

which deny God and cast aside all the principles of the Scripture. Such actions can lead only to misery and suffering. God's answer is found in verses 12 and 13. These works will not profit; in time of crisis their futility will become apparent: "the wind shall carry them all away."

**A. (2) Blessing upon Those who Trust in the Lord
(Isaiah 57:13b-19)**

In sharp contrast to all that precedes, the end of verse 13 points out that even physical blessing is secured in any lasting way only by those who put their trust in God. God will ultimately bring healing and restoration of comfort to all who contritely and humbly seek His will. True peace is found only in seeking to carry out His will and to maintain the principles which He pronounces in His Word. Verse 19 shows the only source of true peace. Peace in the heart, peace with God, peace with our neighbors, peace with foreign nations -- all come only through God's mercy.

A. (3) Epilogue (Isaiah 57:20-21)

In sharp contrast to what precedes, the next two verses show that there is no peace to those who seek it other than through God's own appointed means. "The wicked are like the troubled sea"; there is no true happiness apart from God.

It is a little hard to be sure whether these verses form a separate unit or should be taken as part of the rebuke with which the next chapter begins. Since the theme of peace has just been stressed, it is probably better to consider them an epilogue to this section. Besides, the next chapter, while still dealing with wickedness and rebuking those who sin against God, stresses a particular kind of wickedness not mentioned in these verses.

**B. (1) Rebuke for Formalism and Insincere Worship
(Isaiah 58:1-5)**

In these verses the prophet rebukes those people who, assiduously carrying out the practices of religion, expect God's blessing simply from forms and ceremonies. He points out