“I thought that if the point were demonstrated in a situation as extreme as that in a concentration camp, my book might gain a hearing. I therefore felt responsible for writing down what I had gone through, for I thought it might be helpful to people who are prone to despair.”

A thought transfixed me: for the first time in my life I saw the truth as it is set into song by so many poets, proclaimed as the final wisdom by so many thinkers. The truth—that love is the ultimate and the highest goal to which man can aspire. Then I grasped the meaning of the greatest secret that human poetry and human thought and belief have to impart: The salvation of man is through love and in love. I understood how a man who has nothing left in this world may still know bliss, be it only for a brief moment, in the contemplation of his beloved. In a position of utter desolation, when a man cannot express himself in positive action, when his only achievement may consist in enduring his sufferings in the right way—an honorable way—in such a position man can, through loving contemplation of the image he carries of his beloved, achieve fulfillment. For the first time in my life, I was able to understand the words, ”The angels are lost in perpetual contemplation of an infinite glory.” My mind still clung to the image of my wife. A thought crossed my mind: I didn’t even know if she were alive; I had no means of finding out. There was no need to know; nothing could touch the strength of my love, and the thoughts of my beloved. “Set me like a seal upon thy heart, love is as strong as death”.

Viktor Frankl “Man’s search for Meaning”

1) State the main idea of the whole text.

2) Use the following words from the text in sentences of your own: thought, truth, suffering, to endure.

3) Answer the following questions in your own words.

a- What does Frankl say about “suffering”? Explain briefly.

b- In which way can this book help people?