

צִידוֹן

صَيْدُونُ

ΣΙΔΩΝ

Strong's
Sidon, Zidon

Or Tsiydon {tsee-done'}; from [tsuwd](#) in the sense of catching fish; fishery; Tsidon, the name of a son of Canaan, and of a place in Palestine -- Sidon, Zidon.

<http://bibleapps.com/hebrew/6721.htm>

Zideon In the cabala an angel invoked in the conjuration of the Reed.

<http://www.angelfire.com/journal/cathboduua/Angels/Zangels.html>

Σιδών - Wiktionary

en.wiktionary.org/wiki/Σιδών ▾ Wiktionary ▾

Σιδών. Definition from Wiktionary, the free dictionary. Jump to: navigation, search.

Wikipedia has an article on: Sidon. Contents. [hide]. 1 Ancient Greek.

Strong's Greek: 4605. Σιδών (Sidón) -- Sidon, a ... - Bible Hub

biblehub.com/greek/4605.htm ▾ Bible Hub ▾

STRONGS NT 4605: **Σιδών** **Σιδών**, Σιδώνος (Buttmann, 16 (14)), ἡ (ἰτιϚ and ἰτιϚ, from τιϚ, 'to hunt', in Aramaic also 'to fish'; hence, properly, taking its name ...

Σιδών | Teknia

<https://www.teknia.com/greek-dictionary/sidon> ▾ William D. Mounce ▾

Forms of the word. Dictionary: **Σιδών**, ὠνος, ἡ. Greek transliteration: Sidōn. Simplified transliteration: Sidon. Numbers. Strong's number: 4605. GK Number: 4972.

Wiki Greek-English Lexicon - Σιδών - Sidon (n.)

lexicon.katabiblon.com/index.php?lemma=Σιδών

Kata Biblon user-editable dictionary of the Greek New Testament • Σιδων • SIDWN • Sidōn.

Strong's Greek: 4605. Σιδών (Sidón) -- Sidon, a ... - Bible

bibleapps.com/greek/4605.htm ▾

Sidón: Sidon, a maritime city of Phoenicia. Original Word: **Σιδών**, ὠνος, ἡ. Part of Speech: Noun, Feminine Transliteration: Sidón Phonetic Spelling: (sid-one')

Greek New Testament - Σιδών - La Parola

www.laparola.net/greco/parola.php?p=Σιδών

The word **Σιδών** in the New Testament. ... Click on the first column to search for that word as a form of the root **Σιδών**; click on the second column to search for that ...

Σιδών

www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=*sidw%5Cn... Perseus Project ▾

σιδών, noun pl masc gen attic contr. Word frequency statistics. **Σιδών**. men of Sidon. (Show lexicon entry in LSJ Middle Liddell Autenrieth) (search) ...

Strong's #4605 - Σιδών - Sidon - Old & New Testament ...

www.studylight.org/lexicons/greek/gwview.cgi?n=4605 ▾

Σιδών, ὠνος, ἡ., Sidon, Od. 15.425, Hdt. 2.116, etc.: hence Adj. Σιδόνιος, α, ov, Il. 6.290, A. Supp. 122; later Σιδώνιος, Phryn.Trag. 9 (lyr.), Hdt. 7.44, S. Fr. 909, ...

Sidon

For other uses of “Sidon”, see [Sidon \(disambiguation\)](#).

Coordinates: 33°33′38″N 35°23′53″E﻿ / ﻿33.56056°N 35.39806°E﻿ / 33.56056; 35.39806

Sidon or **Saīda** (**Arabic:** صيدا, *Ṣaydā*; **Phoenician:** 𐤑𐤃𐤏𐤍, *Ṣydw̄n*; **Biblical Hebrew:** צִדּוֹן, *Ṣīḏōn*; **Greek:** Σιδών; **Latin:** *Sidon*; **Turkish:** *Sayda*) is the third-largest city in Lebanon. It is located in the South Governorate of Lebanon, on the Mediterranean coast, about 40 kilometres (25 miles) north of Tyre and 40 km (25 miles) south of the capital Beirut. In Genesis, Sidon is a son of Canaan, a grandson of Noah. Its name coincides with the modern Arabic word for fishery.

1 History



Persian style bull protome found in Sidon gives testimony of the Acheminid rule and influence. Marble, 5th century BC

Sidon (whose name in classical Arabic is: صَيْدُون (Saydoon)) has been inhabited since very early in prehistory. The archaeological site of Sidon II shows a lithic assemblage dating to the Acheulean, whilst finds at Sidon III include a Heavy Neolithic assemblage suggested to date just prior to the invention of pottery.^[1] It was one of the most important Phoenician cities, and may have been the oldest. From here, and other ports, a great Mediterranean commercial empire was founded. Homer praised the skill of its craftsmen in producing glass, purple dyes,

and its women’s skill at the art of embroidery. It was also from here that a colonizing party went to found the city of Tyre. Tyre also grew into a great city, and in subsequent years there was competition between the two, each claiming to be the metropolis (‘Mother City’) of Phoenicia. Glass manufacturing, Sidon’s most important enterprise in the Phoenician era, was conducted on a vast scale, and the production of purple dye was almost as important. The small shell of the *Murex trunculus* was broken in order to extract the pigment that was so rare it became the mark of royalty.

In AD 1855, the sarcophagus of King Eshmun’azar II was discovered. From a Phoenician inscription on its lid, it appears that he was a “king of the Sidonians,” probably in the 5th century BC, and that his mother was a priestess of ‘Ashtart, “the goddess of the Sidonians.”^[2] In this inscription the gods Eshmun and Ba’al Sidon ‘Lord of Sidon’ (who may or may not be the same) are mentioned as chief gods of the Sidonians. ‘Ashtart is entitled ‘*Ashtart-Shem-Ba’al* “Ashtart the name of the Lord’, a title also found in an Ugaritic text.



