

THE BIBLICAL TRUTH ABOUT MT 16:18-19 THE ROCK, THE GATES, THE KEYS, AND BINDING AND LOOSING

By Marie Casale
Copyright © 2002

Mat. 16:18-19 says, "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this ROCK I will build my church; and the GATES of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the KEYS of the Kingdom of Heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt BIND on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt LOOSE on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

These words are quoted by Roman Catholics to justify their doctrine of Papal authority. They say that Peter was the first Pope since he was the ROCK on which the church was built. And therefore the authority of the Pope to BIND and LOOSE doctrine comes down from him. These words were used in the same way in recent years to establish the Peter Primacy Doctrine and authority of the 'Chief Apostle' in the Worldwide Church of God. <http://www.cog-ff.com/html/>(See Feb 19, 1979 article, *And Now Christ Sets Church Back On Track Doctrinally* at <http://www.cog-ff.com/Library/html/publications.html>)

But what does the Bible really say about Mat 16:18-19? In order to know whether the Catholic interpretation of this verse is true, you must read it in context as well as compare it with related scriptures in the rest of the Bible.

SCRIPTURES THAT SUPPORT THE DOCTRINE OF PETER AS LEADER

Here are scriptures used to show Peter was leader of the apostles.

- * Matthew 10:2 Now the names of the twelve apostles are these; The first, Simon, who is called Peter. Here, Peter is called 'the first'.
- * Matthew 16:16-19 ...And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.
- * John 21:15-17 The commission, "Feed My Sheep" is three times given to Peter.
- * Acts 2:14-41 On the Day of Pentecost, it was Peter who gave the first sermon and 3,000 were converted.
- * Acts 10&11 Peter was the first to open salvation to Gentiles
- * Acts 15 When the question arose about whether circumcision was required, there was much disputation about the matter until Peter settled it. Verse 7 ...Peter rose up and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe. After Peter had settled the matter, verse 15 ...then all the multitude kept silence, and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul, declaring what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them. Then James rose and confirmed what Peter had said. Verse 14 ...Simeon (Peter) hath declared how

God at the first did visit the Gentiles... Galatians 2:7 tells us that Paul was the Apostle to the Gentiles while Peter was Apostle to the Jews. Yet Peter was chosen to open salvation first to Gentiles, not Paul.

SCRIPTURES SUPPORTING THE VIEW THAT PETER WAS NOT LEADER

Here are scriptures used to show that Peter was NOT leader of the apostles.

* Luk 22:24-27 On the Passover night before Jesus died, there was a dispute among the disciples about which of them should be greatest. If Jesus had been teaching them that Peter was going to be greatest, and they all understood it from the time Jesus had said to Peter that he was the rock, there would have been no such argument. Jesus had a golden opportunity here to tell them all that Peter was in charge, but he did not. Instead, he said that they were not to be like kings who exercise authority and lordship, but to be like servants.

* Mat 20:20-28 When the mother of James & John asked that her sons might sit on the right and left of Jesus in his kingdom, Jesus did not say he had already given the Chief Apostle position to Peter. He said to her that only the Father knows who shall have those positions, and he reminded them again that they were not to exercise dominion and authority like kings, but to be like servants.

* Mar 16:9 At his resurrection, Jesus appeared first to Mary Magdalene, not to Peter.

* Acts 1:15-26 Peter spoke out among 120 disciples, saying that a man should be chosen to replace Judas Iscariot, but he did not exercise any authority as Chief Apostle to appoint the man. Instead, a man was chosen by lot.

* Gal 1 tells us that Paul did not get his theological training from the Jerusalem Church under Peter's authority. He was taught directly by Jesus Christ (Gal 1:11-12, 16-17) Three years went by from the time Paul was converted before he went to Jerusalem to see Peter and then abode with him only fifteen days. (Verse 18) Gal 2:1 tells us that Paul did not go again to Jerusalem until 14 years later. Gal 2:6 also tells us Paul's attitude toward those in Jerusalem who 'seemed to be somewhat'. "But of these who seemed to be somewhat, (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth no man's person:) for they who seemed [to be somewhat] in conference added nothing to me." If Peter had been Chief Apostle, surely Paul would not have said this, but would have acknowledged the authority of Peter. In verse 9 he states that James, Peter and John seemed to be pillars, that is having the chief positions in the church. But he put James first of these three, not Peter.

