

From the Testimony of Judith Becker on Surviving the Gas Chamber

...So then after that we went to the cutting room and we managed to get out of there relatively okay and then they pushed us into the gas chamber. In the gas chamber they had a, like a little glass booth, you know - it's very interesting that they had that glass booth later on for Eichmann because they had them in the gas chamber. They were like about the size a little longer than this table and narrower and it was like a protrusion that they could go in without actually coming into the gas chamber - there was a separate entrance to it. And they could watch the people inside and the controls were inside that thing. And I recognized this man from the *Sonderkommando* and I looked at him and he puts down. So I tried very hard to distract my mother. It was the hardest moment of my life ever, to know that we are going to die and yet to act so that we don't make a spectacle for the Germans, for the Nazis who were watching us, to make more of a spectacle, you know, to give them more enjoyment. So we did say the *Shma Yisrael* and my mother insisted that we say parts of *Vidui* and I didn't tell her that it was going to be gas, but it was so hard not to scream, not to jump, not to do something - it was the hardest thing ever. I must have used up kilos of energy in those few minutes. And by a miracle again, instead of the gas came the water. Later on it turned out that he had switched on the Zyclon and the delivery system had been damaged and it didn't come so instead, the other valve opened up and the water came. Now we're coming out of the gas chamber. It's like...the only comparison I can give is when I read about Japanese committing "hari-kiri", you know, when they're coming close to death and later on they are so totally exhausted. And that's the feeling, you know, that's really the feeling. I was so exhausted I could hardly... I couldn't walk, I couldn't speak - it was such an effort to withstand the terrible fear and the pressure of dying any second.

Source: Yad Vashem Archives 0.3- 9416