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Summary

Two interviews:

- 1. Fred Silberstein with Rabbi Abraham Klausner**
- 2. Fred Silberstein with sister Hansi**

Interview 1: Fred Silberstein & Rabbi Abraham Klausner – At Auschwitz-Buna Fred selected by Mengele age 15 (earlier had been told to “lie that he was older”); left arm branded with number, warned that he would be “sent to chimneys” if he did not behave, 2 years of verbal abuse, no toothbrush/bath, missing family; October 1944 attempted suicide, having lost faith in God though in surviving, heard small voice inside that encouraged; end of war April 1945, 43 friends held funeral for Fred after hearing false rumor that he had been killed; Rabbi Abraham Klausner enters interview (American rabbi-participated in American liberation of Dachau), his first days devoted to burying the dead; Fred discusses Auschwitz liberation, accidentally bombed by America, seeing thousands of bodies; Fred’s struggle to accept that he was truly liberated; Rabbi Klausner after entering Dachau grappled to find first words to speak to survivors, most wanting to be reconnected with family; Fred returns to discussing selection process under Mengele, having to stand naked, living in constant terror; slave labor picking up hundreds of body every day to be sent to crematorium, finding strength in joining the American forces, participating in Nuremberg trials, finding out that his sister had survived-she had moved to New Zealand, learning parents were killed at Auschwitz; Fred’s fears visiting Germany; Rabbi had also been falsely reported as killed at Dachau, he reading his own name on a death list; Fred’s inability to speak of the Holocaust to his children.

Interview 2 discussion re: an anniversary of liberation:

Fred’s sister was arrested earlier to Fred’s arrest in Berlin; more details of Fred’s arrival to Auschwitz, tattoo 106792, experimented on by Mengele, incisions made on Fred’s groin without anesthesia; suicide attempt; 1945 march to Nordhausen, Fred is so sick, loses hearing, unable to move, assaulted, leaving Fred permanently unable to put hands over head; witnessing cannibalism; Fred with sister Hansi, her tattoo 37275 from Auschwitz women’s camp; Red Cross assists Hansi’s reunification with brother Fred; Fred rebuilding life in New Zealand; post-trauma endured; returning to Germany as a speaker at Berlin Holocaust Memorial unveiling - anger finding his name on memorial as having been killed.