

I know a place  
Nobody is worrying,  
No more dying,  
no sad faces.

I know a place  
no races to run,  
no more wars to fight.

Every day is like Sunday,  
I'm singing about Heaven, Heaven.  
A place where we are singing praises to God.

No more sickness,  
no more sadness.

I know a place,  
Heaven, Heaven.

I'm singing about HEAVEN.

By: Johnnie Hightower

## Acknowledgement

*The family wishes to express their sincere thanks and appreciation  
for the many acts of kindness, comforting words, and prayers  
shown during our time of bereavement.*

*Professional Services Provided By:*

*The Family Funeral Home, LLC*

736 Clinton Avenue  
Newark, New Jersey  
(973) 375-8100

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*In Loving  
Memory  
of*

*Johnnie Earl Hightower*

Sunrise  
May 2, 1941

Sunset  
March 10, 2020

Friday, March 20, 2020 - 10:00 AM

**First Zion Hill Baptist Church**

15 Leslie Street, Newark, New Jersey 07108  
Reverend Dellroger Dunmore, Pastor  
Reverend Jeremey Alleman, Eulogist

# Obituary

**Johnnie Earl Hightower** was born May 2, 1941, to the late Nick Hightower, Jr. and Susie Cook Hightower, in Folkston, Georgia.

At the early age of 4 years old, Johnnie was placed on top of the church piano during services and would sing hymns. This would become the start of his singing career.

During the 50s & 60s, Johnnie's father, Reverend Nick Hightower Jr. got his sons together to form a gospel singing group. They sang in numerous churches and gospel concerts/events. As years went on, the singing brothers were known as the Hightower Brothers.

The family lived in numerous places but eventually settled in Newark, NJ. He went to Central High School and then from there became a full-time Gospel entertainer. Johnnie enjoyed reminiscing with his children about the stories of singing with some of the greats like Mahalia Jackson, Aretha Franklin, Smokey Robinson, and his dear friend Sam Cooke; to name a few. He even had a fun story on how once he and his brothers were practicing in a church, and they heard a group of young boys giggling in the back. Those giggling boys grew up to become "The Jackson 5"!

Fast forward to the year 1965, September 4th to be exact, he married the Love of his LIFE, Ernestine Bush. Their equally yolked union was for 54 1/2 years. Together they had 2 children, Shawn Hightower and Sonji Hightower the eldest.

He worked for the Star-Ledger for 28 years before retiring in 2003. During the 80s he formed his first band "Electric Connection". Then in the 90s, he was one of the lead singers along with childhood friend Charles Johnson, of "Rapture, featuring Johnson & Hightower".

Johnnie was a devoted husband, father, and friend. He was a born again Christian, a true believer in Christ and was deeply respected from all.

Johnnie was predeceased by his beloved son Shawn, brothers Mario Rico, Robert Lee, Willie and dear sister Lillian Pearl.

The life of Johnnie and his spirit and values will continue to sojourn in all the lives he touched and loved: his loving wife, Ernestine, his daughter Sonji, in spirit his son Shawn, his grandsons, Lamar and Martin Jr, His dear sisters Susie Tucker, Sheila, Gloria, and Shalga Hightower. His brother-in-laws Forest Tucker, Jerome Bush, his sister-in-laws Teresa Bush, Sylvia Raye, Karen Bush and in spirit mother and father-in-law Rowena and Cory Bush, Albert, Howard, Catherine Bush, and Jacqueline Gaddy; and a host of nephews, nieces, cousins, and friends.

# Order of Service

Musical Prelude

Processional

Prayer of Comfort

Scripture Reading:

Old Testament- Psalm 91..... Martin B. Lucas, Jr.  
New Testament

Musical Selection

Remarks & Reflections

Charles Johnson, Teresa Bush, Joyce Henderson

Obituary Reading

Musical Selection

Eulogy..... Pastor Jeremy Alleman

Final Viewing

Recessional

## Final Repose

Fairmount Cemetery  
Newark, New Jersey