

down. After listening to all that had to be said the judge stated his judgement which was binding on both sides. (For a detailed description of fallaheen jurisprudence see Finn (1923: 21-24). However, in the evenings, the guest-house had a social function. It was a place of relaxation where men met to enjoy the evenings after a long day of hard work. The absence of social interaction among men in their homes was compensated for by their evening gatherings in the guest-house. They would sit together, or in smaller groups, talking to one another, or all listening to someone telling stories. Sometime the village poets recited poems (zajal) to fit the occasion. Songs of many kinds were also sung by the village singer playing a rababah (a one-stringed fiddle).

In Peasant Life in the Holy Land Wilson describes peasant men meeting in the guest-house at the turn of the century:

"It is a picturesque sight which these guest-rooms present at night, with a crowd of swarthy men seated on the ground in various easy attitudes around the central hearth, on which burns a fire of twigs, the bright blaze lighting up their weather-beaten faces and bringing into sharp relief the white beards of old men. The long pipes are filled and lit, and their smoke mingles with that of the fire. There is the hum of conversation all round or else breathless silence while someone tells a thrilling tale of adventure, robbery, or war: or an animated discussion takes place over some matter of keen local interest" (Wilson, 1906: 278).

Baldensberger also comments:

"The long winter evenings are spent in games or story telling; but the Fallaheen are most fond of the long adventures of the warrior tribes in their migrations from Arabia, attacks from other tribes, love-romances or semi-biblical, semi-Mohammedanized stories about 'Joseph and his brethern' (Baldensberger, 1913: 125),

In his unpublished manuscript, Omar Salih El-Barghouthi states that men from the Barghouthi clan never participated in singing or dancing because they considered this act to be improper and only to be performed by the fallaheen.

Sometimes a religious sheikh who recited parts of the Koran would