

Jesus and the Valley Kidron John 18:1

One of the main differences between the Gospels of Mark and John is that John centers on Jesus's teaching and Mark details his actions.

- The seven "I am's"
- 'Immediately' – 41 times – The Gospel on steroids.

But starting in John 18, John moves from Jesus's teaching and what Jesus did, to Jesus's actions and what is happening to Jesus. This brings us to the 2nd side of the coin of salvation -

- Active obedience – Such as in the wilderness temptation – Fulfilled demands of law
- Passive obedience – Such as in the passion – suffered penalties of God's law
- Passive obedience gains forgiveness for us – Jesus paid for our disobedience
- Active obedience merits righteousness for us – Jesus obeyed for us

"His active obedience consists in all that He did to observe the law in behalf of sinners, as a condition for obtaining eternal life; and His passive obedience in all that He suffered in paying the penalty of sin and thus discharging the debt of all his people."

Louis Berkhof in *Manual of Christian Doctrine*, 215.

<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/justin-taylor/what-is-the-difference-between-the-active-and-the-passive-obedience-of-christ/>

<https://www.ligonier.org/podcasts/simply-put/active-and-passive-obedience-of-christ>

Simply put, in John 18, we move from Christ's active obedience – fulfilling the law for us – to his passive obedience – dying for our disobedience to the law

What Jesus says, is of course, still and always very important, but the emphasis in this section is not on what Jesus says but what Jesus did – or allowed to be done to him. He is serving as the sacrifice for our sins.

And that brings us to our text -

John 18:1 – *"When Jesus had spoken these words, he went out with his disciples across the brook Kidron..."*

Many of you have stood on the Mount of Olives and looked over the Valley Kidron, across the Garden of Gethsemane and to the Temple Mount.

Kidron = obscure, dark, or sad

Jews and Muslims alike call it *'the Valley of Decision.'*

Joel 3:14 - *Multitudes, multitudes, in the valley of decision! For the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision.*

The Kidron Valley, also known as the Valley of Jehoshaphat, separates the Old City of Jerusalem and the Temple Mount from the Mount of Olives.

It runs from Jerusalem, through the Judean desert, descends 4,000 feet and reaches the Dead Sea, 20 miles from where it started.

- Absalom is buried there
- Zechariah is buried there
- This is where Jehoshaphat overthrew Israel's enemies in 2 Chronicles 20.
- This is where the priests through the unclean items during Hezekiah's reign in 2 Chron 29
- And again under the reign of Josiah

2 Kings 23:4, 6 & 12 - *And the king commanded Hilkiah the high priest and the priests of the second order and the keepers of the threshold to bring out of the temple of the LORD all the vessels made for Baal, for Asherah, and for all the host of heaven. 6 – And he brought out the Asherah from the house of the LORD, outside Jerusalem, to the brook Kidron, and burned it at the brook Kidron and beat it to dust and cast the dust of it upon the graves of the common people. 12 - He burned them outside Jerusalem in the fields of the Kidron and carried their ashes to Bethel. And the altars on the roof of the upper chamber of Ahaz, which the kings of Judah had made, and the altars that Manasseh had made in the two courts of the house of the LORD, he pulled down and broke in pieces and cast the dust of them into the brook Kidron.*

- This is where God will judge the nations

Joel 3:1-2a - *For behold, in those days and at that time, when I restore the fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem, ²I will gather all the nations and bring them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat. And I will enter into judgment with them there, on behalf of my people and my heritage Israel...*

Revelation 14:17-20 - *Then another angel came out of the temple in heaven, and he too had a sharp sickle. ¹⁸And another angel came out from the altar, the angel who has authority over the fire, and he called with a loud voice to the one who had the sharp sickle, "Put in your sickle and gather the clusters from the vine of the earth, for its grapes are ripe." ¹⁹So the angel swung his sickle across the earth and gathered the grape harvest of the earth and threw it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. ²⁰And the winepress was trodden outside the city, and blood flowed from the winepress, as high as a horse's bridle, for 1,600 stadia.*

- This is where David fled Absalom's rebellion in Jerusalem in 2 Samuel 15.

Read - 2 Samuel 15:13-16:14

(David returned in 2 Samuel 19:9-20:26) **Read** 19:16-24

But now.... David's greater son also leaves Jerusalem in tears, but, like David, he but will return

Zechariah 14:4 - On that day his feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives that lies before Jerusalem on the east, and the Mount of Olives shall be split in two from east to west by a very wide valley, so that one half of the Mount shall move northward, and the other half southward.

This is what the disciples were looking for in Acts 1 at the ascension of Jesus -

Acts 1:6-11 - So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" ⁷ He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority. ⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." ⁹ And when he had said these things, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. ¹⁰ And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, ¹¹ and said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven."

When Titus and the 12th legion surrounded Jerusalem in A.D. 70, many Jews thought the Messiah would return at that moment and rescue Israel. They did not see that the Messiah first had to be rejected and the nation brought to repentance as Zechariah mentioned in 11:12-13 and 12:10. As it happened, Jerusalem was destroyed, hence Masada.

Application:

For Christ, the Kidron Valley comes before Mount Calvary. This is like, the cross before the crown.

Psalm 30:4-5 - Sing praises to the LORD, O you his saints, and give thanks to his holy name. ⁵ For his anger is but for a moment, and his favor is for a lifetime. Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes with the morning.

The Father's anger at sin, placed upon his Son, will endure for only a moment compared with the eternal morning Jesus ushers in through his birth and resurrection.

a) Birth

Matthew 1:16 – *the people dwelling in darkness have seen a great light, and for those dwelling in the region and shadow of death, on them a light has dawned.*”

Isiah 9:2 - *The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone.*

Isiah 42:6-7 - *“I am the LORD; I have called you^[b] in righteousness; I will take you by the hand and keep you; I will give you as a covenant for the people, a light for the nations,
⁷ to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness.*

Isiah 60:1-3 - *Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.
² For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples;
 but the LORD will arise upon you, and his glory will be seen upon you. ³ And nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising.*

Luke 1:79 – (Zechariah) - *“to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.”*

Interestingly, it was the Puritan, Thomas Fuller (1608-1611), who first said, in his book on Palestine, *“It is said that the darkest hour comes just before the dawn.”*

A biography of Fuller can be located here –

<https://www.apuritansmind.com/puritan-favorites/thomas-fuller-1608-1661/>

But, if this is true of Jesus, it is also true of me.

This is certainly true of life and of death –

b) Resurrection

Psalms 23:4 - *Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.*

John 18:1 - *When Jesus had spoken these words, he went out with his disciples across the brook Kidron, where there was a garden, which he and his disciples entered.*