

# *It Is Written*

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## SPOILER ALERT: JESUS WINS

By Ken Green

"Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war. On his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords" (Revelation 19:11, 16, ESV).

Scripture tells us repeatedly and emphatically that Jesus Christ, the Mighty Warrior, is always victorious. So, make no mistake about it. Jesus is going to win. Someday the clouds will break open, and we will see Him coming in victory (Rev. 19:11).

His powerful appearance will be breathtaking and terrifying: "His eyes are like a flame of fire. . . . He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood, and the name by which he is called is The Word of God. . . . From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. On his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords" (19:12–13, 15–16). In the end, Jesus Christ wins.

All of history leads to Jesus' victory, and all of God's promises culminate in Jesus. We experience all of God's promises through Jesus.

Do you need peace? That calm assurance that God is in control? Ephesians 2:14 assures us that Jesus "himself is our peace." God doesn't dispense peace like a pharmacist filling a prescription. He gives us Himself.

God doesn't have to give us something. He is the something! Jesus Christ fulfills the promise of God's peace.

It's Christ's presence that takes away fear. It's Christ's sovereignty that assures and calms us in the face of doubts. It's Christ's goodness that renews us when we are weighed down by despair. It's Christ's watchfulness and intervention that keep us from faltering. It's Christ's inevitable victory that assures us we will not fail.

One of the most difficult things about the trials in our lives is the not knowing. The reason we fear, doubt, despair, and falter is that we don't know how it's all going to end.

All of us live with some level of uncertainty. You're not alone in this struggle. We all have some insecurity in our lives. We're all living with some question marks. Yours might have the form of a health crisis, a broken relationship, a financial problem, a wandering child, a self-destructive family member. There are stresses that sometimes keep us awake at night. There are issues that linger on the edges of our thoughts and never fully go away. If we really knew when and how the circumstance would end, you might be okay. If we could foresee that it would end well, then we could bear the waiting. If we could predict with certainty that it would end badly, then, at least we might prepare ourselves for what's to come.

But it's the not knowing that pushes us to the limit. We fixate on our momentary trials (2 Cor. 4:17) and wonder, How will this finish? If only we knew.

We know. Or we should. Read the end of the Book. God is always victorious. Ultimately, I will not fail. I will experience some pains and losses along the way. But in the end, because Jesus wins, so do I.

# Reasoning From Scriptures

By Doy Moyer

No reasoning takes place without drawing conclusions from implications. Just try it. Statements and examples often come with the expectation that we draw further conclusions. The point of reasoning and discerning is that we are capable of taking what is explicitly given, then reasoning to conclusions that are, in fact, necessary. For example:

1. The list of sins given in Galatians 5:19-21 concludes with “things like these.” What things? How do we know what is “like these”? How can God expect us to figure that out without explicitly stating it?

2. The Hebrew writer speaks of the mature, who “because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil” (Hebrews 5:12-14). If something is explicitly stated, then what discerning is needed? We just take it at face value and do it or not. To discern, however, is to apply reason, to think it out and through, to draw conclusions based upon principle. Discerning “good and evil” is, of course, vital to one’s spiritual growth and maturity. To do it, however, requires drawing conclusions that are not explicitly stated. Does anyone seriously want to argue that “necessary inferences” are not vital for understanding God’s will? If so, they’ll need a good explanation (based on inference, mind you) for Galatians 5 and Hebrews 5, both of which require drawing conclusions about good and evil beyond what the text explicitly states. We may debate the particulars of the conclusions, but the principle here is absolute, and it requires reasoning from implications.

3. Jesus expected the people to know and believe certain things based on what the Law said, even though not specifically stated. “I am the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob” conveyed more than what the Sadducees were discerning (Matthew 22:32). Jesus expected them to know and believe certain things based on this passage, even though not specifically stated here.

4. Jesus chastised the Pharisees for their failing to properly apply the concept of honoring father and mother, a principle they sacrificed to their view of “Corban” (Mark 7 — “Corban” is a transliteration of a Hebrew term that means a gift or offering dedicated to God; it was considered an irrevocable vow). But how were they to know that such an application to parents was necessary? Should they have drawn a conclusion about this that was, in the end, binding upon their actions and attitudes?

5. Since there was no specific statement against those from Judah serving as priests (Hebrews 7:14), how were they supposed to know such was forbidden? Were they expected to reason to the necessary principle, or should they have waited for a specific statement? And was that principle binding or not? Did God’s silence on the issue of other tribes matter at all?

6. How did the people know to keep every Sabbath holy? Where, in the giving of the Law, do we find God specifically stating that “every single Sabbath” is to be kept holy? All God said was to keep the Sabbath holy. But which one? Every one? Every third one? Once a month? Once a year? “Every one” (every time the Sabbath rolls around) is gathered by inference, and God expected them to get it. One may find this painfully obvious, but such is the nature of many implications and inferences. Many are so self-evident that they need no further argument and we hardly think about it. Even so, the children of Israel failed to obey this.

The list can go on. The point is that understanding God’s will requires the reasoning process. If this is the case, is it not significant that we develop our reasoning abilities — to love God with all the mind — so that we draw proper conclusions? It is not easy because we all make mistakes in our reasoning. Yet, this should not stop us from striving to develop our thinking, becoming more mature, training our senses to discern good and evil. God gave us minds to think His thoughts after Him. May God help us do so.