

The central themes in "night" by elie wiesel literature analysis essay



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The night is the novel by Elie Wiesel, Jewish-American author and activist who was awarded the Nobel Prize for his struggle for life, humanity, and peace. The work is devoted to the life of Jewish during the Holocaust. The life of the father and the son who were sent to Gestapo became the central theme of the novel's plot. Their relationship reflected the changes in their mood and world perception while they were suffering the troubles and the horrors of Hitler occupation.

At the beginning of the novel, we meet Eliezer and his father, the main characters, the destinies of whom we will follow up to the end of the novel. The story begins in 1941 in Hungary. It was the time when the Jewish were persecuted in Europe. Realizing the threat caused by the moods in the society, the father prohibited his son's visits to Mosche, a caretaker in local synagogue. Nevertheless, Eliezer continued visiting him. He liked their discussions of the Kabbalah, the ancient Jewish text.

" He wanted to drive the idea of studying Kabbalah from my mind. In vain. I succeeded on my own in finding a master for myself in the person of Moische the Beadle" (Wiesel 4).

When the father and the son were sent to the Auschwitz, their world perception changed significantly. The horrors which they observed there influenced Eliezer's way of thinking and his visions about God. Seeing the killings every day, he lost his faith in God. Eliezer strives to be close to his father. Noticing how the strength left him, the son tried to be his supporter and caregiver. Their relationship changed at this point. Eliezer realized his duty of being strong to support his father. " I did not fast, mainly to please

my father, who had forbidden me to do so. But further, there was no longer any reason why I should fast" (Wiesel 66).

The continuing sufferings exhausted Eliezer and his father morally and physically. Eliezer lost all his beliefs and persuasions which he had before. While in Buchenwald, he lost his father and did not know where he was sent to. At this moment, Eliezer started to think to stop his search of his father.

He thought that it would be better for him to be on his own as he would not survive if he supported his father. " Here, every man has to fight for himself and not think of anyone else. Even his father. Here, there are no fathers, no brothers, no friends. Everyone lives and dies for himself alone" (Wiesel, 105). Nevertheless, Eliezer changed his mind and became ashamed of his thoughts.

The relationship between Eliezer and his father are closely interconnected with his belief in God. Eliezer rebelled against God after he had seen the killings and horrors at the camps (Patterson et al. 261). It was the tragedy of the ordinary people, the shame of their destinies, their feelings, and actions (Capps 81).

The relationship between Eliezer and his father is one of the central themes in Wiesel's novel. In the Nazis' camps, he supported his father. They were always together. Along with the changes in world perception and the understanding of reality, Eliezer became disappointed with God. In spite of his mental torments, his faith in his father won, and he continued his search in Buchenwald.

Capps, Donald. *The Depleted Self: Sin in a Narcissistic Age*, Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993. Print.

Patterson, David, Berger, Alan L. and S. Cargas. *Encyclopedia of Holocaust Literature*. Oryx Holocaust series, Westport: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2002. Print.

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