

**THE BOOK OF MALACHI**  
**Lesson 12, Chapter 3 Continued 3**

We paused at Malachai chapter 3 verse 11 last time. We're in the midst of hearing God dare His people to take up His challenge to put Him to the test so that if they do, they will prove to themselves that He is always truthful, always faithful, and can bring about anything and everything He promises. In this case, it is promised abundant blessings; but, receiving that abundance is predicated on the condition that they repent from their evil ways and return to Him, wholeheartedly.

This practical lesson that Yehoveh was attempting to get His people to learn was something that had been proved many years earlier, but no doubt was forgotten. During the time of King Hezekiah (some 200 or more years before Malachai) we read of this in 2<sup>nd</sup> Chronicles.

**CJB 2 Chronicles 31:5-10** ***<sup>5</sup> As soon as the order was issued, the people of Isra'el gave in abundance from the firstfruits of the grain, wine, olive oil, honey and other agricultural produce; they brought the required tenth and more. <sup>6</sup> The people of Isra'el and Y'hudah living in the cities of Y'hudah also brought the required tenth of oxen and sheep and the required tenth of consecrated gifts that had been dedicated to YEHOVEH their God, and piled them in heaps. <sup>7</sup> They began accumulating these heaps in the third month and completed them in the seventh month. <sup>8</sup> When Hizkiyahu and the leaders came and saw the heaps, they blessed YEHOVEH and his people Isra'el. <sup>9</sup> When Hizkiyahu asked the cohanim and L'vi'im about the heaps, <sup>10</sup> 'Azaryahu the chief cohen, from the house of Tzadok, answered him, "Ever since the people began bringing offerings into the house of YEHOVEH, we have had enough to eat and plenty left over; for YEHOVEH has blessed his people, and what is left over is this massive supply."***

This forgotten lesson is what plagues human beings as a species. It is in our nature that we *speak* of learning from history, but it is our tendency to get so caught up in trying to solve our immediate problems that we'll take actions

that the evidence of history says will not turn out well for us. Nothing is more informative of this reality than the Bible. Anytime we forgo God's ways for something that seems more expedient, the results will inevitably not be favorable for the longer term even if the immediate outcome we seek seems to have been beneficial.

The people of Yehud had been withholding their tithes. The Priests had been using defective animals for sacrifice. None of this was by accident; rather it was by circumstance. It is the classic circular firing squad proverb. Things don't go well for a time, so the knee-jerk response is to hold back from God so that we can keep more for ourselves. Then when circumstances deteriorate further, our response is to hold back even more, cut corners in worship, and start to blame God for our problems. Refusing to see that it was just normal life that everything doesn't go well all the time. Or that perhaps their faithfulness was being tested. Or that it was their laxity or sin that was the cause of the problem in the first place. This is perhaps what we need to be more on guard for in our lives, in our relationship with God, than anything else.

Let's re-read part of Malachai chapter 3.

### **RE-READ MALACHAI CHAPTER 3:11 – end**

Verse 11 says:

**CJB Malachi 3:11** ***For your sakes I will forbid the devourer to destroy the yield from your soil; and your vine will not lose its fruit before harvest-time," says Yehoveh-Tzva'ot.***

Yehoveh says that part of the blessing that will inure from the peoples' repentance will be stopping the things that cause harm from happening to them. While it is not said here, it is spoken in the next verse and in other Bible passages that when the nations of the world see how protected Israel is, they will praise Israel's God. So, a kind of ironic side effect of Israel's obedience is that, due to their divinely given abundance and protection from harms that other nations are suffering, the nations will turn to Yehoveh. Conversely, when

Israel disobeys and God's blessings turn to curses, then Yehoveh is thought to be a weak and ineffective God for His people. The nations have no respect or regard for Him. So, the goal is not about Israel being highly regarded by the nations, but rather about their God being highly regarded. That applies right down to the individual level. Time has taught me that what I do and how I live has a far greater effect on non-Believers than what I say or claim. A tract or a flurry of social media comments that sound godly and lofty is fine; but it pales in comparison to simply living out what you claim to believe... it is far more effective because it is far more authentic.

As we mentioned last time, for the most part the devourer is locusts since that was the primary and most terrifying of all the pests that the ancients faced. Naturally, this expands to other kinds of insects that cause damage to fields and vineyards, but locusts were the worst. Other sorts of things like weather conditions, hot dry winds, or lack of rain or even too much at the wrong time, could cause the all-important grape harvest to fail. God promises that He will prevent that, as well, in reciprocity for Israel's return to good behavior.

