

## Biography

2011-06-22

### Sheikh Jalal Aldeen's Biography

Sheikh Jalal Aldeen Al-Sagheer is the son of a renowned family of scholars. For his father is Sheikh Ali Al-Sagheer, the son of Sheikh Hussein, son of Sheikh Ali, son of the Grand Ayatollah Al Sheikh Hussein the famous scholar of his time, who was the son of Sheikh Thiyab Al-Jowebari Al-Khaqani. As the name of his great grandfathers suggest Sheikh Jalal Aldeen is a descendant of the Al-Jaboor clan which belongs to the Qahtani Yemeni tribe of Khaqan which originates from the leader Khaqan bin Humair.

From his mother's side he belongs to the tribe of Behadil. His mother is the daughter of Sheikh Faraj Al-Behadili and his maternal uncle is the known speaker Sheikh Ahmed Faraj Al-Behadili, who was one of the first victims of the Baath party. His uncle was martyred in 1971 following his release from prison, due to a series of illnesses which were a consequence of the ill treatment he received whilst in captivity.

Sheikh Jalal Al-Deen Al-Sagheer was born in the city of Najaf on the 15th of September 1957, which is the 20th of Safar, year 1377 in the Hijri calendar. He was named after a friend of his father, Sheikh Jalal Al-Deen a scholar who had come from outside of Iraq at that time. He is the eighth son of Sheikh Ali Al-Sagheer. He has eight siblings; Dr Sheikh Mohammed Hussein, the martyr Mohammed Hassan, Haji Monem, Professor Mohammed Ritha, Professor Ala Al-Deen, Haji Mohammed, the martyr Abdul Razzaq and his youngest brother Haji Jamal Al-Deen.

His father Sheikh Ali Al-Sagheer was the representative of the Grand Ayatollah Sayid Muhsin Al-Hakim in Baghdad. He was appointed to this position following a request from the people of Al-Atayfiya (in Baghdad), who asked the Grand Ayatollah Hakim for a renowned scholar to come to Baghdad, and look after the great mosque of Buratha. In 1959 Sheikh Ali Al-Sagheer left the city of Najaf and moved to Baghdad where he began helping in the refurbishment of Buratha mosque. In 1963 the newly refurbished Buratha mosque was reopened by the Grand Ayatollah Muhsin Al-Hakim in a large ceremony which many people attended.

Sheikh Jalal Al-Deen was educated in the local schools of Al-Atayfiya in Baghdad, he attended Al Jazaner and Al Maqasid primary schools, then Fatih middle School, followed by Al Atayfiya secondary school and finally Shaab college.

The Al-Sagheer family known for being socially and politically active always had their home open to visitors from all over Iraq, many of whom used to inform them of the hardships and needs of the citizens. From a very young age Sheikh Jalal was close to his father and influenced by him and therefore followed in his footsteps. Taking an active role beside his father allowed him to experience and appreciate from an early stage the different problems which the Iraqi society faced.

Sheikh Jalal holds many stories and memories of the military coup of 1963 as his family home was in close proximity to the ministry of defence at that time. He says “my political drive began at an early age, I recall on the 17th of July 1963 (at the age of 11) me and several of my childhood friends gathered to discuss the events in the country at the time. We decided that day we would begin to keep an eye on the Baath party in our area and count how many of them were armed. On the 30th of July we were holding one of our usual gatherings and at the time we had a list of all the armed Baathist’s in the areas of Al-Atayfiya and Al-Shalchiya.” He further recalls “the gatherings we held included only young boys (bearing in mind the mentality of boys at that time is different from the mentality of boys in this day and age). During my first arrest by the Baath party in 1976 I was trialled about these gatherings despite the very young age I was at when I held the gatherings!! I later found out that one of the boys who used to attend these gatherings (Anwar Al Khalidy) had become an active member of the Baath party and had informed them of all the activities we did.”

