



## Remembrance

***There is no remembrance of men of old, and even those who are yet to come will not be remembered by those who follow (Ecclesiastes 1:11).***

*"The end of war is in remembrance."*

This old saying may surprise us. Few who have survived the trauma of war are anxious to relive those days in memory. The pain of the disorder from post-traumatic stress is often caused by the mental replaying of those traumatic events. Thus, the natural inclination is to avoid the memories of war, and many veterans have become quite good at doing that. That is not necessarily good. Avoiding memories can prevent healing.

Memorial Day is a good time for us to remember war with its casualties of bodies and minds. King Solomon of old would encourage us to do this.

For all of his wealth, wisdom, and power, Solomon had much to lament. In the God-inspired Book of Ecclesiastes, he groans out his misery in life. He opens the book with the words: *"Meaningless! Meaningless!" says the Teacher. "Utterly meaningless! Everything is meaningless."* He soon moves to his complaint about remembrance. He says there is none. Thus, there is no meaning to what people have done.

As flags are lowered and wreaths are laid on tombstones at this time of year, the phrase that may come to our ears is, "They have not died in vain." This declares that the death of those who have fallen in service to our nation was not meaningless. Not everyone agrees. Not everyone follows the parade to the burial ground. Not everyone acknowledges the flag at half-mast. Not everyone stands still at the sound of taps. Not

everyone appreciates the sacrifices of those who lost their life to preserve our freedoms.

But those who, like Solomon, lament the lack of remembrance of what was accomplished by those who came before, they will see the meaning of Memorial Day.

The Christian will see the day through God's eyes. The Christian will remember that our nation does not deserve the blessings of freedom that float down upon it. The Christian will remember how close our nation has come to losing these freedoms at times. The Christian will remember that those who stepped forward to defend our nation were gifts provided by the hand of God.

It is a time to acknowledge the gifts we have received through the wars that have been waged and the sacrifices that others have made. It is a time to consider the cost that the loved ones of the fallen have paid.

Remembrance allows us to see the larger picture, to weigh the fuller cost, and to appreciate the greater value of what has been handed down.

We will remember God's promise that the day will come when, *"Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore"* (Micah 4:3).

Until that time comes, on a Memorial Day we will say the prayer of those who have gone before us:

**"Lord God of hosts, be with us yet. Lest we forget. Lest we forget." Amen.**

Written by Pastor Paul Ziemer, WELS National Civilian Chaplain and Liaison to the Military, Cape Coral, Florida Provided by WELS Ministry to the Military



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