

Zinaida Davidovna Turovskaya Biography

a
a

Kiev, Ukraine
2002

My nee name is Zinaida Yarovskaya. I was born in Kiev in 1937. I left this town only once – during World War II. My mother’s name was Hava. My mother’s nee name is Gorodetskaya. My mother was born in 1905 in the family of Nusim Gorodetsliy (a shoemaker) in the town of Radomyshl, Kiev province. Grandfather Nusim came from a poor Jewish family. I have no information about his parents. My grandfather studied in the Jewish school for 3 or 4 years. He was a very good shoemaker. He made men’s, women’s and children’s shoes. Sometimes people didn’t have money to pay for the shoes and they brought him a dozen eggs or some millet. If somebody didn’t have anything to pay with my grandfather did his work for no payment. People liked my grandfather. My grandmother’s name was Tsylia (my mother’s mother). I don’t know her nee name. I guess, my grandmother and grandmother were born approximately in 1870-1875s. Grnadmother Tsylia came from a rather well-to-do family. Her father was a teacher of mathematics in the Jewish school. But this wasn’t the main source of their living. They had a farm where they had a cow and chicken, etc. My grandmother’s father had workers to look after the farm. Their family also had housemaids to do the housework. My grandmother Tsylia must have had brothers and sisters, but my mother didn’t know them. Grandmother Tsylia had some education: she finished school in Radomyshl. My grandmother was a housewife. Their family also kept a cow, chicken and geese. She took care of the farmyard and the house. They lived in a big wooden house with 5 or 6 rooms in it. My grandfather’s shop was in the house, too.

Nusim and Tsylia had 7 children. Pesia-Lieba, the oldest, was born around 1895. The next child was brother Moishe (1897), Then came Gershko, born in 1899. The next was Basia (a girl), born in 1902, and my mother Hava was born in 1905. Zina came after my mother. She was born in 1909. Dora, the youngest, was born in 1914. Their family was moderately religious. My grandfather had a book of prayers, but he opened it rarely. However, he went to the synagogue every Saturday. Like each respected Jew, he had a seat of his own there. The majority of the population in Radomyshl was Jewish. The synagogue was also a place where men could meet to discuss the news and say their prayers, as appropriate for real Jewish people. My mother told me that her father took her to the synagogue every now and then. She went to the 2nd floor in the synagogue with all other women. She remembers the rabbi of Radomyshl, a tall gray-bearded old man. My grandmother stayed at home on Saturday most of the time. Sabbath was a rule at the house. My grandfather Nusim kept the family budget and always gave money for food in advance. On Saturday they always had stuffed fish, chicken and confectioneries on the table. My mother baked bread (halah) by herself. Tey lit the candles on Friday for Sabbath. The rules require the oldest woman in the house to light the candles, but my mother was my grandfather’s favorite and he often said “Havka, go ahead, light the candles”. The whole family got together at the table on Saturday. They followed the

kashrut in the family. At Pesah they used fancy dishes – silver dishes mainly that my grandmother got from her parents. They fasted at Yom-Kippur. Even the older children fasted. My mother stuck to this tradition her whole life, she even fasted at Judgement Day during the years of hunger.

My grandmother Tsylia was the center and the heart of the family. She managed to do everything taking care of her family. All this good living finished at once when my grandmother died from a heart attack when she was almost 40 years old. This happened approximately in 1915.

My grandfather was there alone to take care of 7 children. However, Pesia-Lieba was already living in Kiev. She had finished school and married Aron Milman, a Jew. About half a year passed and my grandfather married another woman – Hava. She had 5 children. Perhaps, my grandfather needed a woman in the house and hoped that her children would be better off if there was one. But things went worse. The children didn't get along and my grandfather's new wife always stood on her children's side. The result was that my mother and her brothers and sisters moved to Kiev. This happened some time in 1916 or 1917. Moshe, the oldest brother, learned to make shoes from his father. Gershko had finished the Jewish school in Radomyshl by that time. Basia and my mother Hava didn't have any education. Basia and my mother lived with their older sister Pesia-Lieba in Kiev. They didn't have children, and they took my mother and her 3 sisters Zina, Dora and Basia into their family. During the Civil war Aron was in the Red Army. Zina, a younger sister, went to live with some distant relatives and later she worked as a baby sitter in rich families. Dora, the youngest, was sent to an orphanage. She was about to turn 3 years old.

