

## SUMMARY OF INTERVIEW WITH REGINA SPIEGEL (HEP)

**12:03** It is important for history to understand Holocaust, and it is important for theology and philosophy - understanding God. And for psychology - understanding the mindset of the Nazis.

6,000,000 jews were killed and 1,500,000 children. what was the motivation? Maybe fear that people would do different than what they were told to do. Also indifference. You get used to awful action after a while .

**12:07** World was bitter about jews, and cruelty developed.

Regina was born in Poland. She was 13 years old in September 1939 when the Germans marched into Poland.

She had a mother, a father, 3 sisters, 2 brothers , and she is the only survivor. Her childhood was good. She had school, friends, and family. This ended when the Germans came in.

**12:11** She grew up fast . Food was important, and they were at the mercy of the Germans. They could do whatever they wanted. They were constantly vulnerable to those in control. Her family had a large apartment and they had to move to a small apartment. . All their valuables were given up. Jewelry, Furs.

**12:17** There were no jobs for her father, and she could not go to school because she was Jewish. Older people tried to teach kids to read and write. They were scavengers for food - hungry cold, and overcrowded. The ghetto was made Germans in 1940.

**12:23** The Germans sectioned a part of the city with barbed wire for jews. If you refused to move, you were shot. It smelled of death, there was little food , and it was overcrowded. They hoped the outside world would help but there was no help from others. The Germans had a free hand. The ghetto was unbearable. They talked within the family about trying to get out. She didn't look Jewish and she was young. She bribed the guard and left the ghetto.

**12:26** Her sister lived in another village 30 kilometers from her. There was a large munitions factory, which was good survival. She took the train to her sisters house . There was a small community with 30 Jewish families. They brought other jews into the community. Starvation, death, and no escape caught up with you.

**12:28** In the village the Germans formed a labor camp where they worked in the factory. Her sisters baby boy was given to a Polish family because no small children were allowed in the labor camp. Later the children were allowed to come into the camps. They worked in the camp during the day and went to the ghetto at night. It was hard work.

**12:30** She was unloading trains at age fifteen. They kept working, couldn't go home. All the people in the ghetto were loaded onto cattle cars . They were told they were going to a settlement, but they were really going to Treblinka - Gas chambers. Her family went to the camp with the ghetto. Others from her families village came [????????????????????] to the village[?].

Why didn't people fight back? Why did they go to the slaughter? They would have died anyway. It was hard to stay alive, and they had to in order to tell others about it later. The process was done systematically by Hitler, no one spoke up.

**12:34** Why was Auschwitz and Treblinka not bombed? In 1942 the couple who had taken her sisters baby turned them in to the Gestapo. After the war Regina went to Poland and asked the woman who turned them in why she did it. She said she was scared because only Jewish children were circumcised, and if she were caught harboring a Jewish child she would be taken to Auschwitz. Regina's sister was taken out and never heard from again. She later saw a man who had seen her sister trying to escape from the trains. She was shot.

**12:40** The Germans decided to close her camp and send her away. She was taken to Auschwitz. Half of the people on the transport died before they got there. They tried to help each other on the train. Once a day they were given a little bit of water. They realized that they were going to die.

Auschwitz was not a factory. There were barracks surrounded by barbed wire, and there were chimney stacks. She was stripped naked and given a tattoo on her arm. She thought that maybe she would be working, because if they were going to kill her right away they would not bother putting a tattoo on her arm. She was the first to the showers. They came out alive, but without hair.

Extermination was the main purpose of the camp, not labor. Four million people were gassed at Birkinau - 3.5 million jews. If she had been there one more week she would have been dead. They slept on boards and straw, packed in like sardines.

**12:48** They kept close for warmth. She went back in 1976 to "validify" the experience. How could it happen? She still can't believe it and still sees people with haunted faces.

She was naked, and people came in to pick people for work. She was picked and went to work in a munitions factory at Bergen-Belsen. She was taken from there when the Germans knew that the war was not going well in the east or in the west. They knew they had to get rid of the workers. They were put on trains but they did not go far. They had to stop for repair.

On April 20, 1945 shew had her birthday on a train. The sky was black with bombers. They got bombed and 1/3 of the people were killed.

When the train was hit a lot of people fell into the whole. She was thought to be dead, but she had just passed out. She had some shrapnel in her head.

**12:54** Soon the witnesses will be dead, so the educated must be the witnesses. They must tell others.

If it was not for the Holocaust, Israel would not be what it is today, but if there had been an Israel, maybe there would have been no Holocaust.

Were jews and germans friends. They got along well , but they turned on each other.

In the village where she and her mother and father lived together, a man had said not to go to the camps because they were burning people. They thought he was crazy.

**1:02** When she got to Auschwitz she realized that they really were burning people. She knows her sister and nephew were killed. She went back to Poland because she thought her family was alive.

**Did the depression affect Germany?**

Yes. People were out of work . Hitler worked on the war machine. The primitive Polish army did not have a chance. They declared war o Germany, but they did not have any sophisticated equipment.

Goodbye.