

A Character Study Of The Apostle Peter

So, why have a study on Peter? Out of all the New Testament bible characters, I feel that Peter is a good example of God choosing an absolutely common everyday "Joe" to serve him; and to be able to accomplish great things through him.

In Peter, we can often see a little of ourselves by what he says and does; so we can empathize and relate to him in various ways. Therefore the big take-away from this study is; we can all say, "if God can use someone like Peter, God can use me also." Keep in mind that though this is a study about Peter, the study is really about Jesus and this particular apostle.

In this study we will have a well balanced spiritual diet of both the milk and the meat of God's word. So this study will be beneficial to both the new Christian and the mature Christian. We'll drink the milk in the sense that we'll witness Jesus, as he starts his ministry and chooses his disciples, he teaches them the elementary teachings of his law first before moving on to weightier teachings, such as types.

I want us to see how awesome our God is; how he is in total control of world events past and present, how he has proven his supremacy as Sovereign God by making prophecies in advance and having them all come to pass accurately and having a recorded history that is sure and reliable.

I will show that it is Jesus God of the Holy Trinity who has always been intimately involved in the careful guidance of his people showing himself in various forms; protecting, fighting for, correcting and blessing his flock. We will go over world history so as to get a 'sense of the mood' of the people of that day.

The Jews in the time of Christ were waiting for the Messiah to come with great expectation that it would happen soon. The Messiah they were told in **Jer. 31:31** would give them a new law. So when John the Baptist and Jesus the Messiah arrive on the scene, they got busy teaching his new law. Listen to these words of Jesus.

Luke 16:16 (NIV)

"The Law and the Prophets were proclaimed until John. Since that time, the good news of the kingdom of God is being preached, and everyone is forcing his way into it."

Did you notice the demarcation words pointing to an ending point for the old law and a starting point for the new law? The old law-UNTIL John/SINCE THAT TIME-the gospel.

So right up to the start of John the Baptist's ministry, the Old Testament Law was taught. By God's authority, John started preaching the basic tenants of this new law that would replace the old law, the gospel of the Kingdom of God.

So the people were expected to follow John's teachings (**Mat.3:15, Lk.7:30**) which were to prepare God's people for the Messiah, preaching repentance, to make straight paths, leveling mountains and filling valleys, and turning fathers hearts to their children and the children's hearts back to their fathers.

The people clamored in droves to respond to John. And the proof of those changed hearts was the response to confess their sins and be baptized for the remission of those sins. This made their hearts ready to accept the teachings of the Savior. Though John and Jesus were teaching the gospel of the Kingdom of God which was Jesus' "last will and testament" for his people to follow, they were living during and under the Law of Moses, and so Jesus lived according to that law while he was alive.

Matthew 5:17-18 (NASB)

"Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill. "For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished.

Jesus is the testator of his 'will', the New Testament, and it replaced the Old Testament and was in full force upon his death.

Jesus had this authority from God to give us a new law, for our Jesus has always been the law giver! In the Old Testament, **Genesis 2:16-17 (NASB)**

'The LORD God commanded the man, saying, "From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die."

In the following verses of **Ex.3:2-7** the Angel of the Lord identifies himself as God and LORD Jehovah!, the great I Am!; and he commissioned Moses to lead Israel out of Egypt and give them a new law from God, which we now call the Old Testament because it was replaced with another new law, the New Testament.

In **Ex. 13:21** and **14:19**, it was the Angel of the LORD (Jehovah Jesus) who led Israel out of Egypt as a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night and stood between Israel's enemies protecting them from harm, *and* he gave them the law. Listen to the Angel of the LORD's words concerning this law.

Exodus 20:1-3 (NASB) Then God spoke all these words, saying, "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. "You shall have no other gods before Me.

Jdg 2:1 Then the Angel of the LORD came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and said: "I led you up from Egypt and brought you to the land of which I swore to your fathers; and I said, 'I will never break My covenant with you."

