

# Ezekiel 40:34

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the arches thereof were toward the outward court; and palm trees were upon the posts thereof, on this side, and on that side: and the going up to it had eight steps.

## Analysis

**And the arches thereof were toward the outward court; and palm trees were upon the posts thereof, on this side, and on that side: and the going up to it had eight steps.** This verse concludes the description of the three inner court gates (south, east, and north) by reiterating their shared features: outward-facing **arches** (elamim, אֵלָמִים), **palm trees** (timmorim, תְּמָרִים) flanking the posts **"on this side, and on that side"** (mippro umippro, מִפְּרֹה וּמִפְּרֹה), and **eight steps** ascending to the entrance. The symmetrical repetition emphasizes divine order, consistency, and impartiality—God applies the same standards to all who approach Him, regardless of direction or background.

The architectural uniformity across south, east, and north gates teaches theological truth: there is only one way to God, though people may approach from different directions and circumstances. The consistent pattern prefigures the gospel's universal application—Jews and Gentiles, slave and free, male and female all come to God through the same means: Christ's atoning work (Galatians 3:28, Ephesians 2:14-18). The varied directions (south, east, north) represent diverse human backgrounds, but the identical gates represent the singular path of salvation.

The palm trees "on this side, and on that side" create a symmetrical framework, suggesting balance, stability, and divine order. In ancient iconography, paired motifs often represented completeness and covenant testimony (two witnesses,

two tablets of the Law). These flanking palms may symbolize the dual nature of covenant relationship: God's faithful provision and human responsive obedience, or divine justice and mercy held in perfect tension. The imagery assures worshipers that approaching God through His prescribed way leads to flourishing and victory (Psalm 92:12-14).

## Historical Context

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The completion of the inner court gates' description prepares readers for the next section detailing the inner court itself and the altar of sacrifice. The three gates (south, east, north) correspond to the three primary tribal camps during wilderness wanderings (Numbers 2), though notably, there is no western inner gate—the temple building itself occupied the western side, housing the Holy Place and Most Holy Place where God's presence dwelt most intensely.

The eight steps to each inner gate created a significant elevation from the outer court, both practically and symbolically. Worshipers ascending these steps would have experienced increasing anticipation and reverence as they approached the altar where sacrifices were offered. The physical ascent mirrored the spiritual reality that approaching God requires progressive sanctification and growing holiness. New Testament fulfillment comes through Christ, who ascended to the Father's right hand, opening the way for believers to approach God's throne with confidence (Hebrews 4:16, 10:19-22).

For Ezekiel's exilic audience, the meticulous description of multiple gates with identical specifications demonstrated that God's restoration would be thorough, not partial. He would not provide a diminished temple or compromised worship but would restore full access to His presence through proper, divinely ordained means. This vision sustained hope during the remaining decades of exile, assuring Israel that God's purposes would be fulfilled exactly as revealed.

## Related Passages

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**James 2:17** — Faith and works

**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

## Study Questions

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1. How does the uniformity of gates approached from different directions encourage you that God welcomes all who come through Christ, regardless of background?
2. What do the palm trees "on this side, and on that side" teach about the balance and completeness of God's covenant relationship with His people?
3. In what ways do the eight steps ascending to inner court gates challenge you to pursue deeper consecration and holiness?
4. How does Christ's ascension to the Father parallel the upward movement through temple gates, opening access to God's presence?
5. What hope does this vision of thorough, complete restoration offer you regarding God's promises for your life and the world's ultimate redemption?

## Interlinear Text

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וְאֶלְמֵי	לְחֵצֵר	הָחַיְצוֹן הַ	וְתִמְרֵי יָם	אֶל
And the arches	court	thereof were toward the outward	and palm trees	
H361	H2691	H2435	H8561	H413
וְאֶל	וּמִפּוֹ	וּשְׁמֹנֶה	מַעַל	וְ
were upon the posts		to it had eight	steps	
H352	H6311	H8083	H4609	
מַעְלֵוֹ:				
thereof on this side and on that side and the going up				
H4608				

## Additional Cross-References

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**Ezekiel 40:22** (Parallel theme): And their windows, and their arches, and their palm trees, were after the measure of the gate that looketh toward the east; and they went up unto it by seven steps; and the arches thereof were before them.

**Ezekiel 40:31** (Parallel theme): And the arches thereof were toward the utter court; and palm trees were upon the posts thereof: and the going up to it had eight steps.

**Ezekiel 40:37** (Parallel theme): And the posts thereof were toward the utter court; and palm trees were upon the posts thereof, on this side, and on that side: and the going up to it had eight steps.

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