

PalArch's Journal of Archaeology
of Egypt / Egyptology

**THE STATUS OF NIKAH AND ITS VALUES IN ISLAMIC SHARIA
AND SOCIETY**

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Dr. Karim Dad , Dr. Abzahir Khan , Dr. Muhammad Zubair , Dr. Gulzar Ali , Dr. Najmul Hassan , Dr. Mumtaz Khan , Muhammad Aqeel Khan , Riaz Ahmad Khan , The Status Of Nikah And Its Values In Islamic Sharia And Society , PalArch's Journal Of Archaeology Of Egypt/Egyptology 18(10), 2239-2248. ISSN 1567-214x.

Key Words: Nikah, Bond, Quran, Sunnah, Desire, Benefits, Scholarly

Abstract

The term Nikah is an Arabic word literally means to combine. In broad sense it is the combination of two persons i.e. male and female in view of the known sharia rulings. It is not only a social contract but also is a form of worship as described by the Holy Prophet S.A.W. Nikah is an essential step which confirms the mental rights of two parties and ensures a legitimate and psychologically safe and sound relation. In the Holy Quran it is explained as the first ever relation on the earth between the human beings. In this article the Nikah has been discussed in light of Quran and Sunnah. The divine instructions in regard to this relation have been explained showing that what is the status of Nikah in Islam? Similarly

the advantage of conducting Nikah that are social, moral, psychological etc have also been elaborated. The methodology adopted for this research is inductive and descriptive (Qualitative). The verses of the Holy Quran and the other wordings of Hadith etc have been added.

Introduction

Islam is a social religion. It focuses on the development and establishment of peaceful society based on dual grounds. It is nature that human being cannot survive without society and communal relationship. Apart from the other kinds of creatures the human beings are the superior creature on Earth. The Human being was settled on the Earth so that to comply with the commands of Allah. He was sent here for testing and Judgment for the purpose Allah Almighty made him responsible to do well and avoid the bad. He was given a guideline to abide by the objectives of his existence. Islam wants the development, prosperity and peace of the Muslim community. Teachings about family life are very important. In which the relationship between the spouses and their rights and duties are paramount. Because the relationship between husband and wife forms the family which is the basic unit of society. In Islamic law, the first name of this relationship is marriage. Nowadays in some societies there is a tendency to run away from marriage.

People prefer to live a free life for a variety of reasons. Marriage is considered an imprisonment, a restriction and an addition to expenses and responsibilities. However, this is not the reality, because the role of marriage is very important in the structure and peace of society. The purpose of marriage and its importance to society is highlighted in this article in an investigative manner. But first its introduction and its importance in terms of Qur'an and Sunnah have been explained.

Introduction to Nikah

Literally, the word nikah means union, intercourse and marriage contract¹. According to experts there is little difference that is, when the word is used for another woman than own, it means a marriage contract and if it is used for his wife, then it means intercourse, such as:

نكح فلان امرأته أو زوجته²

According to Shafi school of thought it means marriage contract and to Hanafi school of thought it refers to meeting and intercourse. Sometimes the word ziwaj is used instead of marriage. The term marriage is often used as both meanings that is intercourse and relation, as Allah Almighty has instructed:

اٰخٰشُرُوْا الَّذِيْنَ ظَلَمُوْا وَاَزْوَاجَهُمْ وَمَا كَانُوْا يَعْبُدُوْنَ³ اٰيٰ قُرٰنٰهُم.

“(It will be said to the angels,) “Muster all those who were unjust, and their fellows, and whatever they used to worship.”

The word “أَزْوَاجَهُمْ” here in this means the colleagues.

In another place Allah Almighty says:

وَإِذَا النُّفُوسُ رُوِّجَتْ⁴ اٰى قُرٰنِت.

And when the people will be arranged in categories.

Then it began to be used as a permanent link between a man and a woman. That is why Marriage is called nikah, because it is the reason for lawful intercourse⁵.

