1. “Eight words spoken quietly, indifferently, without emotion. Eight short, simple words.” What painful, life-changing meaning do these words have for Wiesel?
2. How are Wiesel and his father “greeted” by some of the prisoners at Birkenau?
3. Some of the young men want to revolt. Why don’t they?
4. What infamous person is directing the men to the left and to the right?
5. Describe why the men begin weeping and praying. Does Wiesel join in? Why or why not?
6. “Never shall I forget that night, the first night in camp, which has turned my life into one long night, seven times cursed and seven times sealed.” Why might this be one of the most significant passages in the book?
7. For what job were the strong, sturdy men selected that first day?
8. Describe the “process” that Wiesel and the other new arrivals go through that first night and day.
9. Why does Wiesel thank God for mud?
10. Who is Wiesel referring to when he speaks of the “Angel of Death” and what “choice” does this man give the prisoners?
11. Why does the gypsy strike Wiesel’s father and how does Wiesel react when this happens?
12. How do the prisoners get from Birkenau to Auschwitz and what are their first impressions of this new camp?
13. What is Wiesel referring to when he writes, “The first human words.”
14. What is Wiesel’s number and where does he “wear” it?
15. What lie does Wiesel tell Mr. Stein and why?
16. According to Wiesel’s father, what has happened to Wiesel’s mother and little sister?
17. How long are Wiesel and his father in Auschwitz and what do they do there?
18. Describe the move to Buna.