

Lev. 1:1 The LORD called to Moses and spoke to him from the Tent of Meeting, saying: ² Speak to the Israelite people, and say to them:

When any of you presents an offering of cattle to the LORD, he shall choose his offering from the herd or from the flock.

Lev. 1:3 If his offering is a burnt offering from the herd, he shall make his offering a male without blemish. He shall bring it to the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, for acceptance in his behalf before the LORD. ⁴ He shall lay his hand upon the head of the burnt offering, that it may be acceptable in his behalf, in expiation for him. ⁵ The bull shall be slaughtered before the LORD; and Aaron's sons, the priests, shall offer the blood, dashing the blood against all sides of the altar which is at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting. ⁶ The burnt offering shall be flayed and cut up into sections. ⁷ The sons of Aaron the priest shall put fire on the altar and lay out wood upon the fire; ⁸ and Aaron's sons, the priests, shall lay out the sections, with the head and the suet, on the wood that is on the fire upon the altar. ⁹ Its entrails and legs shall be washed with water, and the priest shall turn the whole into smoke on the altar as a burnt offering, an offering by fire [אֲשָׁה] of pleasing odor to the LORD.

Lev. 1:10 If his offering for a burnt offering is from the flock, of sheep or of goats ... ¹³ ... It is a burnt offering, an offering by fire [אֲשָׁה], of pleasing odor to the LORD.

Lev. 1:14 If his offering to the LORD is a burnt offering of birds ... ¹⁷ ... It is a burnt offering, an offering by fire [אֲשָׁה], of pleasing odor to the LORD.

BDB

אֲשָׁה n. m. an offering made by fire; used chiefly of offerings of animals, but also of the מִנְחָה Lv 2:11, and of the sacred bread and frankincense Lv 24:7 which was placed on the table as a memorial, and finally went to the priests. The word is used in Dt 18:1, Jos 13:14 (D) 1 S 2:28; elsewhere in P Lv 6:10, 10:15, 22:22, Nu 28:2, 28:3, esp. in phrases אֲשֵׁי יְיָ Lv 2:3 + 11 t., אֲשָׁה רִיחַ נִיחֹם לַיהוָה Lv 1:9 + 14 t., רִיחַ נִיחֹם אֲשָׁה לַיהוָה Ex 29:18 + 6 t., אֲשָׁה לַיהוָה רִיחַ נִיחֹם Lv 23:13, אֲשָׁה לַיהוָה רִיחַ נִיחֹם Lv 3:16, Nu 18:17, אֲשָׁה (הוּא) לַיהוָה Ex 29:25, Lv 2:16; אֲשָׁה לַיהוָה acc. after verbs of offering Ex 30:20 + 14 t., אֲשָׁה עֲלֵה לַיהוָה Nu 28:19, אֲשָׁה לַיהוָה קָרְבָן Lv 22:27, Nu 15:25.

HALOT

אֲשָׁה: MHB. (only pl. אֲשָׁיִם); *n. unitatis* derived from אָשׂ: **offerings made by fire**:

DCH

אֲשָׁה ^{65.3.8} n.m. **fire offering**—i.e. offering made by fire.

GKC

[§ 86i] Instead of אֲשָׁה we find in a few cases (a) the ending אֲשָׁה ... and (b) אֲשָׁה, arising from āy, in אֲשָׁה *belonging to fire* (אֲשָׁה), i. e. *a sacrifice offered by fire*; לְבָנָה (prop. *milky*) *the storax-shrub*, Arabic *lubnay*.

RASHI: **An offering by fire.** It must be slaughtered for the sake of the fire; an *isheh* is an offering by “fire,” *esh*.

IBN EZRA: **An offering by fire.** The Hebrew word is really an adjective, implying something that is “offered by fire.” The word modified by this adjective is “the whole,” for this is an offering that is wholly “offered by fire.”

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Baruch Levine, *Leviticus* (JPS Torah Commentary)

9. an offering by fire of pleasing odor to the Lord The etymology of the term *'isheh* is disputed, but it probably derives from *'esh*, “fire.” It follows the form of certain adjectives and literally means “something fiery.”

Baruch Schwartz, “Leviticus,” *Jewish Study Bible*

9: An offering by fire: Heb “*'isheh*” is not derived from “*'esh*,” “fire,” but from a root meaning “gift.” Thus a better translation is “food gift,” since the word denotes burnt offerings, cereal offerings, and sacrifices of well-being. It is not used for the purification and reparation offerings, as the latter are not gifts but rituals of expiation.

Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 1-16* (Anchor Bible)

Its entrails and shins shall be washed with water, and the priest shall turn all of it into smoke on the altar as a burnt offering, **a food gift** of pleasing aroma to the Lord.

9. a food gift. The term *'iššeh* is usually rendered “fire offering” and is derived from *'ēš* ‘fire’. This rendering, however, must be rejected not only because its derivation is dubious but because it does not meet the data. Certain offerings that never enter the altar fire are nevertheless called *'iššeh*, for example, the wine libation (Num 15:10; cf. *b. Sukk.* 48b), the priestly prebend from the well-being offering (7:30, 35–36), and the bread of display (24:7, 9). Conversely, certain offerings that are burned on the altar, at least in part, are never called *'iššeh*, such as the purification offering. Despite the fact that there is frequent mention of the burning of the suet and its related internal organs of the purification offering, not even once is the term *'iššeh* used (see Exod 29:13; Lev 8:16; 23:1, 19; Num 28:15; 29:38). In all of these contexts, all sacrifices are called *'iššeh* except the purification offering (Exod 29:18, 25; Lev 8:21, 28; 23:18; Num 28:15; 29:36). Indeed, in one case the purification offering is explicitly excluded from the *'iššeh*: “If this was done inadvertently, unnoticed by the community, the whole community shall present one bull of the herd as a burnt offering of pleasing odor to the Lord, with its proper cereal offering and libation, and one he-goat as a purification offering ... and for their error they have brought their offering, an *'iššeh* to the Lord and their purification to the Lord” (Num 15:24–25). The conclusion is inescapable that in the last part of the citation (v 25b), *'iššeh* can only refer to the burnt offering and its accompaniments, the cereal offering and libation, from which the purification offering is purposely excluded (*Sipre* Num 111; cf. Maim., *Guide* 3.46.62–63).

Most likely, *'iššeh* is related to Ug. *itt* ‘gift’ or Arab. *'atātu* ‘possessions of every kind’. Because the priests as well as the altar benefit from the *'iššeh* (7:35; 24:9; Deut 18:1; Josh 13:14; 1 Sam 2:28), I suggest “food gift,” a shortened form of *leḥem 'iššeh* (3:11, 16). This translation is in line with the rendering “a sacrifice that is willingly received by the Lord” (*Tgs. Ps.-J* and *Neof.*). It also suffices to explain why it cannot apply to the purification offering. A sacrifice that purges the sanctuary of the pollution caused by the accumulation of sin can hardly be called a gift.

The absence of *'iššeh* from later biblical compositions, especially in similar contexts (cf. 23:37 with Ezek 45:17; Num 28:3–6 with Ezek 46:13–15; Num 28:12–13 with Ezek 46:7; Num 28:17–19 with Ezek 45:21–23), indicates that this term became obsolete by exilic times (Hurvitz 1982: 59–63)—a conclusion that strengthens the thesis that the provenience of the Priestly texts lies in the preexilic period.

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