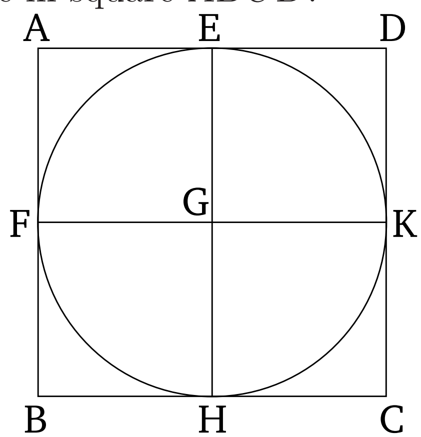
Book 4
Proposition 8

To inscribe a circle in a given square.

Let the given square be $ABCD$. So it is required to inscribe a circle in square $ABCD$.



Let AD and AB each have been cut in half at points E and F (respectively) [Prop. 1.10]. And let EH have been drawn through E, parallel to either of AB or CD, and let FK have been drawn through F, parallel to either of AD or BC [Prop. 1.31]. Thus, AK, KB, AH, HD, AG, GC, BG, and GD are each parallelograms, and their opposite sides [are] manifestly equal [Prop. 1.34]. And since AD is equal to AB, and AE is half of AD, and AF half of AB, AE (is) thus also equal to AF. So that the opposite (sides are) also (equal). Thus, FG (is) also equal to GE. So, similarly, we can also show that each of GH and GK is equal to each of FG and GE. Thus, the four (straight-lines) GE, GF, GH, and GK [are] equal to one another. Thus, the circle drawn with center G, and radius one of E, F, H, or K, will also go through the remaining points. And it will touch the straight-lines AB, BC, CD, and DA, on account of the angles at E, F, H, and K being right-angles. For if the circle cuts AB, BC, CD, or DA, then a (straight-line) drawn at right-angles to a diameter of the circle, from its extremity, will fall inside the circle. The very thing was shown (to be) absurd [Prop. 3.16]. Thus, the circle drawn with center G, and radius one of E, F, H, or K, does not cut the straight-lines AB, BC, CD, or DA. Thus, it will touch them, and will have been inscribed in the square $ABCD$.

Thus, a circle has been inscribed in the given square. (Which is) the very thing it was required to do.