In Islamic point of view the marriage is a constant relation not limited to a specific period which is followed by specific objectives and everlasting benefits. It is a deed for ensuring the domestic, social, psychological and fiscal rights of female. Due to this durable deed the woman become free from all kinds of financial liabilities. Imam Jirjani writes:

هو عقد يرد على تملك منفعة البضع قصداً⁶

Abdul Azim Sharafuddin says:

أنه عقد وضعه الشارع الحكيم يفيد ملك استمتاع الرجل بالمرأة، وحل استمتاع المرأة بالرجل أصالة⁷

“This is a contract designed by God Almighty Due to which it is permissible for them to benefit each other.”

The importance of marriage according to the Qur'an and Sunnah

Marriage is a practice that began from Adam (Blessing be upon them) and Eve (Blessing be upon her) and will remain in Paradise too. It is nature that besides the other qualities and potential Human being has been bestowed with physical and sexual power. As the balance in this life depends on the rightful utilization of human skills, like balance in sexual capacity is possible only to utilize it in accordance with the divine commandments. The Human being is superior from other having things, so the way of reproduction should also be more social and natural. There should be a known strict and natural way for entertaining a marriage. According to the Islamic jurisprudence entertaining marriage is basically prohibited (الأصل في (الابضاع الحرة) the basic in marriage is prohibition and it will become permissible after strict conditions. In Holy Quran, the relations that are non permissible are described in detail. Islam encouraged people by emphasizing the importance of marriage, and does not encourage single life. All the Prophets except Prophet John (عليه السلام) from Adam to Prophet Mohammad PBUH practiced marriage, Allah says:

هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَجَعَلَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا لِيَسْكُنَ إِلَيْهَا⁸

“He is the One who has created you from a single soul, and out of him created his wife, so that he may find comfort in her.”

He ordered both of them to enter Paradise:

وَقُلْنَا يَا آدَمُ اسْكُنْ أَنْتَ وَزَوْجُكَ الْجَنَّةَ وَكُلَا مِنْهَا رَغَدًا حَيْثُ شِئْتُمَا⁹

“And we said, “O Adam, dwell, you and your wife, in Paradise; and eat at pleasure wherever you like.”

The series continued after Adam A.S, until all the Prophets got married, except Yahya and Isa (A.S). Allah says in Holy Quran:

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلًا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ وَجَعَلْنَا لَهُمْ أَزْوَاجًا وَذُرِّيَّةً¹⁰

“We have sent messengers before you, and gave those wives and children.”

Those who do not get married out of fear of poverty, Allah Almighty commands them to get married, through which He will enrich them as Allah says:

وَأَنْكِحُوا الْأَيَامَىٰ مِنْكُمْ وَالصَّالِحِينَ مِنْ عِبَادِكُمْ وَإِمَائِكُمْ إِنْ يَكُونُوا فُقَرَاءَ يُغْنِهِمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ¹¹

“Arrange the marriage of the spouseless among you, and the capable from among your bondmen and bondwomen. If they are poor, Allah will enrich them out of His grace. Allah is All-Encompassing, All knowing.”

In the same way, on the condition of doing justice in times of need, double, tripple and forth Nikah were also allowed.

وَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا تَفْسُطُوا فِي الْبَيَّامَىٰ فَانكِحُوا مَا طَابَ لَكُمْ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ مَنَّىٰ وَثَلَاثَ وَرُبْعَ فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا فَوَاحِدَةً أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ ذَلِكَ أَدْنَىٰ أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا¹²

“If you fear that you will not do justice to the orphans, then, marry the women you like, in twos, in threes and in fours. But, if you fear that you will not maintain equity, then (keep to) one woman, or bandwomen you own. If will be closer to abstaining from injustice.”

Although the revelation of the verse is about the orphan girls, however the ruling is general which refers to all women.

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) described marriage as a means of protection of the inner self and honor and ordered the people to choose a modest companion for life. Prophet PBUH says:

تنكح المرأة لأربع، لمالها ولجمها وحسبها ولدينها فأظفر بذات الدين تربت يداك¹³

“A woman is married for four things, i.e., her wealth, her family status, her beauty and her religion. So you should prefer the religious one (otherwise) you will be a loser.”

