

“It’s Time for a Comeback”

A comeback is necessary normally after a setback. It is the return of a successful person, who has had a setback. These are people who after a setback, have a comeback people that have faced some type hindrance, delay, or obstruction. But they have a comeback and make their way back.

Introduction:

There was a young man with lightning speed and gazelle-like grace when he won the Olympic gold medal in 1960 in Rome. From then until 1963 this man marched through the heavyweight ranks to an 18-0 record. In his 19th fight he had to get off the canvass to come back and knock out Henry Cooper. This was a show of the man’s resilience that made him an icon.

Despite his undefeated record, he was a heavy (7-1) underdog against Heavyweight Champion Sonny Liston who had destroyed everyone he faced. Few gave him a chance, but he overcame the odds to win the Championship on a 7th round TKO.

His future seemed limitless with a 29-0 record and no one close to him in talent. Then his title was stripped from him for refusing to enter the US Army. He stood up for his religious conviction and took on the US government by refusing to fight in Vietnam.

After three and a half years, Ali was allowed to fight again – he had won his battle over his religious belief. However, no one gave him a chance to regain his title after such a long layoff.

Ali’s speed was gone so he had to reinvent himself as a fighter. He could no longer float like a butterfly but he could hit with more power and he could outlast his opponents because of his conditioning. Ali came back and beat Norton in the rematch and then beat Joe Frazier in their rematch. However, Frazier had lost the title to Big George Foreman.

Ali was a huge underdog to Foreman but bucked the odds again to regain his crown with a seventh round knockout. Ali used the now famous “rope a dope” strategy to wear Foreman out in one of boxing’s biggest upsets.

At age 37, Ali regained the title a third time over Leon Spinks Ali made his Comeback.

Lessons to be learned

1. Ali called himself “The Greatest” but worked hard to back it up. He conditioned himself and developed his ability to live up to that title.

2. **Stand up for what you believe in.** It would have been easier for Ali to go into the army and fight exhibitions but he chose to stand up for his belief. It’s easy to have conviction when it’s not challenged. When you stick to those convictions when all is on the line that’s being “The Greatest”.

3. **Always remember that “will is more important than skill”** if you have a strong enough will you can accomplish almost anything. It was Ali’s strong will that made him regain his title after a three-and-a-half-year layoff and two crushing defeats. It was Ali’s strong will that prepared him for the tough fights against Frazier, Norton and Foreman. The harder you work, the stronger your will becomes.

4. You may have to change strategy or reinvent yourself to accomplish your goal. Ali changed his style as a boxer once his superior speed had faded. Sometimes you have to adjust and adapt in order to advance.

5. **Never get discouraged over things you can’t control.** Ali was determined to comeback and regain his title from Joe Frazier.

6. **Always believe in yourself even when no one else does.**

Now I would like to turn to a Biblical example a Man Name Naaman

2 Kings 5:1-14 (NKJV)

¹ Now Naaman, commander of the army of the king of Syria, was a **great and honorable** man in the eyes of his master, **because by him the LORD had given victory to Syria**. He was also a **mighty man of valor, BUT A LEPER**. ² And the Syrians had gone out on raids, and had brought back captive a **young girl** from the land of Israel. She waited on Naaman's wife. ³ Then she said to her mistress, "If only my master *were* with the prophet who *is* in Samaria! **For he would heal him of his leprosy.**" ⁴ And *Naaman* went in and told his master, saying, "Thus and thus said the girl who *is* from the land of Israel." ⁵ **Then the king of Syria said, "Go now, and I will send a letter to the king of Israel." So he departed and took with him ten talents of silver, six thousand shekels of gold, and ten changes of clothing.** ⁶ Then he brought the letter to the king of Israel, which said, Now be advised, when this letter comes to you, that I have sent Naaman my servant to you, **that you may heal him of his leprosy.** ⁷ And it happened, when the king of Israel read the letter, that he tore his clothes and said, "Am I God, to kill and make alive, that this man sends a man to me to heal him of his leprosy? Therefore please consider, and see how he seeks a quarrel with me." ⁸ So it was, when Elisha the man of God heard that the king of Israel had torn his clothes, that he sent to the king, saying, "Why have you torn your clothes? Please let him come to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel." ⁹ Then Naaman went with his horses and chariot, and he stood at the door of Elisha's house. ¹⁰ **And Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying, "Go and wash in the Jordan seven times, and your flesh shall be restored to you, and you shall be clean."** ¹¹ But Naaman became furious, and went away and said, "Indeed, I said to myself, 'He will surely come out *to me*, and stand and call on the name of the LORD his God, and wave his hand over the place, and heal the leprosy.' ¹² *Are not the Abanah and the Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Could I not wash in them and be clean?" So he turned and went away in a rage.* ¹³ And his servants came near and spoke to him, and said, "My father, *if* the prophet had told you *to do* something great, would you not have done *it*? How much more then, when he says to you, 'Wash, and be clean'?" ¹⁴ **So he went down and dipped seven times in the**

Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God; and his flesh was restored like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.