Did you notice the personal pronouns; I, me and my? '**I** led you', 'have no other gods before **me**' and '**my covenant.**'

The prophet **Malachi** tells us in **3:1** Jesus was not just the Angel of the LORD, but the Angel of the Covenant too. In Hebrew this name is; Malach Habberith. Most translations use the word 'messenger' in this verse, just know it is the same Hebrew word as angel (malach) and habberith which is covenant. Jesus was the giver of the law as read in this verse in Malachi.

Malachi 3:1 (NIV)

"See, I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come," says the LORD Almighty.

John the baptist is the messenger who prepares the way for the LORD as prophesied in **Is. 40:3-5** and in **Mal. 4:5-6**. The Messenger of the Covenant is a title of Jesus God: Angel of the Covenant. It is mind blowing to realize that Jesus God is prophesying about himself delivering once again a new law to the people, by a prophet named Malachi; which means my messenger! Paul identifies Jesus in the O.T.

1Co 10:1-4 "I want you to remember, my friends, what happened to our ancestors who followed Moses. They were all under the protection of the cloud, and all passed safely through the Red Sea. In the cloud and in the sea they were all baptized as followers of Moses. All ate the same spiritual bread and drank the same spiritual drink. They drank from the spiritual rock that went with them; and that rock was Christ himself."

There is so much meat to chew on in these four verses, let's break them down. The meat here are types; these verses are loaded with them. Paul's audience was acquainted with this Old Testament story of Moses leading Israel out of Egypt. As you recall, they were just saved from the tenth plague; which was the destroying angel led by the Angel of the LORD. They were saved by the blood of the Passover lamb.

The Passover lamb was a type of Jesus. Though the Israelites did not realize it at the time; the sacrificial lamb was a foreshadow of the actual sacrificial lamb to come in the future, Jesus, who died for us all.

The Angel of the LORD, Jesus, would see the lambs blood on the door posts of the the Israelite's home and the destroying angel would pass-over that home. This too is a type, on the last great day, the day of judgment, the Lord and his angels will gather his people, those who have been redeemed by his blood and those who have not will be destroyed.

Another type or symbol of this is that Israel was cleansed of the sins they got while in the land of sin, Egypt, by the blood of the lamb and they were delivered out of the land of sin to the promised land, Canaan.

Another type concerning their slavery in Egypt is this; that Israel was a slave to sin in Egypt, and once saved by the blood of the lamb, they were delivered out of sin (Egypt) and set free from sin and led to the promised land by Moses, so they were led by the Spirit since Moses was a prophet and who also was a type of Jesus. The types just keep coming!

Ex.11:7 tells us, 'the Lord makes a distinction between Egypt and Israel', meaning he makes a distinction between the holy (those who have been sanctified by his blood) and the profane (those not) and between believers and non-believers, the same as today. More types!!

Paul said they were all protected by the cloud, and that cloud if you remember was the pillar of cloud that lead them by day and at night changed into the pillar of fire, and that was the Angel of the LORD, whom we know is Jesus, who has told us, 'I will never leave you nor forsake you.' The likenesses are amazing.

Paul also mentions that Israel was baptized into the cloud and sea (Jesus) as followers of Moses, and Moses was a prophet and law-giver and was himself a type of Christ. (as all the prophets were: Dt.18)

So God's people, O.T. and N.T. have been baptized into Christ who was **the** Prophet and law giver, as followers!

Paul also says that they ate the spiritual bread, making a type equating spiritual bread and manna, which is a type of bread that Jesus would give us, his words of life and body, as read in **John chapter 6:32-35**.

And he says they drank the spiritual water from the rock that followed them in the desert, making a type equating the water that gushed from the rock and the spiritual water that Jesus offers as to the Samaritan woman in **John 4:10 (NIV)**

Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water."

and, **John 6:35 (NIV)** Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty.

John 7:37-39

On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him." By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been

given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified. Paul takes all the guess-work out of the mystery of this particular type, he flat out tells us that the spiritual rock that was with them in the desert was Jesus the Messiah!!

Wow! **1 Cor.10:1-4** is amazing in the study of types. Paul feeds us MEAT! But two verses later he says 10:6 "Now, all of this is an **example** for us, to warn us not to desire evil things, as they did..." & 11 "All these things happened to them as **examples** for others, and they were written down as a warning for us. For we live at a time when the end is about to come." Example is; 'Tupos' in Greek which is type.

