

The background is a light blue gradient with several realistic water droplets of various sizes scattered in the corners. The droplets have highlights and shadows, giving them a three-dimensional appearance.

Psalm 73

(‘The Message’ translation of the Bible)

1-5 No doubt about it! God is good - good to good people, good to the good-hearted. But I nearly missed it, missed seeing his goodness. I was looking the other way, looking up to the people at the top, envying the wicked who have it made, who have nothing to worry about, not a care in the whole wide world.

(Psalm73 – MSG)

6-10 *Pretentious with arrogance, they wear the latest fashions in violence, pampered and overfed, decked out in silk bows of silliness. They jeer, using words to kill; they bully their way with words. They're full of hot air, loudmouths disturbing the peace. People actually listen to them—can you believe it? Like thirsty puppies, they lap up their words. (Psalm 73 – MSG)*

11-14 *What's going on here? Is God out to lunch? Nobody's tending the store. The wicked get by with everything; they have it made, piling up riches. I've been stupid to play by the rules; what has it gotten me? A long run of bad luck, that's what - a slap in the face every time I walk out the door. (Psalm 73 – MSG)*

15-20 If I'd have given in and talked like this, I would have betrayed your dear children. Still, when I tried to figure it out, all I got was a splitting headache...until I entered the sanctuary of God. Then I saw the whole picture: the slippery road you've put them on, with a final crash in a ditch of delusions. In the blink of an eye, disaster! A blind curve in the dark, and - nightmare! We wake up and rub our eyes. . . . nothing! There's nothing to them. And there never was. (Psalm 73 – MSG)

21-24 *When I was beleaguered and bitter, totally consumed by envy, I was totally ignorant, a dumb ox in your very presence. I'm still in your presence but you've taken my hand. You wisely and tenderly lead me, and then you bless me. (Psalm 73 – MSG)*

25-28 You're all I want in heaven! You're all I want on earth! When my skin sags and my bones get brittle, God is rock-firm and faithful. Look! Those who left you are falling apart! Deserters, they'll never be heard from again. But I'm in the very presence of GOD - oh, how refreshing it is! I've made Lord GOD my home. GOD, I'm telling the world what you do! (Psalm 73 – MSG)

⁷ But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. ⁸ We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; ⁹ persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. ¹⁰ We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. ¹¹ For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that his life may also be revealed in our mortal body. ¹² So then, death is at work in us, but life is at work in you. (2 Corinthians 4:7 – 12)

¹³ It is written: “I believed; therefore I have spoken.” Since we have that same spirit of faith, we also believe and therefore speak, ¹⁴ because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead will also raise us with Jesus and present us with you to himself. ¹⁵ All this is for your benefit, so that the grace that is reaching more and more people may cause thanksgiving to overflow to the glory of God.

¹⁶ Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. ¹⁷ For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. ¹⁸ So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal. (2 Corinthians 4:13 – 18)

³¹ What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? ³² He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? ³³ Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. ³⁴ Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. ³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? ³⁶ As it is written: “For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.” **(Romans 8:31 – 36)**

37 No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. 38 For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, 39 neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:37 – 39)