Sidon Sea Castle, built by the Crusaders in AD 1228

In the years before Christianity, Sidon had many conquerors: Assyrians, Babylonians, Egyptians, Greeks, and finally Romans. Herod the Great visited Sidon. Both Jesus and Saint Paul are said to have visited it too (see *Biblical Sidon* below). The city was eventually conquered by the Arabs and then by the Ottoman Turks.

Like other Phoenician city-states, Sidon suffered from a succession of conquerors. At the end of the Persian era in 351 BC, it was invaded by the emperor Artaxerxes III and then by Alexander the Great in 333 BC when the Hellenistic era of Sidon began. Under the successors of Alexander, it enjoyed relative autonomy and or-

ganized games and competitions in which the greatest athletes of the region participated. In the Necropolis of Sidon, important finds such as the **Alexander Sarcophagus**, the Lycian tomb and the Sarcophagus of the Crying Women were discovered, which are now on display at the **Archaeological Museum of Istanbul**.^[3]

When Sidon fell under Roman domination, it continued to mint its own silver coins. The Romans also built a theater and other major monuments in the city. In the reign of **Elagabalus** a Roman colony was established there, and was given the name of **Colonia Aurelia Pia Sidon**. During the **Byzantine period**, when the **great earthquake of AD 551** destroyed most of the cities of **Phoenice**, **Beirut's School of Law** took refuge in Sidon. The town continued quietly for the next century, until it was conquered by the Arabs in AD 636.



Sidon with a view of the Mediterranean coast

On 4 December 1110 Sidon was captured, a decade after the **First Crusade**, by **King Baldwin I of Jerusalem** and **King Sigurd I of Norway**. It then became the centre of the **Lordship of Sidon**, an important lordship in the **Kingdom of Jerusalem**. **Saladin** captured it from the Crusaders in 1187, but **German Crusaders** restored it to Christian control in the **Crusade of 1197**. It would remain an important Crusader stronghold until it was finally destroyed by the **Saracens** in 1249. In 1260 it was again destroyed by the **Mongols**. The remains of the original walls are still visible.

After Sidon came under **Ottoman Turkish** rule in the early 16th century, it became the capital of the **Sidon Eyalet** (province) and regained a great deal of its earlier commercial importance. After **World War I** it became part of the **French Mandate of Lebanon**. During **World War II** the city, together with the rest of Lebanon, was captured by **British forces** fighting against the **Vichy French**, and following the war it became a major city of independent Lebanon.

Following the **Palestinian exodus** in 1948, a considerable number of **Palestinian refugees** arrived in Sidon, as in other Lebanese cities, and were settled at the large refugee camps of **Ein el-Hilweh** and **Mieh Mich**. At first these consisted of enormous rows of tents, but gradually houses were constructed. The refugee camps constituted de facto neighborhoods of Sidon, but had a separate legal and political status which made them into a kind of enclaves. At the same time, the remaining Jews of the city fled, and the Jewish cemetery fell into disrepair, threatened by coastal erosion.

2 Sidon today

Sidon was a small fishing town of 10,000 inhabitants in 1900, but studies in 2000 showed a population of 65,000 in the city, and around 200,000 in the metropolitan area. The little level land around the city is used for cultivation of some wheat, vegetables, and fruits, especially citrus and bananas. The fishing in the city remains active with a newly opened fishery that sells fresh fish by bidding every morning. The ancient basin is transformed into a fishing port, while a small quay was constructed to receive small commercial vessels. (Refer to the “**Old City**” and the “**Architecture and Landscape**” sections below).



Panorama of Sidon as seen from the top of the Sea Castle, 2009

Saida International Stadium was inaugurated in 2000 for the **Asian Football Confederation's Cup 2000**.

3 Impact on Sidon of regional underdevelopment

According to a recent **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)** report “data also point to an increase in urban poverty especially in Lebanon's largest cities suburbs such as **Beirut**, **Tripoli** and **Saida**, as illustrated by poverty-driven symptoms (child labour, over-crowdedness and deteriorated environment conditions).”^[4]

In another **UNDP** report, the author discusses the development predominance of **Beirut** over the rest of the regions of Lebanon (**North**, **South** and **Beqaa**) is a well-known imbalance that can be dated to the early 19th century.^[5] With the expansion of **Beirut** in the 1870s, urban growth in the future capital-city outgrew **Tripoli** and **Saida**. Transportation routes, missionary schools, universities and hospitals as well as the **Beirut port** development and the commerce of silk participated to the fortification of **Beirut** as a major trade center for **Mediterranean exchange** (**ARNAUD 1993**; **LABAKI 1999**: 23). However, the establishment of **Great Lebanon** in 1920, under the **French mandate**, added the poorer areas of the **North (Akkar)**, **Beqaa (Baalbak-Hermel)** and the **South**

(Jabal Aamel) to the relatively affluent cities of Mount Lebanon. This addition made of Lebanon a country composed of unequally developed regions. This legacy remains a heavy load to bear socially, culturally, economically and politically. Even though the public policies elaborated by the young Lebanese State were attempting to have regional perspectives, the early urban planning schemes reveal a development approach exclusively axed on Beirut and its suburbs.

The post war development policy of the State, promoted by Hariri government (1992–1998), was centred around balanced development and is widely inspired by the 1943 Pact and the 1989 Taef agreement (LABAKI1993: 104). However the application of this policy aims mainly at the rehabilitation and construction of roads and infrastructures (electricity, telephone, sewage). Another of its components is the rehabilitation of government buildings (airport, port, schools, universities and hospitals). Transportation projects (mainly concentrated on the coastal line) constitute 25% of the budget of 10-year economic plan developed by the CDR (BAALBAKI 1994: 90). However, all these projects are predominantly concentrated around Beirut, ignoring the regions.