And **Romans 15:4** "For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope."

Paul tells us that the events in the O.T. were recorded for us so that we can learn from the mistakes made in the past by others so as to avoid them ourselves; likewise we can emulate their good behavior and so please God.

So the study of types gives us a deeper knowledge of God's word producing in us endurance, encouragement and hope.

To better understand Peter, we need to get some context as to what was going on prior to and at that time in the Holy Land. We'll take a quick look at the time from the fall of Israel; the fall of Judah, the Babylonian exile and the dreams that Daniel interpreted and had himself while there; and the 400 year period between the Old and New testaments, the time known as the silent years. Daniel was able to give us historically accurate prophecies concerning world history during the 'silent period'.

During the time of the kings in Israel's history the general pattern of religious behavior was; as the king goes, so goes the nation.

If the king was a good and faithful king, so were the people of the land. If the king did evil in God's sight, so too the people would do evil in God's sight.

Oddly enough, it was the world's most wisest man that brought in pagan worship to Israel. (**Nehemiah 13:25-27**) Solomon had many foreign wives and concubines that he acquired through political alliances with other countries. Solomon erected 'high-places' which were places of idol worship for them. He didn't encourage the Israelites to worship those foreign gods, but he was credited with the bringing in of those high-places after Israel had purged the land of them when they conquered Canaan.

King Solomon's son and successor Rehoboam and the king's servant Jeroboam are responsible for the division of the country that created the ten northern tribes and the two southern tribes. Jeroboam became king of the northern tribes and led them in the worship of foreign gods.

God would then send prophets to warn the people to repent and turn back to their true God. Over the years there would be good kings who led the country righteously, and wicked kings who would lead them to spiritual ruin.

There came a point when God, who had blessed them when they were obedient, had to deliver on His promises of curses for disobedience.

1 Chr. 5:26 and 2 Kings 17:1-23 Shows us in the year 734B.C., God first stirred up the heart of Tiglath-Pilser (Pul) King of Assyria and then his successor Shalmaneser in 725 B.C., to punish the ten northern tribes of Israel carrying them away to be assimilated into the surrounding countries, never to return, and they became known as the dispersion.

In Judah in 605 B.C., Under King Zedekiah, the evil reached a boiling point. Let's read **2 Chronicles 36:11-21 (RSV)**

'Zedeki'ah was twenty-one years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD his God. He did not humble himself before Jeremiah the prophet, who spoke from the mouth of the LORD. He also rebelled against King Nebuchadnez'zar, who had made him swear by God; he stiffened his neck and hardened his heart against turning to the LORD, the God of Israel.

All the leading priests and the people likewise were exceedingly unfaithful, following all the abominations of the nations; and they polluted the house of the LORD which he had hallowed in Jerusalem.

The LORD, the God of their fathers, sent persistently to them by his messengers, because he had compassion on his people and on his dwelling place; but they kept mocking the messengers of God, despising his words, and scoffing at his prophets, till the wrath of the LORD rose against his people, till there was no remedy.

Therefore he brought up against them the king of the Chalde'ans, (Babylon) who slew their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion on young man or virgin, old man or aged; he gave them all into his hand. And all the vessels of the house of God, great and small, and the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king and of his princes, all these he brought to Babylon.

And they burned the house of God, and broke down the wall of Jerusalem, and burned all its palaces with fire, and destroyed all its precious vessels. He took into exile in Babylon those who had escaped from the sword, and they became servants to him and to his sons until the establishment of the kingdom of Persia, to fulfill the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed its sabbaths. All the days that it lay desolate it kept sabbath, to fulfill seventy years.'

Did you notice it was by God's compassion for his people that he sent the prophets to warn them about the path they were on? Though they were in a sinfull state God still loved them and was concerned over their spiritual state, he doesn't want anyone to perish but all to come to repentance, that was true then and it is true now.

Did you also notice what can happen to a soul individually and then an entire nation in this case, when in sin they can reach a point where they can become "beyond remedy?"

