Night, Chapter 4

Vocabulary:
Himmler: one of the highest ranking Nazis, who organized the genocide of the Jews
Oberkapo: the word for a chief kapo who is a prisoner in charge of the other kapos
Gallows: a structure used for hanging people
Rosh Hashanah: The Jewish New Year. [The Jewish calendar pre-dates the Christian calendar and the new year according to the Jewish calendar falls in September.]
Yom Kippur: The Day of Atonement. Jews traditionally fast from sundown to sundown to honor this solemn holiday. Jews are meant to contemplate their lives, atone for their sins, and reflect on this holy day.
Atonement: To try to make up for sins.
Fast: To go without food, usually for religious reasons on a holy day.
Notorious: Famous, but for bad things.
Kaddish: A Jewish prayer for the dead.
Dysentery: a disease that causes abdominal swelling and then death if untreated
Invalid: a sick person
Fortnight: two weeks (fourteen nights)
Red Army: the communist army of Russia, the enemy of the Germans
Morphine: a drug that takes away pain
Infirmary: a small hospital

1. Eliezer is forced to give up his shoes. What else do other prisoners and guards want to remove from him?

2. Eliezer becomes friendly with some other Jews including Juliek from Poland. What is Juliek’s career?

3. Why did the French girl pretend to be Aryan and speak no German?

4. Dehumanized means to become less than a human being. Eliezer gives an example of how he has become dehumanized and writes, “That is what concentration camp life had made of me.” What had he done that makes him feel bad about himself?

5. Why does Idek the Kapo, who has a furious temper, whip Eliezer 25 times?

6. The Jews are glad when their camp is being bombed during an air raid. Why?

7. The Jews must watch the execution (called a ceremony) of a prisoner who tired to steal some soup. Juliek says, “Do you think the ceremony’ll be over soon? I’m hungry.” Later Eliezer says, “I remember I found the soup excellent that evening.” Explain what these statements tell us about Juliek and Eliezer. [Hint: use the word dehumanized in your explanation.]

8. Eliezer and the other prisoners witness another execution of a pipel (young boy) involved in sabotage against the SS. That night, Wiesel writes, “The soup tasted of corpses.” Explain what he means or how he feels by this statement.