From the age of 12 Sheikh Jalal Aldeen was taught by his father the preliminaries of Hawza studies. His father sent him to the Hawza in Najaf to be taught by Sheikh Hassan Al-Jawahiri at that young age. In 1975 following the death of his father, Sheikh Jalal had to return to Baghdad to work so that he could support his family. However despite this he continued his studies by taking lessons in the evening at Shaab college in Al-Khadimiya. As well as usual his college work Sheikh Jalal also had a great interest in the intellectual studies of political and ideological conflict. He spent a lot of his spare time following politics and reading around it. This formed a point of divergence in his family's heritage as his father and ancestors were known

for their wealth in literacy.

Sheikh Jalal Aldeen moved to the city of Najaf towards the end of the year 1977 (year 1397 hijri) after being detained for the second time by the Baath party during the month of Safar that year. At the time of his arrest he was returning from his place of work at a Kuwaiti civil engineering contracting company 'Musaed AlSaleh' which at the time was carrying out the 'Nasriyeh Thermal power project'. Sheikh Jalal's move to Najaf was sudden and swift because following his release from prison he received a warning stating that he is to be held captive in Baghdad. Left with no other choice he fled to the city of Najaf.

Living in Najaf allowed him to successfully complete his hawzeh studies and earn

the right to wear a turban and official Islamic clothing. He was awarded his turban by the grand scholar Ayatollah Sayid Mohammed Baqir Al-Sader. In Najaf Sheikh Jalal Aldeen resided in Al-Azri school with a few of his colleagues including Sayid Kamal Al-Haydari, Sheikh Sadiq Al-Nasri and Sheikh Abd Al-Bederi.

From the beginning of Sheikh Jalal Aldeen's stay in Najaf he was asked to return to Baghdad by Sayid Mohammed Baqir Al-Sader , who saw the importance of Sheikh Jalal carrying out Islamic work in the Mosque of Buratha. However Sheikh Jalal Aldeen did not want to return to Baghdad without seeking the permission of the grand scholar at the time Imam Al-Khoei. He says "and indeed I sought the permission of Imam Al-Khoei, who held a lot of respect for my father who was his main representative in Baghdad, and so he granted me the permission". As a result Sheikh Jalal Aldeen allocated three days of the week to work in the mosque of Buratha in Baghdad, whilst spending the remaining days of the week studying in the city of Najaf. Sheikh Jalal Aldeen would leave Najaf for Baghdad every Wednesday afternoon, spending Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays in the mosque of Buratha, he would then return to Najaf on the Saturday and stay there till the following Wednesday.

The grand Ayatollah Sayid Mohammed Baqir Al-Sader assigned Sheikh Mohammed Hadi Al-Rathi to foresee the studies of Sheikh Jalal Aldeen. Sheikh Jalal Aldeen says: "one of the main reasons which made Sayid Mohammed Baqir Al-Sader request I be taught by Sheikh Mohammed Al-Rathi, was the nature of the relationship between

my family and the Al-Rathi family, however this did not happen.” He adds: “before going to Sayid Mohammed Baqir Al-Sader I had already arranged to be taught by Sheikh Hussein Baqir Hamoudi (the older brother of Sheikh Houmam Hamoudi) without realising Sayid Al-Sader may have other plans for me, some time after this event I went to apologise to Sayid Al-Sader and he laughed in his usual cheerful way and said: ‘I purposely wanted you to be close to Sheikh Al-Rathi due to the unique relationship between your two families’. Following this it was agreed I be taught by Sheikh Al-Rathi, however time beat us and I was captured by the Baath party and imprisoned (towards the end of 1978). This prevented me from seeing Sayid Mohammed Baqir Al-Sader again and taking further lessons from him.”

Due to his interest in politics, from an early stage Sheikh Jalal Aldeen became a member of Islamic movement organisations. Whilst most eyes at that time were set on the Al-Dawaa Party he decided to join a more active party, as the Al-Dawaa Party at that time worked with the same theory of change as the Muslim Brotherhood party. A theory which was not consistent with the political reality of Iraq leadind to the Al-Dawaa Party being fully exposed to Iraqi Security forces. Sheikh Jalal Aldeen joined 'The Peoples Islamic Al-Talae organisation' which was headed by the martyr Sayid Nejah Al-Moussawi. The organization began spreading to many areas in the provinces; Baghdad, Karbala, Najaf and Dujail, Hilla and Basra. This spread of the organization accelerated after the Dawa Party put all its activities on hold at that time.

