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Faith Lost in the Night

Faith comes in many different forms for different people. For some, faith is based on God or another divine entity, others put all their faith in their family or friends, and still for others faith is simply a hope in the unknown. However someone demonstrates his/her faith, it is something that can be lost or gained through challenges and struggles. When people lose hope in what they put their faith in because of trials and setbacks, they can begin to lose the overall sense of faith and change their point of view. This subject is portrayed in the book *Night* by Elie Wiesel. In his story, Wiesel demonstrates faith in God and his religion as a central part of his life. Once he is taken away by the Nazis and sees many more challenges he gradually loses his faith, and eventually turns away from his faith all together once he feels God is no longer helping him.

In the beginning of *Night*, faith in religion and God is of utmost importance for Wiesel, as he prays often and strives to learn about his religion from his elders. Wiesel often spoke with Moishe the Beadle to learn from the Kabbalah and converse about faith. Moishe told him: “Man comes closer to God through the questions he asks Him…Man asks and God replies…The real answers, Eliezer, you will find only within yourself” (5). Wiesel’s faith is also seen in his dedication to studying deeply: “And Moishe the Beadle…spoke to me for hours on end about the Kabbalah’s revelations and its mysteries. Thus began my initiation” (5). Wiesel devoted most of his time each day to spirituality and learning, and thus faith became important to how he lived his life. His faith in God and his religion was strong enough for him that he studied the mystical and complex teachings of the Kabbalah and the Zohar. Wiesel’s early focus on faith greatly influences his point of view later in his life, especially as he begins to face many struggles.

Throughout the story Wiesel gradually loses his faith after he and his family are taken away by the Nazis, and encounter hardships that cause them to question God. Wiesel witnessed many horrific things in the concentration camps that caused him anger towards God and confusion: “For God’s sake, where is God?...Where He is? This is where - hanging here from this gallows” (65). Wiesel questions God more and more as his challenges increase. Wiesel sees so many people dying and no help from God, causing losses in his faith. He becomes angry towards God because he believes God should be doing more to save them.

Eventually Wiesel completely loses his faith and rebels toward God because he believed God was being silent: “I no longer accepted God’s silence…a symbol of rebellion, of protest against Him…Deep inside me, I felt a great void opening” (69). Wiesel experienced so much death and destruction and saw God do nothing. He rebelled against God because he no longer had faith in Him. Wiesel’s whole soul became empty in faith like a great void.