Verse 12 reads:

**CJB Malachi 3:12** ***"All nations will call you happy, for you will be a land of delights," says Yehoveh-Tzva'ot.***

Virtually all the English versions make it sound as if the point is for other nations to see Israel as highly praiseworthy, and its people warranting great merit. The word often translated as happy is ***ashar***, which has a wide range of meaning depending on the context. Here, a much better sense of it would be "fortunate" rather than "happy". That is, rather than an emotion (happy) it is change of condition (from troubled to fortunate). Taken in a fuller context, the greater hope is that the nations will see the poor economic conditions of Israel suddenly change for the better as they have reversed course, stopped following manmade doctrines and rules, stopped being selfish towards God, ended blaming Him for their bad circumstances, and returned to being faithful and obedient to His ways, which are called out in His Word... specifically in the Covenant of Moses.

Israel was supposed to reflect God's light and glory. They couldn't do that in their present condition of rebelliousness because God's justice would not allow Him to bless them as He wants to. So, what nation would choose to aspire to be more like Israel or to follow Israel's God if what they witnessed was a poorly, weak, subjugated people? Nothing has changed for either God-worshippers or those who observe us.

In our Introduction to Malachai, I explained that there are significant topics and principles that are mentioned in this little book, but not dealt with in-depth, mostly because much earlier Bible books already did that. We have been dealing with one of these topics. And yet, misunderstanding what is said can cause much pain or even loss of faith. We are nearly always spoken to by God in terms of physical things, because that's all we humans have to relate to. And, these physical things have to be within the realm of our own knowledge and experience to get maximum effect. Thus, we see words and metaphors and similes used within the context of Hebrew realities of everyday life as of the time they were given. So here in Malachai, fields, orchards, vineyards, animals, wine, locusts, and more are used. Here's my point: even though the abundance God promises to Israel is in direct response to their tithing and sacrificing properly, and to being obedient to all of God's laws and commands, this goes far beyond the physical and material. Yehoveh has been teaching Israel that even when it comes to working the soil, there are spiritual counterparts. Malachai's message is not about getting Israel to adopt a rigid, merciless obedience to a set of rules, or to ultra-detail oriented formal ritual. It is about loving God as their purpose in life. It is the holistic approach to covenant life in that the visible and material is but a reflection of our invisible inward and spiritual. It is no different than when Yeshua uses His famous good fruit/bad fruit metaphor. He used tangible, physical things of common familiarity to explain the inward spiritual things concerning God's principles. Also, that motive for our obedience and behavior is paramount. Tithing and giving only so that we can receive is a bad motive. Tithing and giving as motivated by the outpouring of our love of God and respect for His commandments and morals is what we are to do, without concern as to what good we might reap other than for God's approval. Easy to say, harder to do.

Verse 13 begins the 6<sup>th</sup> and final burden. It is an oracle of both judgement and vindication. It opens with:

**CJB Malachi 3:13** ***"You have spoken strongly against me," says Yehoveh. "Yet you say, 'How have we spoken against you?'"***

Once again God accuses, and Israel deflects. God says, you did thus and so; Israel says, we don't think so. Like the 5<sup>th</sup> oracle of burden, this one is aimed at the entire community of Jews in Yehud. They see themselves as victims of a God who has not kept His promises to them either because He is not able to, or He has become unfaithful and changed His mind. Perhaps what sets this burden apart from the earlier ones is that the Jews aren't only living a rebellious life, they are saying out loud slanderous things against Yehoveh. The tone of the Jewish strawman's reply is one of denial, but mostly in the sense that whatever they said against God was justified and true. They had adopted a false and perverse view of His character that no doubt came from the Priesthood, who were their religious leaders. When the leaders give the people whatever they want so as to get their loyalty, it is called populism. The religion of the Jews of Yehud was made-over into a populist religion, just as the bulk of Christianity has done. Tell us what you want to hear and believe, Christendom's leadership says, and that's what we'll tell you from the pulpit. And, we'll tell it as if it is honestly representing God's Word. So, whatever failure of what we have told you that might occur, go see God. Blame Him, not us. I think it important to understand that as bad as reading that the people of Yehud have spoken "strongly" against God, that word misses the mark. Strongly implies much passion and harshness of words. The Hebrew word is **chazaq**, and it more means to be firmly rigid, of immovable mindset, even having an essence of violence to it. Perhaps the phrase "attack with malicious conviction" helps a bit to get the idea.

