



Only an Armistice

The LORD saw how great man's wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time (Genesis 6:5).

It was hoped that it would be the war to end all wars. Surely, it was thought, a whole world at war would teach the world never to wage war again.

But the hope was empty. Not because the devastation of WWI was less than expected, but because it did not teach the world that wars should not be fought. Instead, we learned how to make wars more deadly.

On November 11, 1918, victors and vanquished sat in a train car in France to sign their names to an agreement to silence the guns of war.

They thought the war was over. One side celebrated as if that were true. The other side agonized as if it were true.

But the war was not finished. It was merely interrupted. This was a ceasefire. This was only an armistice.

In that railroad car the seed was planted for the resumption of the war with weapons more deadly and casualties piled higher.

Nazi Germany pointed to this moment as when the Fatherland was "*stabbed in the back.*" Vengeance was demanded.

Another generation would pay the price of vengeance. They paid in blood. Some of that blood was American.

Then came the battlefields of Korea, and Vietnam, and the Middle East. American blood seeped into the soil of all these places.

Some of the dead are returning home only now.

The cries of "Why?" arise in houses with a gold star on the window and an empty chair at the kitchen table.

The same question comes to those who watch loved ones living now without legs or now without the peace of a mind untouched by torturous memories.

Many is the combat survivor who has uttered the words, "I wish I had not."

Politicians and social scientists search for answers. "Why war?" they ask. They give many answers.

But it is only the Creator and Guardian of life who can give the correct answer.

The root cause of the death and misery lies not in the policies of a nation but in the hearts of its people.

It is found within every nation and every person in every nation.

The cause of war lies in the evil in human hearts.

The end of war is found only in the heart of the holy Lord God.

The only peace that lasts is the one between God and mankind that the angel announced over the fields of Bethlehem.

That peace was bought with blood that seeped into the soil near Jerusalem. Above it was a sign that read,

"Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews."

Without ending is that peace. Beyond measure, it is given.

Those who possess it are told: "The war is over!"

It is not only an armistice.



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