3.1 The Makab (Waste Dump)

Near the southern entrance to the city lies a 'rubbish mountain' called the Makab, a 600,000 cubic metre heap that reaches the height of a four-story building. It was originally created to dispose of the remains of buildings destroyed in Israeli air strikes during the 1982 invasion, but it is now the main dump for the city. Growing out of the sea, it has become an environmental hazard, with medical waste and plastic bags polluting nearby fishing grounds.

Sidon politicians, including the Hariri family, failed for decades to resolve the Makab crisis—which has endangered residents health (especially during episodic burning). In 2004, Engineer Hamzi Moghrabi, a Sidon native, conceived the idea to establish a treatment plant for the City's decades-old chronic waste problem. He established IBC Enviro, privately funded, and the treatment plant became operational in 2013. (<http://www.abc-enviro.com/>)

The Ministry of Environment came up with a \$50,000+ plan to clean the whole area and transform the dump into a green space, along with other heaps in the country. Qamla beach in Sidon, a coast in close proximity to the Sea Castle, witnessed a large municipal cleanup in May 2011, as it was an easy target of rubbish being washed up by the Makab. These plans aim to revive the former glory of the city's coasts and attract tourists who avoided swimming in Sidon's sea before. The project of cleaning the region where the waste dump has already started, and currently a waves-barrier is being built, and the vast bulk of the waste dump being cleared.^{[6][7][8][9]}

4 Old City



Alleyway inside the Old City of Sidon.

The historical core of Sidon is a Mamluk-era old city that extends between the Sea Castle and the Saint Louis Castle. Located on a promontory jutting into the sea, this walled medieval city is very well preserved and is still inhabited today. The old City resembles a vaulted maze with narrow alleyways and winding streets. Arched pathways connect the different neighborhoods of the city. On street level, numerous souvenir shops and mini-markets can be found with old-



Carpenter's Alley inside the Old City

fashioned bakeries making crunchy whole wheat bread, called "Kaak". A lot of the alleys take the name of their residents' occupations like the "Carpenters' Alley" and the "Tailors' Alley". Several mosques dating back to the Umayyad Era are still preserved and are open to the public. A number of TV series and Music Videos have been filmed inside the Old city of Sidon. Being of great historical and architectural significance, the Old City went through a lot of renovations and there is still some measure of restoring to be done.

5 Administrative divisions

The city of Sidon is administrated by the Municipality of Sidon. The municipality is constituted of a council of 21 members including the City Mayor and his Deputy. It has administrative and financial independence but remains under the control and supervision of the central government, specifically the Ministry of Interior. The municipality's jurisdiction is limited to a region of 786 hectares in area and 5 meters in elevation, while each of the city's suburbs is administrated by its own independent municipal council. Sidon is the center of the Governorate of South Lebanon, and hosts the seat of the Governor of Southern Lebanon. The city is also the center of the Sidon District and the Union of Sidon and Zahrani Municipalities (founded in 1978 and contains 15 municipalities). Sidon hosts the southern regional headquarters of a series of governmental facilities like the Central Bank of Lebanon, Électricité du Liban, Central Telecommunications Station and others. It is also the home of the Justice Palace of South Lebanon in its new headquarters on East Boulevard (the old headquarters were an old Ottoman Saray that is currently occupied by the LSF and is planned to be transformed into a cultural center by the municipality).

In the 2000 and 2005 parliamentary elections, the Sidon District along with the Tyre and Bint Jbeil districts formed the first electoral district of South Lebanon. However, in the 2009 elections – and due to the reactivation of the 1960 electoral law – the city of Sidon was separated from its district to form a separate electoral district.

6 Religion and demographics

Sidon is the seat of the Greek Melkite Catholic Archbishop of Sidon and Deir el Qamar, and has housed a significant Catholic population throughout its history. Sidon also hosts the seats of the Sunni Mufti and the Shiite Ayatollah of South Lebanon.

In the 1930s, when Lebanon was still under the French mandate, Sidon had the largest Jewish population in Lebanon, and estimated at 3,588, with 3,060 in Beirut.^[10]

7 Main sights

- Sidon Sea Castle, a fortress built by the Crusaders in the early 13th century. It is located near the Port of Sidon.
- Sidon Soap Museum. It traces the history of the soap making in the region and its different manufacturing steps.
- Khan el Franj (“Caravanserai of the French”), built by Emir Fakhreddine in the 17th century to accom-



Alleyway inside the Old Souks.



The Castle of St. Louis.



Inside Khan El Franj.

modate French merchants and goods in order to develop trade with Europe. This is a typical khan with a large rectangular courtyard and a central fountain surrounded by covered galleries.

- Debbane Palace, a historical residence built in 1721, an example of Arab-Ottoman architecture. It is currently in the process of being transformed into the History Museum of Sidon.^[11] This villa was earlier occupied by the Hammoud family in the 18th cen-



Soap on display inside Sidon Soap Museum



The Ziri Island

tury and also by members of the famous Abaza clan in the late 19th century and early 20th century. The vaults at the ground level being originally stables for the villa residents and then turned into shops as part of the old souks.

