



Question:

Does the word Shi`ah exist in Quran and tradition?

Answer:

In the Holy Quran Shi`ah has been used in the meaning of the follower of the prophets and the great men. In the history of Moses Allah says that: "...and he who was of his party cried out to him for help against him who was of his enemies..." Allah also says that: "And most surely Ibrahim followed his way. When he came to his Lord with a free heart" It has also been used in the meaning of dispersion and discord: "Of those who divided their religion and became sects..." Using Shi`ah in the meaning of following signifies its affirmative meaning and using it in the meaning of dispersion and discord signifies its negative meaning. In the tradition, the Prophet (s.a.w.), who was originally Arab, has undoubtedly used this word in its real meaning i.e. a follower. At the time of revealing this verse "(As for) those who believe and do well, surely they are the best of men" his highness called the followers of Ali (a.s.) Shi`ah. As mentioned by scholars of tradition and commentators, there are several traditions in which the Prophet (s.a.w.) called a group who were the friends of Ali (a.s.) and followed him, the best of men (Khair al-Bariyyah). Some of these traditions are as follows:

1. Ibn Mardawayh has quoted from `Ayishah that she said: "I said: O Messenger of Allah! Who are the most beloved people by Allah?' he said: O Ayishah! Didn't you read this verse? (As for) those who believe and do well, surely they are the best of men."

2. Ibn `Asakir has quoted from Jabir ibn Abdullah that he said: "When we were in the presence of the Prophet (s.a.w.), Ali (a.s.) came. The Prophet (s.a.w.) said that: I swear by who my soul is in His hand he and his followers will be saved on the Day of Judgment. Then this verse was revealed: (As for) those who believe and do good, surely they are the best of men. After that whenever Ali (a.s.) came, the companions of the Prophet (s.a.w.) said that: The best of men came."

3. Ibn Adi and ibn Asakir have quoted from Abu Sa`id that he said: "Ali (a.s.) is the best of men."

4. Ibn Adi quotes from ibn Abbas that he said: "When this verse was revealed (As for) those who believe and do good, surely they are the best of men the Prophet (s.a.w.) said to Ali (a.s.) that: You and your followers are the best men on the Day of Judgment, both you and Allah will be satisfied with each other."

5. Ibn Mardawayh has quoted from Ali (a.s.) that he said: "The Prophet (s.a.w.) said to me that: Didn't you hear this verse?' '(As for) those who believe and do well, surely they are the best of men .They (the best of men) are you and your followers, you will encounter me at Kawthar (in Paradise) and when people will be called to account, you will be invited."Reference:

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