

NIGHT

Section 1

QUESTION

- One of the enduring questions that has tormented the Jews of Europe who survived the Holocaust is **whether or not they might have been able to escape the Holocaust had they acted more wisely.**

- In this first section, Wiesel grieves over the typical **human inability** to acknowledge the **extent of cruelty** of which humans are capable.

Some examples of this are:

- 1. The Jews of Sighet are **unable or unwilling to believe** in the horrors of Hitler's death camps.
- 2. Many Jews **do not believe** that Hitler really intends to exterminate them, even though the Nazis are making life increasingly unbearable for Jews.
- 3. The story of Moishe the Beadle is one of the most painful examples of **the Jews' refusal to believe in the depth of Nazi evil**.

- We as readers know what kind of history man is capable of, and can sense what will happen in the story. We end up reading helplessly as the Jews fail to see, or refuse to acknowledge, their fate.

Wiesel's goals:

- 1. To prevent the Holocaust from recurring by bearing witness to it.
- 2. To preserve the memory of the victims.

4 MAJOR THEMES

- The 4 major themes of this memoir are:
- 1. Eliezer's struggle with his faith
- 2. Silence: both God's and man's
- 3. Inhumanity towards other humans: both from the Nazis and the other prisoners
- 4. The importance of father-son bonds

FAITH

- This first section shows how important Eliezer's faith is to him. Later he will struggle with this faith.
- 1. Beginning: he is a devout Jew who studies faithfully and believes wholeheartedly in God.
- 2. Later: Eliezer's faith is tested when he begins to see how cruel life is, and he starts to question how he can believe in a God who would allow such suffering.

- Therefore, *Night* chronicles Eliezer's loss of innocence, his confrontation with evil, and his questioning of God's existence.

EXCERPTS

- Find two excerpts from Section 1 that focuses on Eliezer's faith:
- 1.
- 2.