

for them to attend, and so on. This is based on the words ﴿and let neither scribe nor witness suffer harm﴾. However, this phrase may also be understood as meaning “and let neither scribe nor witness cause harm” to the one to whom the debt is owed, by refusing or demanding too high a fee, and so on.

- 44- The above may mean that the scribe should not cause any harm (to the lender).
- 45- It may also mean that the witness should not cause any such harm either.
- 46- Doing these forbidden actions is a characteristic of wickedness, because Allah says: ﴿for if you did cause them harm, it would be wickedness on your part﴾.
- 47- Attributes such as wickedness, faith, hypocrisy, enmity, faithfulness and so on may be partial characteristics (that is, not an individual's main characteristic). Thus a person may have some element of wickedness and the like, and he may also have some element of belief or disbelief, because Allah says: ﴿it would be wickedness on your part﴾ and He did not say, “you would be wicked.”
- 48- The witness should be of good character, because Allah says: ﴿such as you choose, to act as witnesses﴾.
- 49- The definition of good character is to be based on what people regard as good character in every place and time. Whoever is regarded by people as being of good character is to be accepted as a witness.
- 50- Based on this, the testimony of one whose character is not known should not be accepted until he is proven to be of good character.

These rulings are what may be derived from this verse according to the best of my limited knowledge. Allah has further wisdom and subtle reasons, understanding of which He grants to whomever He will.