word, Valentinus, a proper name derived from the word valens, meaning to be strong, powerful and mighty. Is there any connection with Nimrod?

In the Bible, Nimrod was the mighty hunter (Genesis 10:9). A proverb in ancient times called their hero their strongman; their Valentine.

We associate hearts with a day set aside in honor of Nimrod, the Baal of the Phoenicians. Ancient Romans used the symbol of the heart that they acquired from the Babylonians. Nimrod founded Babel. He was the first lord of the

Babylonians. In the ancient tongue, the word for “heart” was bal, because of similarity in sound; a symbol of Nimrod the Baal or Lord of the ancient Babylonians! Later, professing Christians in Constantine’s day associated one of their martyrs named Valentine with festivities honoring Nimrod, the Valentine of the heathen. In this way pagan Romans were influenced to embrace the church while still continuing their pagan customs.

Nimrod, the Baal or sun god of the ancient pagans was said to have been born at the winter solstice. In the twenty-first century BC, the winter solstice was on January 6<sup>th</sup>. Semiramis, who ruled as queen in that century ordered Nimrod’s birthday to be on this day. The Eastern Orthodox churches still commemorate this particular day, but now call it by the name of Christmas instead. Caesar ordered the Roman world to celebrate this birth date on the new date of the solstice, December 25<sup>th</sup>.

It was the custom for the mother of a male child to present herself for purification on the fortieth day after the day of birth. Nimrod’s original birth date was January 6<sup>th</sup>, and forty days later is February 15<sup>th</sup>. The celebration began on the evening of February 14<sup>th</sup>, the Lupercalia or St. Valentine’s Day. Semiramis, mother of Nimrod, was said to have been purified and to have appeared for the first time in public with her son as the original “mother and child.”

This is the origin of Valentine’s Day. Should you as a Christian allow your children to celebrate these pagan customs of pagan sex and hero worship? Should we not as Christians discard Baal worship and pagan holidays and follow the Bible?

The following information was researched by Charlene Fite. Notes are taken from the book, ‘The Valentine and Its Origins’ by Frank Staff.

Ancient Customs And Traditions - The Festival Of The Lupercalia - St. Valentine.

Sending a valentine card is no longer considered the serious matter it once was, it is thought to be a harmless way of saying, "I love you."

In Britain and America the majority of people who use this means of saying, "I love you," have no idea that the saint's day they are celebrating is connected with ancient customs, which can be traced back to paganism.

In all countries where man has lived for countless generations, superstitions and old customs become such a part of the life of the people that they are accepted without being questioned as to their reason or origins. These traditions have been handed down for centuries through our forefathers coming from those countries, and most of these celebrated days are rooted in pagan rites and festivals, which is idolatry.

Valentine, according to history, was executed on February 14<sup>th</sup> because he would not denounce his faith. Lupercalia was on February 15<sup>th</sup> and somehow these two dates became one. Lupercalia is associated with fertility rites to the Roman mythological gods and goddesses.

During Valentine's lifetime it is said that he was subject to seizures of fits of epilepsy so that after his death it was believed he would be the likely saint to take interest in epileptic sufferers. In some parts of Germany, epilepsy used to be known as Valentine's sickness. Burton, in his "Anatomy of Melancholy" referred to the aid of the saints for the cure of melancholy and diseases of the mind, and mentions Valentine for the falling sickness.

Most people remember Valentine as saint of the lovers. One of the festivals was the Lupercalia. This was a Spring festival involving fertility rites with young people. The most ancient order of the priests was Luperci, sacred to Pan the god of the country and of the shepherds. They had their name from the deity they attended on - in Greek, a wolf; in Latin, Lupus, because the chief employment of Pan was driving away beasts from sheep.

When the Romans invaded Britain, they introduced their religious festivals and customs and in this way the festival of the Lupercalia was established. Saint Valentine was martyred on the 14<sup>th</sup> of February. In his memory this festival of the return of spring (when a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love and when the birds are mating) arose.

It is interesting to note and remember that the famous story of Romulus and Remus is not fictitious, for Faustulus the shepherd who found the two baby boys at the bottom of a tree brought them to his home where his wife, Laurentia, cared for them, nursed them and brought them up with his own children. Laurentia had formerly been a "fallen woman", a woman of the streets, called in Latin, Lupa, meaning a she-wolf.

Today we still refer to one who fancies himself with the ladies as something of a 'wolf' and when a pretty girl walks down the street, young men give a 'wolf's whistle', which shows that the spirit of the Lupercalia is still with us.

May I remind all Christians that the word fancy and all its connecting words are rooted in imaginations and delusions and if associated with love for a mate to live with for the rest of one's life should be more than a fancy.

Some people are blinded by believing that to participate in the honoring of these pagan observances is harmless, completely ignoring the power behind all pagan rites. Many of the faces of the people on valentines are those of Semiramis, Dianna, Ashtarte, and Tammuz for the cupid's face. These same faces appear in the books Mystery Babylon and Two Babylons. (These books are listed at the end of the article)

If a Christian involves himself with the keeping of dates and observances of these pagan practices he opens the door of his soul to the devil and idolatry.

It is possible that one should pray and ask the Lord to forgive us for any involvement in this ancient custom and cast out the spirit of the wolf.

### **HEALING TESTIMONY REGARDING LUPUS**

May 21, 1987

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Miller: Last year if you recall, we asked for prayer for our daughter as she had systemic Lupus. We had almost lost her in April, 1986. **You sent a prayer cloth and information on Valentine hearts connected with Lupus.**

Praise God, prayer is answered. Just last week she went to the doctor for one of her checkups and the doctors can find no Lupus cells in her blood. This is the first time since 1983 that there are no Lupus cells in her blood! The doctor also told her that she is in excellent health!