On the other hand, Islam take into consideration the virtuous wife to be the high-quality of all worldly possessions:

الدنيا متاع، وخير متاع الدنيا المرأة الصالحة¹⁴

“World is totally a thing of benefit and the best thing of benefit is good woman.”

The Holy Prophet (sws) also carried out several marriages and considered it as a practice of the Prophets. Says:

أربع من سنن المرسلين: الحياء، والتعطر، والسواك، والنكاح¹⁵

“For things are from the Sunnah of Prophets: Modesty, using of perfume, Siwak and Marriage.”

He rebuked those who did not marry and forbade them from costration¹⁶. As Narrated Sad bin Abi Waqqas:

Allah's Apostle forbade 'Uthman bin Maz'un to abstain from marrying (and other pleasures) and if he had allowed him, we would have gotten ourselves castrated¹⁷.

Hazrat Abdullah bin Abbas (R.A) also encouraged people to get married. Saeed ibn Jubayr says that Abdullah ibn Abbas r.a asked me, "Are you married? I replied no, he told me Marry because the best in this ummah is the one who has more wives¹⁸.

The importance of Nikah is proved from Qurna and Sunnah but it does not mean that it is compulsory to get married in all circumstances and for all people. But as the situations for one person vary form others so practicing the marriage especially the Polygamy rely on specific conditions. Because of this, the Nikah is compulsory sometimes and is forbidden (Haram) other times. It depends the person and his status. If the falling in cruelty of a made is define then avoiding Nikah is necessary and practsing it become Non Permissible. Keeping the wives more than one is conditional with the surety of equality among the wives. If a believer has fear to fall in dis equality or atrocity and injustice then he is not suggested or permitted to practice polygamy.

Aims and Obejectives of Nikah

As descussed above, marriage is a multipurpose objective of human existence. It implies the numerous advantages in itself which have a positive impact on social life. Here in below paras the objectives are given in detail.

1. Protection of Morality and Chastity

It is clear from common practice that not taking care of the boundaries of goods and evils in marriage humerous types of social, Physical and mental diseases have occurred. We say that the cause of epidemic HIV Aids in not other than immoral practices. The world is in sever grip of these sexual diseases which has become a tough challenge for human beings. This challeges can be overcome only by practicing the marriage in a permissible way, as commanded by the Holy Quran and the sayings of the Holy Prophet S.A.W. In the Quran, marriage is interpreted with Iḥṣān which menas fortification. The one who gets married is called Moḥṣin and woman who gets married is called Moḥṣina¹⁹. Allah Almighty narrated in second place:

وَأَجَلَ لَكُمْ مَا وَرَاءَ ذَلِكَ أَنْ تَبْتَغُوا بِأَمْوَالِكُمْ مُحْصِنِينَ غَيْرَ مُسَافِحِينَ²⁰

"All (women), excep these, have been permitted for you to seek (to marry) throught your wealth, binding yourself, (in marriage) and not only for lust."

The first task of the marriage law isto strengthen this fortress and who marries with this intention so Allah helps him, as narrated by Prophet PBUH:

حق على الله عون من نكح التماس العفاف عمًا حرم الله²¹

“One who marries with the intention of avoiding Moharramat, so his help is obligatory on Allah.”

Due to marriage the protection of eyes and private parts is possible. Upto a large extent, spouses avoid committing secrets (Moharramat), Because Allah Almighty has declared husband and wife as clothes for each other. Due to which man is protected from various dangers. As Allah says:

هُنَّ لِبَاسٌ لَكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لِبَاسٌ لَهُنَّ²²

The Holy Prophet also declared it as a source of protecting the eyes and private parts as the Holy Prophet PBUH says:

يا معشر الشباب من استطاع منكم الباءة فليتزوج، فإنه اغض للبصر واحصن للفرج، ومن لم يستطع فعليه بالصوم فإنه له وجاء²³

“O young people! Whoever among you can marry, should marry, because it helps him lower his gaze and guard his modesty (i.e. his private parts from committing illegal sexual intercourse etc.), and whoever is not able to marry, should fast, as fasting diminishes his sexual power.”

