

Exodus 38:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And for the east side eastward fifty cubits.

Analysis

The east side (פֶּאֶת קֶדְמָה מִזְרָחָה, pe'at kedmah mizrachah, 'east side toward the sunrise') at fifty cubits establishes the courtyard's entrance orientation. Facing east meant worshipers approached moving westward, away from the rising sun—a deliberate rejection of solar deity worship common in surrounding cultures. This orientation teaches that approaching God requires turning from created things to the Creator (Romans 1:25). The east entrance also recalls Eden's eastern entry (Genesis 3:24), now reopened through sacrificial system pointing to Christ.

Historical Context

The eastern entrance faced the sunrise, requiring worshipers to enter with the sun at their backs—turning from sun to approach God's dwelling. This orientation contrasted sharply with Egyptian and Canaanite temples often oriented toward the sun. The deliberate eastward entrance demonstrated Israel's distinct worship of YHWH, not celestial bodies.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. What does the eastward entrance (requiring turning from sunrise) teach about rejecting creation-worship for Creator-worship?
2. How does the eastern orientation connect Eden's closed eastern entrance to the tabernacle's opened eastern access through sacrifice?

Interlinear Text

וּלְפָאֵת	קִדְמָה	מִזְרָחָהּ	חֲמִשָּׁים	אַמָּה:
side	And for the east	eastward	fifty	cubits
H6285	H6924	H4217	H2572	H520

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