

1. Introduction

This is an attempt to find out the origin of the Arabian people. Because they moved around as nomads, there is very little archeological material available to learn about them. Therefore this study is based on the best preserved and most trustworthy ancient book that is available to us today, the Bible.

First, all the Scripture references that contain the word Arabia or Arabians are taken and determined which people groups they refer to. This may be clear from the verse in which the word appears or from the context of the verse. After that, we look at various Bible translations and extra-Biblical sources to see if they confirm our findings or not.

2. Word Study Arab

Several words in the bible have been translated Arab(s) or Arabia(n). The following table gives the literal meaning of these words.

	Phonetic	Strong's #	Meaning	References
ערב	'arab	H6152	steppe, desert plain	2 Chronicles 9:14; Isaiah 21:13 (2x); Jeremiah 25:24; Ezekiel 27:21
ערבי	'arabiy	H6163	steppe-dweller	Isaiah 13:20; Jeremiah 3:2; 2 Chronicles 21:16; 22:1; Nehemiah 2:19; 4:7; 6:1
ערביאים	'arabiyaiym	H6163	unknown	2 Chronicles 17:11
ערביים	'arabiyiym	H6163	unknown	2 Chronicles 26:7
ערב	'ereb	H6154	mixed company	1 Kings 10:15
Ἀραβία	Arabia	G688	Arabia	Galatians 1:17; 4:25
Ἀραψ	Araps	G690	Arabs	Acts 2:11

It is clear that the Hebrew language, in which the Old Testament was written, has several meanings. The original written language only consisted of consonants and the meaning was determined by the added vowels. The root ערב can mean several things, such as evening, pleasant, woof, desert plateau or raven. ¹ In this study we limit ourselves to the Bible references in which the Hebrew word has been translated into Arabia or Arab(s). What can we learn about its location and people?

3. Bible References

The following verses have been put in chronological order according to the time of writing. The prophet Isaiah received his messages from about 740 till 700 B.C., while Jeremiah and Ezekiel prophesied around the time of the exile of Judah in 586 B.C. Chronicles was written after the exile in the latter half of the fifth century B.C., probably by Ezra, a contemporary of Nehemia. The book of Acts and the letter of Paul to the Galatians date from the 1st century.

The Origin of the Arabs

*God loves
Ishmael*

Isaiah 13:19-20 "And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the splendor and pomp of the Chaldeans, will be like Sodom and Gomorrah when God overthrew them. It will never be inhabited or lived in for all generations; no Arab [H6163] will pitch his tent there; no shepherds will make their flocks lie down there."²

According to this prophecy, there were nomadic Arabs who lived not far from Babylon

Isaiah 21:13-17 "The oracle concerning Arabia [H6152]. In the thickets in Arabia [H6152] you will lodge, O caravans of Dedanites. To the thirsty bring water; meet the fugitive with bread, O inhabitants of the land of Tema. For they have fled from the swords, from the drawn sword, from the bent bow, and from the press of battle. For thus the Lord said to me, "Within a year, according to the years of a hired worker, all the glory of Kedar will come to an end. And the remainder of the archers of the mighty men of the sons of Kedar will be few, for the LORD, the God of Israel, has spoken."

This prophecy contains a judgment over the Kedarites, who were descendants of Ishmael. The trading Dedanites, descendants of Keturah, are told to hide, and the inhabitants of Tema are instructed to help the refugees. The Kedarites appear to be the inhabitants of the area known as Arabia at that time.

Jeremiah 3:2 " ... like an Arab [H6163] in the wilderness. ... "

In this verse the Arabs are seen as inhabitants of the desert.

Jeremiah 25:19-26 "Pharaoh king of Egypt, his servants, his officials, all his people, and all the mixed tribes [H6154] among them; all the kings of the land of Uz and all the kings of the land of the Philistines (Ashkelon, Gaza, Ekron, and the remnant of Ashdod); Edom, Moab, and the sons of Ammon; all the kings of Tyre, all the kings of Sidon, and the kings of the coastland across the sea; Dedan, Tema, Buz, and all who cut the corners of their hair; all the kings of Arabia [H6152] and all the kings of the mixed tribes [H6154] who dwell in the desert; all the kings of Zimri, all the kings of Elam, and all the kings of Media; all the kings of the north, far and near, one after another, and all the kingdoms of the world that are on the face of the earth. And after them the king of Babylon shall drink."