2. Proper Survival of Human lenage

One of the purposes of marital relation aims at the sustaining of the generation in a natural way. As Allah says:

الَّذِي أَحْسَنَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقَهُ وَبَدَأَ خَلْقَ الْإِنْسَانِ مِنْ طِينٍ ثُمَّ جَعَلَ نَسْلَهُ مِنْ سُلَالَةٍ مِنْ مَاءٍ مَهِينٍ²⁴

“Who made well whatever He created, and started the creation of man from clay. Then He made his progeny from a drop of semen, from despised water.”

Allah says in onther place:

نِسَاؤُكُمْ حَرْثٌ لَكُمْ فَأْتُوا حَرْثَكُمْ أَنْتِي شَبْنْتُمْ وَقَدِّمُوا لِأَنْفُسِكُمْ²⁵

“Your women are trillage for you to cultivate. So, come to your tillage from where you wish, and advance something for yourselves.”

This verse clarifies the main objective of marriage that is the production of generation like the cultivation of farming fields. About which a man came and asked from Prophet PBUH:

إني أصبت امرأة ذات حسب وجمال وأنها لا تلد، أفأتزوجها؟ قال كلا ثم أتاه الثانية فنهاء، ثم أتاه الثالثة فقال: تزوجوا الودود الولود فإني مكاثر بكم²⁶

“A man came to the Prophet (PBUH) and said: I have found a woman of rank and beauty, but she does not give birth to children. Should I marry her? He said: No. He came again to him, but he prohibited him. He came to him third time, and he (the Prophet) said: Marry women who are loving and very prolific, for I shall outnumber the peoples by you.”

As the marriage is a full time agreement so it yields the better results in form of mental affection, healthy kids and everlasting sense of confidence, provides both the parties to enjoy the life more definite difference between the relations of human being and the other creature is that the other creatures indulge it for a limited time with no sense of responsibility but as the relation between the human being is concerned it implies a life full of responsibility and the perpetual mutual understanding. That is why the Islamic Shaira recommends this activity only to those persons who can be able to provide the essentials of life to his wife. This experience is considered non applicable for children are mentally retracted persons.

3. Peace of Heart, Love and Kindness

One of the purposes of marriage is peace of mind, love and mercy, because in order to achieve the highest goals of civilization, it is necessary for man to have inner peace and contentment. And this peace and mercy relationship is the soul of marriage. That is, husband and wife get complete peace from each other, it includes all kinds of physical, spiritual and mental peace. Husbands and wives love each other and have mercy on each other, as Almighty Allah says:

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا لِتَسْكُنُوا إِلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ مَوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً²⁷

“And it is among His signs that He has created for you wives from among yourselves, so that you may find tranquility in them, and He has created love and kindness between you.” The love and kindness between husband and wife when they are young and kindness in old age is unparalleled anywhere else.

4. Genealogical protection

Preservation of lineage is necessary because through this the families and tribes come into existence, which is a source of introduction and mutual co-operation. As Allah Almighty has instructed:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا²⁸

“O mankind, We have created you from a male and female, and made you into races and tribes, so that you may identify one another.”

The Prominent scholar of Tafsir IbneJarir says that the meaning of shuab here is genealogy²⁹. This proves the fact that the genealogical protection is done to the relation of marriage.

5. Establishment of better relationship

Marriage is a sacred bond from God Almighty, not just to two people, rather it unites two families and creates a better relationship among them. Because through it, other people become more close. Explaining kindness to humans, Al-Mighty Allah says:

وَهُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ مِنَ الْمَاءِ بَشَرًا فَجَعَلَهُ نَسَبًا وَصِهْرًا³⁰

“And He is the One who created man from water, then made of him relations created by lineage and relation created by marriage.”

Most of the marriages of the Holy Prophet had been for this reason.