Grandfather Nusim lived in Radomyshl with his new wife and her children. He must have felt sorry for his own children living in other people's houses and he asked to have at least Havka, my mother, visit them for the summer. My mother visited her father during the first year after her departure to Kiev. My mother told me that her father was very happy about the October revolution. He said that it would change the life of poor people. My grandfather didn't have any conflicts with the Soviet power. He worked and had many apprentices. He was a very honest man and people liked him. My grandfather attended the synagogue until it was closed by the Soviet authorities in 1920s. When World War II began, my grandfather's wife and her children were evacuated. Grandfather Nusim refused to leave his house. He believed that the Germans wouldn't hurt Jewish people. He believed, they would treat the Jewish people respectfully like it was during World War I. When the Germans entered the town they shot all Jews on the 1st day. My grandfather's Ukrainian neighbors ran to my grandfather and took him to the basement of their house. They made a shelter for my grandfather and he lived there for over 2 years during the German occupation. These people respected my grandfather and wanted to save his life. They were hiding him for over 3 years. They gave him food however little they had to feed themselves. (They also knew that if the Germans had found my grandfather they would have killed him for hiding a Jew. But they were determined to rescue him). When Radomyshl was liberated and my grandfather went out into the street his heart failed him and he died. Perhaps, the feeling of freedom and the bright sunshine were too much for him to bear. He died in the yard of his neighbor's house. His neighbors that were putting their lives at risk in their effort to save his. My mother and I visited Radomyshl in 1952 and heard the details of my grandfather's death from its people. They also showed my grandfather's grave to us. My mother never went to Radomyshl again. She was trying to find those people that saved my grandfather but they were not in Radomyshl any longer.

Now about my mother's brothers and sisters. Pesia-Lieba, my mother's older sister, didn't work. Her husband Aron worked at the leather shop. After the revolution he went to work at the leather factory. They were in the evacuation during the war and returned to Kiev. Aron worked at the leather factory until he retired. He was a religious man and a member of the religious community in Kiev synagogue. Pesia-Lieba died in Kiev in 1975. Her husband Aron died in 1986.

My mother's brothers Moishe and Gershko married Jewish girls in Kiev. Moishe's wife and Gershko's wife had the same name - Manya. Moishe was a shoemaker and Gershko was a Shop Manager at some plant and a member of the Communist Party. They had children, but I don't know their names. Moishe was in the army during the war. He was wounded, but survived. Gershko was a political leader on the front. He was the one to lead soldiers to attack. He perished around 1942 in Ukraine. Their families staid in Kiev (they didn't want to evacuate) and shared the fate of other Jewish people. Moishe's wife with her 5 children and Gershko's wife with 3 children were shot in the Babiy Yar. They probably went off together on his mournful road. Only Tsylia, Gershko's older daughter that had been sent to the Donetsk steppe with other Komsomol members to harvest, survived. Moishe never forgot his family. After he returned from the war he became very withdrawn. He never talked about his dear ones, although they were on his mind every moment. He never got married again and died in Kiev in 1970.

Basia, my mother's older sister, married a Jewish man. His name was Aron. I don't remember his last name. During the civil war Aron was in the Red Army and then worked as a shop-assistant in a store. They had 3 children: Miena, Rosa and a younger girl (I don't remember her name). They were very poor and they lived in a basement where they were renting a room. In the middle of 30s the Jewish Autonomous Region (its capital - Birobidjan) was formed in the Far East and the Jewish people were called to move there. Aron and Basia and their children went to Birobidjan. Aron worked as a carpenter. They received an apartment. However, their 1st year there was hard - their younger daughter died. Later Manya, another girl, was born. Their children studied in the Jewish school in Birobidjan. There was no anti-Semitism there even during the most difficult years for Soviet Jews. Basia, Aron and their children loved their new Motherland and lived there all their life. Basia died around 1980. Aron and the older children also died. Mania, Basia's younger daughter, lives in Birobidjan. She has 2 grown up daughters and grandchildren. In the middle of 50s Manya visited us and stayed with us some time. She played the accordion very well and sang Jewish songs. When she and my mother were singing in Yiddish, all our neighbors came to listen to them. When my sisters Tsylia and Rosa decide to emigrate to Israel (around 1978) Manya wrote a letter calling them traitors. She wrote that she was terminating any relationship with them. To the best of my knowledge and belief, they never again communicated. Tsylia and Rosa have got a status of refugees and have left in USA.

