Thesis: Keeping hope alive during time spent within the camp was a constant struggle.

Evidence:

"Father" I said "if that is true, then I don't want to wait, I'll run into the electrified barbed wire it would be easier then a slow death in flames. Pg.33

Analysis:

Obviously, very little hope remains in Elie’s mind at this point. He’s thinking about committing suicide. His thoughts are a demonstration, however, of how difficult it is to be hopeful in this scenario—the camps. Clearly, someone who is about to commit suicide is struggling with any hope at all. Yet, after this event, Elie is actually saved from the flames, and he and his father live on.

Thesis: For many in the camps, all that kept them alive was the strength received by having a friend or relative to suffer with.

Evidence:

There followed terrible days. We received more blows than food. The work was crushing. And three days after he left, we forgot to say Kaddish.

Analysis:

Even with the abuse that the prisoners are receiving at this point, the “blows” and the lack of food, Elie is still managing to avoid the fate of the young man who decided to end his own life. One of the only matters separating the two—the young man who took his own life and Elie—at this point is the fact that Elie still has his father to rely on, whereas Drumer has been walking around, aloof from the rest of the prisoners.

Thesis: Keeping hope alive during time spent within the camp was a constant struggle.

Evidence:

Here take my knife, I won't need it anymore you may find it useful. Also take my spoon. Don’t sell it. Quickly! Go ahead take what I am giving you

Analysis:

At this point in the story, it’s clear that Elie’s father has found himself in a situation where he thinks he is about to lose his life. Faced with this, he is giving his son, Elie, his “inheritance,” the spoon and knife. Clearly, this shows that his father has lost hope that he is going to live. Even with this lost hope, his father, though, still clings to the small chance of survival through the next selection, but not enough to keep his spoon and knife to himself.