

## Preface

This book, whose original title is *Jadhibah wa dafi'ah-e Ali 'alayhi's-salam* (lit. "The Attraction and Repulsion of 'Ali ", or "The Power of Attraction and the Power of Repulsion of 'Ali") is one of the important works of the late, great scholar ash-Shaykh Murtadha Mutahhari, the Iranian writer, May Allah have mercy upon him. The writer has himself given his explanation of this title in his introduction and in various places in the book, so there is no need for us to explain it any further.

We should not, however, overlook the fact that some one's power of attraction for those who love and help him, and even those who give themselves for him, and, on the other hand; his power of repulsion which create for that person opponents, enemies and even people who wish to kill him (we use the terms attraction and repulsion just as the author has), are for the primary factors in that person, but are two terms which summarize the multiple factors and effects which manifest themselves in him.

One set of these factors is the "essential" or "inward" ones which are found in that person and which are responsible for bringing people to love and help him, or to oppose and hate him. At the same time, there are essential factors which exist in the helpers or enemies themselves, which act together with the first set of factors to produce that love or enmity. There are also external factors which strengthen the effects of these "essential" ones, or constitute obstacles to their fulfillment.

Now, if we consider the personality under discussion free from the context of his times, but rather as a man of all ages and times, we shall necessarily find some factors in addition to those related to his own time, which will be connected with his historical existence in its fully human sense. Either these additional factors will augment the original ones, or else they will weaken them. The most important of these historical factors is the list of those who have loved, and have given themselves, for him, and their personalities, and the list of his opponents and enemies, and their personalities; and these lists are continually being added to as time proceeds and as centuries and generations succeed one another.

This becomes even more important when we consider a personality of the stature of Amir al-Mu'minin (as)<sup>1</sup>, where we find in his pure person the noblest human characteristics combined with the greatest Divine gifts, and in his Shi'ahs and enemies the strongest faith in the Divine Message combined with faith in mankind and its supreme mission, on the one hand and, on the other, hostility to the Divine

Message combined with disbelief in mankind and a rising up against them.

If we take note of the above points, we can gain a clear idea of the great amount of energy that needs to be expended, the extent of the research and the depth of study which must be undertaken before it is possible for someone to do justice to the subject, so that a worthy result may be obtained from all the various aspects of his preliminary investigations.

## II

This book, as the scholarly author, may Allah have mercy on him, points out himself, developed out of four lectures originally given in connections with the commemoration of the martyrdom of al-Imam Amir al-Mu'minin (as). They were collected together and published in the form of this book. The author, may Allah have mercy on him, was only doing justice to himself and to his work when he admitted, in his introduction, that his book is only a sample from his immense subject whose dimensions are broad and multi-faceted. It is our misfortune that the author found himself unable to expound any further on this great subject than these four lectures, which were circumscribed within the framework of the particular limited temporal and circumstantial events in which he found himself, except to the extent that the pressures of his responsibilities allowed him to review the material for publication.

## III

Praise be to Allah Who has caused the author, may Allah have mercy on him, to succeed to the extent that he did in proceeding with his discussion, which relates to the powers of attraction and repulsion of Amir al-Mu'minin (as). He was fortunately able in this work to reach the same high level which he sustained in his other works. When we saw the great Islamic thinking, the clear historical presentation, the originality and novel exposition which are present in this book and about which the generality of readers are in agreement with us, and which exist despite the limitations imposed upon him, we decided to have the book translated into English. We gave it to an expert translator, whom, we thank Allah, was able to translate it into English with similar originality and skill to that which the scholar Mutahhari manifested in the original text.

We praise Allah that we have succeeded in publishing this book in an English version. We ask Allah, and supplicate Him, that He may cause our work to be only in pure devotion to Him, and that He may cause us to succeed in the best thing in which He causes His virtuous slaves to succeed, for He is the best Guide and the best Artisan.

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1. (as): is the abbreviation of the Arabic phrase 'alay-hi/ha/himu 's-salam (may peace be upon him/her/them).

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