

Ezekiel 1:26

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone: and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it.

Analysis

This verse reaches the vision's climax—the throne of God and the divine figure seated upon it. The progression through firmament, wheels, and living creatures culminates in 'the likeness of a throne' with 'the likeness as the appearance of a man' seated above. The triple hedging ('likeness,' 'appearance,' 'likeness') emphasizes transcendence—this is as close as human language can approach the ineffable. The sapphire throne (eben sappir) echoes Exodus 24:10, where Moses saw God's feet upon a sapphire pavement, connecting this vision to Israel's covenant history. The human-like figure on the throne reveals God's person, anticipating the incarnation where deity assumes humanity fully in Christ. Reformed theology has traditionally seen this as a Christophany—a pre-incarnate appearance of the Son, who is 'the image of the invisible God' (Colossians 1:15). The throne imagery emphasizes sovereignty—God rules over nations, including Babylon, and His purposes cannot be thwarted by exile.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern kings sat on elevated thrones to symbolize authority and dominance. Solomon's throne of ivory overlaid with gold (1 Kings 10:18-20) represented Israel's zenith, but even it paled before this vision of the heavenly throne. The exiles needed assurance that though Judah's earthly throne had fallen,

the divine King remained enthroned in sovereign majesty. This vision rebukes the notion that Babylon's conquest of Jerusalem indicated Marduk's superiority over Yahweh. Instead, God's throne-chariot mobility showed He sovereignly moved with His people, maintaining covenant relationship despite judgment. The sapphire's blue color evoked heaven's transcendence, distinguishing the divine throne from earthly counterparts.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does the vision of God's throne provide comfort and assurance when earthly powers seem to triumph over God's people?
2. What does the human-like appearance of the figure on the throne reveal about God's nature and His intention to relate personally to humanity?

Interlinear Text

מִלְמַעְלָה:	לָרֶקֶת יֵע	אֲשֶׁר	עַל	רֹאשׁם	
And above	the firmament	H834	H5921	that was over their heads	
H4605	H7549			H7218	
כְּמֶרְאֵה	אֶבֶן	סַפִּיר	דָּמ וְת	הַכִּסֵּי א	וְעַל
as the appearance	stone	of a sapphire	and upon the likeness	of a throne	H5921
H4758	H68	H5601	H1823	H3678	
דָּמ וְת	הַכִּסֵּי א	דָּמ וְת	כְּמֶרְאֵה		
and upon the likeness	of a throne	and upon the likeness	as the appearance		
H1823	H3678	H1823	H4758		
אִדָּם	עַל יוֹ	מִלְמַעְלָה:			
of a man	H5921	And above			
H120		H4605			

Additional Cross-References

Ezekiel 10:1 (Parallel theme): Then I looked, and, behold, in the firmament that was above the head of the cherubims there appeared over them as it were a sapphire stone, as the appearance of the likeness of a throne.

Exodus 24:10 (Parallel theme): And they saw the God of Israel: and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness.

Revelation 1:13 (Parallel theme): And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle.

Ezekiel 1:22 (Parallel theme): And the likeness of the firmament upon the heads of the living creature was as the colour of the terrible crystal, stretched forth over their heads above.

Daniel 10:18 (Parallel theme): Then there came again and touched me one like the appearance of a man, and he strengthened me,

Revelation 20:11 (Parallel theme): And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.

Revelation 14:14 (Parallel theme): And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle.

Hebrews 12:2 (Parallel theme): Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Isaiah 6:1 (Parallel theme): In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple.

Isaiah 54:11 (Parallel theme): O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and lay thy foundations with sapphires.