After reading the information we received from Lake Hamilton Bible Camp, I requested that my daughter dispose of all heart shapes in her possession as she had them in her room while growing up. She did dispose of all of them, including jewelry.

There is truth in this information. I believe God has led me to do more research on this and I have acquired some one hundred and twenty year old encyclopedias to continue the study.

We are praising God as this difficult situation has put all of us - my husband, our daughter, Mom and I - on some truly interesting paths to His glory. We are looking forward to His work. In Christ's love. California

Many young girls are fascinated with hearts and jewelry made like hearts. Remember, satan has lots of "wiles" and we can no longer go on the fact that we have always celebrated Valentine's Day. It is our premise here at Lake Hamilton Bible Camp that we should bring no abominable

thing into our homes lest we become a cursed thing like it. Deuteronomy 7:25-26, *“The graven images of their gods shall ye burn with fire. thou shalt not desire the silver or gold that is on them, nor take in unto thee, lest thou be snared therein: for it is an abomination to the Lord thy God. Neither shalt thou bring an abomination into thine house. lest thou be a cursed thing like it: but thou shalt utterly detest it, and thou shalt utterly abhor it; for it is a cursed thing.”*

In the book, “Two Be One” by Ernest Steed (out of print), it tells on page 81 of the signs and symbols of St. Valentine’s day activities, like the shapes and pictures on the cards and tokens given on this day. The heart shape with the arrow through it are taken from the pagan mythology symbols, which are sex symbols. Look up the words yoni, phallus and lingam. They are representative of the productive power of nature. These names are connected with the idolatry of nature, such as the worship of trees.

### **PRAYER FOR DELIVERANCE**

Dear Father, we come to You in the name of Jesus and ask for help and forgiveness for yielding to the ways of Babylon and even to Baal fascinations. Lord, You call these the sins of idolatry and the worship of false gods. We want to be forgiven and we ask for the precious blood to cleanse us and wash our hearts of any contamination of any other lord except You. Wash out all the inherited sensuality, fornication and false worship sins that have passed down upon us and help us destroy any idols connected with Valentine’s Day. Praise You, Jesus, for Your precious blood as we allow it to wash our minds, our hearts, and our subconscious. Any attachment that we might have to a piece of jewelry in the shape of a heart, help us to burn it and not desire the gold in it.

Deliver us from paganism, Baal worship and from idols. Your Word says that whosoever calls on the name of the Lord will be delivered. We call on You now to deliver us out of the hands of the enemy. In the name of Jesus, we bind these spirits and command them to go in Jesus name. Amen.



## GLOSSARY

**LUPERCALIA** — Lupercalia is an ancient Roman festival with fertility rites, held on February 15<sup>th</sup> in honor of Lupercus, a pastoral god sometimes identified with Faunus.

**FAUNUS** — In Roman mythology any of a class of rural-deities .... part human and part animal. A god of nature; the patron of farming, and animals; the giver of oracles: identified with Greek Pan.

**FAUNA** - A Roman Goddess.

**LUPUS** — A wolf; in astronomy a constellation outlining a wolf. Also any of various skin diseases; especially a chronic tuberculous disease of the skin, formation of reddish-brown nodules. There are eleven words associated with Lupus as the root word; one other is lupulin, a resinous powder obtained from the strobiles of hops used in medicine as a sedative.

In music the jarring discordant sounds produced in playing an organ or piano that has been tuned to an unequal temperament. A harsh tone produced on string instruments, the intonation of which is not true. Be on guard and check the 'beat' of so called Christian Gospel Rock.

In the dictionary was a list of sayings, included in them was this: "to see a wolf", to lose one's voice. One of the known characteristics of the wolf is, "they usually attack their prey in the throat."

**CUPID** — The Latin name for the god of love, Eros. Cupid is generally identical with Amor (desire). The idea of the god of love in Roman poetry is due to the influence of Alexandrian poets and artists, in whose hands he became a mischievous boy with essentially human characteristics. His usual attribute is the bow. For the story of Cupid and Psyche, see Psyche.

**PSYCHE** — In Greek mythology, the personification of the human soul. The importance in Platonic philosophy, of love (in the highest sense) as an agent of the soul's progress leads, in art from the 4th century BC to representations, allegorical or playful, of Psyche (generally represented as a winged girl, a relic of the old conception of the soul as a bird or insect) in company with Eros, usually in amatory scenes. The tale of Cupid and Psyche, in the *Metamorphoses* of Apuleius, is interesting as the only ancient fairy tale which is told as such. In it Psyche, the youngest daughter of a king, arouses the jealousy of Venus, who orders Cupid to inspire her with love for the most despicable of men.

Cupid, however, falls in love with her and carries her off to a secluded spot, where he visits her by night, unseen and recognized by her. Persuaded by her sisters that her companion is a hideous monster, and forgetful of his warning, she lights a lamp to look upon the face of Cupid, who awakes and disappears. Wandering over the earth in search of him, Psyche falls into the hands of Venus, who forces her to undertake the most difficult tasks. The last and most dangerous of these is to fetch from the world below the box containing the ointment of beauty. She secures the box but on her way back opens it and is stupefied by the vapor. She is only restored to her senses by Cupid at whose entreaty Jupiter makes her immortal and bestows her in marriage upon her lover. (1947) By Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc.

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