

City of Wad Medani True in Following Laws of Islam

By Bayyinah Sharrteff

On one of our visits from the Gezira to Wad Medani, where we went to purchase the few items needed at the house, we visited some of Fatma's relatives.

WAD MEDANI, in my short observance, appeared to be much different from Khartoum, the capital city of the Sudan. The heat was not as intense there as it was in the Capital. There were more shade trees, fruit trees, and multi-color flower-blooming trees in Medani. One saw few foreigners there, a great contrast to Khartoum, which houses all of the foreign embassies and their staffs. There were also few Greek, Syrian and East Indian merchants in Wad Madani.

During my stay there in the Sudan, the government limited the visas of the East Indians. These Indians established businesses in the Sudan, but did not apply for citizenship. They sent the money which they got from their businesses back to their poor families in India. Of course the government does not approve of this for this is a drain on the economy of the Sudan; supporting another people in another country.

Some of these Indian families have been established in the Sudan for generations. They continued to renew their visas in the Sudan, but never applied for citizenship. To solve this continual drain on their economy the government placed a ban on this: They refused to renew the visas of such people even if they owned land (which many of them did in the Sudan). They either had to apply for citizenship or had to leave the country.

There are few oven-baked brick homes in Wad Medani, the majority of the homes are of those typical of the Northern Sudan. The floors in the homes are either dirt (which are wet down every morning with woven straw mats placed over the ground), or of a tile which is waxed regularly with a heavy black wax. They contain one or two large sitting rooms (living rooms). Some have dining rooms. These so-called gathering areas are not connected to any other rooms of the compound and are located in the middle or in the front of the compound.

One passes through unroofed corridors or across the yards to reach the sleeping quarters. The male and female quarters and bathing facilities are on opposite sides of the parents bedroom. The kitchen and toilets are away from the main living quarters, and a high wall of the same materials as the home surrounds the living quarters. There is much space between it and the living quarters. Often beautiful gardens are found in this space.

THIS WALL provides much privacy to its owners. The Muslim women can walk and run to and fro and have full freedom of

actions, without worrying about displaying their adornments to the public. It is not necessary that they wear their tobés (the national dress which covers their bodies from head to foot). This privacy in America is only had within the home. For American yards are usually open for anyone to see in, or over the fence. In America unless one lives in the country, it would be very difficult to keep nosy neighbors out of, or off of the wall.

After being in Wad Medani a few hours, Fatma's relatives took us to an area at which the Nile river was very low. In fact it seemed dry. Small pond like areas could be seen sparsely from the high bank on which we stood. I was taken to this area to be shown the great number of monkeys which lived in this area. It was amazing. As we walked and talked the monkeys ran in large numbers resembling waves before us, seeking refuge in distant trees. I had not seen such a sight before.

We had a wonderful stay there with her relatives. In fact whenever I went in Wad Medani, and the Gezira, I was received very warmly and taken into the families as one of their own.

The Sudanese Muslim men, knowing the weaker and dependent nature of females, extend a protective shield to the females in their midst, if she is submissive to their laws and honors their systems. To the Muslim men of that country, the woman is their responsibility, to honor her and provide for her. She then must submit to their will and not transgress on the man's grounds of rulership and ownership.

These are the teachings of Islam: That the woman is the man's property for which he must protect and provide.

The Honorable Elijah Muhammad teaches us that she is a part of man and that man must treat his two parts as well as he treats the farm. He teaches us that man fights off the enemies of his land, that it may produce and bring forth healthy crops. So must a man extend a protective shield around his woman; for she is the soil from which his crop grows.

In the Sudan the Muslim women feel safe and secure. They know that they will not be molested or disrespected on the streets, for the Laws of Islam are enforced in the Sudan.

The Messenger, the Honorable Elijah Muhammad, teaches us the nature of woman, her role in the Islamic society and the position of man in the Islamic society.

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