Theirs and in fact our sin, whatever it is, can become so all-consuming, so addictive, so misleading and seductive that we are blinded from seeing ourselves from the way we actually are, we can become numb to our own inner voice, our conscience that tells us, "this is wrong, I must stop".

When our consciences become seared and calloused over from ignoring those warnings it issues, we have fallen, we have apostasized, we have backslid, when we are no longer walking in God's light, we are in darkness, and when in darkness you become lost, we are beyond remedy.

Nothing can heal the disease the our soul has. We can reach the point of the unforgivable sin, which is the complete rejection of the Spirit of God, which is the rejection of his word, his prophets and his miracles, which is the abandonment of God altogether.

At that point God has no choice but to deliver on his promise of punishment, which he did to his chosen people. This is a warning for us, his chosen people today. We should love God enough to never have to put him in the position to punish us.

In 586 B.C. He rose up the Babylonian king, Nebuchadnezzar to deliver the punishment.

While exiled in Babylon, God raised up prophets from within the remnant to speak to the people. Though out of anger he punished them, he still loved them and would send them messages of hope and prophecies of events to come. Daniel was one of these men. He is considered one of the major prophets.

Daniel 2 has Daniel interpreting a dream king Nebuchadnezzar had. The dream is of a great statue that has a head of gold, a chest and arms of silver, belly and thighs of bronze, and legs iron and feet of iron and clay. Then a stone cut out of rock by an invisible hand would crush the feet of iron and clay and the rest of the statue into dust and the wind blew it away. The stone became a great mountain that would be a kingdom that lasts forever. The interpretation is of world empires that would come.

Gold head is Babylonian Empire

Silver chest and arms is the Persian Empire

Bronze belly and thighs is the Greek Empire

Iron legs with feet of iron and clay is the Roman Empire

The stone is the Messiah, and the mountain is his kingdom which is the church of the Messiah.

The fulfillment of the first two kingdoms occurred during Daniel's lifetime and are recorded in the bible for us. At the close of the Old Testament, about 430 B.C., the Holy land was a province of Persia. It remained so from 430-332 B.C.

Daniel had a dream in chapter eight that was about a ram the had two horns it and it was strong, this was interpreted as the kings of the Medes and Persians then a hairy he-goat with a great horn crushed the ram and the he-goat magnified itself and his great horn became broken, and in its

place four other horns popped out. A small horn became a great horn and exalted itself to the heavens and desecrated the holy place making worship cease. This vision pertains to an event during the silent years in between testaments and is the Greek empire headed by Alexander the Great who was the great horn that became broken at the height of its power. Alexander died at a young age at the height of his power and his four closest generals who were his friends divided up the empire. They are:

Cassander, Lysimachus, Ptolemy and Seleucus.

The Greek Period was from 331-167 B.C. Alexander the Great was the ruler and dominated most of the known world at that time including; Egypt, Assyria, Babylon and Persia. When he invaded Palestine, he showed mercy to the Jews and spared Jerusalem. His reign was a short one, twelve years in all. He did manage to spread the Greek culture and language around the known world of that time.

Alexander's Greece united the countries of Asia, Europe and Africa, and gave them a common language.

Again, after Alexander's death, his empire was divided by 4 of his generals. I want us to focus in on the 2 generals who divided the Holy land up.

Egypt and Palestine went to Ptolemy, and Syria went to Seleucus. Under Ptolemy the Jews were treated well, they were allowed to build synagogues; worship God and Alexandria became an influential Jewish center. In Egypt, the kings were no longer called pharaohs but called "Ptolemies".

In Syria, the kings were called "Seleucids". In 198 B.C., Antiochus the Great reconquered Palestine and it was then under control by the Seleucid kings.

Seleucid king Antiochus Epiphanes (175-164 B.C.) hated the Jews and tried his hardest to exterminate them and their religion from existence. He nearly destroyed Jerusalem in 168 B.C., defiled the temple by offering a sow on its alter, erected an alter to Jupiter in the Holy of Holies, and banned worship in the temple.

He forbade circumcision by penalty of death, sold thousands of Jewish families into slavery; he destroyed all copies of scripture that could be found and killed anyone that had them in their possession. He also tortured the Jews to renounce their religion.

