

# אַשְׁפָּה

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## Introduction

Grammatical Type: n f.

Occurrences: Total 6x OT, 0x Sir, 2x QumB (1QIsa<sup>a</sup> 22.6, 49.2), 1x inscr (Lachish ostrakon 13.3).

Text Doubtful:

**A.1** Written as אֲשַׁפָּה in 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> Is 22.6 (for other cases of Aleph for MT He in 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> see Kutscher 1974:163-64). 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> Is 49.2 has בְּאֲשַׁפְתִּי, i.e. pl for MT sing.

**A.2** Lachish ostrakon 13.3: 4 אֵת אֲשַׁפָּה. This occurrence is viewed as pl by Ges.-18 (109), Clines (“pl. perh.” 1:418a), Lemaire (1977:130) and is vocalised as pl by Torczyner (1938:159-60). Davies (1991:6) marks the Shin and the “4” as uncertain. There is also a word-divider between אֵת and אֲשַׁפָּה which is marked as uncertain. The reference is marked as uncertain in *HAL* (93).

**B.1** In Jr 5.16 BHS and BHK propose that instead of אֲשַׁפְתִּי we should read שְׁפָתוֹ or אֲשֶׁר פִּיהוּ. The latter emendation is also recorded in Clines (1:418a) and Ges.-18 (109).

**B.2** In Dt 32.41 it is suggested by BHK that there may be an occurrence of אֲשַׁפָּה. BHK proposes to read בְּאֲשַׁפָּה in place of בְּמִשְׁפָּט. The same emendation is found in Greßmann (1905:78), and is said there to go back to an oral communication from Gunkel.

**B.3** Clines (1:418a) suggests the emendation אֲשַׁפְתִּי מִטֹּת “*the rods*, i.e. arrows, *of your quiver*” for MT מִטֹּת אֲמָר (Hb 3.9). The context has קֶשֶׁת ‘bow’ in support of the emendation, although the verse is more likely to be drawing the comparison between speech and arrows drawn in Pr 25.18 and Sir 51.5.

Qere/Ketiv: none.

## 1. Root and Comparative Material

**A.1** אֶשְׁפָּה is the equivalent of Akk išpatu ‘quiver’ or ‘bow case’ (in CAD 7:257), Ug utpt, Eg ispt and Hurr išpanti. Akk may be the source of the word in other languages. The following are explicitly said to be loanwords: Ug utpt by KB (95), Ellenbogen (1962:45), *HAL* (93); Eg ispt by Ehelolf (1923:46-47), Albright (1934:10), Ges.-18 (109), Ellenbogen (1962:45), *HAL* (109); Hurr išpanti by von Brandenstein (1939:58), CAD (7:257), *HAL* (93; see also Ellenbogen 1962:46, n. 3); Hebrew אֶשְׁפָּה by Ellenbogen (1962:45).

**A.2** Akk išpatu is sometimes written with the giš or kuš determinative preceding (*AHW*:397). The former is written before wooden objects, and the latter before leather objects.

**A.3** Ehelolf (1923:46-47) says that Akk išpatu comes ultimately from Sum and gives an etymology. According to him the word used originally to refer to the bow case, before it developed to be used of an arrow case. Ellenbogen (1962:46) offers an alternative Sum etymology of Akk išpatu.

**A.4** Hoch (1994:40-41) gives the various Hieroglyphic spellings of the Eg word through the 18th-20th dynasties. He holds that the word is probably not of Semitic origin, though it has come to Eg through Semitic, and the Eg form resembles Hebrew אֶשְׁפָּה more than it does the Ug or Akk forms.

**B.1** Lawson Younger (1997:566) incorrectly reads *HAL* or Albright (1934) and says that Albright derived אֶשְׁפָּה from Eg ’sp’t.

## 2. Formal Characteristics

**A.1** Whatever its ultimate etymology, אֶשְׁפָּה now has the structure *qatl-h*.

**B.1** [nil]

## 3. Syntagmatics

**A.1** Subj תִּרְנֶה (Jb 39.23). The meaning of this verb is not clear. BDB (943) suggests that \*רְנֶה ‘rattle’ is onomatopoeic. *HAL* (1162) gives it as “klirren”. 11QtgJob uses יתלה from the verb to “hang up”.

**A.2** Obj אִשָּׁרָה (Is 22.6), אִלְמֵי piel (Ps 127.5).

**A.3** nomen rectum of אִשָּׁרָה (La 3.13).

**B.1** [nil]

#### 4. Versions

**A.1** LXX Is 49.2 φαρέτρα. In pl in Is 22.6 since sentence changed from sing “and Elam took up the quiver” to pl οἱ δὲ Ἀιλαμίται ἔλαβον φαρέτρας. LXX Jb 39.23 reads only: ἐπ’ αὐτῷ γαυριᾶ τόξον καὶ μάχαιρα. Similarly with Jr 5.16 first half of verse is omitted and whole verse reads πάντες ἰσχυροί. Janzen (1973:97, 117) explains short LXX reading in Jr 5.16 as haplography. LXX La 3.13 has removed MT’s metaphor by translating “he brought into my kidneys the sons of his quiver” as εἰσήγαγεν τοῖς νεφροῖς μου ἰοὺς φαρέτρας αὐτοῦ “he brought into my kidneys the arrows of his quiver”. LXX Ps 127.5 reads μακάριος ἄνθρωπος ὃς πληρώσει τὴν ἐπιθυμίαν αὐτοῦ ἐξ αὐτῶν “happy is the man who fills his desire from them”. Translation of אִשָּׁרָה by “desire” may link it with the verb אִשָּׁרָה ‘pant’ or ‘long for’. The translation may have been caused by a failure to recognize the metaphor being used. Compare also Tg.

