

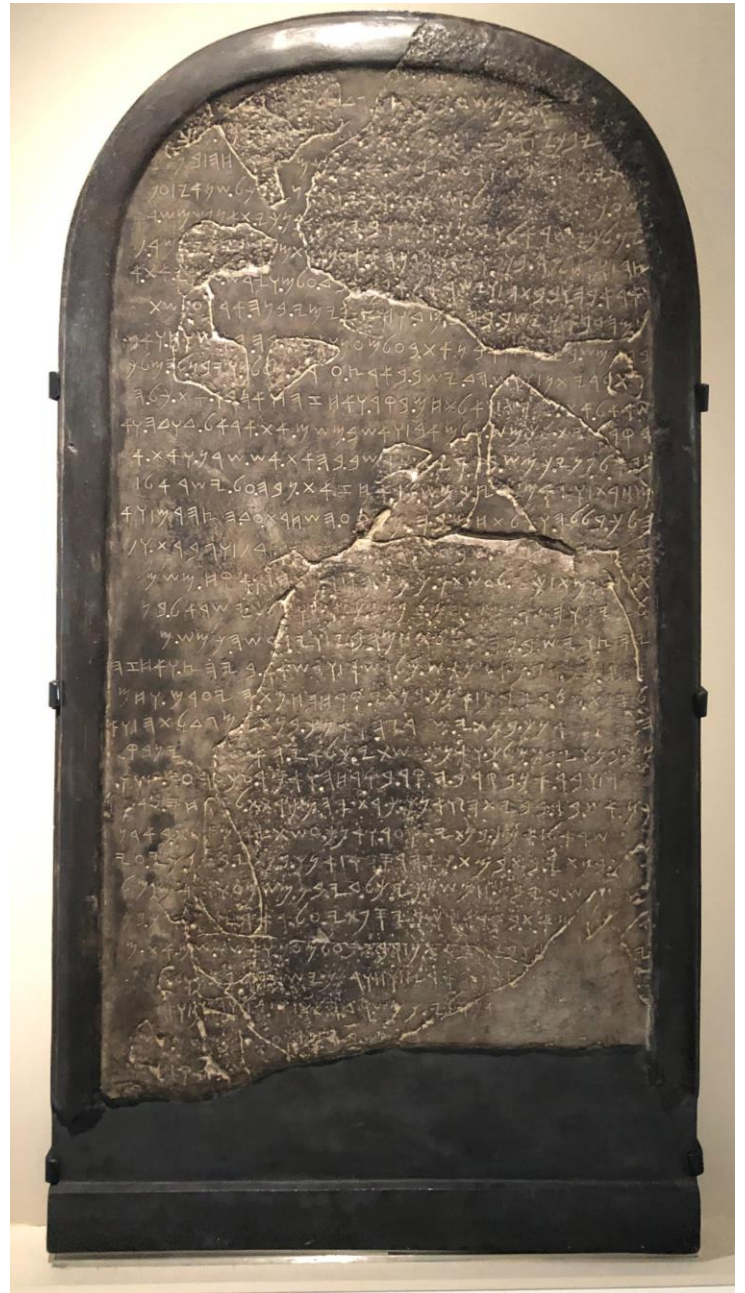
1. "I am Mesha, son of **Chemosh**[-yatti], the king of Moab, the Dibonite.
2. My father (had) reigned over Moab for thirty years, and I reigned
3. after my father. And I made this high-place for Chemosh in Qarcho . . .
4. because he has delivered me from all kings, and because he has made me triumph over all my enemies. As for **Omri**
5. **the king of Israel**, and he humbled Moab for many years (days), for Chemosh was angry with his land.
6. And **his son** reigned in his place; and he also said, "I will oppress Moab!" In my days he said so.
7. But I triumphed over him and over his house, and **Israel has perished**; it has perished forever! And **Omri** took possession of the whole land of Medeba,
8. and he lived there in his days and half the days of his son (**Ahab**): forty years.
9. But Chemosh restored it in my days. And I built Baal Meon, and I built a water reservoir in it. And I built
10. Qiryaten. And the **men of Gad** lived in the land of Atarot from ancient times; and the **king of Israel**
11. built Atarot for himself, and I fought against the city and captured it. And I killed all the people of
12. the city as a sacrifice for Chemosh and for Moab. And I brought back the fire-hearth of his uncle from there; and I brought it
13. before the face of Chemosh in Qerioit, and I made the men of Sharon live there, as well as the men of Maharit.
14. And Chemosh said to me, "Go, take Nebo from Israel."
15. And I went in the night and fought against it from the daybreak until midday, and I took it
16. and I killed the whole population: seven thousand male subjects and aliens, and female subjects, aliens, and servant girls.
17. For I had devoted them to destruction for (the god) Ashtar Chemosh. And from there I took the
18. **vessels of Yahweh**, and I presented them before the face of Chemosh. And the king of Israel had built
19. Yahaz, and he stayed there throughout his campaign against me; and Chemosh drove him away before my face. And
20. I took two hundred men of Moab, all first class (warriors), and I led it up to Yahaz. And I have taken it
21. in order to add it to Dibon. I have built Qarcho, the wall of the woods and the wall of
22. the citadel; and I have built its gates; and I have built its towers; and
23. I have built the house of the king; and I have made the double reservoir for the spring in the innermost part of the city.
24. Now the innermost part of the city had no cistern, in Qarcho, and I said to all the people, "Each one of you shall make
25. a cistern in his house." And I cut the moat for Qarcho by using Israelite captives.
26. I have built Aroer, and I constructed the military road in Arnon (valley).
27. I have built Beth-Bamot, for it had been destroyed. I have built Bezer, for it lay

28. in ruins. And the men of Dibon stood in battle formation, for all Dibon were in subjection. And I am the king
29. over the hundreds in the towns which I have added to the land. And I have built
30. Beth-Medeba and Beth-Diblaten and Beth-Baal-Meon, and I brought there . . .
31. flocks of the the land. And **the House of [Da]vid** dwelt in Hauranen, . . .
32. Chemosh said to me, "Go down, fight against Hauranen!" I went down . . . and Chemosh restored it in my days . . ."

## Mesha Stela

The Mesha Stela, also called the Moabite Stone, is the longest inscription known from Iron Age southern Levant. Plaster casts of the stela can be found in museum collections around the world. This cast represents the front, inscribed portion of the stela.

Ancient Moab encompassed the region east of the Dead Sea. Written in the Moabite language, the text of the stela commemorates king Mesha of Moab's victory over neighboring Israel and details his military campaigns and revolt against the Israelites, who had previously set up towns and sanctuaries in Moabite territory. The text mentions the killing and capture of Israelites, their enslavement as laborers on Mesha's building projects, and the taking of "vessels of Yahweh" (the god of Israel) from a sanctuary. Omri, king of Israel, is also mentioned along with his unnamed "son."



A Comparison of Ancient and Modern Letters

	aleph	kaph	lamed	mem	resh
Proto-Sinaitic ca. 1900–1100 bc	𐤀	𐤁	𐤂	𐤃	𐤄
Phoenician Nora Stone ca. 800 bc	𐤀	𐤁	𐤂	𐤃	𐤄
Moabite Mesha Stela ca. 830 bc	𐤀	𐤁	𐤂	𐤃	𐤄
Hebrew Samaritan Ostraca ca. 800 bc	𐤀	𐤁	𐤂	𐤃	𐤄
Archaic Greek 800–500 bc	Α	Κ	Λ	Μ	Ρ
Modern Latin	A	K	L	N	R