These cruel treatments lead to the Period of Independence or better known as the Maccabean Period. Mattathias, its leader was a Jewish priest of great courage, a highly nationalistic man with 5 heroic, warlike sons who were willing to revolt against Antiochus Epiphanes.

He led successful battles against their enemies, specializing in guerrilla warfare and surprise attacks and ambushes. Soon other bands of patriots joined them and they enjoyed victory after victory. Mattathias died in 166 B.C. and passed his mantle to his son Judas. Judas had a nickname, Maccabeus that means, "the hammer". He was a military genius and won battles of unbelievable and impossible odds. As a result of his successes, his family and their followers became known as the Maccabees.

He reconquered Jerusalem in 165 B.C., and purified, restored and rededicated the temple. This was the beginning of the Feast of Dedication that is also known as Hanukkah, a feast of 8 days.

The Maccabean period of time lasted from 167-63 B.C.

Roman Period 63 B.C. through the time of Christ.

Palestine was conquered by Rome under the leadership of Pompey. He appointed Antipater, an Edomite (from Esau's seed) to be ruler over Judea. He was succeeded by his son Herod the Great who was King of Judea (37-4 B.C.). He got his throne and kept it by brutality, even murdering his wife and 2 sons.

Herod the Great in order to win favor with the Jews rebuilt the temple with great splendor. Herod was a cruel man because he gave the order to slay all the male children of Bethlehem 2 years and under at the time of Christ's birth.

His son Herod Antipas, 33 years later killed John the Baptist (**Mark 6:16-29**) and mocked Jesus (**Luke 23:7-12**)

His grandson, Herod Agrippa 1, 14 years later, killed James the Apostle. (**Acts 12:1,2**)

His great grandson, Herod Agrippa 2, 16 years later was king when Paul was tried. (**Acts 25:13-26,32**)

We know that the known world of that time was under occupation by the Roman government. Caesarea, which is a coastal city in Samaria, was the Roman capitol of Palestine.

The Romans to their credit were tremendous road builders. They linked together the united lands that Greece created.

This was actually God's providence, because this made it possible for the gospel to be carried and preached to the ends of the earth.

Once again many of the Jews were looking to throw off the shackles of their oppressors and there was a group that was nationalistic and rebellious and had Maccabean roots called the Zealots. There was also a feeling among the people that the Savior would come and reestablish the throne of David.

There were many different denominations or sects of Judaism in those days; there were three dominant sects; the Essenes, Pharisees and Saducees.

The Essenes. They were a Jewish-Samaritan people during the time of the second temple that flourished from the 2nd century B.C. to the 1st century A.D. Jewish historian Josephus records that Essenes existed in large numbers, and thousands lived throughout Judaea, but they were fewer in number than the Pharisees and the Saducees. The Essenes lived in various cities and lived in communal life practicing asceticism which is self denial of pleasures, voluntary poverty, daily bathing, and their priests practiced celibacy. The Essenes have gained fame in modern times as a result of the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, which are commonly believed to be the Essenes' library.

The Pharisees. They were thought to have originated in the 3rd century B.C. in reaction to the Greek effort to Hellenize the Jews when it was realized that many of the Jews were accepting the pagan religious customs. Their aim was to preserve national integrity and strict conformity to the Mosaical Law.

The Sadducees. It was thought they originated the same time as the Pharisees; they were in favor of adopting Greek customs because they were not religious, even though they were a priestly clique. They did not support the Maccabean movement. They were not numerous, but were wealthy and influential. To an extent, they controlled the Sanhedrin even though they were rationalistic and worldly-minded.

The Zealots. They were fanatical, nationalists from the time of the Maccabees to the final stand at Massada. They were often violent in their rebellions to throw off their oppressors in the time of Christ.

The Sanhedrin. They were thought to have originated in the 3rd. century B.C. So they were the recognized leadership during the time of Christ. A group of 70 men, consisting of; priests, and Sadducee nobles, some Pharisees, scribes and elders. The High Priest presided over them. But I think their roots can be traced way back to the beginning of Moses ministry, let's look at some O.T. Verses.

