

Semitic Phonological Equivalences and Transcription¹

by Dr. Steven D. Anderson (<http://Bible.TruthOnly.com>); rev. 10/16/2015

Proto-Semitic ²	Classical Arabic	Classical Hebrew	Modern Hebrew	Imperial Aramaic	Akkadian (OB)	Ethiopic (Ge'ez)	Ugaritic
'	ء (')	א (')	א ('/ø)	א (')	'/ø	'	
b	ب (b)	ב (b)/ב (v)	ב (b)/ב (v)	ב (b)/ב (v)	b	b	
g (or j)	ج (j)	ג (g)/ג (g')	ג (g)	ג (g)/ג (g')	g	g	
d	ד (d)	ד (d)/ד (ð)	ד (d)	ד (d)/ד (ð)	d	d	d
h	ה (h)	ה (h)	ה (h)	ה (h)	'/ø	h	
w	ו (w)	ו (w)/ו (y) ³	ו (v)/ו (y)	ו (w)/ו (y) ³	w/ø	w	
z (or ^d z)	ז (z)	ז (z)	ז (z)	ז (z)	z	z	z
ð/z/θ	ظ (ð)	צ (s)	צ ('s)	ט (t)	s	s	ð
ð/d/dh	ذ (ð)	ז (z)	ז (z)	ד (d)/ד (ð) ⁴	z	z	d
ħ	ح (h)	ח (h)	ח (h)	ח (h)	'/ø	ħ	
x (?) ⁵	خ (h)	ח (h)	ח (h)	ח (h)	ħ	ħ	
h/k/kh	כ (h)	כ (h)	כ (h)	כ (h)	ħ	ħ	
t	ط (t)	ט (t)	ט (t)	ט (t)	t	t	t
y	ي (y)	י (y)	י (y)	י (y)	y/ø	y	
k	ك (k)	כ (k)/כ (h)	כ (k)/כ (h)	כ (k)/כ (h)	k	k	
l	ل (l)	ל (l)	ל (l)	ל (l)	l	l	
m	م (m)	מ (m)	מ (m)	מ (m)	m	m	
n	ن (n)	נ (n)	נ (n)	נ (n)	n	n	
s (or 's)	س (s)	ס (s)	ס (s)	ס (s)	s	s	s
'	ع (')	ע (')	ע ('/ø)	ע (')	'/ø	'	'
g'/g'/gh	غ (g')	ע (')	ע ('/ø)	ע (')	'/ø	'	g'
p (or f)	ف (f)	פ (p)/פ (f)	פ (p)/פ (f)	פ (p)/פ (f)	p	f	
ʃ (or 'ʃ)	ص (s)	צ (s)	צ ('s)	צ (s)	s	s	s
d (or ʃ)	ض (d)	צ (s)	צ ('s)	ע (')/ק (q)	s	d	s
θ/t/th	ث (θ)	ט (s)	ט (s)	ת (t)/ת (θ)	š	s	θ (or t)
q	ق (q)	ק (q)	ק (k)	ק (q)	q	q	
r	ر (r)	ר (r)	ר (r)	ר (r)	r	r	
š (or ʃ)	ش (š)	ש (s)	ש (s)	ש (s)/ס (s) ⁶	š	š (or ʃ)	š
š (or s)	س (s)	ש (s)	ש (s)	ש (s)	š	s	š
t	ت (t)	ת (t)/ת (θ)	ת (t)	ת (t)/ת (θ)	t	t	t

¹ For similar charts, see Huehnergard, *A Grammar of Akkadian*, 590; Rosenthal, *A Grammar of Biblical Aramaic*, 18; Johns, *A Shorter Grammar of Biblical Aramaic*, 5. The Ugaritic column in the above chart is only partially complete.

² Proto-Semitic (PS) is reconstructed hypothetically, so Semiticists disagree on the original set of consonants in PS and their pronunciation. Letters in parentheses represent alternative proposals.

³ PS ו (w) typically becomes ו (y) at the beginning of a word in Hebrew and Aramaic.

⁴ Old Aramaic represented PS ð as ז (Rosenthal §17).

⁵ The existence of this letter in PS is questionable. See John Huehnergard, "Akkadian ħ and West Semitic ħ." Pages 102-19 in *Studia Semitica*, ed. Leonid Kogan. Papers of the Oriental Institute 3. Orientalia: Moscow, 2003.

⁶ ש became ס in later Aramaic (Rosenthal §19).

Semitic Consonants¹

	stops				affricatives			fricatives				nasals	approximants
	vd	vl	vdem	vlem	vd	vl	vlem	vd	vl	vdem	vlem	vd	vd
bilabial	<i>b</i>	<i>p</i>										<i>m</i>	<i>w</i>
labiodental								<i>v</i>	<i>f/p̄</i>				
interdental								<i>ð/d̄/dh</i>	<i>θ/t̄/th</i>	<i>ð/z̄/θ</i>			
dental	<i>d</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>ḏ</i>	<i>ṭ</i>								<i>n</i>	<i>r</i>
alveolar					<i>z</i> (or <i>ḏz</i>)	<i>s</i> (or <i>ʿs</i>)	<i>š</i> (or <i>ʿš</i>)		<i>s</i>				
lateral							<i>š</i>		<i>ś</i>				<i>l</i>
palatal								<i>j</i>	<i>š</i>				<i>y</i>
velar	<i>g</i>	<i>k</i>		<i>q</i>				<i>ḡ/ḡ/gh</i>	<i>ḫ/k/kh</i>		<i>x</i>		
pharyngeal								<i>ʿ/ʿ</i>	<i>ḥ</i>				
glottal		<i>ʔ/ʿ</i>							<i>h</i>				

Key: vd = voiced; vl = voiceless; vdem = voiced emphatic; vlem = voiceless emphatic

∅ = null (no pronunciation)

Note: Transliteration conventions are not fixed; some writers may represent different sounds by the same symbols.

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