

Ezekiel 40:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he brought me thither, and, behold, there was a man, whose appearance was like the appearance of brass, with a line of flax in his hand, and a measuring reed; and he stood in the gate.

Analysis

The 'man, whose appearance was like the appearance of brass' is a theophanic figure—likely a pre-incarnate appearance of Christ or a high-ranking angelic messenger representing divine authority. Bronze or brass (Hebrew נְּשֹׁהֶת, *nechosheth*) symbolizes judgment and divine glory in Scripture (cf. Daniel 10:6, Revelation 1:15). The measuring instruments—'line of flax' and 'measuring reed'—indicate God's sovereign ordering of sacred space. Just as God measured creation (Job 38:4-5), He precisely defines the boundaries of His dwelling place. The figure 'stood in the gate,' the place of authority and judgment in ancient cities. This detailed measuring throughout chapters 40-42 demonstrates that worship must conform to God's standards, not human innovation. Reformed theology emphasizes the regulative principle—worship according to God's prescription, not human imagination.

Historical Context

Measuring appears in ancient Near Eastern foundation rituals and temple construction accounts, but here it serves theological purposes. The bronze-like appearance recalls Solomon's bronze pillars (1 Kings 7:15-22) and the bronze altar (2 Chronicles 4:1). The measuring reed (approximately 10.5 feet) provided standardized sacred measurements. Gates held judicial and commercial

significance in ancient cities—where legal transactions occurred and elders sat (Ruth 4:1, Deuteronomy 21:19). This measuring vision contrasts sharply with Ezekiel's earlier vision of the temple's desecration (Ezekiel 8-11). Where God's glory departed from the corrupted temple, this vision promises restoration. The meticulous measurements demonstrate that God's return won't be haphazard but ordered according to His holiness.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. What does the bronze-like figure's appearance teach us about the holiness and authority required for worship leadership?
2. How do the precise measurements challenge contemporary casual approaches to worship?
3. In what ways does God still 'measure' our worship, lives, and churches according to His standards?

Interlinear Text

וַיָּבֹא יָא	אוֹתַי	שֶׁמָּה	וְהִנֵּה	אִישׁ	
And he brought	H853	H8033	H2009	me thither and behold there was a man	
H935				H376	
כְּמֵרָא הָ			כְּמֵרָא הָ		
was like the appearance			was like the appearance		
H4758			H4758		
			נְחֹשֶׁת	וּפְתִיל	פֶּשֶׁת יָם
			of brass	with a line	of flax
			H5178	H6616	H6593
בְּיָדוֹ	וּקְנֵה הָ	הַמֶּדָּה הָ	וְהָוָא	עֹמֵד	בַּשַּׁעַר:
in his hand	reed	and a measuring	H1931	and he stood	in the gate
H3027	H7070	H4060		H5975	H8179

Additional Cross-References

Revelation 11:1 (Parallel theme): And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein.

Ezekiel 47:3 (Parallel theme): And when the man that had the line in his hand went forth eastward, he measured a thousand cubits, and he brought me through the waters; the waters were to the ancles.

Revelation 1:15 (Parallel theme): And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters.

Revelation 21:15 (Parallel theme): And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof.

Ezekiel 1:7 (Parallel theme): And their feet were straight feet; and the sole of their feet was like the sole of a calf's foot: and they sparkled like the colour of burnished brass.

Ezekiel 1:27 (Parallel theme): And I saw as the colour of amber, as the appearance of fire round about within it, from the appearance of his loins even upward, and from the appearance of his loins even downward, I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and it had brightness round about.