The Baath party began to increasingly harass the people of Iraq especially those who were very religious. In response to this Sheikh Jalal Aldeen decided to put together an organisation which would be prepared to clash with the security forces if they assaulted innocent people. This organisation was named the 'Islamic Revolutionary Awareness Movement' after awareness about Islam began spreading following the Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1979.

Despite being detained three times and facing torture in the prisons of the Baath Party, Sheikh Jalal Aldeen did not give in to the Baathists, refusing to give them any information about the movement he was part of. A movement which they did not even know existed, as they were convinced Sheikh Jalal Aldeen was part of the

Dawaa Party.

It was his final release from detention on the fifth of Rajab in 1397 Hijri where he had spent nearly six months (arrested on the 10th of Muharram in Karbala) which drove him to strengthen his anti-regime organisation. He was certain that the Baath Party did not know anything about the work him and his brothers were doing. Upon his release he immediately began initiating a plan to re-link the organisations he was previously responsible for, his brother Abdul Razzaq acted as his right wing. His responsibilities grew bigger when the Baath party began a ferocious campaign against the Islamists following the events of the seventeenth of Rajab that same year. The Baath party arrested the majority of Islamic activists in all the provinces, including Sayid Nejah Al-Moussawi the head of 'The Peoples Islamic Al-Talae

organisation' and his brother Sayid Sabah Al-Moussawi. With the head of 'The Peoples Islamic Al-Talae organisation' arrested the burden of responsibility on Sheikh Jalal Aldeen was great.

From the year 1975 with the participation of some of those faithful to him Sheikh Jalal Aldeen began organising the smuggling of weapons from Abu Ghraib and Camp Taji. These smuggling happened through the Sayid Yahya Al-Husseini (originally from Karbala) who was the commander of Abu Ghraib Chemical stores and the martyr Khaled (originally from Al-Qasim) who worked in the stores of Taji. During this period Sheikh Jalal Aldeen was also carrying out paperwork for the organisation and writing publications. Including a publication which aimed to increase peoples awareness about revolution (36 pages long), which went on for several issues.

The influence of repression was severe and confessions against Sheikh Jalal Aldeen began in the prisons of the fifth division. The Baathists were shocked when they realised, the man who they had detained then set free three times, was the same person who had caused them so much trouble. They immediately set out to search and arrest Sheikh Jalal Aldeen, but on several occasions he managed to escape from being caught by the Baathist security forces. Despite the advice of those close to him to flee Iraq, he refused to do so without seeking permission from Sayid Mohammed Baqir Al-Sader. Instead he went into hiding with Sayid Yassin Al-Mousawi who the Baath regime was also on the lookout for. They stayed in a house belonging to Sayid Yassin Al-Mousawi in the area of Al Buraq in the city of Najaf. This was until Sheikh Jalal Aldeen was informed by Sheikh Hussein Baqir that Sayid Al-Sader had given him the permission him to leave Iraq, but had asked that he exposes the Baath regime abroad. Sheikh Jalal Aldeen says: "I had asked Sheikh Hussein Baqir to

inform Sayid Al-Sader of my situation and seek his permission regarding my migration from Iraq as I was adamant I would not leave Iraq without Sayid Mohammed Baqir Al-Sader's permission. This mediation took place through the household of Sayid Mohammed Baqir Al-Hakim as Sheikh Hussein Baqir was his -brother in law," he adds: "after two or three days I met Sheikh Hussein Baqir in Al -Yazedi school in Souk Al-Amara, he handed me 70 Iraqi dinars from Sayid Al Sader, and informed me that Sayid Al-Sader had requested I work against the Baath regime and expose them outside Iraq. Sayid Mohammed Baqir Al-Sader had advised that I leave Iraq for Lebanon, and on my arrival to Lebanon I should meet Sheikh Shams Aldeen. And indeed several days later I left Iraq using a forged passport holding the name Maythm Jawad Jaber, which was given to me on 23/9/1979 by one of my prison companions the martyr Furat Kathim Jabir."