6. Establishment of Peaceful Society

After marriage the spouse work collectively with devotion and confidence and carry out their obligations in a happy manner. On one side they entertain a peaceful life with satisfaction of mind, while on the other side they are hopeful of breeding the children that the fruit of their hearts in this sincere and loving environment when their children grow up, so they are also very peaceful and generous. Society is the name of a group of these humans. When these human beings stay a non violent existence among themselves, the society can also be peaceful and fine, due to the fact Islam instructs us to stay a social existence. For which both men and women are the unit. Neither man alone can form a society, nor can woman alone form a society. Rather, they each need each other. So marriage is a bond between a man and a woman, through which they fully love each other. They live a peaceful social life by cooperating with each other, which gives birth to a better and more peaceful society. This is why marriage performs a vital position in making society peaceful. Because of this, people fulfill their sexual desires from the proper place. If someone deviates from it and takes a wrong direction, the society will deteriorate. Fights and quarrels become common among themselves. Because no brave person can tolerate anyone to see his mother, sister, daughter or wife etc to look at his mother, sister, daughter or wife etc. It is a common observation that when someone does this, people do not leave him alive.

7. Development of the Sense of Responsibilities

After getting married, the husband works hard and earns money and then he spends his earnings on family. This is because of marriage that provokes this individual to be hard working. This also develops in him the sense of charity and makes him sensitive and careful about his earnings and expenditures. Through marriage he keeps himself touch to

those activities that yield some economic advantages. He tries to avoid the extravagance and the other purposeless undertaking. It is encouraged by Islam and Allah Almighty has also promised a reward for him as Prophet PBUH said:

إِذَا أَنْفَقَ الرَّجُلُ عَلَى أَهْلِهِ نَفَقَةً وَهُوَ يَحْتَسِبُهَا كَانَتْ لَهُ صَدَقَةً وَمَهْمَا أَنْفَقْتَ فُجُوْا لَكَ صَدَقَةٌ حَتَّى اللَّقْمَةَ تَرْفَعُهَا فِي فِي أُمَّرَاتِكَ³¹

“A great charity that whatever you spend with the intention of pleasing Allah, you will be rewarded for it. Even on the morsel you put in your wife's mouth.”

Spending on family members has been declared as better spending. As narrated:

دينار تنفقه على أهلِكَ، ودينار تنفقه على مسكين، ودينار تنفقه في سبيل الله، أعظمها أجراً الذي تنفقه على أهلِكَ³²

“The dinar which you spend on your family its reward is better than which you give to a poor person or in the way of Allah.”

8. Protection of Mind and Body

Through marriage, the defects of both males and females are covered because both of them cover each other. Allah Almighty has also declared them as each other's apparel:

هُنَّ لِبَاسٌ لَكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لِبَاسٌ لَهُنَّ³³

“They are apparel for you, and you are apparel for them.”

Even the Prophet PBUH strictly forbade the nakedness of each other, Prophet Says:

إن من شر الناس عند الله منزلة يوم القيامة الرجل يفضي إلى المرأة وتفضي إليه ثم ينشر سرها³⁴

“The worst of people in position before Allah on the Day of Resurrection is the man who has intercourse with his wife, and she with him, and then spreads her secrets.”

If any incorrect technique is used for the fulfillment of sexual desire instead of marriage, then no one's fault can be protected.

9. Heredity

Due to marriage husbands and wives inherit each other's. The husband takes the ½ of the assets left by the died wife in case of no children leftover, while in case of leaving children he takes the ¼ of the total amount.

Similarly, the spouse gets one fourth in the absence of her husband's child, while she receives one eighth in the presence of child. As Allah states:

وَلَكُمْ نِصْفُ مَا تَرَكَ أَزْوَاجُكُمْ إِنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُنَّ وَلَدٌ فَإِنْ كَانَ لَهُنَّ وَلَدٌ فَلَكُمْ الرُّبْعُ مِمَّا تَرَكَنَّ مِنْ بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ يُوَصِّينَ بِهَا أَوْ دَيْنٍ وَلَهُنَّ الرُّبْعُ مِمَّا تَرَكَنَّ إِنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ لَكُمْ وَلَدٌ فَإِنْ كَانَ لَكُمْ وَلَدٌ فَلَهُنَّ الثُّمْنُ مِمَّا تَرَكَنَّ مِنْ بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ يُوَصِّونَ بِهَا أَوْ دَيْنٍ³⁵

“For you there is one-half of what your wives leave behind, in case they have no child. But, if they have a child, you get one-fourth of what they leave, after (settling) the will they might have made, or a debt.”

