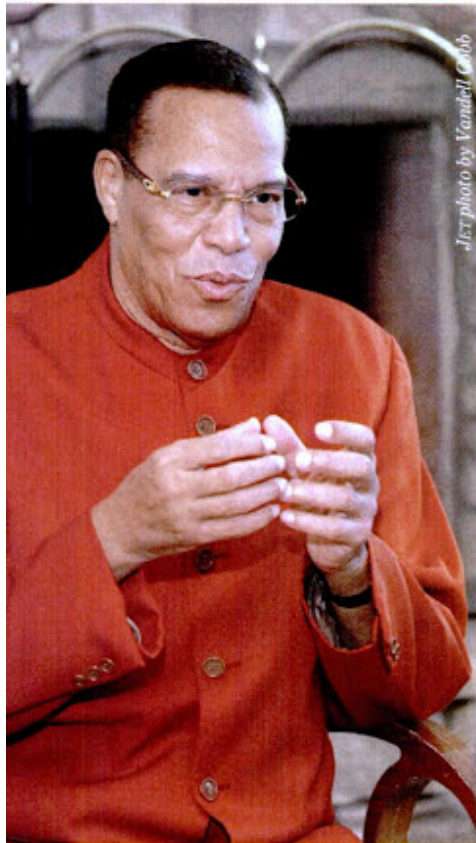


JET EXCLUSIVE

# Minister Louis Farrakhan

## Talks About Miraculous Recovery



▲ Nation of Islam leader the Honorable Louis Farrakhan, who was diagnosed with prostate cancer in 1991, discusses his recent miraculous recovery during an exclusive JET interview at his farm in Michigan.

**M**inister Louis Farrakhan says he was saved by the grace of God.

There's no other way to explain it, he says.

Farrakhan, the leader of the Nation of Islam, was diagnosed with prostate cancer in 1991, and was recently released from the hospital after a five-week stay that included a 14-hour major surgery. While there are no signs of the cancer, he had been suffering from the effects of radiation treatment.

During an exclusive interview with JET at his Michigan farm, the 73-year-old leader opened up and talked candidly for the first time about his illness. The interview was set to last no more than 30 minutes but easily stretched to more than two hours as a surprisingly energetic, upbeat and joyous Farrakhan talked, laughed and played music as he testified about his miraculous recovery and the power of prayer.

"I'm back from death's door," he says, sitting in the living room of his spacious home. "And six weeks after the operation, I am getting stronger every day."

He reveals that even his doctor is surprised that he is healing and recovering so well. "My doctor said to me, 'Minister,



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I'm the kind of doctor who no matter how well the operation went, I am always looking for glitches, the fever, the infections, the things that come after a major operation that you had. But after watching you for four weeks, I can tell you that your recovery is nothing short of miraculous."

The interview was 10 days before his much-anticipated speech on Saviours' Day. "I hope to be in Detroit, delivering my Saviours' Day address by the grace of God."

Minister Farrakhan has been absent from the public spotlight since August 2006 and last year, he turned over the day-to-day leadership duties to an executive board and postponed all speaking engagements because of his poor health (JET, Oct. 9, 2006). He said at the time doctors discovered "an ulcer in the anal area"

▼ Farrakhan, a classically-trained violinist, plays for JET during interview. Above, he plays music from the CD he is working on with Harry Belafonte, Jimmy Scott, Deniece Williams and others. The CD will include a rendition of *Remember Me* from the movie, *Troy*.



and that he was "dehydrated" and "anemic."

He underwent a 14-hour abdominal operation at Chicago's Northwestern Memorial Hospital designed to correct damage caused by the radiated seed implantation procedure he received to treat his prostate cancer. The procedure left him in pain for years.

And recently the pain became even more unbearable, and he had lost about 40 pounds. "If I didn't do something about my condition, I probably would not survive. Most people had given up on me. Many people thought that I wouldn't make it. My dear wife when she saw the blood rushing out of me and the way that I looked, she thought 'Maybe he won't make it,' so they summoned all my children to come by my bedside. But God was by my bedside, too. So I am here because

He still has some work yet for me to do."

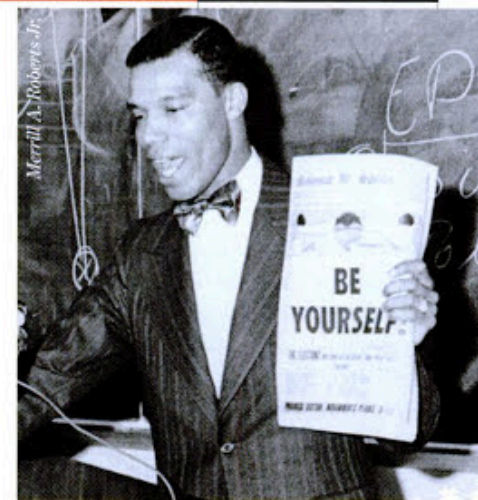
He was in intensive care for five days as they prepared him for the operation. "The doctors say the only surgery greater, more difficult, more complicated than the surgery I had was a liver transplant. That's how difficult it was."

