

Walker Lazarus

Mrs. Graning

English 8

October 22, 2024

Night

Night is a book based on a true story about the cruel treatment of the Jewish people in the concentration camps during WWII. A young Jewish boy, Elie Wiesel and his father are sent to endure the horrors of these camps. In the book, Elie's faith changes from very intense religious studying, questioning his faith, and finally losing his faith. The idea of how his God could allow this evil to happen is often in his thoughts. The things he and his father endure are horrific.

Even as early as eleven, Elie was very interested in studying and learning about his Jewish Religion. He often tried to ask his father to find someone to help him study intensely. He wanted to do much more than the basic studying most children did. Elie found a master religious teacher himself, Moshe the Beadle, a foreign Jew in his community. Moshe taught him that praying is talking with God, and asking him

questions. “And why do you pray, Moshe?” Elie asked. “I pray to God that he will give me the strength to ask him the right questions.” (Wiesel 2) At this point Elie is very religious.

In 1944, Elie’s and all the Jewish families in the town were rounded up and transported to Auschwitz, a death camp. He now starts to question his faith in God. Upon arriving at the camp he heard “Men to the left! Women to the right!” (Wiesel 28) He never again saw his mother or sister. After realizing the nazi’s were putting little children and their mothers in the furnace he was devastated. “Never shall I forget those flames which consumed my faith forever.” (Wiesel 32) clinging to his father he went to the barracks. They were stripped and their clothes burned. Later lying on their beds some of the men would pray. “I did not deny God’s existence, but I doubted his absolute justice.” (Wiesel 41) he now had lots of questions about maintaining his faith.

Elie and his father were transported to several concentration camps, each one worse than the one before. They observed the most terrifying treatment of the prisoners, both by the guards and other prisoners. The prisoners were starved and tortured. Finally Elie could no longer doubt that God was dead to him. In one of the camps a guard and his childlike assistance were caught stealing, all were rounded up and hung in front of the other prisoners. The public hangings were used to keep everybody in line. As the child was hanging and struggling slowly dying, Elie had to look into his face. One man asked “Where is God now?” Answering to himself, Elie said, “Where is he, here he is; he is hanging here on these gallows.” (Wiesel 57) God was now dead to Elie.

Through the years Elie and his father were transported from camp to camp. In the last camp he sees his father was being taken down to the crematorium, all around him is dead. Finally the prisoners are rescued after enduring years of starvation, torture, and beatings. The last thing Elie does before being freed is see himself as a corpse in the mirror. He went from being faithful to having now faith at all. This holocaust changed the world forever.

Works Cited

Weisel, Elie. *Night*. St. Paul Minnesota; Hill & Wang, 1960. Print.