* Gal 2:11-14 It is true that Peter had been the one whom God used to first call Gentiles. (Acts 10&11) Yet, when he came to Antioch and behaved himself against the truth by not being willing to associate with Gentiles, Paul corrected him publically. Would Paul have done this if he knew Peter was in a position of authority over all the disciples? (Compare Acts 23:4-5)

The conclusion of these scriptures is that there are good arguments both for and against the doctrine of Peter being Chief Apostle. The truth is that there is no plain scripture we can turn to that says Peter was Chief Apostle. How, then do we explain Mat 16:18-19 seeming to show that Peter was the leader?

THE CONTEXT

First, look at the context. Jesus had asked the disciples who they thought he was. Peter answered, "Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God." It is possible that Jesus could have been referring to this statement rather than Peter himself as the foundational rock on which the Church is built. After all, Peter was not the first to say that Jesus was the Christ, the son of God. John the Baptist had said so in Jo 1:34. Andrew, Peter's brother had said so in Jo 1:41 when he first introduced Peter to Jesus. Nathanael also said so when he first met Jesus (Jo 1:49). When you think about it, all Christian churches as they are built may disagree in many doctrines, but they have this in common as their foundational belief, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

THE ROCK

Let's examine the words. Jesus said, "That thou art Peter (petros), and upon this ROCK (petra) I will build my church". The Church of God says that 'petra' is a massive craggy rock while 'petros' is a small stone. Catholics say 'petra' and 'petros' are simply masculine and feminine forms of the same word. The truth is that it can be proved that 'petra' is a massive rock, but it cannot be proved whether 'petros' is a massive rock or a small stone because in the New Testament 'petros' is never used to indicate a particular size rock, but is used only for the name of Peter. Most other New Testament occasions of the word 'stone' are translated from the Greek word 'lithos', not 'petros'. Looking at the Aramaic word 'Cephas' or 'kepha' from which Peter's name is derived, is not much help in clearing this up. 'Kepha' can be used to translate any of the common Hebrew words for rock: 'sela' and 'tsûr' (both usually rendered in the Greek Septuagint as 'petra') as well as 'eben', a stone (usually rendered 'lithos' in Greek).

Looking at Peter's epistles are also no help in clearing this up either, since Peter nowhere referred to himself as the rock (petra) on which the church is built, nor did he refer to himself as a small stone.

Furthermore, the name Petros could be an 'explanation' of the Aramaic 'kepha' rather than a 'translation' into Greek. Notice Jhn 1:42 And he (Andrew) brought him(Peter) to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, (Aramaic) which is by interpretation, A stone. (petros) The word 'interpretation' here is from the Greek 'hermeneuo'. Just one verse before in verse 41 there is another Greek word for interpretation. Jhn 1:41 He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. The word for 'interpreted' here is 'methermeneuo'. This word means to translate into the language of one with whom I wish to communicate, to interpret. However the word used in verse 41, 'hermeneuo', means to explain or expound in words as well as to translate. So was the name 'petros' a 'translation' into Greek as is always assumed - or simply an 'explanation' of the Aramaic 'kepha'?

The conclusion here is that neither the Church of God nor the Catholic Church should be so dogmatic as to their assertions about what the name 'petros' means because whether Jesus meant Petros,/Cephas to indicate a large craggy rock or a small stone simply cannot be proven for sure as far as the language is concerned.

The word 'petra' is a different story. Jesus said plainly that he would build the church upon PETRA, not on 'petros' - unless 'petros' is, as the Catholic Church says, simply the masculine form of petra.

Unlike 'petros', there are other places in the New Testament where 'petra' is used that leave no doubt as to its meaning.

* Mat 27:60 And laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the ROCK (petra): and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed.

* Mar 15:46 And he bought fine linen, and took him down, and wrapped him in the linen, and laid him in a sepulchre which was hewn out of a ROCK (petra), and rolled a stone unto the door of the sepulchre.

Note: These verses tell us that the sepulchre of Jesus was hewn out of a great and massive ROCK (petra) Therefore we know from these scriptures what size rock petra is.

