

But they are in peace.
 For if in the eyes of men, indeed, they be punished,
 yet is their hope full of immortality;
 Chastised a little, they shall be greatly blessed,
 because God tried them,
 and found them worthy of himself.
 As gold in the furnace, he proved them,
 and as sacrificial offerings he took them to himself.
 Those who trust in him shall understand truth,
 and the faithful shall abide with him in love:
 Because grace and mercy are with his holy ones,
 and his care is with his elect.

The word of the Lord.

4

An unsullied life, the attainment of old age.

A reading from the Book of Wisdom

4:7-15

The just man, though he die early,
 shall be at rest.
 For the age that is honorable comes not
 with the passing of time,
 nor can it be measured in terms of years.
 Rather, understanding is the hoary crown for men,
 and an unsullied life, the attainment of old age.
 He who pleased God was loved;
 he who lived among sinners was transported—
 Snatched away, lest wickedness pervert his mind
 or deceit beguile his soul;
 For the witchery of paltry things obscures what is right
 and the whirl of desire transforms the innocent mind.
 Having become perfect in a short while,
 he reached the fullness of a long career;
 for his soul was pleasing to the LORD,
 therefore he sped him out of the midst of wickedness.
 But the people saw and did not understand,
 nor did they take this into account.

The word of the Lord.