The community of returned Jews had adopted a certain widely accepted theological view of Yehoveh. It was hostile to Him. We see this view carried over into Christendom 1000 years later with the theological notion that the old, severe, bloodthirsty and harsh God of the Old Testament, The Father, has been replaced with the new, kind, merciful and loving God of the New Testament, The Son. What brings people to this conclusion is the carrying out

of justice. The Father invoked punishments as justice for His disobedient people. The Son (it is said) no longer carries out justice, as it is something antiquated and no longer needed or applicable to His followers or would-be followers. The Jews had created their own religion, just as Constantine would do the same. Thus, when God told the Jews of Yehud that they had strayed from obedience and faithfulness to Him, they couldn't see it and in fact argued that they had not, or if they had, they were perfectly justified in doing so because He had failed them.

Verse 14 says:

**CJB Malachi 3:14** *By saying, 'There is no point in serving God. What good is it to obey his orders or to walk about as mourners before Yehoveh-Tzva'ot?*

Essentially the response to God is that despite putting out the effort, obeying Him has produced no tangible results. The Young's Literal Translation brings out the sense of this verse a little better than most Bible versions.

**YLT Malachi 3:14** *Ye have said, 'A vain thing to serve God! And what gain when we kept His charge? And when we have gone in black, Because of Jehovah of Hosts?*

The claim by the Jews is threefold. There is no use in serving God. There is no profit in it. And there is nothing happy about constantly repenting and being in the required mourning-mode over their condition. The first accusation is that obeying God is hollow and full of emptiness. There is no value or moral worth in it. The second accusation is there is no material gain in obeying God's laws and commands. They didn't get more money as laborers. They didn't gain social status. They didn't see the value of their land or its production of food as increasing. So, what's the point of being obedient? The third accusation is that their grief over their poor economy... national and personal... never lets up. They obey, but things are still bad. Any of this sound familiar? It is the refrain of the Constantinian Church that the Law of Moses, God's laws and commands, are nothing but a needless heavy yoke that keeps us in oppression. There's no profit in obedience to the Law because serving God in

obedience is a vain and hollow thing, now that Christ has come to set us free from it. Both the Jews of Yehud and then Constantinian based Christianity had adopted false theological principles in order to arrive at the same conclusions that we are watching God condemn through Malachai. How easy it is to fall into that! Once we begin a journey down a road paved with manmade doctrines, which by definition is false theology, it is very difficult to make a U-turn.

Clearly the Jews had been performing things they thought were in line with God's commands. Or, at least, they had convinced themselves of it. But, in truth, it was a sham. Whatever they did, it was all for hoped-for gain. It had nothing to do with obedience or loving Yehoveh. It was selfish and devoid of any authentic piety. All they actually accomplished was to offend God and further lose their grip on their relationship with the Creator. I would like you to listen to something rather shocking when we take all this into account. But, maybe it is even more shocking when we look into the mainstream religious organizations that insist they are following God's Word, but just on face value alone, obviously are not.

**CJB Isaiah 58:2-9    <sup>2</sup> "Oh yes, they seek me day after day and [claim to] delight in knowing my ways. As if they were an upright nation that had not abandoned the rulings of their God, they ask me for just rulings and [claim] to take pleasure in closeness to God, <sup>3</sup> [asking,] 'Why should we fast, if you don't see? Why mortify ourselves, if you don't notice?' "Here is my answer: when you fast, you go about doing whatever you like, while keeping your laborers hard at work. <sup>4</sup> Your fasts lead to quarreling and fighting, to lashing out with violent blows. On a day like today, fasting like yours will not make your voice heard on high. <sup>5</sup> "Is this the sort of fast I want, a day when a person mortifies himself? Is the object to hang your head like a reed and spread sackcloth and ashes under yourself? Is this what you call a fast, a day that pleases Yehoveh? <sup>6</sup> "Here is the sort of fast I want-releasing those unjustly bound, untying the thongs of the yoke, letting the oppressed go free, breaking every yoke, <sup>7</sup> sharing your food with the hungry, taking the homeless poor into your house, clothing the naked when you see them, fulfilling your duty to your kinsmen!" <sup>8</sup>**



*Then your light will burst forth like the morning, your new skin will quickly grow over your wound; your righteousness will precede you, and Yehoveh's glory will follow you. <sup>9</sup> Then you will call, and Yehoveh will answer; you will cry, and he will say, "Here I am."*

God wants actions, not glib platitudes. Sincere worship, not religious entertainment. Obedience, not emotions.

