

The Ruined Yom Kippur

On Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur 1942, when the Germans had begun to seize people for work, we did not congregate in the synagogues and the study-halls, but sat for days on end at home¹.

We stayed up till late at night praying the *Kol Nidrei* service but, on the following day, Yom Kippur, many people were already missing [from the prayer-service], because it had been said that the tailors, cobblers and carters, who presented themselves to work on Yom Kippur, would be granted working cards.

Many people, therefore, went to “Metalurgia” in the morning. My father went to work with a broken heart. It was the first time in his whole life that he had gone to work on the “Holy Day”. We went about distractedly, not knowing if those who had gone would come back home or not.

In the evening, the gates of the large “Metalurgia” workplace opened and all the labourers came out. The joy was great, but not for long. We found out that trains had arrived with Ukrainians, who were to assist in the deportation of the Jews from the city. Fathers wept and bade their children farewell. “This is our last Yom Kippur”, my father said with tears in his eyes, and he wept all the way home.

That same night, the ghetto was surrounded and the first victims fell. The *akcja* [operation] on our street took place on *Erev Sukkos*. They separated us in the Nowy Rynek. My mother, father and sister were taken away to their deaths and I, my brother and one sister were sent to “Metalurgia”.

We toiled intensively and, late at night, after our penal servitude, we would return to the “Small Ghetto.”

¹ [TN: Where they held small prayer-services, as mentioned previously.]