- Old Souk, a historical vaulted market stretching between the Sea Castle and the Castle of St. Louis.
 - The Castle of St. Louis (*Qalaat Al Muizz*). It was built by the Crusaders in the 13th century on top of the remains of a fortress built by the Fatimid caliph Al Muizz. It is located to the south of the Old Souks near Murex Hill.
 - Eshmun Temple, dedicated to the Phoenician God of healing. Built in the 7th century BC, it is located in the north of Sidon near the Awali river.
 - The Ziri, a tiny rocky island located 1.5 km (0.9 mi) off the coastline of Sidon. In ancient times, it was used as a breakwater for the protection of ships and fleets. The island is a preferred destination for the locals who come here for picnics and swimming. The island is accessed by several ferry boats from the port of Sidon.
- The Corniche is a seaside promenade that extends for about 7 km (4 mi) along the city's coast. The Corniche is a popular destination for walkers, joggers, skaters and bikers. Push cart vendors offer an array of local snacks and drinks.
 - The Sidon Resthouse (*Istirahat Saida*), a traditional architectural structure that houses an elegant and well-known Lebanese restaurant, overlooking the Sea Castle and the old port, with a view of the Ziri from its long terraces and garden. It also features a courtyard interior with a fountain and ornamented walls with masonry archways.
 - The Largest Lebanese Flag. On Lebanon's 66th Independence Day, Sidon witnessed the erection of the largest Lebanese flag. The flag is 12 meters long and 6 meters wide, and was erected on a 21 meter high pole. The flag was raised on the intersection of Rafik Hariri Boulevard and Riyad Solh Street, and is easily accessible from the Corniche. The flag was painted by 66 students from the city.
 - The *Bahaa El-Dine* Mosque. Financed by Rafik Hariri and named after his father, the mosque is a 21st-century take on Istanbul's Ottoman Mosques. Located on a roundabout on the city's northern entrance, the mosque is an architectural gem that dots the city's skyline. The mosque with its authentic Arabesque designs, interior Islamic inscriptions, inner courtyards, Mecca-styled minarets and awe-inspiring 36-meter-high dome is a non-miss landmark in the city.
 - The British War Cemetery in Sidon. Opened in 1943 by units of His Majesty's (King George VI) British Forces occupying the Lebanon after the 1941 campaign against the Vochi French troops. It was originally used for the burial of men who died while serving with the occupation force, but subsequently the graves of a number of the casualties of the 1941 campaign were moved into the cemetery from other burial grounds or from isolated positions in the vicinity. The cemetery now contains 176 Commonwealth burials of the Second World War and nine war graves of other nationalities. It was designed by G. Vey. It is perhaps that only garden in modern Sidon that is elegantly kept and cared for. It is not a public garden but can be visited when the wardens have its gateways opened

8 Architecture and landscape

In general, the architectural spaces of the old part of the city, with its antique, medieval and Ottoman quarters, are impressive, and are ranked as world heritage. It is adorned with various examples of great architectural legacies since antiquity. This is the case despite the fact

that its buildings and alleyways are neglected, and require monumental renovations and organised efforts to prevent them from falling into further ruin. Some international funds were allocated to sponsor the facelifting of certain public spaces and old squares with the provision of minimal infrastructure. There are also individual initiatives to restore specific neighbourhoods as pioneered by the Audi Foundation and its elegantly rehabilitated old soap factory, now turned into a museum. The same applies to the renewal of the Debbane Ottoman mansion or villa, which was originally linked to the Hammoud family trust and was even occupied by a branch of the aristocratic **Abaza** family towards the end of the 19th century. The old city has great architectural potentials that remain underdeveloped. It has qualities that can put it on par with the old quarters of **Antibes** if its architecture becomes safeguarded and protected as well as promoted for quality life-styles. Sidon can learn from more modest yet successful examples in Lebanon itself, such as the restoration and adaptive re-use of the old quarters of **Byblos** and its small seaport entourage, or to be inspired in a humbler scale by the development of **Downtown Beirut**.

The modern city of Sidon that extends outside the walls of the medieval quarters is generally chaotic, deprived of any notable aesthetics, built with inexpensive material, and lacking in any form of urban planning. There are some minor exceptions to this at the level of individual buildings, especially those erected in the 1950s to the 1960s, in addition to a small number of mosques, commercial malls and villas or buildings designed by proper architects or up-market developers. The sprawl in the built environment has disfigured the cityscape and the landscape around it. Ugly buildings and terrible parking lots replaced the great citrus orchards that once surrounded Sidon and used to perfume it in the springtime. The only highly maintained green-space that has refined qualities is the War Cemetery of the British legions in the Levant during **World War I** and **World War II** that fell in Sidon. Beautifully landscaped and managed by the British, this cemetery is surrounded outside its fences by dilapidated buildings and scarred neglected landscapes. Near it remains a large citrus orchard that one hopes will resist the assaults of chaotic and irreverent builders. Moreover, the old city of Sidon that was always connected to the sea and its waves has been separated from its seashores by a very wide highway of asphalt that the locals refer to as the “corniche”. These rather defacing aspects are also set against a total lack of green public spaces and gardens. This aggressive degradation in the urban and architectural qualities has furthermore reached a dangerous turn in ecological terms with the disposal of sewage in the seafront and the dumping of refuse material that culminated in a mountain of rubbish known as the “**Makab**” (as noted in the section above), which threatens not only Sidon’s sea and the life within it, but also a vast stretch of the Eastern Mediterranean coastline. In fairness, one still has to note that Sidon is not worse in its urban and environmental conditions than other Lebanese

cities like **Tyre** or **Tripoli**. The greatest maritime city of Sidon, which was once set in a longstanding marriage with the sea, and that used to be adorned in all sides by gardens and orchids, is now turned against itself, becoming a living threat to the sea that also consumes the remainder of the green landscape and litters it. Maybe the future generations of this once grand city will someday experience the saving awakenings before it is too late. Perhaps the expat immigrant Sidonians who have been exposed to the qualities of life in North America, Europe, and the rich Arab states of the Gulf may bring novel initiatives of more refined development.

9 Shopping and entertainment



Clothing stores in Sidon’s city center

Sidon contains several shopping venues boasting local and international brands, as well as a handful of food and beverage outlets like the “**Spinneys**” and “**BSAT**” supermarkets. Traditional Coffeeshops serving Turkish coffee and the fruit-flavored **Hubble Bubble** occupy the seafront of the Old City while modern restaurants, especially those that serve Lebanese and Italian cuisine, are centered in the new city. From **McDonald’s** and **KFC** to **Starbucks**, **Burger King** and **Pizza Hut**, several western chains have opened at least one branch in the city, with more opening in the near future. Traditional Oriental sweets are Sidon’s speciality with regionally renowned sweetshops found all over the city.

