

1
00:00:00,000 --> 00:01:01,950

2
00:01:01,950 --> 00:01:03,600
--listen to, by the way.

3
00:01:03,600 --> 00:01:04,620
You are.

4
00:01:04,620 --> 00:01:07,110
You're very articulate.

5
00:01:07,110 --> 00:01:07,930
You mean I talk?

6
00:01:07,930 --> 00:01:10,060
I've thought about all
this for a long time.

7
00:01:10,060 --> 00:01:12,270
No, you speak well.

8
00:01:12,270 --> 00:01:14,560
We're continuing now.

9
00:01:14,560 --> 00:01:15,060
Hi.

10
00:01:15,060 --> 00:01:17,640
One thing I did want
to ask you, and I

11
00:01:17,640 --> 00:01:20,340
don't know if we got
it for the record also.

12
00:01:20,340 --> 00:01:21,990
I know we heard
your mother's name,

13

00:01:21,990 --> 00:01:26,160
but did we hear her first
name, your parents' both names,

14
00:01:26,160 --> 00:01:28,650
and the years they were born?

15
00:01:28,650 --> 00:01:31,990
My father was Kurt
Gerson Oppenheimer,

16
00:01:31,990 --> 00:01:36,670
and he was born in 1896 in the
same town that I talked about.

17
00:01:36,670 --> 00:01:44,580
My mother was Gerta Gill Jonas.

18
00:01:44,580 --> 00:01:47,260
What was interesting about
them is that they had--

19
00:01:47,260 --> 00:01:50,730

20
00:01:50,730 --> 00:01:53,477
I have had three
grandparents by the name

21
00:01:53,477 --> 00:01:55,810
of Oppenheimer, none of whom
were related to each other.

22
00:01:55,810 --> 00:01:59,460
In other words, my grandfather
married on my father's side

23
00:01:59,460 --> 00:02:00,390
an Oppenheimer.

24
00:02:00,390 --> 00:02:04,350
And my maternal
grandfather Jonas

25

00:02:04,350 --> 00:02:07,650
married an Oppenheimer, so there
were a lot of Oppenheimers.

26

00:02:07,650 --> 00:02:10,949
And you know the history
of the name Oppenheimer,

27

00:02:10,949 --> 00:02:13,830
and I have that history,
by some coincidence

28

00:02:13,830 --> 00:02:15,480
during all these
terrible happenings

29

00:02:15,480 --> 00:02:18,750
during the centuries, there
was a duke or a bishop that

30

00:02:18,750 --> 00:02:23,130
lived in Oppenheim who was kind
to the Jews, so a lot of Jews

31

00:02:23,130 --> 00:02:26,500
were happy to take on that name.

32

00:02:26,500 --> 00:02:29,850
It's one of those
funny little things.

33

00:02:29,850 --> 00:02:32,000
It's a nice town, by
the way, Oppenheim.

34

00:02:32,000 --> 00:02:35,680

35

00:02:35,680 --> 00:02:40,000
You talked about one other
Jewish family in town.

36

00:02:40,000 --> 00:02:42,360

Do you know what
happened to them?

37

00:02:42,360 --> 00:02:47,880

The young ones came
to the United States.

38

00:02:47,880 --> 00:02:53,580

The grandfather was
murdered, and that was it.

39

00:02:53,580 --> 00:02:57,840

And in the adjoining town
where I went to Sunday school,

40

00:02:57,840 --> 00:03:01,440

I actually met one
family in Israel once.

41

00:03:01,440 --> 00:03:05,550

And I can't tell you what
happened to the other ones.

42

00:03:05,550 --> 00:03:09,720

Let me say to you that a PhD
thesis has just been written

43

00:03:09,720 --> 00:03:11,070

about my part of Germany.

44

00:03:11,070 --> 00:03:15,630

And I was interviewed by this
person Dieter Hoffman, who

45

00:03:15,630 --> 00:03:18,270

has written the
history of the Jews

46

00:03:18,270 --> 00:03:21,330

in the small towns of my region.