Zina, my mother's younger sister, was a baby sitter. She worked and lived in other people's houses. Later she got married and had 3 children. That's all I know about her. Zina died young in 1936. I know this for sure because I was born in 1937 and named after my mother's sister.

Dora, my mother's younger sister, was in the children's home. She finished 5 years of school there and then my mother took her away from the children's home to marry her to a Jewish man. Dora got married when she was 16. Her husband's last name was Khazin. Dora and her younger children were evacuated from Kiev, but her older daughter Zhenia stayed in Kiev with her father's parents.

They were all shot in the Babiy Yar. Dora's husband was killed on the front during WWII. After the war Dora returned to Kiev. She never got married again. She worked at shoe factory #4 and died in 1980.

Now, Hava Gorodetskaya, my mother, lived with her sister Pesia-Lieba in Kiev. My mother was 17 when she met my father.

My father's name was David Yarovskiy. I know very little about his family. Perhaps, my parents got so much attracted by each other because they both lost their parents. My father's mother died very young. My father was born in 1906 in a town in Poland. I think it was Lodz. His father and my grandfather Volko Yarovskiy was a fairly rich man. I don't know what he was doing for a living, but he managed to give his children both religious and secular education: Cheder and secondary school. My father had 2 brothers: Aron Yarovskiy, born around 1900 and Fivish Yarovskiy, a younger brother, born in 1908. They all went to school. When my father was 14 his mother died (i.e. in 1920). His father remarried very soon. His children Aron, David and Fivish couldn't forgive him for forgetting their mother and left him.

Somehow they got to Kiev. My mother told me that she met my father at the synagogue in Podol. My mother was 17 and my father was 16. They fell in love with each other. Perhaps, each of them wanted to get and give the love that was gone from their lives with their mothers' death. My mother told me that they obtained permission to get married from the synagogue. My mother's older sister Pesia-Liba had no objections against this marriage. She liked David very much. They got married in 1922. Those were hard years, but nevertheless, they had a Jewish wedding with huppah and all Jewish traditions.

My parents lived at Pesia's home a few months. But there was too little space and they needed a home of their own as they were expecting their 1st baby.

My father, however young he was, was a very smart man. He and his younger brother Fivish opened a private shop that manufactured various goods from horns. They purchased cow horns in the surrounding villages to make combs, ashtrays, pens, etc. and sold them in their shop. This was the period of NEP. There were many private shops at that time. This business allowed my parents to rent an apartment in a private house in Podol and to purchase it at a later time.

In 1923 my older sister Tsylia Yarovskaya was born, in 1925 my brother Vladimir and in 1929 my sister Rosa were born. My mother didn't have a job, but she was very busy at home. She was a wonderful housewife like my grandmother Tsylia and she gladly did any work. Living in the outskirts of the city my mother bought a cow. In summer the cow was kept outside in the valleys adjoining to Podol. Nowadays this area is one of districts in Kiev - Obolon. They also had chickens and geese - everything was like in my mother's childhood in Radomyshl. Mother went to the synagogue, which inhaled beside on Podol, observed holidays and traditions. Prayed. We had kosher kitchen.

NEP ended in 1926 and my father's shop was closed. My father and Fivish found a job at the Kiev meat-packing factory. My father continued to study. After finishing his studies my father became Commercial Director of the Kiev meat-packing factory. From here I make a conclusion that my father studied at the Food Industry Institute.

My father traveled a lot. Some time in 1932 (famine in Ukraine) he saw a 6 or 7 year old homeless Jewish boy at a railway station. The boy was crying and asking for food. My father talked to him and heard that his parents had died and that there was nobody left. My father brought this poor boy home. The boy's name was Motl. My mother accepted him as her own child. They washed the boy and gave him clean clothes and food and he became the favorite boy in the family. He lived in our family until the beginning of the war. In 1941, when WWII began, Motl was 17. He was mobilized to the translators' school. He was good at languages. Later he became a military translator at the Army Headquarters. When in the Army he fell in love with a Russian girl from Krasnoyarsk. He married her and settled down in Krasnoyarsk after the war. He wrote letters to my mother and visited her. He deeply mourned for our father and he tried to support our mother as much as he could. After my mother died I lost Motl's address. I don't know whether Motl is alive or where he is.