Shopping is concentrated within two areas: East Boulevard, and the city center. From the high-end designer stores of **Pierre Cardin** and **Christian Dior** to stores directed to low and middle-income consumers, clothing stores in Sidon cater to all tastes and needs. Several other international clothing brands could be found in the city. These include **ALDO**, **Jack & Jones**, **Vero Moda**, **Springfield**, **Timberland**, **Zara**, **Mango**, **Pull and Bear**, **Mothercare**, **Bossini**, **H&M**, **Benetton**, and **GS**. Some of these stores could be found in the 2 malls in the city, **Saida Mall** (24,000 sq meters) and **Le Mall** (12,000 sq meters), aside to kids entertainment facilities, cafes and

restaurants.

Sidon also has a large Amusement Park near its southern entrance.

10 Education

Sidon is home to numerous educational facilities ranging from public elementary schools to private universities. According to a 2006 study, the city is home to 29 schools that serve a total of 18,731 students: 37% are in public schools, 63% are in private schools. Sidon also contains 10 universities, 5 of which are private universities.

The Beirut Arab University declared recently that its future Sidon Campus will host its Faculty of Medicine.

11 Festivals and celebrations

- The “Nights of the Khan” festival, consisting of a series of concerts and performances held in the **Khan El-Franj** in the Old City of Sidon. The festival takes place during the holy month of **Ramadan**. It is organized by the International Sidon Festivals Committee and the Hariri Foundation. The Festival hosts a wide array of artists and performers; it features **Sufi** art, poetry recitals, religious song medleys, Folkloric Lebanese and **Palestinian** dance groups. The festival was frequently attended by the Prime Minister of Lebanon, Tourism Minister, Education Minister, Culture Minister aside to numerous social, political and religious Lebanese figures.
- The “Wedding of the City” is a street carnival held in Sidon in the **El-Fitr** Muslim Holiday. The carnival runs for three consecutive days and is organized by the International Sidon Festivals Committee and the Hariri Foundation. The Carnival takes place on a 300-meter-long section of the Coastal Highway -extending between the **Sidon Sea Castle** and the Port- that gets closed and transformed into a Pedestrian-only zone. Last summer, the carnival attracted more than 30,000 spectators on its 3rd day. The carnival features European and Local Acrobats, giant floating balloons, exotic dancers, a light and sound show...etc.
- Independence Day Celebrations. Sidon played a significant role in Lebanon’s quest for Independence in the early 1940s whether through its nationalist politicians or through its citizens’ protests and demonstrations demanding Independence. Hence, On 22 November of every year, Sidon celebrates Lebanon’s Independence through a series of festivities that involve: a Military Parade in the Barracks of the Lebanese Army, an honorary reception in the city’s serial held by the Governor, and a tribute to

Sidong’s independence figure **Adel Osseiran**. 2009’s Independence day celebrations featured an extra festivity which is the erection of the largest Lebanese flag, on the city’s northern entrance.

- Prior to these events, the 1960s witnessed the famous “Spring Festival”, especially during the Republican term of President **Charles Helou** and mainly under the direction of the illuminated Governor of the South Lebanon region (*muhāfaza*), **Ghalib El-Turk**. One of the main features of this festival was commemorated with a special edition stamp by the postal services in Lebanon in 1965. It shows the local mariners’ boat converted into decorated small Phoenician ships, which took a large audience in formal dress (black-tie stylish gala of formal soirée attire) to the small island facing Sidon (the so-called “Zireh” or “Ziri” [abbreviations of “al-Jazira”). The island itself was transformed into a large amphitheatre facing a theatrical stage floating on the sea waves, with the backdrop of the island shaped like a large white cruiser ship with chimneys. Then the famous Lebanese artist **Sabah** (singer) performed that evening, and she descended unto the floating sea-stage on a large model of a lit crescent moon, sparkling in this eastern Mediterranean summer night sky. These elegant features of the performing space and of the procession were at the time designed by the local artist **Mohammad Mouhib El-Bizri** (aka: **Mouhib El-Bizri**). The locals and visitors at the time thought of this festival as being akin to a “one thousand and one night” fairytale of glamour that was nonetheless done under a limited budget, and yet yielding a memorable spectacle of visual effects that many of the elderly of the city still recall to date. These festivals of the “belle époque” dwindled soon after the war of 1967 and were terminated by the early 1970, and none of the subsequent ceremonials lived up to these bygone standards in refinement and quality.

12 Politics

The sectarian division in Sidon is evident. Although the locals have found some sort of understanding to settle together and coexist, the division managed to rise to the surface on several occasions. The city proper is largely occupied by **Sunni** Muslims, while Christians dwell in the densely populated suburbs, forming an urban belt that encircles the city. **Shiite** Muslims live in a large hilly terrain that extends south of the city.

This sectarian and demographic division rose to the surface during the Lebanese Civil War, when armed clashes erupted between the pro-Palestinian Sunni Muslims and the anti-Palestinian Christians. The clashes ended with the surrender of the Christian front, and the Christians were forced to move to east Beirut. After the war ended



Public beach near the Saida International Stadium

in 1990, the Christians have gradually returned to their hometowns.

The city of Sidon since the time of independence has been active in the political arena, especially in the period leading up to the end of the 20th century. It was the center of the 1958 uprising of the fishermen against the government of President Chamoun at the time. It was and continues to be a seat for the Nasserites, and it had a representation of a wide variety of political parties, Arab nationalism, Syrian nationalism, communists, and then a rise of Islamic movements. It was a key city for the P.L.O. during the Lebanese civil war. It clashed with the Syrian army in 1978 in joining ranks with the P.L.O. at the time, and then lived in relative peacefulness with the presence of the Syrian army till the 1980s. It then underwent severe hits during the 1982 Israeli invasion and fell under a brutal occupation. It was one of the first places in Lebanon to contribute to the earliest forms of resistance against the Israeli occupation. It was attacked by the Lebanese Forces militias in 1985 and was able to defend itself until the end of the Lebanese civil war. It was the city from which Rafic Hariri established his power in political and financial terms through initial reconstruction and charity work. The city of Sidon despite its open relation to modernity remained conservative, and like most political practices in Lebanon it is still ruled by families.