In total Sheikh Jalal Aldeen had been imprisoned three times not including the numerous times he had been arrested and called for investigation. His first arrest was planned to take place in 1975 (having been accused of the same cases which Sheikh Houmam Hamoudi was accused of) with a group of believers from the mosque of Buratha, including the martyr Sameer Jawad and the martyr Tariq Zelzela. However the death of his father (Sheikh Ali Al-Sagheer) resulted in the Baath party delaying his arrest till 26/4/1976. He remained in prison for 76 days and was investigated in the fifth division of the security service (where Islamic activists were interrogated) and the second division of the security headquarters (where interrogation of those accused of plotting against the Baath party as members of national alliances took place).

The officers in charge of investigating him in the fifth division were the perpetrator Sadoun also known as ‘the wolf’, and the perpetrator Nouri Al-Falluji (who disguised his identity using the name Faisal Hilal). The officer who was directly responsible for torturing Sheikh Jalal Aldeen in the fifth division was Badr Al-Dulaimi, he continued the torture for 56 days. As for the perpetrator Musaab Al Tikriti he was the officer responsible for torturing Sheikh Jalal Aldeen in the second division. Sheikh Jalal Aldeen describes the torture which took place in the second division as being more intense and severe than that which took place in the fifth division. Sheikh Jalal Aldeen was mainly interrogated regarding the nature of his relationship with the martyr Sayid Mohammed Mehdi Al-Hakim and Sayid Dawood Al-Attar. He was also interrogated about his link with the two martyrs Salman Al-Timimi and Abdul Hussein Jeta, who were executed in 1969 accused of being part of the Abdul Ghani network, which attempted a coup against the regime. Sheikh Jalal Aldeen also describes how he was questioned about the two authors Zuhair Al-Araji and Taha Jabir Al-Alwani “who he did not even know”.

As he did not give the Baath security services any information he was referred to the court of Al-Thowra, with the accusation that he was bringing up children in a backward way! The Al-Thowra court was in the area of Al-Karada in the city of Baghdad, and at the time it was headed by Jarallah Al-Alaf. He sentenced Sheikh Jalal Aldeen to one year in prison or release on bail of 100 dinar, which was then granted to him.

The second time in which Sheikh Jalal Aldeen was arrested and imprisoned was during the uprising of 1977. He was arrested along with a group called ‘the symbols of sectarian riot in Baghdad’ and among those arrested were the martyrs Sheikh Abdul Jabar Al-Basri and Mufakir Mehdi (one of the leaders of the organisation along with Sheikh Jalal Aldeen), and Sayid Mohammed Hussein Al-Haidari. The arrest took place on 22nd of Safar in the year 1397, where they were taken to the fifth division of the security service in Baghdad, before being transferred to ‘prison number one’ in the Al-Rashid camp. This is where the special investigative committee had been stationed. Sheikh Jalal Aldeen says: “we entered prison number one and there we saw the catastrophe, hundreds of youth from the city of Najaf (detained due to uprising on the road between Najaf and Karbala) being tortured collectively.”

On the third day Sheikh Jalal Aldeen and those with him in his prison cell were taken to be investigated. The prison guards used material from Sayid Mohammed Hussein Al-Haidari’s turban to handcuff them in the form of a chain linking all the prisoners together. They were all questioned and interrogated however Sheikh Jalal Aldeen was the only one who was tortured. They continued to torture him until he almost lost consciousness. As it was clear to the security services that Sheikh Jalal Aldeen and those with him had not taken part in the coup they were eventually released after three days.

Sheikh Jalal Aldeen was arrested and detained again for the third time, this time his imprisonment lasted the longest. He was arrested on the 10th of Muharram in the year 1399 (beginning of December) from in front of the door of Imam Hussein (as) shrine whilst he was taking part in the rituals of Tawereej. The two brothers of the perpetrator Abdul Latif Al-Darmi (one of them was called Thiya) arrested him and took him to the police department of Karbala where he stayed for a month. He spent most of that month in solitary confinement where he was brutally tortured every day except the last two days. The officer responsible for torturing him was

Shakir Al-Samawi.