**CJB Malachi 3:15** *We consider the arrogant happy; also, evildoers prosper; they put God to the test; nevertheless, they escape.'"*

Again, let's turn to the YLT to get a more literal sense of what Malachai said.

**YLT Malachi 3:15** *And now, we are declaring the proud happy, Yea, built up have been those doing wickedness, Yea they have tempted God, and escape.'*

Essentially, the CJB leaves untranslated the first word of this verse, which is **atta**. As we see in the YLT, it means "now". It modifies and explains the situation of the words being said. It is right to add the word "and" before it, since preceding **atta** is the letter **vav** (usually pronounced when it is a word, such as **we** or **ve**, and not just a Hebrew alphabet character). So, it is properly to be read as "and now" with the idea that verse 15 is a continuing and consequent action brought about by what comes just before it. That is, the people of Yehud seem to say that to follow God in His ways and in His Law is a vain, useless thing, and so we are going to declare ourselves proud and happy that we don't! Again, sound familiar? The Church is proud and happy that it doesn't follow God's laws and commandments. In fact, it condemns those that try to as Judaizers, if not heretics. It is those who gave up all that obedience who are happiest and most free.

Interestingly, the word typically translated as proud or arrogant is, in Hebrew, **zedim**. Indeed, it does mean that; however, the very few times it is used in the Bible (as in Isaiah 13 and Psalm 119), it always is about those who intentionally stray from God's laws and commands.



CJB **Psalm 119:21** ***You rebuke the proud, the cursed, who stray from your mitzvot.***

The remainder of Malachai 3:15 says that the people believe that it is those who are wicked who prosper the most. The wicked test God by doing what God says in His laws are wrong, or not doing what His commandments say are right, but everything turns out good for them. So, the idea is that the people tell God that the community used to do what was right, but their obedience and their allegiance to Yehoveh provided no tangible benefit to them. I want to point out so that there is no confusion: the people claiming this are not the godless but rather the God-worshippers. The community of God Believers. What they are thinking and saying is dangerously close to a philosophical view called nihilism. Nihilism is a philosophical theory that argues life is inherently meaningless and that traditional values and beliefs are unfounded. It encompasses a range of perspectives all centered on the idea of meaninglessness due to the absence of objective truth or purpose. Please notice that it is the absence of "objective" truth that is the central problem. That is, if all we have as humans is "subjective" truth, then there is no firm truth we can all count on. It is always changing and flexible; it is a moving target. The Christian theory of truth called The Law of Love is entirely subjective. It is the denial of any universal truth or standard or objective moral code that we are all to abide by. I have mine; you have yours. And, it stands right on the edge of amounting to nihilism (but not quite there!) It leads to Believers thinking it their place to make demands of God to fulfill their dreams and goals, and assuming that He must behave towards a person according to each person's standards, otherwise when this doesn't happen then they are disappointed in God. The Jews of Yehud had adopted their own contrived standards of right and wrong, worship, morality, and how to sift through their minds the goings on of the world around them to try to understand it. Their conclusion? Because God did not reward their near-nihilistic thoughts and behaviors, which they self-determined were righteous, then it meant it was better to be wicked because then you could prosper more! God had promised Abraham that if he would obey God, that God would bless him. But, now, they say that God is instead rewarding the wicked with a much better happiness. It was the full reversal of the divine justice paradigm taught to them in the Torah.

Human devised doctrines and false, agenda-driven theologies are the slipperiest of slopes that will ultimately lead to catastrophe even if at first it does not seem so. But, there is also a cost to following God's stated ways and His written moral code. The outcomes of each choice bear the opposite eternal results even if their temporal results might not seem that way.

Verse 16:

**CJB Malachi 3:16** *Then those who feared Yehoveh spoke together; and Yehoveh listened and heard. A record book was written in his presence for those who feared Yehoveh and had respect for his name.*

The verse opens with **az** (meaning "then", something that is happening at the same time of what was happening in verse 15), when a different group within the community of Believers is now addressed. That is, this is an opposing group that listened to Malachai's prophecy and spoke among themselves about it. The outcome was that they were those who feared Yehoveh. That is, they had true, sincere allegiance to Him. God observed them, heard what they were saying among themselves, liked it and acted upon it. Two different words are used when it speaks about God, first, listening, and then God, second, hearing. Here is a marvelous example of what I've spoken about so very many times over the years. God listened (**qashab**), then He heard (**shema**).