Exo 18:25-26 'Moses chose able men out of all Israel and made them heads over the people, chiefs of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties, and of tens. And they judged the people at all times. Any hard case they brought to Moses, but any small matter they decided themselves.

This was later recounted by Moses in **Dt. 1:9-15** in greater detail.

"At that time I said to you, 'I am not able to bear you by myself. The LORD your God has multiplied you, and behold, you are today as numerous as the stars of heaven. May the LORD, the God of your fathers, make you a thousand times as many as you are and bless you, as he has promised you!'

How can I bear by myself the weight and burden of you and your strife? Choose for your tribes wise, understanding, and experienced men, and I will appoint them as your heads.' And you answered me, 'The thing that you have spoken is good for us to do.'

So I took the heads of your tribes, wise and experienced men, and set them as heads over you, commanders of thousands, commanders of hundreds, commanders of fifties, commanders of tens, and officers, throughout your tribes. And I charged your judges at that time, 'Hear the cases between your brothers, and judge righteously between a man and his brother or the alien who is with him. You shall not be partial in judgment.

You shall hear the small and the great alike. You shall not be intimidated by anyone, for the judgment is God's. And the case that is too hard for you, you shall bring to me, and I will hear it.' And I commanded you at that time all the things that you should do."

So Moses established a ruling body of wise men to judge the matters of the Israelites.

Ex. 24:9-11 "Then Moses and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel went up, and they saw the God of Israel. There was under his feet as it were a pavement of sapphire stone, like the very heaven for clearness. And he did not lay his hand on the chief men of the people of Israel; they beheld God, and ate and drank."

Here we see the leadership of Israel being invited by God to meet him and have a supper with him to usher in the covenant, and the curious number of elders being 70, the same number as in the Sanhedrin.

Num 11:16-17 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Gather for me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom you know to be the elders of the people and officers over them, and bring them to the tent of meeting, and let them take their stand there with you. And I will come down and talk with you there. And I will take some of the Spirit that is on you and put it on them, and they shall bear the burden of the people with you, so that you may not bear it yourself alone.

Again we see the number of the wise men of Israel to be 70, and they were to help Moses in running the nation so Moses would not be overburdened. God even anointed them with the same Spirit that Moses had. Compare this to the modern day Sanhedrin and you can see the common threads, and possible origin of this group.

The Scribes. They were copiers of scripture. Their origin dates way back. Their job was to study and interpret and copy the scriptures. Because of their detailed acquaintance with the scriptures they were also called lawyers. They were recognized authorities.

The Dispersion. They were the Jews living outside of Palestine, among the gentiles.

Other than Greek, the common language of Palestine was Aramaic in Jesus day. After the return from Babylonian captivity it gradually displaced Hebrew. Aramaic is the ancient language of Syria, and it was very similar to Hebrew.

Geographically the Holy Land was known as Palestine and it was the junction of three continents, Asia, Europe and Africa. It lies between the Mediterranean Sea and the Arab desert and is the meeting place of the world's highways.

During the time of Jesus, Palestine was divided into four major parts.

Judea; in the south part, it was the center of Jewish conservatism.

Samaria; in the center part mostly made up of a mixed race of people with Jewish blood.

Perea; which was east of the lower Jordan. It had many prosperous Roman cities.

Galilee; to the north had a large mix of Greek population. Josephus estimated its population at about 3,000,000. Its Roman capital was Sepphoris and this is where Herod's royal residence was and it was 4 miles away from Nazareth. Herod ruled Galilee and Perea, and Pilate ruled Judea and Samaria.

Alexandria; second city of the Roman Empire was 300 miles to the southwest, and Antioch, third city of the Roman Empire was 300 miles to the north. The O.T. Ends with the foretelling of how the N.T. Begins.

Malachi 4:4-6

"Remember the instruction of Moses my servant, the statutes and ordinances I commanded him at Horeb for all Israel. Look, I am going to send you the prophet Elijah before the great and terrible day of the LORD comes. And he will turn the hearts of fathers to their children and the hearts of children to their fathers. Otherwise, I will come and strike the land with a curse."