

Celebration of Life for



Zachariah "Risasi" Dais *Photojournalist Extraordinaire*

September 10, 1949 - October 14, 2021

Virtual Service of Remembrance
Saturday, November 20, 2021 | 4 O'clock Eastern Standard Time

His Life

Zachariah Dais was born on September 10, 1949, in Marion, SC. He was the fourth of seven children born to Sandy and Adeline Dais. Zack grew up in a family that instilled strong values of Integrity, Love of Neighbor, Dedication and Hard work. From a very young age, Zack was always very industrious, always had an entrepreneurial spirit, and displayed remarkable leadership and team building qualities. During his youth, he mentored younger students, and worked a paper route for the Charlotte Observer. In his teens, while working at local country club, he developed a good reputation, which came in handy when our mother became very ill. These qualities formed in childhood followed him throughout his life and he came to be described as a “Gentle, Humble Giant. The poem, “IF” by Rudyard Kipling well describes Zack’s attributes of focus and perseverance. “If you can keep your head when those around you are losing theirs ... if you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue or walk with kings and not lose the common touch ... You will become a real man, my son.”

He graduated from Johnakin High School in 1967. He attended South Carolina State University, in Orangeburg, SC, and graduated in 1971 with a degree in Business & Journalism. While at SCSU, he became editor of the student newspaper. A major defining moment in Zack’s Life occurred at SCSU’s Orangeburg Massacre when one of his best friends, Henry Smith was killed. This event shaped Zack’s life going forward and his zeal as an advocate of justice. During the summers of his college years, he worked in NYC at the Port Authority and in Chester, PA at local grocery stores, while living with his Uncle Charlie.

After graduating from SCSU in 1971, he moved to New Jersey. His multifaceted skills in leadership, training, marketing, sales, and journalism resulted in him working in several key corporate and NJ State government positions throughout his career. His most recent position was with Newark City Hall within Department of Economics & Housing. Zack embraced the Swahili name “Risasi” in his desire to identify more closely with his African roots, still retaining his birth name – Zachariah, a Bible name given by his parents. He was a people person, and his life was filled with helping others in various aspects, as well as a wide range of artistic, political, and humanitarian interests. From an early age, Zack loved and had an eye for photography and a talent for writing. He cultivated this talent to become a highly respected photographer, documentarian, and journalist. He was a fervent champion for Black artists and cultural events. Zack was also keenly interested in and devoted his life to uplifting the oppressed, working with a variety of organizations and individuals on special initiatives toward that end. Zack loved Newark, North Jersey, and New York City, as this was where he developed many lasting friends, who became his extended family.

As his Grandfather Eli Williams, who was nicknamed “TWO” as he was noted for his remarkable ability to manage large projects normally requiring 2 visionary men effectively and seemingly effortlessly, so too was Zack. Zack worked approximately 5 decades as a photojournalist, documenting, and highlighting special events, as well as the lives of dignitaries, musicians, celebrities and non-famous. His award winning work earned him the title “International Award-Winning Photojournalist Extraordinaire” ... a continuous role he held while maintaining a full-time position. As Proverbs 27:2 states “Let someone else praise you and not your own lips.” It’s truly reflective of Zack’s passion as a photojournalist ... highlighting others’ accomplishments, not himself. Zack was more comfortable “behind the scenes”. Zack was also very protective of others - presenting their stories truthfully and in the most positive light.

He leaves to mourn a brother, Romeo Dais of Madison, WI; five loving sisters: Rose Marie Lewis of Atlanta, GA (W. Arthur Lewis-deceased); Charine Dais of Hartsdale, NY; Irene Dais of Marion, SC; Arnetha Juliet Dais and Geraldine Dais of Cary, NC; one niece, Andrea Dais Lewis of Atlanta, GA, and two great-nephews, Christian Lewis Johnson, and Alexander Lewis Johnson; many cousins and countless friends.

Order of Service

Randy Fling, Master of Ceremonies

Music/Video

Prayer

Scripture

Hymn

Obituary

Remarks

Musical Performance

Poem

Music/Song

Hymn

Eulogy

Closing Prayer

Video Tribute



Family Reflections

Rose - Zack was a loving, supportive brother. The official photographer for family, whose camera was never far from him.

Andrea - Uncle Zack, thank you for instilling love for family, the community, and our people. Your passion for unity and community uplift will be greatly missed by all.

Irene - Zack, my brother, you'll always be in my heart.

Romeo - Zack was a great photographer, writer, fierce advocate of African American history and culture, and protector of the family. His spirit will forever be in our hearts.

Charine - My soul brother, Zachariah Dais and I were two spirits in the universe given by God. Our hearts were as one. The French writer, Marcel Proust said, "Love is space and time made perceptible to the heart. Love is both indefinable and deeply sensory."

Juliette - Zack, my thoughts go to BOTH the Biblical meaning of your Name and the "Good Name" you established in your life! (Proverbs 22:1 "Good Name better than great wealth ... to be respected better than silver and gold") Your reputation of operating with Integrity and Caring from childhood is "Remembered" and documented in many hearts. And just as we "**Remember**" your positive legacy and life lessons you taught, the meaning of Zachariah, "**JEHOVAH Remembers**" speaks volumes! That profound meaning and The Sure Promise from Jesus Christ at John 5:28-29 gives tremendous reassurance and comfort while you sleep, until the Grandest Family Reunion Ever on Earth. Revelation 21:3-5: TRUE PARADISE Worldwide with Justice, Peace and Brotherly LOVE reigning, as your heart so desired. Psalms 37:11, 29; Isaiah 65:17, Revelation 7:9-10, Micah 4:3-4. While you rest, we strive to prepare ourselves for approved entry into This Thrilling PARADISE on Earth by diligently trying to follow guidelines by The Almighty Host and Creator ... Zechariah 8:22-23 and Isaiah 2:2-3.

Cookie - Zack, a diamond in the rough; rest, you will stand again. Daniel 12:13

Acknowledgements

The Dais Family wishes to express their sincere appreciation for all your loving support, thoughts, and prayers during this difficult time. Thank you for the cards, phone calls, emails, text messages, flowers, and social media tributes. Your words of support are like apples of gold in silver carvings.

Special acknowledgment to Mayor Ras J. Baraka, City of Newark, Kecia Daniels, Jenny Rodriguez, Randy Fling, Jaheed Ashley, Kojo Ade, Ted Wilson, Richard Cammarieri, Dr. M. William Howard, Dr. Lewis Miller, Dr. Robert Moody, and countless others who supported and encouraged Zack during his life, and who especially supported us during this difficult time.

Also, a special thank you to The James E. Churchman, Jr. Funeral Home.

*Ecclesiastes 7:1 - A good name is better than good oil, and the day of death is better than the day of birth.
Zack definitely made a good name through his deeds and actions.*

Professional Services Entrusted To

James E. Churchman Jr. Funeral Home

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