

What is the Kidron Valley in the Bible?

<https://www.gotquestions.org/Kidron-Valley.html>

The Kidron Valley is a place just outside of Jerusalem, in between the city and the Mount of Olives. The name Kidron (or Cedron in the KJV) is either a reference to the “darkness” or “murkiness” of the water that periodically flows in that place or to the cedars that grow in that area. The Kidron Valley is technically a wadi, as a stream runs through it only after heavy rains. This location is associated in the Bible with sorrow, judgment, and death.

For example, 2 Kings 23:1-6 describes King Josiah commanding “the high priest, the priests next in rank and the doorkeepers to remove from the temple of the Lord all the articles made for Baal and Asherah and all the starry hosts.” Once removed from the temple, the idols were “burned . . . outside Jerusalem in the fields of the Kidron Valley” (verse 4). King Josiah did the same with the Asherah pole (verse 6). Similar reforms were accomplished by King Asa and King Hezekiah, both of whom disposed of idols in the Kidron Valley (1 Kings 15:13; 2 Chronicles 29:16; 30:14).

When David fled Jerusalem during Absalom’s rebellion, he crossed the Valley of Kidron (2 Samuel 15:23). When King Solomon confined the rogue Shimei to the city, he forbade him from going any farther than the Kidron Valley (1 Kings 2:36-37). From 2 Kings 23:6, it seems that, in the time of Josiah, the Valley of Kidron contained “the graves of the common people.” According to the historian Josephus, Queen Athalia was executed in the Valley of Kidron (Antiquities of the Jews, ix. 7, § 3).

Jesus must have crossed the Valley of Kidron many times in His travels. On the night of His arrest, Jesus “went out with His disciples over the Brook Kidron, where there was a

garden" (John 18:1). Once in the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus felt the full weight of His impending death, so much so that "his sweat fell to the ground like great drops of blood" (Luke 22:44, NLT).

The Bible speaks of an end-times judgment on the earth. As God is restoring the fortunes of His people, Israel, He says, "I will gather all nations and bring them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat. There I will put them on trial for what they did to my inheritance, my people Israel" (Joel 3:2). The Valley of Jehoshaphat, or the Valley of Decision (Joel 3:14), is thought by many to be a reference to the Valley of Kidron.

In each case, the Kidron Valley serves as backdrop to death and sorrow and judgment.

There is coming a day, however, when the Valley of Kidron will shed its sorrowful reputation. God promises that, one day, "I will be the God of all the families of Israel, and they will be my people" (Jeremiah 31:1). "See, I . . . gather them from the ends of the earth. Among them will be the blind and the lame, expectant mothers and women in labor; a great throng will return. . . . I will lead them beside streams of water on a level path where they will not stumble" (verses 8-9). Then, God says, "I will turn their mourning into gladness; I will give them comfort and joy instead of sorrow" (verse 13). The Lord's plans for a restored Jerusalem will include a change in the Valley of Kidron: "The whole valley where dead bodies and ashes are thrown, and all the terraces out to the Kidron Valley on the east as far as the corner of the Horse Gate, will be holy to the Lord. The city will never again be uprooted or demolished" (verse 40).

The Valley of Kidron, with its sad history of idolatry, impurity, and condemnation, will

one day be “holy to the Lord,” and God “will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more” (Jeremiah 31:34).