

Night elie wiesel

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Night: An Analysis “ Night” a masterpiece by a Jewish Eliezer, who himself was a teen at the time of brutal incident of holocaust and lived in his hometown of Sighet, in Hungarian Transylvania. Eliezer in his childhood was of a student of Torah (the revealed book of Jews) and Cabbala (which is a set of guidelines of Jewish spirituality).

He used to learn certain religious aspects from his teacher Moshe the Beadle and later his teaching class was cut short, when his teacher was deported.

After a few months when Moshe returned he told everyone a very horrifying tale i. e the Gestapo (i. e. the German secret police force) took charge of his train, guided everyone into the forest, and thoroughly butchered almost every one of them. Nobody believed Moshe, who was declaimed lunatic.

In beginning as a juvenile blood Eliezer only viewed world as a place of “ eat, drink, perform rituals and be merry” but with each passing day life teaches him certain lessons that forced him to change his outlook about life.

Even in the start when Germans were taking over their vicinity, he did not consider them as their enemies as he quoted himself that “ Still our first impressions of the Germans were rather reassuring.... made no offensive remarks, and sometimes even smiled at the lady of the house”. (9) But later that changed drastically as “ So many crazed men, so much shouting, so much brutality... sticks in hand, striking anywhere, anyone, without reason. (34, 35)

In the whole story his perspective about God and world changed drastically. With each day passing by his views about worldly affairs and role of God in this affairs have been tainted to a greater extent. In beginning He was a very religious boy who was losing trust on God day by day as he said on an instant soon after he has been exalted from his hometown he started

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doubting the help and Merciful nature of God as he said, “ For the first time, I felt anger rising within me. Why should I sanctify His name? ... What was there to thank Him for? (33)

Some more days his faith was shaken more significantly as he explained this in his own words, “ Some of the men spoke of God.. As for me, I had ceased to pray...I was not denying His existence, but I doubted His absolute justice. (45)

He in the preface himself cited his conviction from the start till end as “ In the beginning there was faith, which is childish; trust, which is vain; and illusion, which is dangerous”.

In beginning he thought that a person deeds actually decides what he will face in life but then later on after series of traumatic experiences in camps out there he realizes that this myth is not true. There are many people who do well and suffer bad and many who do bad and gets good in return. He portrayed this concept as, “ In those days, I fully believed that the salvation of the world depended on every one of my deeds, on every one of my prayers. But now, I no longer pleaded for anything... no longer able to lament...I felt very strong... I was alone, terribly alone in a world without God... I was nothing but ashes now, but I felt myself to be stronger than before (68)

The paradigm shift in his thinking throughout his journey in his own words as, “ I too had become a different person. The student of Talmud, the child I was, had been consumed by the flames.... My soul had been invaded and devoured by a black flame.” (37)

After such sequences of repeated shocks, ordeals and sufferings from Germans he found himself stronger and faced the real bitterness of this

world that he had only considered an amusing place. He described his own and his fellow Jews condition as follows, " We were masters of nature, masters of the world ... Stronger than cold or hunger ... we were the only men on earth " (83)

The height of pain and suffering made him admit the cruel nature of this world towards some as he narrate the incident of the death of his father in these words, " I did not weep, and it pained me that I could not weep...I had no more tears". (106)

Thus the novel revolves around changing mindset and perspective of Elie Wiesel about the pain, suffering, role of God, dwindling and heinous nature of human being and the courage and strength to fight all the anguishes and distresses.

References:

Wiesel, E. (2008). Night. London: Penguin.