I was born on 4 February 1937. Although I was the 4th child in the family my parents were still young: my mother was 32 and my father was 31. My parents were very much in love with one another. They were happy. At least, my mother told me so. They were real Soviet people and were happy about everything new that came with the Soviet power. We celebrated the 1st of May and October Revolution day at home. People even celebrated the Parisian Commune Day at that time. My parents spoke Yiddish at home. My mother understood Russian, but she spoke it with a strong Jewish accent. My mother had no education and she only learned to write her signature. But this was no obstacle to her feeling beloved and happy. My father wasn't a religious person, but my mother was very religious. My father didn't mind her following what she thought was right. My mother said her prayers every day and fasted on the Judgement Day. She celebrated all Jewish holidays at home. My father attended the festive dinners, but he treated them as one of my mother's weaknesses. My mother's brothers and her sister Dora visited us with their families (her sister Basia was already living in Birobijan and Zina had died). Tsylya, Volodia and Rosa, the older children, studied in an ordinary Russian school. In 1940 my younger brother Boris was born. But for the war everything would have been fine.

I don't remember the day of 22 June 1941 when the war began. I was 4 years old. My father and his brother Fivish were called up to the anti-aircraft and chemical defense forces. And Aron, my father's older brother, was sent to the front. Moishe and Gershko were also called up to the army. Tsylya and Volodia were Komsomol members and they were sent to the labor front to help with harvesting and excavate trenches. Tsylya was sent to Kharkov and then farther to the East. I don't remember exactly where she was during the war, somewhere in the Urals. She worked in hospitals and made uniforms for our soldiers. She returned to Kiev after the war.

My older brother Vladinir Yarovskiy died tragically during the war. He was sent to Krasnodar along with other Komsomol members. When the Germans occupied Krasnodar, Volodia and few other boys were captured. They were all shot except our Volodia. The Germans identified that he was a Jew by circumcision and buried him alive. Chairman of the collective farm where this happened sent a letter to Kiev to tell us about this tragedy. Upon receiving this letter my mother and my older sister went to the station and saw the place where Volodia died. The Chairman gave them the money that Volodia had earned. Later the monument was installed on this spot and all names of the deceased were engraved on it. But the name Yarovskiy was written Yurovskiy by mistake. Such was the tragic end of my older brother.

But this was still to happen. At the beginning of the war we didn't know what was to happen to us.

Everybody believed that it would end soon and that we would win the victory over the Germans. Moishe and Gershko's wives refused to evacuate. As for us, my father forced us to live. He saw us off to the train that was to take us away. My mother and I, her sister Rosa and little Boris, Fivish's wife with her 2 children and Dora and her baby were going together. Zhenia, Dora's older girl, stayed in Kiev with her grandparents. I remember little about this trip. I only remember the overcrowded carriage and people sitting on their luggage. We were all thirsty. My mother got off the train when it stopped to exchange clothes and things for food and water. But hunger and thirst never left us. I didn't cry. I must have felt that tears could only make things worse and cause pain to my mother. But my younger brother Boris was constantly crying. Dora's baby got dysentery and died. Dora didn't even cry, she was just sitting there pressing her baby to her chest. I remember this well, because my mother took away the baby and got off the train when it stopped to bury the baby. The train started and my mother missed it. I was very scared and afraid that my mother wouldn't catch up with us. But she did on another train.

We arrived at the town of Melikes in Chuvasia where we stayed during all our evacuation period. My mother worked at the timberfelling sites. It was freezing, some people froze to death. Once the wood cutters were attacked by wolves. They somehow chased them away. Basically, when recalling the war I come to thinking about the unexpected strength of character in my mother that had actually no education. We were renting a small room. My older sister Rosa and Aunt Dora and little Boris slept in this small room. After her son died Dora gave all her life to Boris that was almost the same age as her son. Dora couldn't work. She tried to cook some food from some potato peels and turnip. I remember that soup with potato peels was our regular meal at that time. My legs were all swollen due to lack of food and they never returned to the normal conditions. The doctors said this was the result of starvation in my childhood. Mummy used to return from work very late and she fell asleep right there, near the door - there was no other space. My mother had very long hair that she wore in a plait. Once her plait froze to the steel jamb of the door, and my mother couldn't tear her plait from it. The landlady brought an ax and cut off my mother's plait. I remember myself crying, but my mother said it was O'K and her hair would grow. My mother smiled at us, but her heart was aching. She didn't know anything about our father and she realized that he was probably not among the living any more.

