



**G-d: An Exclusive Interview  
Mishpatim 2016**

**Shmot 33:20**

G-d then explained, "You cannot have a vision of My Presence. A person cannot have a vision of me and still exist."	וַיֹּאמֶר, לֹא תוּכַל לִרְאוֹת אֶת-פָּנַי: כִּי לֹא-יִרְאֵנִי הָאָדָם, וְחָי.
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**Yalkut Yitro 286, Mechilta Beshalach Shirata 4 – Book of Legends**

"I am the Lord thy God." Because the Holy One appeared to them at the Red Sea as a mighty man waging war, at Sinai as a pedagogue teaching <a href="#">Torah</a> , in the days of Solomon as a young man, and in the days of Daniel as an aged man full of mercy, the Holy One said: Because you see Me in many guises, do not imagine that there are many gods--for I am He who was with you at the Red Sea, I am He who was with you at Sinai, I am the same everywhere. "I am the Lord thy God."	"אֲנִי ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ"—לְפִי שֶׁנִּרְאָה לָהֶם הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא עַל הַיָּם כְּגֹבֵר עוֹשֶׂה מִלְחָמָה, וְנִרְאָה לָהֶם בְּסִינַי כְּסוֹפֵר מִלְמַד תּוֹרָה, וְנִרְאָה לָהֶם בְּיָמֵי שְׁלֹמֹה כְּבַחוּר, וְנִרְאָה לָהֶם בְּיָמֵי דָנִיֵּאל כְּזָקֵן מֵלֵךְ רַחֲמִים, אָמַר לָהֶם הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא: לֹא בִשְׁבִיל שֶׁאַתֶּם רוֹאִים אוֹתִי דְמוּיֹת הַרְבֵּה תִדְמּוּ שֵׁשׁ הַרְבֵּה אֱלוֹהוֹת, אֲלֵא אֲנִי הוּא שְׁבִים, אֲנִי הוּא שְׁבִסִּינַי, אֲנִי הוּא שְׁבִכָּל מְקוֹם—"אֲנִי ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ".
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How are the above statements contradictory? How can they be harmonized?

How does G-d appear in the following verses and commentary?

**Shmot 24:9-10**

Moses then went up with Aaron, Nadav and Avihu, and seventy of Israel's elders. They saw a vision of the G-d of Israel, and under His feet was something like a sapphire brick, like the essence of the sky for purity.	וַיַּעַל מֹשֶׁה, וְאַהֲרֹן--נָדָב, וְאַבִּיהוּא, וְשִׁבְעִים, מִזְקְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל. וַיִּרְאוּ, אֶת אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל; וַתַּחַת רַגְלָיו, כְּמַעֲשֵׂה לְבֵנֵת הַסַּפִּיר, וְכַעֲצֻם הַשָּׁמַיִם, לְטָהָר.
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How is this different from other biblical visions of G-d?

... the G-d of Israel...

**Etz Haim Shmot 24:10**

The name befits the context of the special relationship now being forged between G-d and Israel.



## What is the symbolism of prophecy being from the feet?

### Isaiah 66:1

Thus said the L-rd, "The heaven is My throne and the earth is my footstool"	פֹּה, אָמַר ה', הַשָּׁמַיִם כִּסֵּאִי, וְהָאָרֶץ הַדָּם רֵגְלִי
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### Isaiah 6:1

In the year that King Uzziah died, I beheld my L-rd seated on a high and lofty throne; and the skirts of His robe filled the temple.	בְּשָׁנַת-מוֹת הַמֶּלֶךְ עֻזִּיָּהוּ, וָאֲרָאָה אֶת-אֲדֹנָי יוֹשֵׁב עַל-כִּסֵּא רָם וְנֹשָׂא; וְשׁוּלְיוֹ, מְלֵאִים אֶת-הַהֵיכָל.
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Zohar – Just as feet come in contact with the ground, so allegorically, G-d's "feet" are the attribute that comes in contact with the level below. They are therefore seen as the means of prophecy.

Moreh Nevuchim 1:28 - Feet denote the ultimate essence of creation.

### ...sapphire...

#### Ezekiel 1:26

Above the expanse over their heads was the semblance of a throne, in appearance like sapphire...	וּמִמַּעַל, לָרָקִיעַ אֲשֶׁר עַל-רֹאשָׁם, כְּמֵרָאָה אֲבֵן-סַפִּיר, דְּמוּת כִּסֵּא
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Bachya – The stone is related to wisdom,  
Tzioni – The Hebrew word sapir is related to sefer, book

Ra'aved – Some say this sapphire is like a third eye through which mystical vision is attained

### ...brick...

#### Rashi Shmot 24:10

The brick had been before Him during the period of Egyptian slavery as a symbol of Israel's woes, for they were subject to brickwork	הִיא הִיְתָה לִפְנֵי הַשַּׁעֲבֹד לְזִכֹּר צָרְתָן שֶׁל יִשְׂרָאֵל, שֶׁהָיוּ מְשׁוֹעֲבָדִים בַּמַּעֲשֵׂה לְבָנִים
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Sifri Beha'alotcha 101 - This was the brick out of which the tablets of the law would be carved  
Yerushalmi Suka 4:3 – Brickworking tools



## What color is all this?

### Sota 17a

We have been taught that R. Meir used to say: Why is blue different from all other colors? Because blue is similar to the color of the sea; the color of the sea is similar to the color of the firmament; the color of the firmament is similar to the color of sapphire; and the color of sapphire is similar to the color of the throne of glory, as is said, "There was under His feet the like of paved work of sapphire stone, and the like of the very heaven for clearness" (Exod. 24:10); and also, "The semblance of a throne in appearance like sapphire" (Ezek. 1:26).

דַּתְנִיָּא הִיָּה ר"מ אֹמֵר  
מָה נִשְׁתַּנָּה תְּכֵלֶת מִכָּל  
מִיָּנִי צַבְעוֹנִין מִפְּנֵי  
שֶׁהַתְּכֵלֶת דּוֹמָה לַיָּם וַיִּם  
דּוֹמָה לְרִקִּיעַ וְרִקִּיעַ דּוֹמָה  
לְכֶסֶד הַכְּבוֹד שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר  
וַיִּרְאוּ אֶת אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל  
וַתַּחַת רַגְלָיו כַּמַּעֲשֵׂה  
לְבֵנַת הַסַּפִּיר וְכַעֲצֵם  
הַשָּׁמַיִם לְטֹהַר וְכַתִּיב  
כַּמְרָאָה אֲבֵן סַפִּיר דְּמוֹת  
כֶּסֶד

Rashbam – Something like the whiteness of a sapphire

Ralbag – Their vision may have been of pure empty space