**Qashab** means to passively listen; to observe; perhaps to make note of something. But, **shema** means to *act* upon what one hears. So, how did God act? A record book was written in that contained the names of this group of sincere God-fearers.

It would be correct to see this group who feared God as the exceptions to the rule. The minority. The remnant. Truly a synonym for speaking about those who have the fear of Yehoveh, is those who live a holy or righteous lifestyle. This righteous lifestyle is NOT how they came to fear God, but rather their fear of God led them into a righteous lifestyle. As Kaiser once said in a commentary, "it was turning to God in faith for the meaning and enjoyment of life in all its mundaneness *and* spiritual potential".

I want to highlight that right at the end of this verse there appears a second characteristic of the remnant who feared God. In the CJB it was those who “had respect for His name”. The Hebrew word that is usually translated as respect or esteemed is **chashab**. Of all the versions I checked, the one that comes the closest to nailing what this word really means (from a modern Western vocabulary standpoint) was the RSV. They said, “and **thought** on His name”. **Chashab** is not a verb that is used very much in the Bible; but it means something like “to meditate” or “focus your mind upon”. To think about it. Humans focus our minds on the things that matter most to us. And this remnant group of Jews focused their minds upon God’s **shem**... His name. This doesn’t mean His name in the sense of the proper noun Yehoveh. It means His nature, and His character. And the words indicate that this remnant thought on God the opposite way that the majority did. Rather than to refute Him they agreed with Him. Rather than to blame God, they blamed themselves. When we hear God, and we agree and change to meet His standards, that is true and actual repentance. Feeling sorry, even crying crocodile tears, is NOT repentance. An authentic change of mind, which will automatically lead to an authentic change of behavior, is the definition of repentance.

What is this book that God wrote in? Here, in Hebrew, it called **sepher zikkaron**; book of remembrance. We find essentially the same term used in other places like Psalms and Esther, that mean essentially the same thing.

The RSV Bible again comes closest to the fully literal in this case.

<sup>RSV</sup> **Esther 6:1** ***On that night the king could not sleep; and he gave orders to bring the book of memorable deeds, the chronicles, and they were read before the king.***

While in Esther this indeed is an actual book in which certain memorable deeds were recorded for posterity or perhaps for some other royal purpose, when the Bible uses the same term referring to God, heaven or other spiritual circumstances, it is an illustration or a metaphor. Whatever is used to record things in the heavenly realm is compared to a book of records used by a king or a merchant. And, just like such books will have debits and credits, or record

bad deeds and good deeds separately, so is there a spiritual record keeping that divides all humanity into those who gain life, versus those who don't. There are 4 instances in the Book of Revelation that refer to a Book of Life and those faithful whose names are entered into it, versus the other side of the ledger that will suffer condemnation when the time for judgment arrives. I think that Revelation's Book of Life and the **sepher zikkaron** here in Malachai, are referring to the same thing. Other scholars don't agree and believe there is a different and separate book that records our good deeds and our bad deeds. So, essentially, the book of records of good and bad deeds are consulted at judgment, and then a person is either recorded into the Book of Life or is left out. I think this is taking metaphors and illustrations way too far and too literally. This "book" is merely an approximation so that people know that God remembers and what they do will not ever be forgotten, regardless of how much time might pass. And it will be accounted for.

This viewpoint is born out in verse 17.

**CJB Malachi 3:17** ***"They will be mine," says Yehoveh-Tzva'ot, "on the day when I compose my own special treasure. I will spare them as a man spares his own son who serves him."***

I won't spend the time to dig into each Hebrew word that opens this verse; I'll only explain this: the grammar used speaks of a future time. That is, these repentant God-fearers will in the future "be mine". When we get to the words "on the day", this is rather standard Bible-speak for the Day of Judgment... also called the Day of Yehoveh or the Day of the Lord. There is no question that this is pointing to the End Times. But, contained in this and the several earlier verses is a key to God's End Times judgment activities that flies in the face of most Church doctrine.

