

*Bashir Ahmad Rafiq sahib was born in 1931 in the North West Frontier Province of Pakistan. In 1945 he moved to Qadian, India to study at Taleemul Islam High School. He joined Taleemul Islam College in 1949 in Lahore from where he obtained his B.A. degree. In 1953 under the instruction of Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih II رضى الله عنه he enrolled at Jamiatul Mobashireen, Rabwah. After completion of his Shahid degree he was posted to England in 1959. He has served the Jama'at at various capacities including Imam of the London mosque for 21 years, Private Secretary to Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih III رضى الله تعالى , Founder of the Muslim Herald, Editor of The Review Of Religions, Wakil-i-Tabshir, Wakil-i-Diwan & Wakil-i-Tasneef. He is the author of more than a dozen books both in English and in Urdu on various aspects of Islam and Ahmadiyyat.*

### **First recollection**

The first time I saw Huzur رضى الله تعالى was during a meeting of Majlis Khuddamul Ahmadiyya in 1945. I was very impressed by him and can still remember meeting him and shaking his hand. We got to know each other and became good friends in Qadian. He was only two and a half years older than me. Following the partition we both studied at Lahore so again used to meet at Jama'at meetings there. It was then that I discovered what a good poet he was. He was shy in reciting his poetry but whenever I requested him he was kind enough to do so.

### **Like Father Like Son**

On my return to Rabwah in 1979 I had further opportunities to observe Huzur رضى الله تعالى . He was then Sadr Majlis Ansarullah. He was a dynamic leader, very learned and an ocean of knowledge. Even at that time he would chair Question and Answer sessions involving non-Ahmadi guests. People in the Jama'at would comment how similar he was to Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih II رضى الله عنه , who was very learned, a great orator and an excellent writer. All these qualities of his

father could be seen in abundance in Huzur رضى الله تعالى also.

### **Migration to London**

General Zia-ul-Haq's anti-Ahmadiyya Ordinance in 1984 was implemented on a Thursday. Huzur رضى الله تعالى called an emergency meetings to discuss the matter.

On Juma, we all went to Masjid Aqsa thinking Huzur رضى الله تعالى would deliver the sermon. We were so surprised when we saw someone else stand up instead, even though Huzur رضى الله تعالى was present and sitting among the congregation. After the sermon Huzur رضى الله تعالى led the prayer, in which he was very emotional. When he finished he stood up, still overcome with emotion, and waved to everyone. People were crying, you could hear it all around – I've not seen anything like it since. The next morning after Fajr we were told that Huzur رضى الله تعالى had left Rabwah, the following day we found out he was in London.

### **A Man of God**

It was in 1979, when we held a function on the Deliverance of Jesus from the Cross,