

*[From the papers of Dr. Gordon H. Clark. From "The Home Evangel", date unknown.]*

The war is going well; at the moment of writing, the Germans have almost collapsed, and the Japanese are caving in faster than anyone expected; the war is going well. But is it going well for those whose sons or husbands swell the casualty lists? Already the casualties are more numerous than in 1918. Can the bereaved and can the wounded say that the war has gone well?

At the beginning of the war, thoughtless well-wishers may have told us that our son or our husband could not get hit. It was false comfort. Others said that the chances were four to five that our boy would come home safe. That might have been true, but it is no comfort for the one-fifth who do not come home safe. Yet such a calculation of probabilities is the best that a non-christian can offer. If God does not rule in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, what can be said except "Take your chances and make the best of it"?

The Christian, on the other hand, will search the Scriptures and there he will find true comfort. In II Chronicles 18 we read how Jehoshaphat and Ahab went together into battle. Because the prophet of the Lord had said that Ahab would be killed, Ahab dressed as a common soldier as a disguise. But "a certain man drew a bow at a venture, and smote the king of Israel between the joints of the harness . . . and he died."

Ahab's disguise did not save him. The enemy failed in its conscious attempt to kill the king; but a random shot, aimed at nothing in particular, killed him. Today some soldiers say the shell with your number on it will get you, and until that shell is fired nothing can hurt you. There is a great difference between this G.I. philosophy and the teaching of the Scripture. The one is a fatalistic, purposeless view of things, whereas the Scriptures teach that God sees the end from the beginning and does all things for a purpose. The Syrian enemy had shot his arrow without a purpose, but God had a purpose in ordaining that he should do so. And thus the wicked Ahab was punished by death.

This does not mean that only the wicked are killed in battle. Many good Christians have died violent deaths in wars and in persecutions. But in these cases the principles in Christ's words to Pilate still applies: "thou couldst have no power against me, except it were given thee from above."

The bereaved Christians today still sorrow, as did Christ's mother and disciples, but they do not sorrow

as others who have no hope, for they know that God has seen the end from the beginning, that He acts with a purpose, and the He doeth all things well. AND BECAUSE CHRIST ROSE FROM THE DEAD, WE TOO SHALL RISE.

G.H.C.