From the time Israel was created, and right up until our time and even into the future, God has labeled it as His precious (or special) treasure; and that is what this verse is drawing upon. However, on the Day of Yehoveh, this goes from being a spiritual attitude and promise, to an actual material fact that will be demonstrated to all. God's possession of His Special Treasure will be revealed in His activities of blessing the righteous remnant, but also in judging

the evildoers. Over and over in God's Prophets, the issue of judging, and the dealing with evil doers, has to do with God's own people... not pagans. Judging doesn't mean how we normally take it in modern English. For us, judging and condemning are almost synonymous terms. Both indicate negative outcomes. Biblically, however, judging is the term used to describe the judicial process whereby the accused is in a courtroom, and evidence (both for and against) is produced, and then the judge decides on guilt or innocence. The judge can as easily decide innocence as he can guilt and thus condemnation. God-worshippers... whether ancient Israel or those of us who have been grafted in... Believers... will go through a judicial process. We all stand accused before God. He will look at the evidence for and against us, and render a verdict. No one will be exempt. It is on the Day of Judgment when this happens, and as verse 17 explains, that is the day that Yehoveh will compose, or decide on the make-up, of His Special Treasure. His Special Treasure will be taken from among all those who claim loyalty to Him. I'm going to say it again: not from the pagan world, but from those who claim that they are God-worshippers. They will come from Synagogues, Churches, Believers congregations of all kinds, homegroups, and even individuals (who for whatever their reasons) have no congregation or group association but still claim God). Out of all these will come a remnant that God will hold up as true God-fearers. And what will happen to that remnant?

The final words of verse 17 tell us: "...I will spare them as a man spares his own son who serves him". It is telling that the Hebrew word used to identify this remnant in Malachai is **segulla**. Although the typical English wording of "they will be mine" or some such thing is not wrong, it doesn't quite catch the essence of the highly personal nature of it. **Segulla** more means something like "personal property". While indeed Yehoveh has sovereignty over the entire public domain of life on earth, they are not considered His personal property. But the righteous remnant is God's personal property. It is very similar to the situation for the land of Israel. God is sovereign over all the lands and territories on earth. But, ONLY the Promised Land... that land of Israel... is set apart as His personal property. In fact, God makes it clear to Israel that they do NOT own that land; they are but land tenants living on God's land at His pleasure. It is, therefore, at the pleasure of God as with the pleasure of a man's own son, that he awards that son with pardon for whatever he might

have done. But... to even be included as that son (that remnant) ... it must be that the son obeys his father, does his father's will, and serves him.

We will end today's study with something that sums it all up better than I could ever hope to.

CJB **Psalm 103:1-22 By David:**

***Bless YEHOVEH, my soul! Everything in me, bless his holy name! <sup>2</sup>  
Bless YEHOVEH, my soul, and forget none of his benefits! <sup>3</sup> He forgives  
all your offenses, he heals all your diseases, <sup>4</sup> he redeems your life  
from the pit, he surrounds you with grace and compassion, <sup>5</sup> he  
contents you with good as long as you live, so that your youth is  
renewed like an eagle's. <sup>6</sup> YEHOVEH brings vindication and justice to  
all who are oppressed. <sup>7</sup> He made his ways known to Moshe, his  
mighty deeds to the people of Isra'el. <sup>8</sup> YEHOVEH is merciful and  
compassionate, slow to anger and rich in grace. <sup>9</sup> He will not always  
accuse; he will not keep his anger forever. <sup>10</sup> He has not treated us as  
our sins deserve or paid us back for our offenses, <sup>11</sup> because his mercy  
toward those who fear him is as far above earth as heaven. <sup>12</sup> He has  
removed our sins from us as far as the east is from the west. <sup>13</sup> Just as  
a father has compassion on his children, YEHOVEH has compassion on  
those who fear him. <sup>14</sup> For he understands how we are made; he  
remembers that we are dust. <sup>15</sup> Yes, a human being's days are like  
grass, he sprouts like a flower in the countryside- <sup>16</sup> but when the  
wind sweeps over, it's gone; and its place knows it no more. <sup>17</sup> But the  
mercy of YEHOVEH on those who fear him is from eternity past to  
eternity future, and his righteousness extends to his children's  
children, <sup>18</sup> provided they keep his covenant and remember to follow  
his precepts. <sup>19</sup> YEHOVEH has established his throne in heaven; his  
kingly power rules everything. <sup>20</sup> Bless YEHOVEH, you angels of his,  
you mighty warriors who obey his word, who carry out his orders! <sup>21</sup>  
Bless YEHOVEH, all his troops, who serve him and do what he wants!  
<sup>22</sup> Bless YEHOVEH, all his works, in every place where he rules! Bless  
YEHOVEH, my soul!***