He recalled that during the surgery, doctors found a small cancerous tumor in the colon, but "they cut that out."

He thanks all the doctors at Northwestern, Howard University in Washington, D.C. and St. Anthony's Memorial Hospital in Michigan City, IN, for their professional and thorough care. "For 14 hours, I was on that table, and everyone, I am saying this with deep, deep respect, everyone from the doctors to the students who were under them, to the nurses, to the certified nurses assistants, everyone who looked after me for nearly five weeks in that hospital, they were like God's specific angels that He entrusted me to."

He was also under the constant care of his daughter and nurse, Fatima Farrakhan Muhammad, who was by his side throughout his hospital stay.

He continues to urge Black men to go to the doctor and get checked for prostate cancer. "We are more concerned with bling bling and designer clothes and designer shoes than taking a yearly trip to the doctor. Maybe one or two trips to the doctor can lead you to discover an illness early to nip it in the



▲ In the '70s, Farrakhan (as a rising Nation of Islam leader) pushes for Black pride and unity during a speech. ▼ A young Louis Farrakhan (seated) listens intently as his teacher, Nation of Islam leader the Honorable Elijah Muhammad, speaks. "I am a student of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad," he says. "I'm not a self-made man. I am a Muhammad-made man."

bud and save your life."

He adds, "Prostate cancer is killing us wholesale and it happens because we don't want a digital examination in our



This One



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rectum. We feel that it's not manly. But we must have the exams. Go to the doctor," he urges Black men. "Don't even wait until you are 40; start at 35 to get digital exams and blood work. Think more about your health and the well-being of our bodies. It's imperative. You can't do that unless you change the priorities of our thinking."

He is pleased that he had the surgery. "If I had not had this operation, the cancer may have ultimately taken me away. So truly, God is great and is the greatest and I am eternally grateful to all of those who prayed for my recovery."

His wife of 54 years, Mother Khadijah Farrakhan, looked over and smiled as her husband was doing the JET photo shoot and said: "He is gaining his weight back. We were so afraid we were losing him. He is beginning to look more like



himself now. He looks wonderful, handsome, healthy and happy as ever. It is a miracle. I

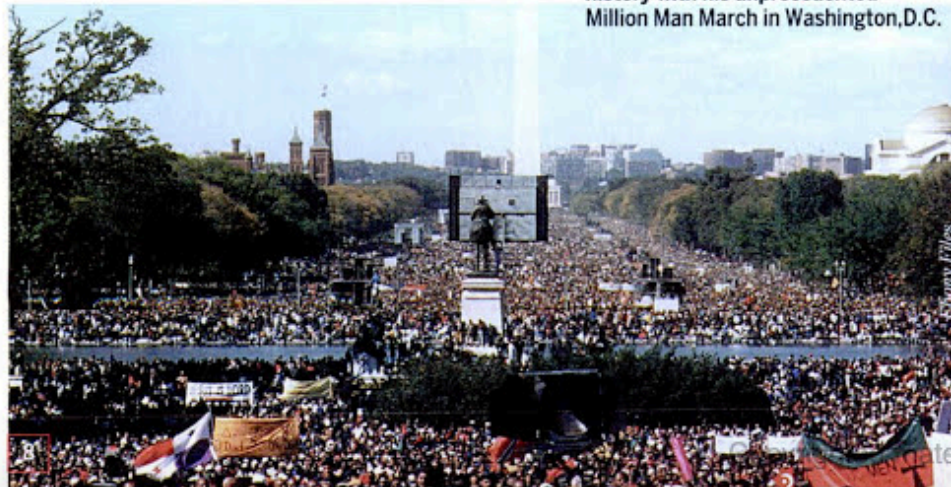
thank everyone for their prayers. Allah, God answers prayers."

Farrakhan has received phone calls and expressions of support from his friends worldwide, including the Rev. Jesse Jackson, the Rev. Al Sharpton and hip-hop mogul Russell Simmons, who calls him his "living father."

Rev. Jackson told JET: "We thank God for restoring the health of Minister Farrakhan. God has blessed the Minister bountifully. I have talked with him and visited with him throughout his illness and now recovery... May he continue to serve and inspire."

