

# Life

By Bayyinaah Sharrieff

To be accepted as a guest in a Muslim society is a pleasure and a great honor.

Upon entering a Muslim Sudanese home, one feels comfortable. There is a peaceful ease about the reception by the host and hostess. Usually, the women are escorted to the ladies' sitting room or the garden or yard within the compound away from the men; while the men stay in the front yard or in the main sitting room (living room). Cool lemonade or tamarahindi, or kirkaday or belamoor (cool soft drinks made from spices, dates and powdered herbs) perhaps even an orange soda pop or a coke are brought in, seemingly immediately after being seated.

**THE FEMALES** may relax their head coverings if they wish at this time because only females are in this area.

The men likewise are served cool soft drinks of the same nature as those served the females by their host or one of his sons or nephews. They too may relax in full for there are no females present.

After the cold drinks are taken, hot tea or coffee is then brought to the guests. The thing which I found amazing about this is that one is not asked what they wish to drink or if they would like a drink. It is assumed that one is thirsty and would always like something to drink.

They continue to offer fruits and candies and food to their guests bringing it forward and placing it on small tables near their guests so that it can be known what is available and that it is no trouble to prepare it or serve it.

You are often offered a bed to rest upon and are welcomed to do so especially if your visit is near the heat of the day or if you have traveled a long distance.

RECORDED music on tapes or a radio playing music is often brought into the room or area of the guests as a form of entertainment.

One feels the ability to relax fully, even if one did not intend to do so, in such an easy and friendly atmosphere.

Strain or tenseness is absent from the atmosphere. I enjoyed immensely being the guest in such a comfortable society. Such procedures of entertaining guests is the practice among the Muslim Sudanese.

At their large celebrations and parties, one will find an atmosphere totally different from that of a party in a western Christian society. They do not hide themselves nor their actions in darkness. There are many lights, often colored lights. There are musicians present to entertain the guests. There are comedians (male) who make puns on words and there are acrobats who tumble and do other physical won-

ders. Often the children sing songs and dance. One is also constantly being served and offered a great variety of soft cool drinks. There is no loud talking nor wild savage dancing as at parties of the Western civilization.

The hospitality of a Muslim home and in a Muslim society is so unlike that of the Christian home and society. The Muslim will give freely of what he has for his brother. They rejoice when they have a guest in their home. They express happiness, which can plainly be seen, is sincere when they receive their company. But those in the Christian Western societies hoard most of what they have to themselves, and do not offer to give for they are afraid that others might accept. Think about this. They do not offer lunch or dinner many times for fear that one might accept dinner and they have only prepared enough for themselves.

The Europeans are not as selfish about this as the Americans.

Those in Western societies extend a quick "hello" and offer very little clean refreshment to their guests. The Western Christian people are often referred to by those in the east as being cold.

**THE HOLY QUR-AN** instructs the Muslims to spend of what they have been blessed in the way of doing good. The Honorable Elijah Muhammad reminds us also to "give to the traveller like we do for our near of kin" that, "this is best for those who desire Allah's pleasure and these it is who are successful"—(Holy Qur-an 3:38). Every instruction which the Honorable Elijah Muhammad gives to us is supported by the Holy Qur-an.

After visiting the East and living among them, I have seen and now compare the basic differences of the two societies and can truly say that He (the Honorable Elijah Muhammad) is

teaching the universal way of righteousness to those who will listen.

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