The local politics of Sidon in the 20th century was mainly dominated up till the 1980s by allegiances around two main families, the El-Bizri and Saad. The El-Bizri politicians were known for their business connections, close ties with eminent Lebanese and Levantine leaders, and their bent on serving the Lebanese state as government ministers, officials and mayors. The Saad politicians tended to be populist and became engaged in violent protests in the 1940s, 1950s and then during the Lebanese civil war as Nasserites (populist followers of Nasser in Lebanon). The local political conflict between these two families was always resolved through amicable means and ties of kinship. Their hold over the political aspects of the city was similar to that of Mediterranean families in Sicily or to being also influenced by the ties of Arab families,

clans, and tribes in traditionalist forms. The most notable figures of the El-Bizri family in the first half of the 20th century were: Ahmad El-Bizri (born 1899), Salah El-Bizri, Eizeddine El-Bizri (commonly known as Eizzo) and Anwar El-Bizri (born 1910). These four brothers were businessmen and politicians who dominated the political life of the city up till the late 1940s, using traditional inherited forms of governance since Ottoman times. With intelligence and strength they maintained their power for over 50 years. It is from their ranks that Maarouf Saad started his public life, and their close cousins, Nazih El-Bizri, Amin El-Bizri, and Fouad El-Bizri became the next generation of politicians and statesmen in Lebanon; holding positions as ministers and members of parliament. The El-Bizri and the Saad political practices were bent on social justice and on local service in public affairs. The El-Bizri were since the Ottoman rule bent on serving the state, and this continued with their loyalty and support to the successive governments of Lebanon since the times of independence. They also helped eminent politicians and statesmen from Sidonian descent such as the Prime Ministers Riad Solh, Taki El-Din Solh and Rashid Solh, they also gave their support to former Prime Minister Saab Salam, father of the current Lebanese prime minister, Tamam Salam. The presence of the El-Bizris was at times intimidating on the local scene, but they were also known for their goodwill and dignified public service. The Saad family developed their links with Nasserism in the 1950s and engaged in the uprising and armed protest of 1958 against the government of the Lebanese President Chamoun. They also became involved in the civil war as part of the left wing politics of the Lebanon (Al-Haraka al-Wataniyya) with PLO connections, and they actively contributed to resisting the Israeli occupation after 1982. They remained populist in their politics and focused on the grassroots, while the El-Bizri were generally appealing to the middle and upper classes. In the middle 1980s, the Hariri family started to rise to prominence and it became the most influential in Sidon in political and financial terms, even though the presence of the Saad and the El-Bizri in local politics remained significant at the level of visibility and activism. The politics of Sidon is similar to that of the traditional old cities of the Levant in the sense of being family-based. In broad terms one could say that the El-Bizri family had an influence since Ottoman times, and then most significantly across almost the entirety of the 20th century. It was local in impact at first, but then the members of this family became influential within the Lebanese state and institutions, and they supported the Solh family that had successive Prime Ministers and that moved its power base from Sidon to Beirut. The Saad family developed its original politics from within the sphere of influence of the El-Bizri family and then became a power to reckon with on its own after 1948, and most powerfully in 1958, then in the civil war and up till today. Maarouf Saad, the leader of his family, and a local influential politician, was assassinated at the eve of the Lebanese civil war in 1975. The

Saads retained their populism and grassroots appeal, and attracted a core of loyal adherents since the middle of the 20th century. While the El-Bizri were Levantine in their Arabism (namely focused mainly on Bilad al-Shaam in regional politics), and the Solh being also similar to them in this, the Saad were leaning more towards a broader pan-Arabism (Nasserite, Libyan, and then Syrian). As for the Hariri family, they are regionally focused on Saudi orientations in politics. The Hariri family started to rise to political and economic prominence in the 1980s and became perhaps the most influential family in Lebanon by the middle 1990s. It is now one of the most organized in political terms and it follows modern forms of political practice through a large party (Future Movement) that cuts across various economic classes but that is usually seen as a Sunni political movement with regional weight due to its close ties with Saudi Arabia. The Hariri family came to its political and financial height through the towering figure of **Rafic Hariri** who became a Prime Minister of the Lebanon in successive terms until his assassination in 2005. His son Saad became a Prime Minister and a leader of the Future Movement, and his sister Bahaa a longstanding member of Parliament, while his oldest son, Bahaa focused on his international business with global impact as entrepreneur. The weight of the Hariri family is now measured at the regional and international scene in levels unprecedented for Sidonians in modern politics.

13 Archaeology

Sidon I is an archaeological site located to the east of the city, south of the road to Jezzine. An assemblage of flint tools was found by P. E. Gigues suggested to date between 3800 to 3200 BC. The collection included narrow axes or chisels that were polished on one side and flaked on the other, similar to ones found at Ain Cheikh, Nahr Zahrani and Gelal en Namous.^[1] The collection appears to have gone missing from the Archaeological Museum of the American University of Beirut.^[12]

Sidon II is said to be “near the church” at approximately fifty meters above sea level. P. E. Gigues suggested that the industry found on the surface of this site dated to the Acheulean.^[1]

Sidon III was found by E. Passemard in the 1920s, who made a collection of material that is now in the National Museum of Beirut marked “Camp de l'Aviation”. It includes large flint and chert bifacials that may be of Heavy Neolithic origin.^[1]

Sidon IV is the tell mound of ancient Sidon with Early Bronze Age (3200 BC -) deposits, now located underneath the ruined Saint Louis Castle and what are also thought to be the ruins of a Roman theatre.^[1]

In indication of the high-profile of the old city of Sidon in archaeological expeditions, and mainly in the 19th century, in October 1860 the famous French scholar Ernest

Renan was entrusted with an archaeological mission to Lebanon, which included the search for the antique parts of Sidon. The Phoenician inscriptions that he discovered, and his field data, were eventually published in his notebook the: *Mission de Phénicie* (1864–1874; *Phoenician Expedition*).