* 1Co 10:4. And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual ROCK (petra) that followed them: and that ROCK (petra) was Christ.

Note: Here, CHRIST is plainly the PETRA, the ROCK

* Rom 9:33 As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and ROCK (petra) of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

* 1Pe 2:6-8 Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe [he is] precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, And a stone of stumbling, and a ROCK (petra) of offence, [even to them] which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.

Note: In these verses, one of which is in the book of Peter, Jesus is called the ROCK (petra) of offense. So in the New Testament there are now three verses saying plainly that Jesus is the PETRA ROCK. And Matthew 16:16 says, "upon this rock (petra) I will build my church.

* Mat 7:24-25 Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a ROCK (petra): And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a ROCK (petra).

* Luk 6:47-48 Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will shew you to whom he is like: He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a ROCK (petra): and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a ROCK (petra).

Note: These scriptures are in the context of the Sermon on the Mount. I counted 50 principles and commandments in the Sermon on the Mount which are the sayings of Jesus as the PETRA, the massive ROCK foundation on which we should build our spiritual house.

So if these sayings are referred to as the ROCK (petra), there is no reason why the saying of Peter in Mat 16:16, "Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God", cannot be the ROCK (petra) too instead of Peter himself.

Let's look at some other scriptures showing how ministers such as Peter should be regarded and how the church or house of God is to be built...

* 1Co 3:4-5 For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal? Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?

Note: And who also is Peter but a minister by whom ye believed?

* 1Co 3:6-7 I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.

Note: Neither is Peter anything, but God that giveth the increase.

* 1Co 3:8-9 Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour. For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.

Note: Here Paul is saying that the apostles are labourers in building the church which is the people of God. This also applies to Peter.

* 1Co 3:10-12 According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble...

Note: Notice how Paul is saying that he is laying the foundation of Jesus Christ, not the foundation of Peter. He is saying, another will come after him and continue building on the church, but let him take heed how he is building on the foundation of Jesus Christ lest he build wood, hay or stubble, things which are easily burned up. If Paul is warning here about how future ministers continue building, what does this say about infallibility?

* Col 2:6-7 As ye have therefore received the Lord Jesus Christ, so walk ye in him.: Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.

Note: Here, individual Christians are to be rooted and built in Christ, not in Peter.

* Eph 2:19-20 Now, therefore, ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and of the household of God. And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.

Note: This verse could have said that Peter was the chief corner stone after Christ, but it did not. Peter is counted with all the apostles as a foundation of the house of God with Jesus Christ as the CHIEF STONE.

* 1Pe 2:5-6 Ye also as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold I lay in Sion a CHIEF CORNER STONE, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.

Note: Here, Peter himself says that individual Christians are living stones in the spiritual house God is building and that Jesus Christ is the chief STONE upon which we 'as smaller stones' are built.

THE GATES

The next statement is: "and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." The word 'hell' here is from the Greek word 'hades' which simply means the grave. The grave is where the dead are buried. Dan 12:2 tells us that they are 'sleeping in the dust of the earth'. Dan 12:2 And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame [and] everlasting contempt. So Jesus gave the promise here that the church would never come to an end, cease to exist, be buried in the dust or 'die out'.

Many interpret the 'gates of hell' to mean that Jesus gave the promise of infallibility to the church. Believing this is to open yourself wide for deception to enter in. There are many other scriptures that do not support the idea of infallibility. For example, the seven churches of Revelation 2 and 3, which Christ said are his churches, contain errors in doctrines, deeds and attitudes. Jesus admonished them to correct and overcome these errors. Also Jesus warned his disciples in Mt 24 to "Take heed that no man deceive you, for many will come in my name saying that I am the Christ, and shall deceive many." 2Pe 2:1 warns that "there shall be false teachers AMONG YOU." There would be no need for such warnings if there was such a thing as infallibility. It is our individual responsibility to "prove all things and hold fast that which is good. (1Th5:21) Do not just take for granted that what you are taught is true, but search the scriptures to see whether those things are so. (Act 17:11) It is unwise to give over our responsibility to search the scriptures to any man supposing him to be infallible.

