

# KIDRON VALLEY

The Kidron Valley is located on the east side of Jerusalem, running north and south between the temple mount and the Mount of Olives. It continues south through the Judean Desert all the way to the Dead Sea, falling nearly 4,000 feet in descent. The Kidron Valley is actually a 20-mile long wadi with rushing water and flash floods during the rainy season.

There are several references in the Old Testament to events happening in the Kidron Valley. One is David fleeing through this valley and up the Mount of Olives to escape from his son Absalom, who tried to steal the throne. David left in mourning—“weeping,” “barefoot,” and “his head covered” (2 Sam. 15:13-30). Athaliah may have been executed in the Kidron Valley as her evil reign in Judah was brought to a violent end (2 Kings 11:16; Josephus *Antiquities* 9.7.3). The Kidron Valley is also where pagan items such as Asherah poles and Baal altars were demolished and burned (1 Kings 15:13; 2 Kings 23:4, 6, 12; 2 Chron. 15:16; 29:16; 30:14).

In the New Testament, Jesus was taken up to the pinnacle of the temple where he was tempted to jump by Satan (Mt. 4:5-6). This high place would have overlooked the Kidron Valley. Some of the monuments to the prophets built there were visible from the temple mount, where Jesus later spoke to the crowds (Mt. 23:1, 29). Jesus crossed over the Kidron Valley in the triumphal entry, during Passion Week, and specifically on the night of his betrayal (Mk. 11:1, 11; Lk. 22:39; Jn. 18:1). He probably used a bridge that had been constructed from the Mount of Olives to the temple mount (see Mishnah *Parah* 3.6; *Shekalim* 4.2).



Pinnacle of the Temple Mount  
(Royal Portico)

Kidron Valley

JERUSALEM MODEL

There are many tombs and tomb monuments found in the Kidron Valley and on the hillside of the Mount of Olives today. Some of these predate the time of Christ. (See the section entitled *Tombs & Ossuaries*.)



The Kidron Valley with the So-Called Tomb of Absalom (Viewed from the North)

Jewish tradition states that the resurrection of the dead will occur on the Mount of Olives when the Messiah comes. Some say that a miraculous bridge will span the Kidron Valley from the Mount of Olives to the temple mount. The righteous people buried on the Mount of Olives—which is literally covered with graves—will be raised to life and will pass over this bridge to the temple mount. Then God will judge the nations. This tradition is partially based on a combination of Joel 3 (assuming “the Valley of Jehoshaphat” refers to the Kidron Valley) and Zechariah 14. Premillennialists also join these two passages together.

There are several problems with this approach. (1) The passages speak to different audiences in different time periods and are probably unrelated. (2) The language was written in apocalyptic style and should not be interpreted literally. (3) There is no solid proof that “the Valley of Jehoshaphat” refers to the Kidron Valley. (4) The Messiah—Jesus—has already come the first time, and these things did not literally happen. (5) When he comes a second time, faithful Christians will meet him in the air, not on the earth (1 Thess. 4:16-17).



The Kidron Valley with the Temple Mount (Viewed from the East)



The Temple Mount, Kidron Valley, and Mount of Olives (Viewed from the South)