The St. Louis land-castle grounds were excavated in 1914–1920 by a French team. Then eastwards a new site was also excavated by another generation of French expeditions in the 1960s. This same site received renewed attention in 1998 when the Directorate General of Antiquities in Lebanon authorized the British Museum to begin excavations on this area of land that was specifically demarcated for archaeological research. This has resulted in published papers, with a special focus on studying ceramics.^[13]

The archaeological fieldwork was not fully undertaken since the independence of the Lebanon. The main finds are displayed in the National Museum in Beirut. The fieldwork was also interrupted during the long civil war period, and it is now resumed but at a timid and slow scale, and not involving major international expeditions or expertise. Perhaps this is also indicative of the general lack in cultural interests among the authorities of this city, and almost of the non-existence of notable intellectual activities in its modern life. There are signs that the locals are beginning to recognise the value of the medieval quarters, but this remains linked to minor individual initiatives and not a coordinated collective effort to rehabilitate it like it has been the case with Byblos, even though the old district of Sidon contains a great wealth in old and ancient architecture.

14 The Biblical Sidon



Shrine commemorating the last meeting place between St. Paul and St. Peter inside the Old City of Sidon.

The Bible describes Sidon in several passages:

- It received its name from the “first-born” of Canaan, the grandson of Noah (Genesis 10:15, 19).

- The **Tribe of Zebulun** has a frontier on Sidon. (Gen. 49:13)
- It was the first home of the **Phoenicians** on the coast of Canaan, and from its extensive commercial relations became a “great” city. (Joshua 11:8; 19:28).
- It was the mother city of **Tyre**. It lay within the lot of the tribe of Asher, but was never subdued (Judges 1:31).
- The Sidonians long oppressed **Israel** (Judges 10:12).
- From the time of **David** its glory began to wane, and **Tyre**, its “virgin daughter” (Isaiah 23:12), rose to its place of pre-eminence.
- **Solomon** entered into a matrimonial alliance with the Sidonians, and thus their form of idolatrous worship found a place in the land of Israel (1 Kings 11:1, 33).
- **Jezebel** was a Sidonian princess (1 Kings 16:31).
- It was famous for its manufactures and arts, as well as for its commerce (1 Kings 5:6; 1 Chronicles 22:4; Ezekiel 27:8).
- It is frequently referred to by the prophets (Isaiah 23:2, 4, 12; Jeremiah 25:22; 27:3; 47:4; Ezekiel 27:8; 28:21, 22; 32:30; Joel 3:4).
- **Elijah** sojourned in Sidon, performing miracles (1 Kings 17:9–24; Luke 4:26).
- **Jesus** visited the “coasts” of **Tyre** and **Sidon** (Matthew 15:21; Mark 7:24) and from this region many came forth to hear him preaching (Mark 3:8; Luke 6:17), leading to the stark contrast in Matthew 11:21–23 to Korazin and Bethsaida.
- From Sidon, at which the ship put in after leaving **Caesarea**, **Paul** finally sailed for Rome (Acts 27:3, 4).

15 Sanchuniathon

- The account ascribed to the Phoenician historian **Sanchuniathon** makes Sidon a daughter of **Pontus**, son of **Nereus**. She is said there to have first invented musical song from the sweetness of her voice.

16 International relations

16.1 Twin towns and sister cities

See also: [List of twin towns and sister cities in Lebanon](#)

Sidon is twinned with:

- **Constanța**, Romania
- **Sofia**, Bulgaria
- **Sochi**, Russia

17 Notable families

In the Modern Era (from the start of the 20th century to the present with political and/or business prominence):

- **Solh**
- **Hariri**
- **El-Bizri**
- **Saad**
- **El-Zaatari**
- **Jumblatt**—not originally from Sidon
- **Osseiran**—not originally from Sidon
- **El-Bsat**
- **Shammaa**
- **Saniora**
- **Baba**
- **El-Yaman**
- **Moghrabi**
- **Zeidan**
- **Jebaily**
- **Naffa**—not originally from Sidon.
- **Nahouli**
- **Shreiteh**
- **Al-Raii**

18 Notable people

In Antiquity and the Pre-Modern Era:

- **Dorotheus of Sidon** (1st century BC) Greek astrologer associated with Sidon.
- **Zeno of Sidon**, an Epicurean philosopher of the 1st century BC (c. 150 – c. 75 BC), who was born in the city of Sidon in Phoenicia.
- **Antipater of Sidon** (2nd century BC): Poet

- **Boethus of Sidon** (c. 75-c. 10 BC): Peripatetic philosopher
- Early-Christian martyrs, **Zenobius** and his sister **Zenobia**, executed under **Diocletian**, 3rd century AD
- **Boulos (Paul) al-Rahib**, Melchite Bishop and scholar of the 13th century AD
- **Euthymios Saifi**, Melkite Catholic Bishop of Sidon and Tyre, 1643–1723

(From late antiquity, across the Middle Ages, and up till the modern era, these seem to have been periods of intellectual demise, with no notable figures to mention. The 20th century continues this trend and it is dominated by local politicians and by activists, and it is very rare to name notable intellectuals, artists or literary figures with international and established profiles):

In the Modern Era (from the start of the 20th century), in alphabetical order by family name:

- **Fayza Ahmed** (Al-Rawwass), well-known Arab singer formerly based in Egypt.
- **Ahmad Al-Assir**, former Imam of Masjid Bilal Bin Rabah in the Abra suburb. He was a critic of Hizbullah, and became a fugitive after fighting the Lebanese army in 2013.
- **Raymond Audi**, international banker and former Minister of Refugees in the government of Lebanon.
- **Anwar El-Bizri**, local authority in the first half of the 20th century, an eminent businessman and politician.
- **Eizeddine El-Bizri**, (known also as 'Ezzo) local authority in the first half of the 20th century, an eminent businessman and politician.
- **Salah El-Bizri**, influential mayor in the first half of the 20th century, an eminent businessman and politician.
- **Afif al-Bizri**, (Afif El-Bizri) former Chief of Staff of the Syrian armed forces with a high-standing military rank and political profile during the Syria-Egypt republican union of the **Nasser** era.
- **Fuad El-Bizri**, former Minister of Public Works who also served in several Lebanese governments.
- **Amin El-Bizri**, head of the Lebanese Union of Engineers and Architects, President of the Arab Federation of Engineers, former minister of housing in several Lebanese governments, and a major architect who was an apprentice of **Le Corbusier**.
- **Nazih El-Bizri**, former Minister of Health who held several ministry posts in successive Lebanese governments, and a longstanding Member of the National Parliament, highly active and visible for over 50 years in Lebanese and Levantine politics.
- **Abdel Rahman El-Bizri**, former mayor of Sidon (son of Nazih El-Bizri); an active local politician, and also a faculty member at the **American University of Beirut** medical school.
- **Nader El-Bizri**, Philosopher, Architect, and prolific Scholar with a leading international academic and intellectual profile.
- **Bahaa Bsat**, former President of the Order of Engineers and Architects in Lebanon and former president of the “Maqasid” distinguished old school in Sidon.
- **Emile Bustani**, one of Lebanon’s entrepreneurial and philanthropist stars in the first half of the 20th century. Founder of an intentional petroleum company and of CAT. Raised as orphan by American missionaries at the Gerard Institute in Sidon at the beginnings of the 20th century.
- **Ghassan Hammoud**, MD, Founder of **Hammoud Hospital University Medical Center**, the main medical institution in modern Sidon.
- **Rafic Hariri**, former highly eminent Prime Minister, billionaire and international businessman, grand philanthropist, and late leader of the **Future Movement**; assassinated on 14 February 2005.
- **Bahia Hariri**, former Minister of Education in the governments of Lebanon and philanthropist. Bahia Hariri is the only sister of the late Prime Minister **Rafic Hariri**. Presently, Bahia Hariri is a member of the **Lebanese Parliament** as she was re-elected in June 2009.
- **Saad Hariri**, youngest former Prime Minister of Lebanon; an international businessman, and son of **Rafic Hariri**.
- **Bahaa Hariri**, international businessman and billionaire, son of **Rafic Hariri**.
- **Ahmad Hariri**, young leader in the **Hariri Future Movement** and son of **Bahia Hariri**.
- **Ibrahim El-Mallah**, international businessman and entrepreneur largely invested in Sidon.
- **Hamzi Moghrabi**, Civil & Environmental Engineer, Founder and President of **IBC Corp.** the brainchild behind the waste processing plant in Sidon.
- **Adel Osseiran**, co-founder of modern Lebanon a highly eminent leading figure in Lebanon’s 20th-century history, participated in securing Lebanon’s independence from the French mandate.

- Ali Osseiran, Member of Parliament and former Minister.
- Sheikh Mohamad Osseiran, Jaafari Mufti of Sidon.
- Hiba Al-Qawwas, Lebanon's leading Soprano.
- Maarouf Saad, former deputy representing Sidon in the national parliament and founder of the Popular Nasserite Party. Influential local leader, assassinated in 1975 at the eve of the Lebanese civil war.
- Moustapha Saad, son of Maarouf Saad, popular Nasserite politician, and former deputy representing Sidon in the national parliament.
- Ousama Saad, son of Maarouf Saad, Nasserite politician, and former deputy representing Sidon in the national parliament.
- Fouad Siniora, former Prime Minister of Lebanon and minister of finance, a longstanding member of parliament, and main leader in the future movement.
- Riad Solh, former Prime Minister of Lebanon a highly eminent leading figure in Lebanon's 20th-century history, participated in securing Lebanon's independence from the French mandate.
- Takkie El Dine Solh, former Prime Minister of Lebanon, and a leading figure in Lebanese politics; died in Paris.
- Sami Solh, former Prime Minister of Lebanon, and a leading figure in Lebanese politics.
- Rashid Solh, former Prime Minister of Lebanon, and a leading figure in Lebanese politics.
- Ali Zaatari (al-Haj Ali Zaatari), leading early to the middle of the 20th century businessman, landlord and agriculture entrepreneur, built a fortune with his brothers and sons.
- Ahmad 'Arif Al-Zein, an early 20th-century Sheikh and eminent Islamic jurist-scholar, an educator and journalist who founded the learned "Irfan" magazine.
- Sulayman Al-Zein, former Minister of Education.

19 See also

- Kfar beit
- Kitbuqa

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- Additional notes taken from *Collier's Encyclopedia* (1967 edition)

21 External links

- Sidon Dump Gets Make Over
- Sidonianews (Sidon News Portal) (Arabic)
- Lebanon, the Cedars' Land: Sidon
- Destination Lebanon: Sidon

- (French) Fondation Audi (includes a virtual tour of The Soap Museum and other heritage sites in the Old City)
- Sam Houston State University: Nicholas C. J. Pappas: The Inscription on the Sarcophagus of the Phoenician King Eshmunazar
- Notes on Sidon
- Sidon excavations
- watch “Isti'mariyah – windward between Naples and Baghdad”
- SIDON ARABIC WIKIPEDIA

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