

**Love righteousness, you rulers of the earth, think of the Lord with uprightness, and seek him with sincerity of heart;** 1:2 because he is found by those who do not put him to the test, and manifests himself to those who do not distrust him. 1:3 For perverse thoughts separate men from God, and when his power is tested, it convicts the foolish; 1:4 because wisdom will not enter a deceitful soul, nor dwell in a body enslaved to sin. 1:5 **For a holy and disciplined spirit will flee from deceit,** and will rise and depart from foolish thoughts, and will be ashamed at the approach of unrighteousness.

But **ungodly men by their words and deeds summoned death;** considering him a friend, they pined away, and they made a covenant with him, because they are fit to belong to his party. For **they reasoned unsoundly, saying to themselves, "Short and sorrowful is our life, and there is no remedy when a man comes to his end,**

2:9 Let none of us fail to share in our revelry, everywhere let us leave signs of enjoyment, because this is our portion, and this our lot. 2:10 **Let us oppress the righteous poor man; let us not spare the widow nor regard the gray hairs of the aged. 2:11 But let our might be our law of right, for what is weak proves itself to be useless. 2:12 "Let us lie in wait for the righteous man, because he is inconvenient to us and opposes our actions;** he reproaches us for sins against the law, and accuses us of sins against our training. 2:13 **He professes to have knowledge of God, and calls himself a child of the Lord. 2:14 He became to us a reproof of our thoughts; 2:15 the very sight of him is a burden to us, because his manner of life is unlike that of others, and his ways are strange. 2:16 We are considered by him as something base, and he avoids our ways as unclean; he calls the last end of the righteous happy, and boasts that God is his father. 2:17 Let us see if his words are true, and let us test what will happen at the end of his life; 2:18 for if the righteous man is God's son, he will help him, and will deliver him from the hand of his adversaries. 2:19 Let us test him with insult and torture, that we may find out how gentle he is, and make trial of his forbearance. 2:20 Let us condemn him to a shameful death, for, according to what he says, he will be protected."** 2:21 Thus they reasoned, but they were led astray, for their wickedness blinded them, 2:22 and they did not know the secret purposes of God, nor hope for the wages of holiness, nor discern the prize for blameless souls; 2:23 for God created man for incorruption, and made him in the image of his own eternity, 2:24 but through the devil's envy death entered the world, and those who belong to his party experience it. 3:1 But the souls of the righteous are in

the hand of God, and no torment will ever touch them.

**The righteous man who had died will condemn the ungodly who are living, and youth that is quickly perfected will condemn the prolonged old age of the unrighteous man. 4:17 For they will see the end of the wise man, and will not understand what the Lord purposed for him, and for what he kept him safe. 4:18 They will see, and will have contempt for him, but the Lord will laugh them to scorn.**

**They will come with dread when their sins are reckoned up,** and their lawless deeds will convict them to their face. 5:1 **Then the righteous man will stand with great confidence in the presence of those who have afflicted him,** and those who make light of his labors. 5:2 When they see him, they will be shaken with dreadful fear, and **they will be amazed at his unexpected salvation. 5:3 They will speak to one another in repentance, and in anguish of spirit they will groan, and say, 5:4 "This is the man whom we once held in derision and made a by-word of reproach -- we fools!** We thought that his life was madness and that his end was without honor. 5:5 Why has he been numbered among the sons of God? And why is his lot among the saints? 5:6 So it was we who strayed from the way of truth, and the light of righteousness did not shine on us, and the sun did not rise upon us.

**Listen therefore, O kings, and understand; learn, O judges of the ends of the earth. 6:2 Give ear, you that rule over multitudes, and boast of many nations. 6:3 For your dominion was given you from the Lord, and your sovereignty from the Most High, who will search out your works and inquire into your plans. 6:4 Because as servants of his kingdom you did not rule rightly, nor keep the law, nor walk according to the purpose of God, 6:5 he will come upon you terribly and swiftly, because severe judgment falls on those in high places.**