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God has written a new beginning to another beautiful chapter from one book of life here on earth to the Lamb's Book of Life in heaven. This chapter began with Hazel Rebecca Terry Porter of Tangipahoa Parish, Hammond, La., on a hot summer day August 31, 1946 when Alzina Booker Terry and the late Hiram W. Terry of Columbus, Ohio, sent out a jubilant proclamation throughout the community.

It's a girl! It's a beautiful little baby girl.

She began her walk with the Lord at an early age. Later in her adult walk with the Lord, she, along with her mate the late Dr. Robert Porter (founder/pastor), co-founded the Genesis Baptist Church with a few growth stops along the way. She faithfully labored by his side for more than 31 years. God's call on Hazel's life granted her talents that amazed and baffled even her at times.

She attended Ohio State University and graduated from the University of Minnesota with a bachelor of science degree in Family Relations, along with a diploma in Aging Studies.

Elder Hazel Porter served as an ordained Elder under her sons. She was president of the California Association of Minister's Wives and Minister's Widow, Dean of the Pacific Region Minister's Wives and Minister's Widows, as well as public relations chair of the International Association of Minister's Wives and Minister's Widows, Minister's Wife Devotional Bible in conjunction with Thomas Nelson Publishers -- the first printing sold out.

Her travel has taken her across the United States, Canada, the Caribbean Islands and South Africa ministering.

Her entrepreneurial adeptness spun and grew in co-ownership of P&P Bookstore and Porgena's (a men and women's boutique) in St. Paul, Minn.; owner of P&P Robes and Church supplies; founder and CEO of HP Ministries Inc.; and Director of Women of Wisdom Conference, Sacramento.

In addition to her many plays and prose, her published work includes an inspirational booklet entitled, "Hope in the Midst of Hurt"; articles in the "Minister's Wife Devotional Bible," staff writer for "Genesis Today" (a quarterly religious publication circulated throughout several countries), and editor/compiler of "A Mazwi O Moya" (A book of anecdotes of Ministers' Wives/Widows from America, Bahamas and South Africa).

One of the greatest blessings God gives us is the gift of someone who cares -- that gift was wrapped up and tangled up in our beloved Hazel Rebecca

Terry Porter. She was full of words of wisdom that were food for thought, showering immense support and incomparable compassion. She shared willingly, freely and abundantly to encourage, to inspire and to assist only her children, but also those of her sister, adopted extended family, co-laborers and friends as well.

There comes a time in every woman's life when she has to take a close look at herself. Not at her circumstance, not at what she did, not at how unfair life is -- she has to just look at herself in all her glory and imperfection Porter did that and was sure in who she was. It is said that a woman who has endured the most unusual life is someone of wisdom, someone who has been chosen by God to go through most unusual life is someone of wisdom, someone who has been chosen by God to go through things that have made her stronger. Hazel's strength and courage showed through until the very end.

Many a woman has walked through life but has not lived. Many a woman has considered the wonders of life, yet never offered a hand nor spoke the truth; but we remember and honor a special jewel on today, someone who lived the life of faith she talked about. From her heart she protected, nurtured and cherished her family.

With her brilliant mind she attempted to redirect the misled, inspire the downtrodden, energize the slothful and applaud the producers. She was always telling everybody about somebody who saves anybody -- The Good News.

With her hands she made her house a home, penned and directed soul-stirring plays, wrote prose to create and enlighten with light rays of inspiration and visions of time and space unexplored. Her soul she gave to God -- "She, as we are, was an imperfect woman serving a Perfect God."

Hazel's health endured a blow in the first onslaught of cancer in 1985, and then in 2003 it hit her body again. Finally, the enemy returned in November 2004 -- this time the weakened body, unable to generate the needed strength, succumbed and transitioned into Glory for final rest.

She endured her share of heartaches and pain, trials and tribulations, yet she persevered, realizing that character was being developed and growth was taking place with each storm she overcame.

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