As soon as Kiev was liberated in 1943 my mother started packing to go back home. But we had to stay in the evacuation for another year because we needed to obtain permission to return to Kiev. We returned in autumn 1944. Our apartment was occupied by our prewar neighbors. They were using our furniture and even children's beds with coverlets. When my mother entered the room the new tenant pushed her out of there saying that you, zhydy [this offensive Jew name in Russian], spent all the wartime nobody knows where and that all our belongings were theirs. This was how we became "zhydy" immediately upon our return to Kiev. My mother didn't argue with our neighbors. There was an unkempt dirty basement in this house - with rats. We cleaned it up and settled down there.

The worst news for us was that our father David Yavorovskiy had perished. He died during Kiev defense operation on 21 September 1941. We received the notice about his death at the recruitment office. Fivish perished about the same time - they were together in the army and they perished together. Aron, my father's older brother, perished near Warsaw in 1944. Gersh, my mother's brother, perished, the families of Gersh and Moishe were exterminated in the Babiy Yar,

and so was Zhenia, Dora's daughter. Upon our return my mother got to know about the death of her father Nusim and about her son Volodia. Sometimes it seemed to me that my mother's heart was made of stone. She never cried, only prayed in Yiddish. Now I understand that she was giving every effort to keep what she had: her children.

My mother and sister Rosa went to work at the Kultchim shop. They manufactured stationery. On weekends Rosa and Komsomol members went to clean up Kreschatik, the main street that was in ruins. In 1946 our older sister Tsylia returned from the Urals. She got a job of an accountant in a shop.

We kept living in the basement. The conditions were terrible. We could only see the legs of passer-byes. The toilet and water were in the yard. We had no kitchen. We were cooking on a little stove. I remember that my mother and I went to see Budyonniy (Budyonniy was a hero of the Civil war, Commander of the Red cavalry, a very authoritative person in the Soviet Union). I don't remember whether my mother got to see him, but nothing in our life changer after this visit. They only installed gas stoves in the corridor of our basement. We lived under such awful conditions until 1964 when we received an apartment as the family that had lost the man of the family to the war. We waited for it 20 years after the war.

In 1945 I went to school. It was an ordinary Russian school where boys and girls studied together. We were separated in the year's time. I remember that the teachers treated us, the children that had lost their fathers, very well. We received free luncheons at school in 1946-47 and gave us a delicious roll. I remember that I always looked forward to getting this roll and at the same time I felt ashamed to be in the group of children receiving it because their fathers had perished. I remember that my brother Boris and I got nice new coats. We also received textbooks for free. I studied well. I was good at Mathematics. I even helped senior schoolchildren sometimes. They used to give me a roll or a cookie for this and it was nice of them to do so.

I can't remember whether anti-Semitism or struggle with Cosmopolites in the early 1950s had any impact on us. I have dim memories of some discussions at school about the doctors that poisoned people and that Jews were to blame for all people's problems. But children were talking about this in whisper. It seemed they were just discussing what they had read in newspapers or heard from adults. I remember, when Stalin died we were all invited to the concert-hall at school. Everybody was crying. Siema Mironovna, our teacher, a Jew, got all fatherless children together. She was sitting and crying with us.

In this time I at all was not interested by the Jewish life. This was not fashionably amongst acquaintance of mine nobody did not note Jewish holidays. But we with the pleasure celebrated Soviet holidays. Much liked 1 may, day of anniversaries of Great October Revolutions. Went on demonstrations, at night were going to buildings, at the table, sang cantos, danced, listened a music, in general were lucky.

After studying 7 years at school I went to work at the hat factory. I was an apprentice there. I didn't work there long. I went to the "Progress" shop store - they made hats there, too. I learned to make very beautiful women's hats. I became a Komsomol member in the shop and was the leader of the Komsomol unit for 7 years. I was finishing my studies in the evening school of working young people. They didn't pay much in this shop. I worked two shifts to make some money. In the 1st years of my work director of this shop was a Jewish man. Later the shop was converted into a

factory and a Ukrainian woman became its director. She was terribly anti-Semitic. Life became more difficult for the Jews. We couldn't earn anything extra and our rates were constantly reduced. Employees of non-Jewish origin were sent to resorts each year getting trade-union reductions for their stay there. I didn't get to go there once.

