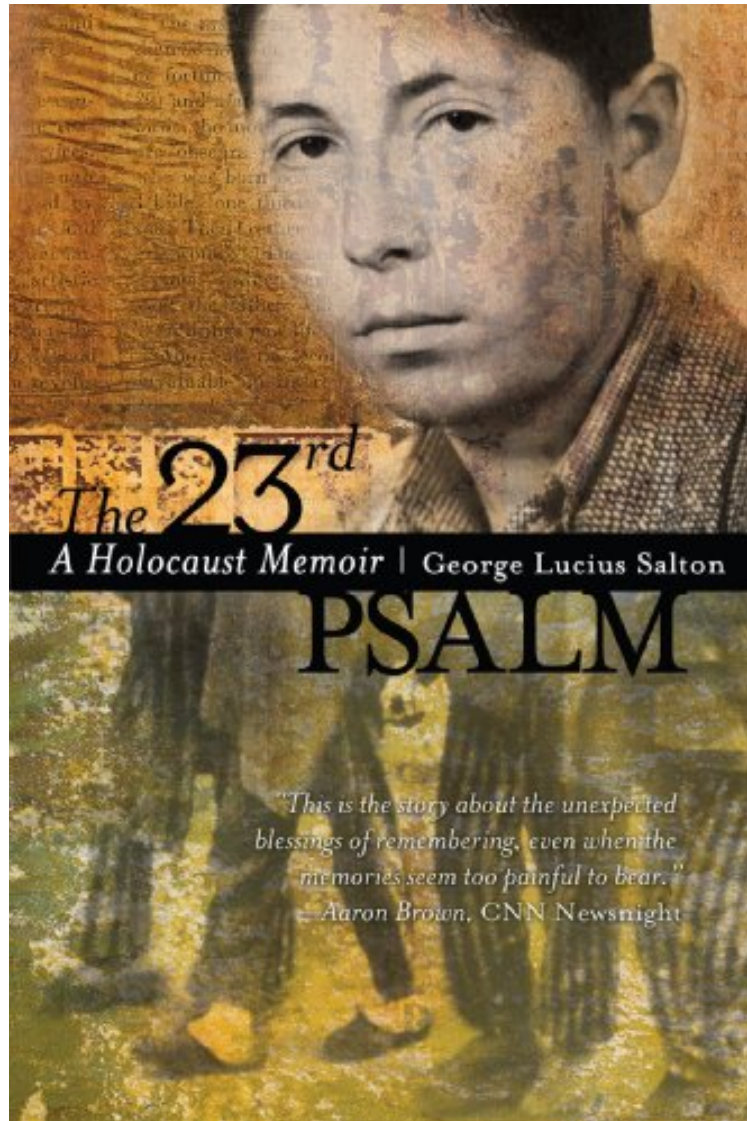


The 23rd Psalm: A Holocaust Memoir

George Lucius Salton

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George Lucius Salton : The 23rd Psalm: A Holocaust Memoir before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The 23rd Psalm: A Holocaust Memoir:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. A story you won't put down until the last page By Janet Prevost I have an entire bookshelf of books written by Holocaust survivors and this is by far one of the best. Well written and amazingly detailed. The author was clear and raw about his experiences. I'm so thankful that him and so many others decided to write their experiences in a book. I can't imagine how hard it would be to think about those horrible and

hellish things that happened to him and his family and I'm grateful he was able to convey it so emotionally in his book. Lucek was a survivor of the death camps who wanted to give up but decided not to and with that and the Grace of God, he went on to great things after the war. He details his life from the very beginning of the rumblings of that awful time period and is able to convey the very special relationships he had with his mother, father, and brother. He was the only survivor of his immediate family and went to America sometime after the war had ended. He is a man to be admired as he apparently let his survivor instinct lead him to a successful life and career.

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Deeply moving, honest and brave

By Kelly Hock

The 23rd Psalm is so moving and emotional, so well-written and engrossing that when I reached the end I felt like the beginning of the book, which I started only a few days ago, is years and miles away. This is a very detailed and personal autobiography of George Salton (Then Lucjan Salzman), an eleven-year old boy living in Tyczyn Poland, when the Germans invade Poland in September 1939. My heart wept as I read about the gradual descent of his family, who were educated and well-respected, into poverty and illness. They struggled against the overwhelming tide of German rule, but finally are forced from their home and into the overcrowded, violent and starving Rzeszow Ghetto. His parents are eventually forced to leave the ghetto with the rest of the residents who were deemed not to be able workers, and George and his brother are forced to work in a nearby factory. George pleaded to go with his parents, who were destined for the Belzec death camp. They insisted that he stay with his brother, thus saving his life.