Sheikh Jalal Aldeen was then transferred to the security headquarters in Baghdad, where it became apparent that an arrest warrant had already been issued against him in Baghdad the same day of his arrest in Karbala. In Baghdad he was questioned and tortured by the executioner Fathil Al-Zerkani who was known for being brutal and violent. His torture continued for 45 days after which he was moved to the general security service prisons where he remained for some time. There he was imprisoned with the Sunni Sheikh Abdul Malik (the current mufti of Baghdad) and his brothers, and the poet Walid Al-Athamy and the martyr Sheikh

Taha Hamdoon.

Again they moved Sheikh Jalal Aldeen to another prison this time to the Al-Fathila prison. He was taken there with several other prisoners including the martyrs Salah Al-Waeli and Furat Kathim Jedi, and once in the prison of Al-Fathila Sheikh Jalal Aldeen met the martyrs Sheikh Majid Bedrawi, Jasim Al-Iyrawani. The Baath security service again failed to get any information from Sheikh Jalal Aldeen who despite being tortured remained silent. For the second time they referred him to the Al-Thowra court, but this time to the Al-Thowra court in Abu Ghraib.

-The judge at the time who was assigned Sheikh Jalal Aldeen's case was Muslim Al Juboori, who found the case awkward as the accusation against Sheikh Jalal Aldeen was that he was sabotaging the national Iraqi economy! Although the judge Muslim Al-Juboori sentenced Sheikh Jalal Aldeen to a one year suspended jail term. Sheikh Jalal recalls a funny incident which happened at the time which shows how courts during the Baath regime were run. I will leave Sheikh Jalal Aldeen to tell us what happened in his own words. However firstly I would like to point out that during the Baath regime Muslim Al-Juboori was elected the Mayor of Najaf and almost a month after being appointed the uprising of 'Alarbaeen' took place. Consequently he was removed from his position by the uprisers who were led by the martyrs

Sahib Abu Kilal and Abbas Ajina.

Sheikh Jalal Aldeen says: "I was not surprised at all when the deputy prosecutor requested I be executed due to my hostility towards the regime, as this was usual of him!! However when Muslim Al-Juboori read out my charges I was very intrigued to know what associated me with the economy? So I asked Muslim Al-Juboori: 'what am I to do with the sabotaging of the economy?' He replied: 'you have stated that it is forbidden to eat chicken which has been slaughtered in a non Islamic way, and as the country is importing this chicken your statement will wreck the economy!' I replied: 'So why am I being held accountable surely you should refer to the Holy Quran and question the scholars as they are the one who released the statement?' At this point Muslim Al-Juboori opened his eyes wide beaming at me and said: 'that is true, but you have also stated something else.' I asked him: 'what?' He said: 'call the first witness in'. The first witness to be called in was a servant who had worked in the mosque of Buratha and he was known to be an agent working for the security services. The witness looked at the judge and said: 'Sir he not only forbids eating chicken but also says it is haraam (forbidden) to eat cheese and butter

which have been slaughtered in a non-Islamic way'. The judge Muslim Al-Juboori looked at me whilst laughed and said: 'your first statement regarding chicken being slaughtered in a non-Islamic way I understand has been stated in the Quran, however where did you get your statement about the unlawful slaughtering of cheese and butter from?'. At this point I dropped what was in my hand from astonishment as I was seeing Iraq's most Supreme Court being run by the most stupid people! To be fair I wasn't the only person in the courtroom laughing at the judges stupidity, the deputy prosecutor was going to explode of laughter, I could see him attempting to hide this however the movements of his belly gave him away. The lay judges sitting either side of the judge were also evidently concealing their laughter as was the court clerk who hid his smile behind the court book. Anyway I replied to the judge whilst shaking my hand and laughing with mockery saying: 'are butter and cheese even slaughtered so that you can accuse me of saying the Islamic and non-Islamic slaughtering of them???' I could tell that at that moment the judge felt very embarrassed as he realised how foolish he looked, he ordered the witness to leave the court room whilst cursing him."