Rev. Al Sharpton said: "Minister Farrakhan has always been there to encourage and help all of us, now we have the opportunity to do the same thing for

**In 1995, Farrakhan made worldwide history with his unprecedented Million Man March in Washington, D.C.**





him. He is an example that when you are at death's door, you can come back with a victory. You can rise above health challenges if you hold on to faith. He has exhibited the kind of faith

that we all preach about. There is no testimony without a test, and Minister Farrakhan has taken the test and the world awaits his testimony."

Simmons told JET: "We as Black people are blessed to have another chance to celebrate him while he's still living. We should not take this lightly. I am committed to promoting his legacy and correcting the misconceptions about his intentions and his teachings. His recovery is because God still has work for him."

Looking ahead, the Minister is pre-

▼ In 2005, Minister Farrakhan and his wife Mother Khadijah Farrakhan (seated) enjoy family time with their children (l-r) Mustapha Farrakhan, Betsy Jean Farrakhan, Abnar Farrakhan, Donna Farrakhan Muhammad, Maria Farrakhan, Fatimah Farrakhan Muhammad and Louis Farrakhan Jr. Not pictured are Joshua Farrakhan and Khallada Farrakhan.



Vector/Powell/Powell Photography Inc.



Courtesy of Farrakhan Family

◀ Minister Farrakhan and his wife, Mother Khadijah Farrakhan, were married 54 years ago on Sept. 12, 1953, at St. Cyprian's Episcopal Church in Boston.

paring to show another side of Minister Louis Farrakhan that many don't know. He is an accomplished violinist and started a

career in show business as a calypso singer years ago. He is now preparing to play the violin on a classical-jazz and gospel-flavored album with some of his musical friends, including Harry Belafonte, Deniece Williams, Chaka Khan, Patti LaBelle and veteran jazz singer Jimmy Scott.

He gave up his music professionally at age 22 when he became a Muslim. He needed to devote himself full-time to the Nation of Islam at the urging of the Hon-

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orable Elijah Muhammad, the leader of the Nation of Islam.

"It took me less than 2 minutes to make my decision. I could live without music, but I couldn't live without truth. So I gave all of this up to learn the Word that would help our people rise."

I am never disappointed for being obedient to my teacher," he explains. "Because if I had put more time into my music, I would have put less time into my study of the Word. It's the study of the Word and the love of our people that made me magnetic. It was the only way I could draw 2 million Black people to the Million Man March. It wasn't music, it was the Word and the love of our people. Now in the twilight of my life, it comes full circle. The album deals with my life musically."

Asked the secret of his strong appeal to Black America, he says: "It is deeper than charisma. It is the Word, and second, it is love. People can feel me. I'm not looking for honor. I'm not looking for praise. I'm not thinking about my legacy. I am thinking about seeing the rise of a people. When God says to me, 'It is time to come in,' I want to leave a better world than the world that I found on my birth."

He notes, "Black folks know whether they agree with me or not, they can trust me. Because I'm consistent. Either consistently right," he laughs, "or consistently something else. But I am consistent. And they know that I can't be bought. They know that I can't be bossed. And they see in me a Brother who truly loves

his people."

He adds, "Let my legacy show that I have tried to serve and the quality of my service. Let the historians judge that and give me, if I deserve it, my place in history."

—Clarence Waldron

### The Honorable Minister Louis Farrakhan: Timeline

- Born:** Louis Eugene Walcott May 11, 1933 -Bronx, New York
- 1948:** Starts show business career as a calypso singer, violinist and dancer; one of the first Blacks to appear on "The Ted Mack Amateur Hour"
- 1953:** Marries childhood sweetheart, the former Betsy Ross, later named Mother Khadijah Farrakhan. They later have 9 children
- 1951:** Wins track scholarship to attend Winston-Salem Teacher's College in NC
- 1954:** Known as "The Charmer," he records hit calypso tune, *Jumbie Jamboree*
- 1955:** Joins Nation of Islam as Louis X
- 1965:** Nation of Islam leader The Honorable Elijah Muhammad gives the rising leader the last name "Farrakhan"
- 1977:** Begins to rebuild the work of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad
- 1981:** Calls new members together to give rebirth of the Nation of Islam
- 1993:** Performs with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra on his 60th birthday
- 1995:** Organizes the historic Million Man March, attended by 2 million Black men, the largest gathering of Blacks in the nation's history
- 2000:** Organizes Million Family March in Washington, D.C.
- 2005:** Organizes and unites leaders in Washington, D.C. for the Millions More Movement
- 2007:** Delivers Nation of Islam Saviours' Day address in Detroit after making miraculous health recovery