

## The Best-Selling Survivor

The Holocaust was a significant event in our world's history that should never be forgotten. We should always remember the people who passed away and the people who survived. Elie Wiesel was one of the few lucky survivors whose story changed my views of the Holocaust.

Elie Wiesel was born in 1928, in Sighet, Romania. Sighet was occupied by Germans in 1944. The Wiesel family was moved to a ghetto temporarily. Everyone in the ghetto was transported in cattle cars to Auschwitz-Birkenau, the largest liquidation camp in Poland. Elie Wiesel and his father, Shlomo, were immediately split from Elie's mother and his three sisters. This was the last moment Elie ever saw his youngest sister and mother. To avoid immediate liquidation, Elie lied about being eighteen (Holocaust Memorial Day Trust). Approximately 1.1 million Jewish people were exterminated at Auschwitz-Birkenau in gas chambers (Greenfeld 5).

Elie Wiesel and his father were transferred to Monowitz, a labor camp, which was part of the Auschwitz complex. Both Elie and Shlomo became slave laborers working in a nearby factory (Holocaust Memorial Day Trust). Like others in concentration camps, Elie and his father were frequently starved, and beaten by the Nazi soldiers. They also witnessed abuses and murders of their fellow inmates (TIME-Life Books 111).

The Soviets' advance to Poland made Nazis evacuate Poland with Jews. Elie and Shlomo were relocated into Buchenwald, another slave labor camp, in Germany (Holocaust Memorial Day Trust). Elie, Shlomo, and other prisoners were forced to a ten-day march to reach cattle cars leading to Buchenwald. Shlomo survived the ten-day

march, but he died after arrival in Buchenwald. On April 11th, 1945, Elie and the other prisoners of Buchenwald were finally liberated (TIME-Life Books 111).

Elie Wiesel was sent to live in an orphanage in France, where he reunited with his older sisters, Beatrice and Hilda. In Paris, Elie pursued his dreams and became a journalist. François Mauriac, a French journalist, persuaded Elie to write about his dreadful past (Holocaust Memorial Day Trust). *Night*, a best-selling book, is about Elie's struggles retaining faith in God during the Holocaust (Wiesel). Elie and his wife, Marion, married in 1969 and had their child, Shlomo, in 1972. Elie Wiesel was awarded a Nobel Peace Prize in 1989. He died recently on June 2nd, 2016 (Holocaust Memorial Day Trust).

Elie Wiesel's story of the Holocaust has changed my views. I originally thought that a Holocaust survivor must have felt hatred and bitterness looking back into their past. Elie Wiesel showed me that having hatred and bitterness will not get you very far. I learned that it is still possible to pursue your dreams after having an unpleasant past. Elie Wiesel became successful in pursuing his dreams and becoming a best-selling author. Elie Wiesel left a significant imprint on the world that I will never forget.