

Elie of the universe,
the all-powerful and



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BUSTER**

Elie Wiesel was a devout Jew during his childhood, just before the Holocaust wounded his soul. He survived the events of the Holocaust, but in his waiting for the Lord's intervention, just like it was in the bible, his doubts in God and his mercy began to develop. The book 'Night' tells us of the journey that Wiesel took in his dilemma whether to forgive God's cruelty towards his people or to define his own fate. He finds it difficult to understand the role of God in the world, and poses many questions to try and understand why God would stand by and watch the horrors of the Holocaust. When the Jews of Sighet first heard of the crimes of the Nazis, they strengthened their faith in God, and believed that God would provide them with security from such horrifying things, as Wiesel stated, "And we, the Jews of Sighet, were waiting for better days, which would not be long in coming now" (5). The Jews, Wiesel included, believed that God had greater plans for everyone, and everything that happened was for their benefit, since God was both their defender and righter of wrongs. The faith that Wiesel had in God was enormous, in spite of the increasing abuse and hatred that the Nazis had for the Jews (Wiesel 5). Just like the other believers, he believed that their suffering was a punishment from god for their evil deeds, and therefore they did not resist or fight back.

God was supposed to present himself at the last moment and show his glory for their perseverance, but this did not happen. "God is testing us. He wants to find out whether we can dominate our base instincts and kill the (Wiesel 42) within us.

We have no right to despair. And if he punishes us relentlessly, it's a sign that he loves us all the more" (Wiesel 42). Eventually, Wiesel got to a point

where he did not want to praise and thank God anymore. His fellow men were suffering and dying, yet God was still not manifesting his power.

“For the first time I felt revolt rise in me. Why should I bless His name? The Eternal, Lord of the Universe, the All-Powerful and Terrible, was silent. What had I to thank Him for?” (Wiesel 31). The Jews had lost faith in God, and despair crept in, since they wondered who would save them.

By this point, Wiesel was already feeling betrayed, and at the hanging of the angel-faced pipel, he declared that God was dead to him, bringing an end to his long lived faith in God (Wiesel 62). The events of the Holocaust brought a lot of anger to Wiesel, which he directed to both God and men, for their cruelty. He could not understand the numerous killings, and it appeared that the lack of intervention from God implied that he approved the killings. Many believers had died, but Wiesel was alive and hurting. He therefore redirected his energy to accusing God and asking for him to explain his ignorance of the cries of his people (Douglas 5). In addition to the Jews doubting the love that God had for his people, and amidst all the questions, Wiesel and other Jews decided to become God (Douglas 7). This meant taking charge of their lives and doing things that they had never done before, and the most significant one was to hate. The Jews had been humiliated and killed while believing that God has a greater plan for them.

They believed that hate would lead them to fight back, as they no longer believed in suffering and persevering for a God who failed to answer the cries of his people (Douglas 7). The questions raised by Wiesel bear no answers. What comforted him were the words that he had received from

Moshe during his childhood, telling him that the relationship between man and God was based on question and answer, where the answers for the questions that people asked God came from the depths of the soul, where they stayed till death (Wiesel 2-3). The variety of questions came from his childhood observations, whereby the people initially shared their possessions but eventually became violent towards each other, killing for food, and not caring for others. Wiesel's lack of faith led him to stop fasting when Jews were required to, and he no longer observed the Sabbath day. He believes that the many questions that he has will be answered one day, by God himself, and hopes that no other Holocaust will happen, as he continues to wonder why the first one was, in the first place. One thing that Wiesel advises is that faith alone is not enough to stop tragedy, but the decisions and active participation of people.

Works Cited

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