

What Is Love, and Who Is Our True Beloved as Human Beings?

What Is Love, and Who Is Our One True Beloved?

What is love?

What is love for someone/something?

Who is our true beloved?

What is love's function in our lives?

Do we strive to obtain something we do not want, or do we enjoy it when we have it?

In previous lessons, we learned that our soul has five faculties: sense perception, imagination, estimation, intellect, and supra-rational faculty. Each of these faculties has its own needs, and to satisfy its needs and desires, it wants to reach its beloved. We said that if there is no harmony between the person who desires and her object of desire, or if the person who desires does not need the object of desire, there will be no desire at all. But in addition to harmony and need, there is another essential factor for desiring and wishing for something. This factor is called love. But what is love? Love, in its literal sense, is when the soul likes and is attracted to something desirable. Therefore, it is through this initial interest and love that we develop a desire for something, and anything we desire becomes a beloved and a part of our existence.

Another question that arises is: What role does love play in our lives? In fact, if we do not develop love, interest, and affection towards something, we will not have

any inclination or attraction towards it. The love that exists between each part of our existence and its desired thing can be considered as the basis for the activities of the soul. It is this love that mobilizes all our faculties to fulfill the desires of every level of our existence.

But what is a “deity” or “god,” and what is its relationship with love? A deity is anything that, due to its existence, harmony, knowledge, capacity, and prior experience is desired and loved by one of our existential dimension. This love creates the "desire" within us, and as a result of this desire, we adjust our behaviors and plans to achieve it.

The needs of each faculty are its beloved or deity. They become so beloved to us that they captivate us, directing all our actions and reactions towards them. However, this love is not inherently undesirable and is even necessary for our existence because it forms the foundation of all our desires, inclinations, and passions. In fact, if we have no inclination or desire towards the desires of each level of our existence, it means that our hierarchy of love is facing problems and we are experiencing disorder at that level.

The Beloved and Deity of our Human Dimension

Each dimension of our existence has a beloved or deity based on compatibility, love, and inclination. Our human dimension also has a beloved with which it is compatible, so it loves and desires this dimension. Since our human dimension is divine in essence, it is in harmony with God; therefore, it is inherently in love with that Absolute Perfect. None of the perfections of the lower levels of our existence have compatibility with our human dimension, so they cannot be the beloved or

deity of this dimension. The fact that only God can be the true beloved and deity of our human dimension gives this dimension dignity. When we say "There is no deity but Allah," we are denying the existence of any deity other than Allah. This means for our human dimension, which has a divine nature, there is no other deity besides Allah. In reality, our supra-rational faculty finds peace only in the companionship and embrace of Allah. Each level of our existence has its own specific beloved and deity. The true beloved and deity of our human dimension is God only. Now, we understand the connection between the concept of "There is no deity but Allah" and the notion of love.

What Is the Criterion for Measuring Love?

We found the answer to the question "What is love?" Now we are going to discuss the function and various aspects of love in our lives? The structure and laws of the creation system are such that divine tests occur in all aspects of our lives and at every moment.¹ These tests measure the priorities that we have established based on the hierarchy of love.² Until we are put to the test, it is unclear how much we love our True Beloved.³

The criterion for measuring the health of the hierarchy of love within us is that the beloved of each part of our existence should be important to us within its own specific boundaries. For example, the importance we place on work or acquiring knowledge should not diminish our affection for or the time we spend with our

¹. Quran, 2:155

². Quran, 67:2

³. Quran, 22:11

family. Or the importance we place on our own beauty should not cause financial problems.

While acknowledging our love for family members, home, material possessions, business, and wealth, God asks us to love each perfection within its specified limit. He wants us to love the Beloved of our human dimension-i.e., God, Family of the Prophet, and struggle in His path- above all others.⁴ In that case, we have gained a correct knowledge about our true and eternal self and about our relationship with Allah.

The same relationship that we experience in earthly love applies to our relationship with the Beloved of the human dimension of our existence, and our behavior determines the level of our affection and love for our Beloved. These tests also show us the first priority of our hearts. In fact, it is the true ruler of our existence which becomes victorious when it has to choose between different beloveds. If God is truly the first beloved of our hearts, when faced with a choice, we will abandon the lower dimensions and sacrifice everything for the will and desire of our True Beloved.

Who Is Our Beloved?

The attention we give to the desires of different dimensions of our existence clearly shows to which dimension we give primacy: inanimate, vegetative, animal, intellectual, or human. That is because any level of our existence which is brought

⁴. Quran, 9:24

into focus makes us follow its deity and beloved. Considering the love between each dimension and its beloved, this is completely natural and logical.

As humans we have a human dimension, but if we submit to the lower dimensions of our existence, we cease to be human. It means we have abandoned our true deity, the beloveds of other levels of our existence have become our beloved, and we have devoted all our attention to them. In other words, we have succumbed to lower desires, that is, those desires which are lower in rank than the supra-rational faculty. If we truly love our True Beloved and consider Him as our only true beloved, we will not choose any other deity besides him and truly grasp the meaning of “There is no deity but Allah” (*“La ilaha illallah”*).

In this article, we answered the question “What is love?” and stated that needs create love and lead us to seek them. The needs of each level of our existence are the beloved and deity of that dimension. Allah is the only Beloved of our human dimension and we find peace in Him only. If we truly consider Allah as our beloved, we do not focus on the lower levels and sacrifice everything for the will of our True Beloved. In the next articles, we will explain the necessity and importance of submitting to the Beloved of our human dimension and explore the real function of this love.

If you can provide more answers to the question “What is love?” please share them with us in the comments section.