Sheikh Jalal Aldeen was sentenced to a one year suspended jail term, and before being released the judge ordered him to thank the court and shout aloud 'long lives justice', both of which Sheikh Jalal Aldeen refused to do. Instead he entered into a -discussion with the judge which lasted twenty minutes. The more Muslim Al Juboori would raise his voice and call out insults the more Sheikh Jalal Aldeen refused to obey him. This resulted in the judge ordering Sheikh Jalal Aldeen to be detained and re-investigated. Consequently Sheikh Jalals release from prison was delayed by 18 days. His release from prison was on the 5th of Rajab in the year

1397, awaiting him at the doors of the security service headquarters in Karbala were; his brother Dr Sheikh Mohammed Hussein Al-Sagheer, the martyr Sayid Mustafa Jamal Aldeen and his cousin Sheikh Mohammed Salman Al-Khaqani. Together they immediately set off to the city of Najaf as Sheikh Jalal Aldeen “wanted to meet Sayid Mohammed Baqir Al-Sader”.

His release from prison on the 5th of Rajab was during a time in which the city of Najaf was very unstable in terms of security. The number of people coming into Najaf from all over Iraq to pay their allegiance to Sayid Mohammed Baqir Al-Sader was on the increase. For this reason, when Sheikh Jalal Aldeen requested to see Sayid Al-Sader that same day he was unable to do so, but instead he was advised to immediately return to Baghdad and carry out the guidance of Sayid Al-Sader alongside the Sayid's other representatives. So indeed the Sheikh returned to Baghdad and began to work on everything which was put on hold whilst he was in prison.

With the great success of the Islamic revolution in Iran his enthusiasm increased, and he began working harder than ever to bring down the Baath regime. However he was aware that the forthcoming days would hold many conflicts with the Baath party, and indeed these days came along quickly when Sayid Al-Sader ordered for a military coup to liberate the Iraqi people from the Baath regime. During this time Sheikh Jalal Aldeen was living in special circumstances, he had to work against the regime with great precision to buy time and avoid being arrested. He knew if they were to arrest him this time he would not escape prison again but be executed.  
-When the companions of Sheikh Jalal Aldeen were arrested (Sheikh Abdul Jabar Al

Basri, Sayid Nijah Al-Mousawi, his assistant Kheyoon Abdul Hussein and his assistants brother Basim Abdul Hussein) he was left with no choice but to continue his pro revolution work alone. However as the Baath regime had detained those close to him he was aware of the possibility that confessions against him may be brought forward and that sooner or later the security services would come looking for him.

-Towards the end of the month of Ramathan news came that Sheikh Abdul Jabar Al Basri, Sayid Nijah Al-Mousawi and Sheikh Khezal Al-Soodani had been executed by the Baath party. In response to this news Sheikh Jalal Aldeen's gave a sermon on the day of Eid which was very bold and thunderous. Following this his home and school in Najaf (Al-Azri School) faced a series of raids so Sheikh Jalal Aldeen decided to migrate out of Iraq.

The last sermon given by Sheikh Jalal Aldeen before leaving Iraq, (which was at a Friday prayer) was one rarely heard in Baghdad due to its modern tone, with the exception of several other preachers who gave sermons with a similar tone. They -include Sheikh Mousa Al-Soodani (who gave Friday sermons in the area of Al Huriya), Sheikh Khezal Al-Soodani (in Al-Geryaat), Sheikh Nathim Al-Basri (who -gave Friday sermons in Al-Karadeh) and his elder brother Sheikh Abdul Jabar Al Basri (in the area of Hay-Alsalam). However Sheikh Jalal Aldeens sermon was the most unique (despite him being young than the above scholars) in that it addressed the political taboos, touched upon matters related to the security services and criticised the reality of society at the time, all of which caught the interest of the educated elite. His presence in Iraq at the time was no longer safe, so that

September in the year 1979 Sheikh Jalal Aldeen left the mosque of Buratha and migrated from his beloved country.

Taking with him his religious beliefs, moral principles, and will power to free his country Sheikh Jalal Aldeen fled Iraq to continue his mission of bringing down the Baath regime but this time outside his home land.