

Ezekiel 40:44

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And without the inner gate were the chambers of the singers in the inner court, which was at the side of the north gate; and their prospect was toward the south: one at the side of the east gate having the prospect toward the north.

Analysis

And without the inner gate were the chambers of the singers in the inner court, which was at the side of the north gate; and their prospect was toward the south: one at the side of the east gate having the prospect toward the north. The transition from sacrificial tables to singers' chambers demonstrates that worship involves both blood and song, atonement and praise. The Hebrew sharim (שָׁרִים, "singers") were Levitical musicians whose ministry was as ordained as the priests' (1 Chronicles 25). Their chambers were strategically placed with specific orientations ("**prospect toward the south**" and "**prospect toward the north**"), suggesting liturgical positioning for optimal acoustics or symbolic significance.

This verse teaches that worship encompasses the full range of human response to God—confession through sacrifice and celebration through music. David organized temple singers with the same care as priests (1 Chronicles 6:31-48, 15:16-24), recognizing that worship requires both penitence and praise. The placement of singers' rooms near the sacrificial area indicates their ministry was not entertainment but integral to worship. In the new covenant, believers are called to offer both the sacrifice of Christ by faith and "**the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name**" (Hebrews 13:15).

Historical Context

Temple singers (Levitical choir) emerged during David's reign and became formalized under Solomon (2 Chronicles 5:12-13). They used cymbals, harps, lyres, and trumpets, performing psalms and worship songs. The Babylonian exile interrupted this ministry, making Psalm 137's lament poignant: "How shall we sing the LORD's song in a strange land?" For Ezekiel's audience, the vision of singers' chambers represented restored joy and the resumption of Israel's calling to worship. The synagogue tradition of cantors and the Christian practice of congregational singing both flow from this temple heritage.

Related Passages

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How does the integration of singers with sacrificial worship challenge the modern separation between 'worship music' and the rest of church life?
2. What does the assigned positioning of singers teach about the ordered, intentional nature of corporate worship rather than spontaneous emotionalism?

Interlinear Text

וּמְחוּצָה	שַׁעַר	הַפְּנִימִי	לְשֹׁכֹת	שָׂרֵי יָם	בְּחֹצֵר
And without	gate	in the inner	were the chambers	of the singers	court
H2351	H8179	H6442	H3957	H7891	H2691
הַפְּנִימִי	אֶשֶׁר	אֶל	כְּתֵף	שַׁעַר	הַצִּפּוֹן:
in the inner	H834	H413	at the side	gate	of the north
H6442			H3802	H8179	H6828
					and their prospect
					H6440
הַקֶּדֶם יָם	שַׁעַר	כְּתֵף	אֶל	אֶחָד	הַדָּרֹם וְ
toward	the south	one	H413	at the side	gate
H1870	H1864	H259		H3802	H8179
					of the east
					H6921
הַצִּפּוֹן:	דָּרֹם	כְּתֵף	פְּנֵי יָם		
and their prospect	toward	of the north			
H6440	H1870	H6828			

Additional Cross-References

Ezekiel 40:27 (Parallel theme): And there was a gate in the inner court toward the south: and he measured from gate to gate toward the south an hundred cubits.

Ezekiel 40:23 (Parallel theme): And the gate of the inner court was over against the gate toward the north, and toward the east; and he measured from gate to gate an hundred cubits.