



## Elie Wiesel

*"The opposite of love is not hate, it's indifference. The opposite of art is not ugliness, it's indifference. The opposite of faith is not heresy, it's indifference. And the opposite of life is not death, it's indifference."*

Elie Wiesel (1928-2016) is regarded as one of the most important writers of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Born to a Jewish family in Romania, his world was turned upside down when the Nazis came for him and his family. In 1944, they were deported to the horrors of the concentration camp Auschwitz. His family was killed, but he barely survived, appearing in a famous picture taken when the camp was liberated. After the war, he advanced his education and became an author. In 1958, he published *Night*, a gripping portrait of life in a concentration camp. This and other works wrestled with the difficulties of what the Holocaust shows about human nature. After achieving literary fame, he became an outspoken advocate for never allowing the lessons of the Holocaust to be forgotten. He also campaigned against contemporary human rights abuses all over the world. In 1978, he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize as "one of the most important spiritual leaders and guides in an age when violence, repression, and racism continue to characterize the world." He was instrumental in the creation of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, and he also was honored with the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1992. While the Holocaust caused Wiesel a crisis of belief, he eventually reaffirmed his Jewish faith with a public profession in a newspaper article. He passed away at the age of 87.

Elie Wiesel is an important humanitarian whose writings have inspired millions to fight for justice and truth in the world, and we remember his life and work for others.