In the late 1960s I got a job at the cinema factory. I worked at the color slide production. Many other Jewish people were working there and they were treated well. I was earning good money there until I retired in 1992.

At the beginning of 1960 I met my future husband, Jewish, Abram Turovskiy. We met at a party and liked one another at once. My husband was born in Kiev on 10 May 1936. His grandfather was a rich man. He owned a bakery in Podol. Abram's father was a military. He was sent to the front when the war began. During way in evacuation Abram lagged behind from the train, in which went grandparents, his mother and his one-year-old sister. Abram was sent to a children's home in Kazakhstan and was there until 1950. In the children's home the children teased and beat him for his being a Jew. When he turned 15 he ran away and went to look for his family. He went to Kiev and came to shoe factory #4 where his mother had been working before the war. He found his mother there. She was working in the laundry at the factory kindergarten. His mother's name Rachil Srulevna Podmirchan. Abram's mother told Abram that his father had perished at the front and his grandparents and sister died in the evacuation. His mother told him that she was looking for him after the war but everywhere she went she was told that he wasn't there. His mother was very happy to have her son back.

We got married in 1961. We had no wedding, just a registration of our marriage. Abram came to live with us. In 1964 we received a two-room apartment. Abram worked as a maintenance technician. He was a very skilled worker. He was supposed to get a state award for his work but he didn't get it due to his Jewish origin. His boss put him on the list of awardees, but he was reprimanded by the solid alloys trade union committee for doing so. My husband heard this discussion. This was a moral trauma for my husband and he got a stroke on that very day. He was ill for almost a year and then he went back to work. But he was badly injured at work - his hands were cut off by some machine. He became an invalid and could move only in the wheel-chair. In 1998 when my husband died he was only 62 years old.

My husband was not a religious person. We were assimilated Soviet people. We always difficult live, much worked. No Jewish traditions, regrettably we didn't save. I am sorry, but time was such cruel, surrounding situation was not favorable. Us had one free day at a week - a Sunday, and else we did not work in Soviet holidays, them and noted and else days of births to we came the guests.

In 1966 our daughter Ludmila was born. She studied well at school but she couldn't enter the Institute because of her being a Jew. She finished a course of kindergarten nurses, computer school and hairdresser's school. Ludmila has several professions but she cannot work. She has four children to take care of. Yevgeniy, born in 1986 studies at school. But he is a very ill boy. He was born in the year of Chornobyl disaster and has problems with his thyroid gland. Her 2ND son Alexandr was born in 1987. Dmitriy, born in 1994, has a heart disease. He is a very smart but he cannot attend kindergarten because of his heart. Nastia, the youngest, was born in 2000. Since my husband got ill our family has had all kind problems. My daughter had to quit work because of her children's illnesses. My son-in-law Mikhail, a professional driver, got in a car accident and lost his job. He couldn't go on working. He has occasional earnings from car repairs. My daughter also does

some work every now and then but they don't have a permanent job. Hesed, the Jewish Charity Center supports us, but this is not enough for a family with four children. Sometimes my granddaughter takes an empty plate asking to give her something to eat. Who would have a heart to bear this? My daughter Ludmila was a beautiful girl. One can hardly recognize her now. She has become very thin and lost all her teeth. There is nobody around to help us. My mother died in 1989. My older sister Tsylia lives in Baltimore, USA. She has two daughters - Diane and Evgenia. My sister Rosa lives in Chicago. She has two grown-up sons: Dmitriy and Leonid. My brother Boris lives in Haifa, Israel, and his daughter has moved to America. They are doing very well, but they don't support us. When our family was going to move to America, their authorities refused to give us a status of refugees. They told us that we should have been supported by our close relations in the US. But our relatives refused to give us shelter. After such attitude I didn't call or write them for several years. Recently I wrote them that we literally starve and asked them to send us a little bit of money. They answered that they had problems of their own and that they couldn't help us. We get no help from the state or social services. The only thing left for us is to move to Israel. But it involves money again, and we sometimes don't have money to use public transportation. My mother observed Jewish traditions until her last day. She prayed and celebrated Sabbath. I don't believe in God. We do not observe any Jewish traditions or celebrate holidays, although we are all Jews. We just never get there. Perhaps that is why God has turned away from us.