Naaman was:

- A **great and honorable** man in the eyes of his master
- **The LORD had given victory to Syria**
- He was also a **mighty man of valor**

WOW Naaman had it going on he was great and honorable in the eyes of the King. The Lord had given victory in battle. A Mighty man of Valor.

- **BUT HE WAS A LEPER**
- **His condition was incurable, hopeless, it was terminal. The man had a condition that eat him up from the inside out.**
- **Sometimes we don't know how and who the Lord is going to use In Naaman's case**
- **It was a young slave girl. This girl knew about the power of the God of Israel, The girl knew how God used the man of God.**

Then she said to her mistress, "If only my master *were* with the prophet who *is* in Samaria! **For he would heal him of his leprosy.**"

There are times that God is speaking to us and giving us instructions, and just because it does not come the way we think that it should we don't accept it.

- **WHO YOU KNOW AND MONEY DOES NOT ALWAYS SOLVE YOUR ISSUES.**

Then the king of Syria said, "Go now, and I will send a letter to the king of Israel." So he departed and took with him ten talents of silver, six thousand *shekels* of gold, and ten changes of clothing.

Today that would have been over a million dollars

There was no cure for leprosy, regardless of how much money was offered. Naaman and his king had sought the wrong source for their solution, and many of us do the same thing today.

- **The King thought it was a setup. Lol**

And it happened, when the king of Israel read the letter, that he tore his clothes and said, "*Am I God, to kill and make alive, that this man sends a man to me to heal him of his leprosy? Therefore please consider, and see how he seeks a quarrel with me.*"

- **The man of God sends for Naaman**

Why have you torn your clothes? Please let him come to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel." ⁹ Then Naaman went with his horses and chariot, and he stood at the door of Elisha's house. ¹⁰ **And Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying,**

"Go and wash in the Jordan seven times, and your flesh shall be restored to you, and you shall be clean."

➤ **Now this is where it gets crazy**

But Naaman **BECAME FURIOUS**, and went away and said, "Indeed, I said to myself, **'He will surely come out to me, and stand and call on the name of the LORD his God, and wave his hand over the place, and heal the leprosy.'**"¹² Are not the Abanah and the Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Could I not wash in them and be clean?" **So he turned and WENT AWAY IN A RAGE.**

➤ **Again from the unexpected comes advice (The Servants)**

And his **servants** came near and spoke to him, and said, "My father, *if* the prophet had told you *to do* something great, would you not have done *it*? How much more then, when he says to you, **'Wash, and be clean'?**"

Many people miss it because where they think they should get it, is not where God has it for them. Don't let the looks of a person or a place cause you to miss what God has for you.

➤ **Totally obedience is necessary**

So he went down and dipped seven times in the Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God; and his flesh was restored like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.

Nothing happened the first time, the second time... or even the sixth time Naaman dipped. That wasn't the instruction. Naaman had to dip seven times before experiencing a comeback.

One of the reasons many people don't experience a comeback in their situation at home or at work, in their health or in their finances, or anywhere else is that they go only partway.

They will do half or two-thirds of what they know God wants them to do, and then when they quit, they wonder why they don't see the change they thought they would get. But partway isn't the instruction. The instruction from God is always complete obedience.

God always demands full faith.

What has God instructed you to do that you didn't go all the way?

Naaman didn't experience just one miracle when he dipped seven times— he experienced two.

First, his body was completely healed of its disease.

Then came miracle number two— Naaman’s condition was actually reversed.

We read that “his flesh was restored like the flesh of a little child.” The implications of this double miracle are powerful.

God turned back the hands of time. He rolled back the clock and restored to Naaman more than what his disease had taken away.

Don’t just look to God to turn your situation around. Instead, trust Him also to restore the years the locusts have stolen (Joel 2: 25).

That’s how great God is. God is so incredibly awesome; He can not only fix what is wrong but also give you back what you have lost.

That’s why you should never give up hope, regardless of how long you’ve struggled. God can turn back the hands of time.

Before God can give you your complete comeback your double portion

But before He can do that, He needs you to think different.

**He needs you to set down your pride, dignity, and rationale aside.
God needs you to seek Him and His Word concerning your situation so He can tell you what to do.**

He wants you to obey completely.

Are you struggling in your marriage? Has God asked you to surrender to your spouse or show unconditional love? Then do it. Fully.

Are you facing challenges with your finances? Did God instruct you in His Word to honor Him with the firstfruits of what He gives you, even when things are tight? Then do it.

Conclusion

What is needed for a Comeback?

1. Think Differently
2. Embrace the unusual
3. Accept Direction
4. Obedience to follow instructions