

~JUDAH, WILDERNESS OF (147)

- The generally uninhabited, barren eastern slope of the Judean mountains.
- And the sons of the Kenite, whose son-in-law Moses was, came up out of the city of palm trees with the sons of **Judah** to the wilderness of **Judah**, which is to the south of Arad. Then they went and took up dwelling with the people. (**Judges 1:16**)
- This wilderness region, extending about 16 to 24 kilometers (10 to 15 miles) in width, begins not far East of the Mount of Olives and stretches some 80 kilometers (50 miles) along the West coast of the Dead Sea.
- It mainly consists of smooth and rounded barren hills of soft chalk, cleft by torrent valleys and ravines. Toward the Dead Sea the rounded hills give way to rocky gorges, and the sea itself is faced by a wall of jagged cliffs.
- Dropping some 1,200 meters (3,900 feet) in 24 kilometers (15 miles), this wilderness is shielded from the rain-bearing West winds and therefore receives only limited rainfall.
- At the same time it is at the mercy of the dry winds that sweep in from the East. But when it does rain, water rushes through the otherwise dry torrent valleys, and for a few weeks in the rainy season the wilderness produces meager vegetation.
- David, who sought refuge from Saul in the Wilderness of **Judah**, described it as, a land dry and exhausted, where there is no water. [**Psalms 63:Sup, 1**]
- No stream has its source in the heart of this arid region, and no surface water runs there. In sharp contrast, the stream issuing forth from Ezekiel's visionary temple flowed through this wilderness and supported trees in abundance along its banks.
- And gradually he brought me back to the entrance of the House, and, look! There was water going forth from under the threshold of the House eastward, for the front of the House was east. And the water was going down from under, from the right-hand side

of the House, south of the altar. ([Ezekiel 47:1](#))

- And he gradually brought me forth by the way of the north gate and took me around by the way outside to the outer gate that is facing toward the east, and, look! Water was trickling from the right-hand side. ([Ezekiel 47:2](#))
- When the man went forth eastward with a measuring line in his hand, he also proceeded to measure a thousand in cubits and to make me pass through the water, water up to the ankles. ([Ezekiel 47:3](#))
- And he continued measuring a thousand and then made me pass through the water, water up to the knees. And he continued measuring a thousand and now made me pass through, water up to the hips. ([Ezekiel 47:4](#))
- And he continued measuring a thousand. It was a torrent that I was not able to pass through, for the water had got high, water permitting swimming, a torrent that could not be passed through. ([Ezekiel 47:5](#))
- At that he said to me; Have you seen this, O son of man? Then he had me walk and had me return to the bank of the torrent. ([Ezekiel 47:6](#))
- When I returned, why, look! On the bank of the torrent there were very many trees, on this side and on that side. ([Ezekiel 47:7](#))
- And he went on to say to me; This water is going forth to the eastern region and must go down through the Arabah. And it must come to the sea. It being brought forth into the sea itself, its water is also actually healed. ([Ezekiel 47:8](#))
- And it must occur that every living soul that swarms, in every place to which the double-size torrent comes, will get life. And it must occur that there will be very many fish, because there is where this water will certainly come, and the seawater will be healed, and everything will be alive where the torrent comes. ([Ezekiel 47:9](#))
- And it must occur that fishers will actually stand alongside it from En-ge-di even up to En-eg-laim. There will come to be a

drying yard for dragnets. In their kinds their fish will prove to be, like the fish of the Great Sea, very many. (**Ezekiel 47:10**)

- There are its swampy places and its marshy places, and they will not be healed. To salt they will certainly be given. (**Ezekiel 47:11**)
- And alongside the torrent there will come up, along its bank on this side and on that side, all sorts of trees for food. Their leafage will not wither, nor will their fruitage be consumed. In their months they will bear new fruit, because the water for them, it is coming forth from the very sanctuary. And their fruitage must prove to be for food and their leafage for healing. (**Ezekiel 47:12**)
- It was undoubtedly into the desolate Wilderness of Judah that the goat for Azazel was sent on the annual Atonement Day after being led there from the temple at Jerusalem.
- And Aaron must lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat and confess over it all the errors of the sons of Israel and all their revolts in all their sins, and he must put them upon the head of the goat and send it away by the hand of a ready man into the wilderness. (**Leviticus 16:21**)
- And the goat must carry upon itself all their errors into a desert land, and he must send the goat away into the wilderness. (**Leviticus 16:22**)
- In the **First Century C.E**, John the Baptizer began his ministry in a section of this region North of the Dead Sea.
- In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the **wilderness** of **Judea**. (**Matthew 3:1**)
- Saying; Repent, for the kingdom of the heavens has drawn near. (**Matthew 3:2**)
- This, in fact, is the one spoken of through Isaiah the prophet in these words; Listen! Someone is crying out in the **wilderness**, Prepare the way of Yehowah, you people! Make his roads straight. (**Matthew 3:3**)
- But this very John had his clothing of camels hair and a leather

girdle around his loins, his food too was insect locusts and wild honey. (Matthew 3:4)

- **Then Jerusalem and all Judea and all the country around the Jordan made their way out to him. (Matthew 3:5)**
- **And people were baptized by him in the Jordan River, openly confessing their sins. (Matthew 3:6)**
- **Apparently somewhere in this same wilderness Christ Jesus was tempted by the Devil.**
- **Then Jesus was led by the spirit up into the wilderness to be tempted by the Devil. (Matthew 4:1)**