A scripture often quoted that supposedly proves RCC infallibility is 1Ti 3:15 which says that the church is the pillar and ground of the truth. Actually what this statement proves is that the church is identified (by God) as any people who hold fast to the truth. A ground is like something that is receptive to electricity. A true Christian will receive the truth. Those who are not true Christians will not be receptive. The truth is what is infallible. People can claim to be the true church or true Christians but that does not make it so. In fact, Jesus said that many will be astonished and say to him in that day, "We preached and taught in your name!... and he will say, depart from me." (Mt 7:22) How do we know we are in the truth? Jesus said, "If ye CONTINUE IN MY WORD, then are ye my disciples indeed; and you shall know the truth..." (Jo 8:31) This means we must always examine ourselves, as individuals and as churches to see whether we are abiding in the words of Jesus. Pointing to a supposed unbroken line of successors since Peter is no proof that you are in the truth. Only pointing to the words of Christ puts you in the truth. The book of 1Jo has several examples of SAYING that we know him vs ACTUALLY knowing him. "He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments is a liar and the truth is not in him." 1Jo 2:4 for example.

THE KEYS

What are the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven that Jesus gave to Peter? The RCC and the Church of God in the last days of Herbert Armstrong interpreted them as the keys of authority by

comparing them with Isa 22:21-22 where the Lord gave Shebna's job as being over the king's house to Eliakim. "And I will clothe him (Eliakim) with thy (Shebna's) robe, and strengthen him with thy girdle, and I will commit thy government into his hand: and he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah. And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open." The RCC equates this key of the house of David with the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven given to Peter by which Peter received authority as pope over the church. But if the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven had to do with authority given to Peter, wouldn't he have mentioned in his writings that he was the Chief Apostle or Pope or leader over the New Testament Church? Surely he would. Wouldn't the other apostles have testified plainly that he was the one to follow, the leader of the apostles? Surely they would. There are certainly scriptures showing that Peter exhibited leadership, but none that plainly say that he was the leader whom everyone must obey.

The truth is that the key of the house of David which represents authority was not given to Peter, because Rev 3:7 says, "And to the angel of the church of Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the 'key of David', he that openeth and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth;" This scripture tells us that Jesus Christ is the one who HAS the key of David. He alone has the authority to open and shut. He has not given this key to anyone. Moreover, anyone claiming to have this key of authority through supposed inheritance from Peter are actually usurping the throne of Jesus Christ.

What Jesus gave to Peter were the 'keys of the Kingdom of Heaven'. A key OPENS something. The key of the Kingdom of Heaven OPENS the Kingdom of Heaven to us. Is there anything in Peter's writings which show what will open to us the Kingdom of Heaven? YES! Read 2Pe 1:5-11 "And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your FAITH, VIRTUE; and to virtue KNOWLEDGE; and to knowledge TEMPERANCE; and to temperance PATIENCE; and to patience GODLINESS; and to godliness BROTHERLY KINDNESS; and to brotherly kindness CHARITY. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: FOR IF YE DO THESE THINGS, YE SHALL NEVER FALL. FOR SO AN ENTRANCE SHALL BE MINISTERED UNTO YOU ABUNDANTLY INTO THE EVERLASTING KINGDOM OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST." These things, then: FAITH, VIRTUE, KNOWLEDGE, TEMPERANCE, PATIENCE, GODLINESS, BROTHERLY KINDNESS, AND CHARITY are the KEYS which shall open to us the Kingdom of Heaven. These are the keys which Jesus Christ gave to Peter, a special gift for a beloved disciple who answered in the presence of all the disciples that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God.

BINDING AND LOOSING

Now we have the next statement: "and whatsoever thou shalt BIND on earth shall be BOUND in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt LOOSE on earth shall be LOOSED in heaven." The RCC explains this as Jesus giving Peter the authority to bind and loose doctrine in the church. Mt 18:15-19 tells us that 'binding and loosing' was not only given to Peter, but to all the disciples. "Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and

him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican. Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall BIND on earth shall be BOUND in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall LOOSE on earth shall be LOOSED in heaven." You see how binding and loosing has to do with judgments concerning problems between brethren. Why is the judgment bound or loosed in heaven? Because if you follow the procedure outlined here, GOD HIMSELF WILL BE WITH YOU IN THE JUDGMENT. God himself will stand on the side of the person who is in the right. He will be an enemy to your enemies.