The rawness of George's emotions and his vulnerability help the reader to understand the depth of his pain. I'll never really know just how traumatic his journey was; I simply can't imagine the level of sadness he must have felt. But I'm grateful for his bravery in so honestly and beautifully describing it. When George is forced to leave that factory, he also leaves his brother, the last shred of the family he had. He is sent to a shockingly large number of labor and concentration camps in Poland, Germany and France. The expertise he acquires during his imprisonment exploited to build weapons in an underground complex in France. Finally, ill and starving, he is liberated by the Americans in 1945. George eventually reunited with an aunt and uncle in America and began to rebuild his life. Decades later, with the support and encouragement of his family, he began sharing his story. He wrote his memoir and shares his story with live audiences.

While heartbreaking, Mr. Salton's story is also inspirational. It's a story of an intelligent, creative, and strong young man who used his resourcefulness to survive and never lost his humanity. After reading other Holocaust memoirs of survivors from Poland I can feel George's sincerity and honesty, and rather than clashing, this book helps to paint a richer and more detailed picture of life in Poland before, during, and after the war.

I decided to purchase this book after reading the prologue preview, which describes the trip that George and his family took back to Tyczyn in 1998. I was moved and drawn into the story when he so bravely describes his emotions on seeing his childhood home and the way he's treated by the current residents of the town. The book gripped me from the beginning and never let go.

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Riveting and gut-wrenching memoir of young polish survivor of multiple KZs

By Customer

This book is worth reading even if you think you know what happened to the Jews in the concentration camps in Poland and in the slave labor camps in Germany. The book is written by someone whose teenage years and family were lost to the Nazi system of forced labor, sadism and murder. His account is harrowing.

The amount of courage it took for the author and his family to dredge up these detailed memories - names of guards, names of prisoners, dates, cities, quotations - and the violence and humiliation he suffered - there is no doubt that he became a Mensch in spite of those who treated him as less than a dog.

For people researching Shoah, this book documents survival from the Polish Jewish prisoner's point of view, starting from the moment Germany invaded Poland - during the "selection" process, in multiple forced labor camps, during forced marches and during the boxcar transports. It documents the reactions of non-Jewish citizens in Poland, Germany and France to the public humiliation and (rare) escape attempts of the prisoners. It documents the lies that were told in order to trick the prisoners into joining transports to Belzac, and how slowly rumors of the truth reached the surviving family members. It documents the progression of laws that harmed Jews. It documents a wide range of slave labor, torture and punishment - from first-hand experience and from what he witnessed happening to other prisoners. It documents the few moments when someone risked their own safety to provide compassion or a scrap of food or the transmission of a message.

Warning: this book is highly experiential. You will not be able to put it down. You will have to put it down.

It is probably not suitable for teenagers and young adults without mature adult discussion.

Many thanks to the author and his family for making the story public.

In September, 1939, George Lucius Salton's boyhood in Tyczyn, Poland, was shattered by escalating violence and terror under German occupation. His father, a lawyer, was forbidden to work, but eleven-year-old George dug potatoes, split wood, and resourcefully helped his family. They suffered hunger and deprivation, a forced march to the Rzeszow ghetto, then eternal separation when fourteen-year-old George and his brother were left behind to labor in work camps while their parents were deported in boxcars to die in Belzec. For the next three years, George slaved and barely survived in ten concentration camps, including Rzeszow, Plaszow, Flossenbug, Colmar, Sachsenhausen, Braunschweig, Ravensbrck, and Wobbelin. Cattle cars filled with skeletal men emptied into a train yard in Colmar, France. George and the other prisoners marched under the whips and fists of SS guards. But here, unlike the taunts and

rocks from villagers in Poland and Germany, there was applause. "I could clearly hear the people calling: 'Shame! Shame!' . . . Suddenly, I realized that the people of Colmar were applauding us! They were condemning the inhumanity of the Germans!" Of the 500 prisoners of the Nazis who marched through the streets of Colmar in the spring of 1944, just fifty were alive one year later when the U.S. Army 82nd Airborne Division liberated the Wobbelin concentration camp on the afternoon of May 2, 1945. "I felt something stir deep within my soul. It was my true self, the one who had stayed deep within and had not forgotten how to love and how to cry, the one who had chosen life and was still standing when the last roll call ended."

"A powerful, searing recollection of the past, telling George Salton's story with a fierce integrity that is both descriptive and introspective." Michael Berenbaum, author of "The World Must Know" and former consultant to Steven Spielberg's Shoah Foundation Project
From the Publisher
Outstanding University Press Book Citation,
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From the Back Cover
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