Chapter Outlines

Ch. 5

* The prisoners gather to celebrate the new year with the Jewish holiday Rosh Hashanah. They pray and praise God.
* Eliezer “Elie” cannot praise God- he is angry and feels like God has abandoned him and the Jewish people.
* Elie bonds with his father more closely, who understands the struggle Elie is having with his faith.
* Elie does not fast during Yom Kippur, a traditional fast day in the Jewish religion.
* It is announced that there will be another selection and everyone is very nervous. Elie is worried that his father will not pass but after the selection no one is called out or taken away.
* Days later, those who were selected are ordered to stay in the camp. Elie finds out that his father did not pass the selection and must leave him as he goes out of the camp to work.
* Elie struggles with the idea that he will never see his father again, but his friends help to encourage him until he returns to camp.
* Elie’s father is still alive when he comes back- he passed the second selection and was not killed.
* During winter, Elie’s foot swells and he must undergo surgery. While he is still in the infirmary, a rumor starts that the Russian army is approaching. The Germans evacuate most of the camp. Elie decides to leave the infirmary so that he can stay with his father and be evacuated with him.
* The prisoners begin evacuation at night during a great deal of snowfall.

Ch.6

* The prisoners must run as fast as they can in the snow wherever the Germans lead them. Those who fall behind are shot immediately.
* Elie forces himself to run and stay with his father.
* The prisoners stop in a deserted village. Elie and his father find some shelter in an abandoned house. They help one another stay awake because falling asleep in the cold could mean never waking up.
* Elie speaks with a rabbi who asks if he has seen his son. Elie remembers after the rabbi leaves that the son purposefully ran ahead and lost touch with the rabbi. Elie prays he will never do what the rabbi’s son has done.
* After more running, the prisoners arrive at the Gleiwitz camp and rush into barracks.
* Elie becomes trapped under piles of men but pulls himself out.
* He sees his friend Juliek, the violin player. Juliek plays Beethoven on his violin during the night and is dead when Elie wakes up.
* There is another selection. Elie’s father is chosen, but Elie runs after him. This causes confusion and the two are able to sneak back to the passing side of the selection.
* The remaining prisoners, including Elie and his father, are loaded onto cattle cars.

CH.7

* The prisoners travel in cattle cars for ten days and nights with no food or water. During this time the car stops and the men throw out the dead. Elie’s father is mistaken for dead and Elie saves him by slapping him until he wakes up.
* In a German town, the regular citizens throw bread into the car to watch the prisoners fight over it. Elie does not try to grab any bread but those who do are caught in a deadly fight, pitting even fathers and sons against one another.
* Someone tries to strangle Elie in his sleep, but a family friend Meir Katz saves him. Meir loses hope and does not survive to the end of the journey.

Ch.8

* The trip has made Elie’s father even weaker. He also seems to have lost his will to live.
* Several days later, an air raid causes a panic in the camp. Instead of Elie staying close to his father, he runs into barracks with everyone else and forgets about his dad. He sleeps in the barracks and begins to look for his father in the morning.
* The doctors say that they can do nothing for Elie’s father.
* As Elie’s father grows weaker, his bunk mates begin to mistreat him but there is nothing Elie can do to stop it.
* Some people advise Elie not to continue to care for his father, but to only look out for himself. Elie feels guilty because he thinks about the advice but he continues to bring food and care for his father.
* Elie’s father cries out for him during the roll call. The guard tells him to stop and he doesn’t so the guard begins to beat him. Elie does not go to his father as he cries. After the guard leaves, Elie spends a long time with his father then goes to bed.
* The next morning, Elie’s father is gone and another prisoner lays in his bed. Elie cannot cry for his father, he has no more tears.

CH.9

* After his father’s death, Elie is transferred into a children’s block and only thinks of eating.
* The armed resistance decides at the last moment to attack as the Germans prepare to liquidate the camp. The Germans fled and the resistance forces took over. American tanks appeared later that afternoon.
* Everyone’s first thought was to eat.
* Elie got sick and was transferred to a hospital.
* After getting a little better, Elie looks at himself in the mirror for the first time and sees his emaciated body.