It has been said that Mt 18 is a 'specific' use of binding and loosing; but Jesus gave Peter a 'general' authority to bind and loose concerning judgments made by the church. So is this true? Are the church leaders allowed to bind or loose anything they want upon the laity? To answer this we must examine other scriptures concerning binding and loosing.

IMPROPER USE OF BINDING

Notice Mt 23:1-4 "Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples, Saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not. For they BIND heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers." Here, undoubtedly was a misuse of binding by religious leaders. The Scribes and Pharisees were using their religious authority to 'bind heavy burdens' upon people. A good example is how they did this with the Sabbath command. They bound so many little do's and don't's to it that it became a burden for people rather than the blessing God intended. For example, they said that Jesus was breaking the Sabbath because he healed people and plucked a few ears of corn to eat on the Sabbath. They bound their own traditions on people such as washing up to the elbow. (Mr 7:5) Neither Jesus nor his disciples obeyed these commandments of men which were bound upon them. This is why they were accused.

All of us who are in any position of authority, whether minister or parent or employer should examine ourselves to see if we are binding heavy burdens upon those subject to us. Indeed the Lord says in Mt 11:30, "My burden is light"; and again in 1Jo 5:3 "For this is the love of God that we keep his commandments and his commandments are not grievous." And Isa 58:6 says, Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to LOOSE the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? So if you believe that your religious leader has the authority to bind rules and regulations on you which are not in the Bible and that those are bound in heaven, you are deceived and are following a man instead of Christ.

IMPROPER USE OF LOOSING

In Hab 1:3-4, we have an example of improper 'loosing': "Why dost thou show me iniquity, and cause me to behold grievance? for spoiling and violence are before me; and there are that raise up strife and contention. Therefore the law is SLACKED (loosed), and judgment doth never go

forth: for the wicked doth compass about the righteous; therefore wrong judgment proceedeth." Here we find people who loose the laws of God. But does God want his laws loosed? Let the Bible answer!

Deut 11:18 Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul, and BIND them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes.

Pr 3:1-3 My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments: For length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add to thee. Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: BIND them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart:

Pr 6:20-21 My son, keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother: BIND them continually upon thine heart, and tie them about thy neck.

Pr 7:1-5 My son, keep my words, and lay up my commandments with thee. Keep my commandments, and live; and my law as the apple of thine eye. BIND them upon thy fingers, write them upon the table of thine heart.

God absolutely does not want his commandments loosed. Even in the very end of the book of Revelation he admonishes once more: "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life and enter in through the gates into the city." (Rev 22:14) So if you believe that your religious leader has the authority to loose any of the commandments of God, you are deceived. For example, the RCC loosed the Sabbath commandment and changed it to Sunday worship. They loosed the commandment against making graven images. If you think these commandments are loosed in heaven, you are deceived and are following a man instead of Christ.

CONCLUSION

If you read Mt 16:18-19 in context only and not compare it with the rest of scripture, it is easy to assume that Jesus gave authority over the church to Peter. In the RCC this assumption led to the supposed infallible authority of a Pope. In the Church of God it led to the supposed infallible authority of a Chief Apostle. But because God has never guaranteed any man's infallibility, (no scripture can be found assuring it) this doctrine has caused wholesale deception and falling away from many original truths in order to follow the orders of a man as well as giving over to a leader our personal responsibility before God to study, prove all things and walk faithfully in HIS WORDS regardless of what our peers might do. God has allowed deception in the world because those who will not WATCH for sin and error (from within and without ourselves and our churches) and REPENT are APPOINTED to it, leaders and followers alike. Jesus said, "If the blind lead the blind, they both will fall into the ditch." (Mt 15:14) This statement PROVES that leaders are capable of spiritual blindness, does it not? The ultimate deception will be the 'Beast' who will be a 'leader' whom all the world will admire and follow except those written in the Lamb's book of life. (Rev 13:1-10) Notice in vs 10 the words that follow the description of the beast. "He that LEADETH into captivity shall himself go into captivity... here is the patience and the faith of the saints." God will not be mocked either by leaders or followers. But every man shall be rewarded according as his own work shall be.