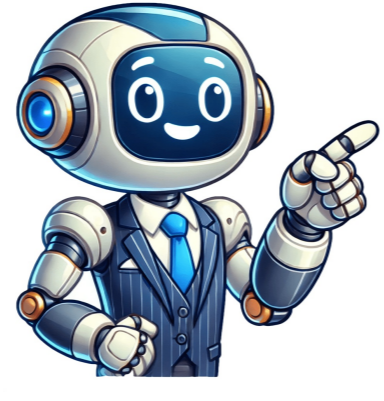


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ישר (yashar), to be level. From the noun שירן (shiryān), body armor, from the root שרר (sharar), to be stiff or firm. Even though in our present culture the name Sharon is a popular name for girls (that's why we list it, admittedly incorrect, as a "Biblical female character"), in the Bible it only occurs as the name of two separate regions: one is a pasture land east of the Jordan occupied by the sons of Gad (1 Chronicles 5:16), the other is the plain that covered much of the north coast of Israel (1 Chronicles 27:29).The famous phrase "I am the Rose of Sharon," is exclaimed by the bride of the Song Of Solomon (Song of Solomon 2:1 — but see the note below).The only other book in the Hebrew Bible in which the name Sharon occurs is Isaiah (Isaiah 33:9, 35:2 and 65:10), and in the Greek New Testament the name Sharon is mentioned only in Acts 9:35 (spelled Σαρων, Saron). Some translations read a Sharon also in Joshua 12:18, but this is more likely a place called לַשָּׁרוֹן (Lasharon). The name Sharon is one of those names of which the etymology and applied meaning diverge. BDB Theological Dictionary reports that the famous theologian Gesenius "plausibly connected" the name Sharon to the verb ישר (yashar), meaning to be level or straight: Verb ישר (yashar) means to be straight or level. Adjective ישר (yashar) means right or upright. Nouns יש (yosher), ישרה (yeshara) and ישר (meshar) mean uprightness or straightness. Noun מִישׁוֹר (mishor) describes a level place or plain. Verb אָשַׁר ('ashar) covers a decisive progression or a setting right, and is often applied to describe happiness and prosperity (right on!). This is not due to a curious coincidence but to the obvious correlation of righteousness and efficiency. Righteousness in the Biblical sense describes a solid grasp of natural law, which leads to high levels of technology, social liquidity and thus peace and prosperity. Nouns אָשַׁר ('esher), אָשַׁר ('ashar) and אָשַׁר ('osher) mean happiness or blessedness. Nouns אָשַׁר (ashur) and אָשַׁר (ashur) mean a step, a walk or a going. The noun תֵּאשִׁיר (te'ashur) refers to a kind of tree (a happy tree? a progressing tree?). The relative particle אשר (asher) means who or which, and may or may not be related to the previous (but probably does). This connects Sharon to a meaning of Great Plain, and was in New Testament times doubtlessly associated to the Pax Romana — the period of "peace" that lasted from 27 BC to 180 AD and cost the lives of millions and the destruction of the great cultures of Europe. Hence in Revelation 20:9 we read: "And they came up on the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, and fire came down from heaven and devoured them." See our article on the name Aeneas for more on this. However, despite a plausible connection to יש, the name Sharon is spelled identical to the common Hebrew word שירן (shiryān), meaning body armor. Root שרר (sharar) has to do with rigidity resulting from the absorption and retention of liquids (called turgor in plants), liquidity in economy, or data in IT and so on — and the ultimate effects thereof. The promise of Jesus' that streams of living water would emerge from within (John 7:38), tells of a curing of social lymphedema, when pools of stagnant wealth (whether fat, cash or data) are re-released into society to benefit all (for more on this, see our article on the noun δούλος, doulos). Noun שר (sar) means chief or ruler (someone in whom a society's wealth is concentrated). Its feminine form, שרה (sara), denotes a princess, noble lady or perhaps a ruling class collectively. The denominative verb שרר (sarar) means to be a chief. Noun שרירות (sherirut) describes firmness in a negative sense: stubbornness. Noun שר (shor) refers to the umbilical cord and noun שרה (shera) to a bracelet of some sort. Noun שריר (sharir) apparently denotes a sinew or muscle. Mystery verb שרה (sara) is used only to describe what Jacob did with the Angel (Genesis 32:29 and Hosea 12:4). It's traditionally been translated as "to wrestle," but it obviously metaphorizes Israel's formation into a political unity based on the retention of knowledge and skills. Derived noun תְּשִׁירָה (misra) literally means "place or agent of שרה (sara)." It occurs only in the famous prediction that "the misra will be upon his shoulders" (Isaiah 9:6). Verb שרה (shara) means to fill and release. Noun תְּשִׁירָה (mishra) denotes the juice of grapes. Noun שירי (shiryā) denotes a kind of weapon and noun שירון (shiryon) or שירן (shiryān) describes body armor — the link between physical, political and intellectual rigidity is obvious (see Ephesians 6:14). For a meaning of the name Sharon, NOBSE reads Plain and Jones reads A Great Plain. But to a Hebrew audience, especially a Hebrew audience that never heard of the famous theologian Gesenius, the name Sharon sounded like Body Armor. A Roman name that means body armor is Loricatus, and another Hebrew name that might mean the same is Zabbai. In the Song of Solomon the bride of the story calls out something that is traditionally translated with "I am the rose of Sharon," (2:1) but 'rose' is not correct.The word is חַבַּבֵּט (habasselet) and denotes a crocus or meadow saffron. But the nod towards the actual plant is eclipsed by the wonderful way this word may fall apart to a creative audience:חַבַּב (habab) is a rare word, used only once in the Bible (Deuteronomy 33:3). It means love in the sense of the love that God feels for the people. A derivation is the word חב (hob), a rare word meaning bosom (Job 31:33).The second part of our word probably comes from the word בַּצֵּל (basal), which means flower bud, and flower buds may have inspired the turban. But the verb גָּלַל (sala) means to grow dark and derivation גֶּל (sel) means shadow. The word that indicates this flower seems to means literally Overshadowed By God's Love."I am black but lovely," says Sharon's saffron (1:5 and 2:1).