

Ezekiel 48:32

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And at the east side four thousand and five hundred: and three gates; and one gate of Joseph, one gate of Benjamin, one gate of Dan.

Analysis

And at the east side four thousand and five hundred: and three gates; and one gate of Joseph, one gate of Benjamin, one gate of Dan. The eastern wall of the holy city measures 4,500 cubits (approximately 2.25 miles) with three tribal gates. The eastern orientation is significant—the glory of God departed eastward (Ezekiel 10:18-19, 11:23) and returns from the east (Ezekiel 43:1-4). The eastern gates witness both departure and return.

The tribal selection is theologically loaded: **Joseph** (representing Ephraim and Manasseh, the northern kingdom), **Benjamin** (faithful to Judah through the division), and **Dan** (the northernmost tribe, often associated with idolatry at Bethel and Laish—Judges 18). That Dan receives a gate despite its apostasy demonstrates radical grace—Jacob prophesied Dan would be "a serpent by the way" (Genesis 49:17), yet here Dan has permanent access to God's presence. This is scandalous grace. Joseph's inclusion (though divided into Ephraim/Manasseh elsewhere) suggests restored unity between north and south. Benjamin's presence connects to the tribe of Paul, who brought the gospel to the nations.

Historical Context

The eastern gate held special significance in Jerusalem's temple. It faced the Mount of Olives and the wilderness beyond. Solomon's temple and the second temple had eastern gates; Jesus entered Jerusalem from the east (Matthew 21:1),

and will return to the Mount of Olives from the east (Zechariah 14:4, Acts 1:11). Dan's northern territory at Laish (Judges 18) became synonymous with idolatry—Jeroboam placed one of his golden calves there (1 Kings 12:29-30). Yet in this eschatological vision, Dan is fully restored, demonstrating that no tribe is beyond redemption.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. How does Dan's inclusion despite its idolatrous history demonstrate the extent of God's grace?
2. What does the eastern orientation—direction of both glory's departure and return—teach about repentance and restoration?

Interlinear Text

אֶלֶף	ימ	וְאֶרֶב	עַת	מֵאוֹת	שָׁמֵן	קָדוֹם	יְמִינָה	פָּאַת	וְאֶל
H413	side	And at the east	and five	hundred	four				thousand
	H6285	H6921	H2568	H3967	H702				H505
אֶקְדָּה:	בְּנִימָן	שָׁעַר	אֶקְדָּה:	יְוָשָׁבָת	אֶקְדָּה:	שָׁעַר	אֶקְדָּה:	בְּנִימָן	אֶקְדָּה:
gate	and three	gate	of Joseph	and one	gate	of Benjamin	and one	H1144	H259
H8179	H7969	H8179	H3130	H259	H8179				
אֶקְדָּה:	וְאֶל	שָׁעַר	וְאֶל	וְאֶל	וְאֶל	וְאֶל	וְאֶל	וְאֶל	וְאֶל
gate	of Dan	and one							
H8179	H1835	H259							