**A.2** Ps 127.5 Aq, Sym, Thd φαρέτρα ‘quiver’.

**A.3** Pesh Jb 39.23, Ps 127.5, Is 22.6, 49.2 qtrq’ ‘quiver’. In Is 22.6 with *seyame* (pl marker) in manuscript 7a1 and probably in 12a1. La 3.13 reads ’l bkwlyty g’rwhy “he made his arrows enter into my kidneys”. This understands אִשָּׁרָה אִשָּׁרָה to mean “his arrows”. Pesh Jr 5.16 (7a1) reads: ggrth ’yk qbr’ ptyhn. McKane (1986:124) thinks that Pesh Jr 5.16 has used ggrth “their throats” assimilating to Pesh Ps 5.10, which reads w’yk qbr’ ptyh’ ggrthwn. Pesh Jr 5.16 does not therefore attest a non-Masoretic Vorlage.

**A.4** Tg Is 22.6 uses אִשָּׁרָה ‘weapons’ or ‘armour’. Tg Jb 39.23 (Diez Merino 1984) like Is 22.6 has אִשָּׁרָה. Tg Is 49.2, Jr 5.16 has אִשָּׁרָה אִשָּׁרָה and אִשָּׁרָה אִשָּׁרָה respectively. The second word of these phrases, “weapons” or “armour”, is cognate with אִשָּׁרָה. In this phrase it may have become specialised to mean “quiver” (Jastrow:37). Tg La 3.13

explains metaphor of MT using the phrase גירי תיקיה “the arrows of his quiver” to represent בְּנֵי אֲשָׁפָתוֹ. Tg Ps 127.5 (Díez Merino 1982) מדרשיה “his school” is clearly interpretative.

**A.5** 11QtgJob at Jb 39.23: עלוהי יתלה שלט נשנ וגוד וחרף סיף. שלט here means “bow case” or “quiver”. See Sokoloff (1974:93) and Borger (1977:102-05).

**A.6** Vg always has *pharetra* ‘quiver’, except Ps 127.5 iuxta LXX which uses *desiderium* ‘desire’. In La 3.13 Vg translates בְּנֵי אֲשָׁפָתוֹ by *filias pharetrae suae* “the daughters of his quiver”. The reason for the feminine, “daughters”, is uncertain.

**B.1** 11QtgJob at Jb 39.23 שלט was translated by French “lance” (van der Ploeg and van der Woude 1971). This meaning is rejected by Borger (1977:102-05), and seems without warrant.

## 5. Lexical/Semantic Field(s)

**A.1** אֲשָׁפָה is in the semantic field of military equipment, and is accoutrement to offensive weapons. It may also be viewed as part of the semantic field of archery. In Is 49.2, Ps 127.5 and La 3.13 אֲשָׁפָה is brought into close connection with חֵץ ‘arrow’. The last two examples have חֵץ in the preceding verse. In La 3.12-13 there is a link between אֲשָׁפָה and קֶשֶׁת ‘bow’. There is a looser contextual link between אֲשָׁפָה in Is 22.6 and קֶשֶׁת in Is 22.3.

**A.2** אֲשָׁפָה is brought into connection with בְּנֵים in the phrase בְּנֵי אֲשָׁפָתוֹ (La 3.13), and in the context of Ps 127 (cf. הַנְּעוּרִים בְּנֵי in v. 4). A looser connection may be made between the reference to eating up sons in Jr 5.17 and the use of אֲשָׁפָה in Jr 5.16.

**B.1** [nil]

## 6. Exegesis

**A.1** On Is 22.6 Wildberger (1978:819) says “Ps 127.5 spricht bildhaft vom Füllen des Köchers, man erwartet also, daß hier von seinem Entleeren gesprochen

würde...Aber wenn man den Köcher aufhebt, geschieht das ja auch, um Pfeile herauszunehmen.”

**A.2** In Jr 5.16 an אֶשְׁפָּה is likened to an open grave although it is not directly an instrument of death, nor is its orifice expansive. The simile may be used because the quiver is the source of numerous deadly arrows. Thus Craigie, Kelley & Drinkard (1991:90) translate, “Its quiver is like an open grave; all within it are warriors.”

**A.3** The general military context of the Lachish ostraca favours the view that אֶשְׁפָּה is found there. It may be a list of equipment. The possible use of the sign “4” immediately after אֶשְׁפָּה may also indicate that it is a pl.

## **B.1 [nil]**

## **7. Conclusion**

Given the parallels in other languages, the versional renderings, and the military contexts of its use, the meaning of אֶשְׁפָּה as “quiver” seems secure. It is possible, however, that bows and arrows were kept in the same case in some periods, and therefore, since in Akk išpatu also has the less common meaning of “bow case”, the possibility that this is the meaning in some Hebrew occurrences should not be ruled out.

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