

## TRIBUTE TO A FALLEN MARINE: JIM WILLIAMS

An excerpt from his eulogy: Delivered December 18, 2020, Tennessee State Veterans Cemetery

**"...a certain man drew a bow at a venture, and smote the king of Israel between the joints of the harness: therefore he said to his chariot man, Turn thine hand, that thou mayest carry me out of the host; for I am wounded. And the battle increased that day: howbeit the king of Israel stayed himself up in his chariot against the Syrians until the even: and about the time of the sun going down he died."**

2 Chronicles 18:34

The setting of the sun suggests to us a departure in life. Wherever we go over land, sea, and air, death's ravages are seen. Regardless of the year or hour of the day that we visit the places where men have trod, death has preceded us. *"Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away."* General Douglas MacArthur in his farewell address to the United States Congress said, "Old soldiers never die; they just fade away." Death is typified in the fading flower, in withering grass, in falling leaf; it is like the dissipating smoke of a campfire and is pictured by the setting sun.

In the United States Marine Corps, all our deceased are referred to as fallen Marines whether they die in combat, perish as a result of an accident, succumb to the ravages of disease, or pass away of natural causes in the sunset of life. To a Marine serving in a combat zone the setting sun brings with it a measure of anxiety and oftentimes fear of what awaits in the darkness, as they 'saddle-up' and 'move-out' into their night ambush location.

And yet, the sunset is not to be feared, because...

**The Sun Goes Down by the Appointment of God.** For He maketh night and day, and ruleth the heavens. To God belong the issues of death... *"...And it is appointed unto man once to die...."* An appointment we all shall keep!

**The Sun Goes Down for the Benefit of Humanity.** Though tears and bereavement shadow the earth, death attracts His creation to heaven. God has provided a portal through which we may enter by grace through faith; made possible by His death, burial, and resurrection. The Lord said, *"...I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die...."*

All of us would probably agree; **The Sun Goes Down Too Soon for Us.** Despite life's trials and sorrows, we cling to life. Our desire is to stick around and live a little longer, that he might enjoy more of its beauties. Furthermore...

**The Sun Has His Natural Time for Setting.** This setting is expected and prepared for by mankind. Everyone expects the accustomed length of days of three score and ten, but death is unpredictable and comes to humanity at various stages in one's life. We are here today because a Marine has fallen, and we must carry on the fight to preserve our freedoms till the consummation of this age. May each heart here embrace courage knowing that...

**The Sun Goes Down to Rise Again.** Only a brief interval of darkness and he appears again, climbing the heavens in majesty and strength. A time will come when this orb of day will set, nevermore to rise, but the godly shall live on, where the sun shall never go down. Finally consider that...

**Taps will one day give way to Omnipotent Reveille.** God is the Father of Lights and does all things well. Whether the sunlight of our loved ones departs in the morning, at mid-day, or in the evening, it will have a glorious rising in that perfect day, in which there shall be no night. The sounding of the Divine trumpet is well-nigh!

Tis sundown my brother. Rest easy and sleep well, for the line has held and thy duty to God, Country, and Corps is done. Semper Fidelis, always faithful. *"God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord."* May ye dwell eternally in the Son's Light in Heaven. Esprit de Corps, Never Forget!

Semper Fidelis,

*Chaplain Ron*

We honor the service of Sergeant James Michael Williams, United States Marine Corps. Our brother served with honor as a Radiotelephone Operator in the Vietnam War. Jim served as detachment 924's Past Commandant.