10. Protection of Religion

Because of marriage, husbands and wives avoid the devil's slippage in many aspects of life. It safeguards their beliefs and manners from destruction. Even Prophet PBUH declared protection of half religion of the couple from marriage.

من رزقه الله امرأةً سالحة، فقد أعانه على شطر دينه، فليتق الله في الشطر الثاني³⁶

“Whosoever God blesses with a righteous woman, and he has helped him with one part of his religion, let him fear God in the second part.”

Holy Prophet PBUH says:

إذا تزوج العبد فقد استكمل نصف الدين فليتق الله في النصف الباقي³⁷

“If a person gets married, he has fulfilled half of his faith, so he should fear Allah Almighty in the other half.”

11. Source of Continuous Good Fame and Favor

Marriage is considered a non ceasing source of the eraning the good fame and favors in this world and the Hereafter. The children are the pure source of spiritual income as described by the Holy Quran:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَنْفِقُوا مِنْ طَيِّبَاتِ مَا كَسَبْتُمْ وَمِمَّا أَخْرَجْنَا لَكُمْ مِنَ الْأَرْضِ وَلَا تَيَمَّمُوا الْخَبِيثَ مِنْهُ تُنْفِقُونَ وَلَسْتُمْ بِآخِذِيهِ إِلَّا أَنْ تُغْمِضُوا فِيهِ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَنِّي حَمِيدٌ³⁸

“O you who believe, spend of the good things you have earned, and of what we have brought forth for you from the earth, and do not opt for a bad thing, spending only from it, while you are not going to accept it (if such a thing is offered to you), unless you close your eyes to it, and know well that Allah is All independent, Ever Praised.”

Through marriage, Allah Almighty gives man legitimate children as Quran states:

والله جعل لكم من أنفسكم أزواجاً، وجعل لكم من أزواجكم بنين وحفدة³⁹

“And Allah has made for you mates (and companions) of your own nature, and made for you out of them sons, daughters and grandchildren.”

Parents have a part in every good deed of their children, And after the death of their parents, it becomes a charity for them. Holy Prophet PBUH says:

إذا مات الإنسان انقطع عنه عمله إلا من ثلاثة: إلا من صدقة جارية، أو علم ينتفع به، أو ولد صالح يدعو له⁴⁰

“When a person dies, his actions ends. But there are three things that remain: Charity, Knowledge that people can benefit from and good children who pray fro parents.”

12. The maturity of human perfection

Through marriage, man’s qualities are developed and convert a person to be matured in thinking and working. Without marriage, they remain improper. New research on women has discovered that a woman reaches to perfection psychologically, physically and mentally after giving birth to three children. Right marriage gives both of them the opportunity to be mentally developed, which is very important in the society⁴¹.

13. Spiritual and Physiccal Enhancement

Physically, there are many benefits of marriage, as many physical and spiritual ailments are cured by marriage.

Conclusion

Marriage is such an agreement between men and women through which marital relation between them becomes legal and civil rights and duties are established. The ruling on marriage relies upon the occasions. Sometimes it is obligatory while in other situation it become simple permissible. Anyhow marriage is the practise of all the Prophet PBUH in an emphasized sunnah. If it is certain that his wife will be wronged in marriage, then it is haraam and if there is fear, then it is abominable. In order for the marriage to take place properly, the consent of the guardian, the appointment of the dower and the consent of the two witnesses are required. Marriage brings many moral, economic, social, physical, spiritual and religious benefits. All divine law allows polygamy on the condition that justice be done in times of need.

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