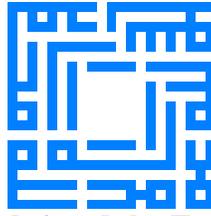




## **The Definition of 'Arabs' and the Twelve Tribes of Ishmael**



### The Definition of ‘Arabs’ and the Twelve Tribes of Ishmael

**Q.** Who is an ‘Arab’, and how would you define ‘Arab’ according to the religion of Islam?

**A.** Bismillahir Rahmanir Raheem. Wa Alaikum As Salam Wa Rahmatullhi Wa Barakatuhu,

“Allah did choose Adam and Noah, the House of Abraham, and the House of ‘Imran above all people, Offspring, one of the other: And Allah heareth and knoweth all things.” (Holy Quran, Sura 3, V. 33-34) and,

“Or do they envy mankind for what Allah hath given them of his bounty? But We had already given the House of Abraham the Book and Wisdom, and conferred upon them a Mighty Kingdom” (Holy Quran, Sura 4, V.54)

The correct definition for ‘Arab’ is, those persons who descend from the bloodline of the House of Abraham, through his eldest son Ishmael. This was also the correct view of the renowned Arab genealogist Hisham ibn Muhammad al-Kalbi (A.D. 737-819), known as Ibn al Kalbi, who established a genealogical link between Ishmael (alaihi salam) and the Holy Prophet (sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) and wrote that the people known as ‘Arabs’ were specifically and only the descendants of Ishmael, from his twelve sons, who formed The 12 Tribes of Ishmael.

The Bible gives us the following record of these tribes:

“But as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: behold I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation.” Genesis 17:20

“And these are the names of the sons of Ishmael, by their names, according to their generations: The firstborn of Ishmael, Nebajoth, and Kedar, and Adbeel, and Mibsam, and Mishma, and Dumah, and Massa, Hadad and Tema, Jetur, Naphish and Kedmah. These are the sons of Ishmael, and these are their names, by their towns and by their encampments; twelve princes according to their nations.” Genesis 25:12-16

According to Islamic traditions, the names of the twelve sons of Ishmael (alaihi salam) are, Qedar, Fidmah, Bana Buth, ‘Awil, Taqes, Masma’, Taima, Jasham, Hadu, Duma, Yatur, and Massa . Madinah the Illuminated was inhabited by the descendents of Taima and Yemen by the descendents of Massa.

Allah's Apostle (sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) descends from Qedar (Kedar) the son of Ishmael (alaihi salam). The Kedarites were a mighty tribe whose historical importance may be noted from the fact that they were mentioned in the pages of the Torah, Assyrian Tablets, and ancient Greek history. Aryan, Ptolemy and Pliny give clear mention of their existence in the Hijaz province of Arabia. (Forester, 'Arab Geography', Vol. 1, p.248)

And Allah Knows Best!

Sayyid Ahmed Amiruddin