47

00:03:21,330 --> 00:03:27,610

That's not only a history since
Nazi times but from before,

48

00:03:27,610 --> 00:03:29,280

what happened before.

49

00:03:29,280 --> 00:03:33,660

It is the most detailed
history of what's happened.

50

00:03:33,660 --> 00:03:39,510

This is a young man, who's about
31, who for some blessed reason

51

00:03:39,510 --> 00:03:43,080

has devoted his whole
existence to this question.

52

00:03:43,080 --> 00:03:48,240

And he got a PhD in history
from the university in Cologne,

53

00:03:48,240 --> 00:03:49,620

and he came to interview me.

54

00:03:49,620 --> 00:03:52,200

And I've read his
master's thesis,

55

00:03:52,200 --> 00:03:55,020

but I haven't read the
PhD thesis, which is now

56

00:03:55,020 --> 00:03:56,770

being published in a book.

57

00:03:56,770 --> 00:03:58,800

For example, the butcher
in a neighboring town.

58

00:03:58,800 --> 00:04:00,758

They walked in, and they

took one of the knives

59

00:04:00,758 --> 00:04:04,170
and cut off his head.

60

00:04:04,170 --> 00:04:07,590
In the small towns,
it's more illuminated

61

00:04:07,590 --> 00:04:13,080
what neighbors could do to
neighbors instead of somebody

62

00:04:13,080 --> 00:04:19,560
from the outside coming in once
you're given the OK to do it.

63

00:04:19,560 --> 00:04:23,970
And of course, we know there are
some people who didn't do that,

64

00:04:23,970 --> 00:04:25,740
too.

65

00:04:25,740 --> 00:04:28,573
Coming back, you
came to this country.

66

00:04:28,573 --> 00:04:29,490
You lived in San Jose.

67

00:04:29,490 --> 00:04:33,150
You went up to Santa Rosa,
went to Santa Rosa High School.

68

00:04:33,150 --> 00:04:35,320
What did you do
after high school?

69

00:04:35,320 --> 00:04:37,982
Well, I actually went to
Santa Rosa Junior College

70

00:04:37,982 --> 00:04:38,940
because it was cheaper.

71

00:04:38,940 --> 00:04:40,530
I could live at home.

72

00:04:40,530 --> 00:04:44,220
And then I finished two
years in a year and a half,

73

00:04:44,220 --> 00:04:45,870
and then I came to Berkeley.

74

00:04:45,870 --> 00:04:48,300
And you graduated with
what major and what

75

00:04:48,300 --> 00:04:50,760
did you do after that?

76

00:04:50,760 --> 00:04:56,760
I got a major in social work
and was married immediately

77

00:04:56,760 --> 00:04:59,650
after I got my degree.

78

00:04:59,650 --> 00:05:01,230
And then two years
later, went back

79

00:05:01,230 --> 00:05:05,280
and got a master's at UC too.

80

00:05:05,280 --> 00:05:06,360
What did I do--

81

00:05:06,360 --> 00:05:08,335
Did you have any [INAUDIBLE]

82

00:05:08,335 --> 00:05:10,050

Yeah.

83

00:05:10,050 --> 00:05:12,690

Well, then I had children.

84

00:05:12,690 --> 00:05:17,070

And when I went back to work, I
worked at [INAUDIBLE] Hospital

85

00:05:17,070 --> 00:05:19,620

at the UC campus in
the psychiatric clinic.

86

00:05:19,620 --> 00:05:21,420

And then I went into
private practice,

87

00:05:21,420 --> 00:05:24,240

so that was my
professional work.

88

00:05:24,240 --> 00:05:27,090

But I've done a great
variety of voluntary things

89

00:05:27,090 --> 00:05:31,050

because it can be done
with more initiative.

90

00:05:31,050 --> 00:05:31,840

I admire that.

91

00:05:31,840 --> 00:05:32,340

Yeah.

92

00:05:32,340 --> 00:05:34,590

Is there anything
else that you can

93

00:05:34,590 --> 00:05:37,410

think of that you would
like to have us record

94

00:05:37,410 --> 00:05:41,340
or any experience or any thought
that perhaps Evelyn or I have

95

00:05:41,340 --> 00:05:43,080
not asked you?

96

00:05:43,080 --> 00:05:46,200
Well, it's just this thing
that is so important to me,

97

00:05:46,200 --> 00:05:50,250
that if you are an
immigrant from this kind

98

00:05:50,250 --> 00:05:57,630
of a political situation,
you come to this country,

99

00:05:57,630 --> 00:06:02,160
and for all practical
purposes, as soon as possible,

100

00:06:02,160 --> 00:06:05,160
you pretend that nothing
has happened in terms

101

00:06:05,160 --> 00:06:07,620
of your appearance
and what you do

102

00:06:07,620 --> 00:06:10,500
and how you strive and struggle
and how you get married again

103

00:06:10,500 --> 00:06:11,580
and have children.

104

00:06:11,580 --> 00:06:16,110
By the way, I was never
going to have any children

105

00:06:16,110 --> 00:06:20,010
because I didn't want anybody
to experience this anymore.

106
00:06:20,010 --> 00:06:24,250
And we didn't have any for
five years of my marriage.

107
00:06:24,250 --> 00:06:29,250
I mean, I had to go to it
pretty slowly because I just

108
00:06:29,250 --> 00:06:33,700
didn't want this to
happen to anybody anymore.

109
00:06:33,700 --> 00:06:37,320
It was just too
hard a way to exist.

110
00:06:37,320 --> 00:06:39,360
And what was your question?

111
00:06:39,360 --> 00:06:40,750
What did you say?

112
00:06:40,750 --> 00:06:44,040
What I wanted to say about
that is, so you do all this.

113
00:06:44,040 --> 00:06:45,360
You go to university.

114
00:06:45,360 --> 00:06:46,860
You prepare for
some kind of career.

115
00:06:46,860 --> 00:06:48,600
You get married.

116
00:06:48,600 --> 00:06:53,430
But underneath, you
know that your existence

117
00:06:53,430 --> 00:06:58,170
has been shockingly different
from the way in which you

118
00:06:58,170 --> 00:07:00,690
on the outside lead
your everyday life.

119
00:07:00,690 --> 00:07:05,100
It's been shockingly and
terribly different to the point

120
00:07:05,100 --> 00:07:09,210
that, at this particular moment,
I would think that all of us

121
00:07:09,210 --> 00:07:10,720
probably should have--

122
00:07:10,720 --> 00:07:13,410
if we hadn't to wear
gold stars, we probably

123
00:07:13,410 --> 00:07:16,290
should have worn them
for the rest of our lives

124
00:07:16,290 --> 00:07:20,290
as a reminder of
what can happen.

125
00:07:20,290 --> 00:07:22,740
It's not just what
can happen to Jews.

126
00:07:22,740 --> 00:07:25,500
It's what people
do to each other.

127
00:07:25,500 --> 00:07:27,667
And maybe as far as the
existence of the universe

128
00:07:27,667 --> 00:07:30,000
is concerned, it's not important
what happens to people,

129
00:07:30,000 --> 00:07:31,440
but I happen to be a people.

130
00:07:31,440 --> 00:07:31,950
Excuse me.

131
00:07:31,950 --> 00:07:35,250

132
00:07:35,250 --> 00:07:40,770
I think out of our experience
should come much more.

133
00:07:40,770 --> 00:07:43,680

134
00:07:43,680 --> 00:07:53,950
Look, Jesus says I
died for your sins.

135
00:07:53,950 --> 00:07:56,320
My interpretation of
that has always been--

136
00:07:56,320 --> 00:07:59,561

137
00:07:59,561 --> 00:08:01,446
Can I get you a little water?

138
00:08:01,446 --> 00:08:02,180
Wait a minute.

139
00:08:02,180 --> 00:08:03,680
I think I got a
tickle in my throat.

140

00:08:03,680 --> 00:08:07,100

Maybe you ought to cut that
out for one minute, please.

141

00:08:07,100 --> 00:08:08,585

What he meant-- what Jesus--

142

00:08:08,585 --> 00:08:11,300

Take just a second
for it to start.

143

00:08:11,300 --> 00:08:11,800

OK.

144

00:08:11,800 --> 00:08:13,210

I'm sorry.

145

00:08:13,210 --> 00:08:16,490

The way I understand what Jesus
said that I died for your sins

146

00:08:16,490 --> 00:08:21,680

is that people are just
so unconscious for what

147

00:08:21,680 --> 00:08:25,670

horrible things they can do by
not paying attention and taking

148

00:08:25,670 --> 00:08:27,200

care of each other.

149

00:08:27,200 --> 00:08:31,430

And I figured that my
grandfather and everybody else

150

00:08:31,430 --> 00:08:35,929

died to make us
pay attention what

151

00:08:35,929 --> 00:08:40,010

can happen in a so-called

cultured country,

152

00:08:40,010 --> 00:08:43,700

in a country that has a
system of rights and wrongs,

153

00:08:43,700 --> 00:08:47,120

and that it can happen anywhere.

154

00:08:47,120 --> 00:08:51,350

And I don't know how you go
about learning that lesson.

155

00:08:51,350 --> 00:08:53,510

I mean, it still is
a big question to me.

156

00:08:53,510 --> 00:08:58,020

But I don't think it's just
a Jewish question at all.

157

00:08:58,020 --> 00:09:00,530

I think it's a
people-to-people question.

158

00:09:00,530 --> 00:09:02,545

I think it's a
people-to-earth question.

159

00:09:02,545 --> 00:09:03,920

It's a people-to-animal
question.

160

00:09:03,920 --> 00:09:07,280

161

00:09:07,280 --> 00:09:11,690

It's just somehow there has
to be some kind of reformation

162

00:09:11,690 --> 00:09:15,055

of how we deal with life.

163

00:09:15,055 --> 00:09:16,680

But for me, I'm going
to turn this back

164

00:09:16,680 --> 00:09:17,640

to Evelyn in a minute.

165

00:09:17,640 --> 00:09:19,473

But for me, I'd like
to thank you very much.

166

00:09:19,473 --> 00:09:21,660

Not only have you given
us a picture of your life,

167

00:09:21,660 --> 00:09:28,710

but I think you've given us deep
insights to how this problem is

168

00:09:28,710 --> 00:09:32,400

part of a larger
problem, and I admire you

169

00:09:32,400 --> 00:09:36,630

for carrying your passion.

170

00:09:36,630 --> 00:09:38,700

It's not so comfortable
at times, you know.

171

00:09:38,700 --> 00:09:41,985

But I appreciate coming, and
if it's of any use to anybody

172

00:09:41,985 --> 00:09:46,800

at any time, I'm glad that I've
done it, and I appreciate it.

173

00:09:46,800 --> 00:09:47,985

I also want to thank you.

174

00:09:47,985 --> 00:09:48,485

Thank you.

175

00:09:48,485 --> 00:09:49,320

Thank you very much.

176

00:09:49,320 --> 00:09:53,120

It was most illuminating,
and I thank you.

177

00:09:53,120 --> 00:09:55,810

You've told a remarkable story.

178

00:09:55,810 --> 00:09:56,350

Thank you.

179

00:09:56,350 --> 00:09:57,220

Thank you.

180

00:09:57,220 --> 00:09:59,340

It's really a very
ordinary story.

181

00:09:59,340 --> 00:10:01,690

That's the problem of it.

182

00:10:01,690 --> 00:10:03,315

There is no ordinary story.

183

00:10:03,315 --> 00:10:04,440

There is no ordinary story.

184

00:10:04,440 --> 00:10:07,910

You're very remarkable,
you know, your insight.

185

00:10:07,910 --> 00:11:08,000