In this summary of peoples, the Arabs are mentioned between the kings of the mixed tribes in the desert and the descendants of Dedan, Tema, and Buz. So the Arabs were desert dwellers. Remarkably, besides Tema none of Ishmael's descendants are mentioned, even though the Kedarites were prophesied about by Isaiah. This points to the Kedarites being known as Arabs by the time of Jeremiah.

Ezekiel 27:21 " Arabia [H6152] and all the princes of Kedar were your favored dealers in lambs, rams, and goats; in these they did business with you."

This verse is part of a list of countries with which the port city of Tyre traded. Arabia and the princes of Kedar being mentioned together, indicates a strong kinship. They traded in the same products; animals that were herded by nomads.

The Origin of the Arabs

*God loves
Ishmael*

2 Chronicles 9:14 "... And all the kings of Arabia [H6152] and the governors of the land brought gold and silver to Solomon."

The context of this verse is the queen of Sheba who brought voluntary gifts to king Solomon. If the kings of Arabia brought voluntary gifts as well, they were not subject to Solomon and their territory beyond Moab, Ammon and Edom. That means Arabia was most likely to the east where the Ishmaelites dwelled.

1 Kings 10:15 "Beside *that he had* of the merchantmen, and of the traffic of the spice merchants, and of all the kings of Arabia [H6154], and of the governors of the country."³

This is a record of the same events mentioned in 2 Chronicles 9. It is the only place where the Hebrew word *'ereb* [H6154] is translated with Arabia. The word is translated elsewhere as 'mixed company'. Commentator Barnes follows the line of 'mixed' and states, "These were probably tribes half Jewish, half Arabian, on the borders of the western desert." Wesley says, "We must not think all these to be kings of large dominions; many of them were only governors of cities."⁴ Other possibilities are that the vowels in this verse should be *'arab*,⁵ or that the mixed group is more or less synonymous for Arabia (see Jeremiah 25 above).

2 Chronicles 17:11 "Some of the Philistines brought Jehoshaphat presents and silver for tribute, and the Arabians [H6163] also brought him 7,700 rams and 7,700 goats."

Although Strong categorized this word under H6163, it is a different word in Hebrew, as can be seen in the table above. It is not clear which people these was. According to verse 10 fear of God fell on the kingdoms around Judah, so this must have been a group not far from the Philistines and Israelites.

2 Chronicles 21:16 "And the LORD stirred up against Jehoram the anger of the Philistines and of the Arabians [H6163] who are near the Ethiopians."

This refers to a group of Arabs who lived in the vicinity of the Cushites. Some see the Cushites as the original inhabitants in the center of the Arabian Peninsula, others see them as a people who lived south of Egypt. In any case, these Arabs have lived south of Judah. They may have been descendants of Ishmael or were other desert tribes.

2 Chronicles 22:1 "And the inhabitants of Jerusalem made Ahaziah, his youngest son, king in his place, for the band of men that came with the Arabians [H6163] to the camp had killed all the older sons. So Ahaziah the son of Jehoram king of Judah reigned."

This event follows the conflict with the Arabs described in 2 Chronicles 21, which means these are probably the same Arabs who lived in the vicinity of the Cushites.

2 Chronicles 26:7 "God helped him against the Philistines and against the Arabians [H6163] who lived in Gurbaal and against the Meunites."

The literal words in Hebrew are, "God helped him against the Philistines and *Arabiyyim*, the Arabs who lived in Gurbaal and against the Meunites." So these "Arabia-ians" belonged to the Arabs.

Nehemiah 2:19 " But when Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite servant and Geshem the Arab [H6163] heard of it, they jeered at us and despised us ..."

Nehemiah 4:7 " But when Sanballat and Tobiah and the Arabs [H6163] and the Ammonites and the Ashdodites heard that the repairing of the walls of Jerusalem was going forward and that the breaches were beginning to be closed, they were very angry."

Nehemiah 6:1 " Now when Sanballat and Tobiah and Geshem the Arab [H6163] and the rest of our enemies heard that I had built the wall and that there was no breach left in it ..."

Nehemiah mentions Arabs who lived in Israel, probably with Geshem as their leader. Possibly these were descendants of the Arabs who attacked Judah at the time of king Jehoram (2 Chronicles 21:16). Another possibility is that these were descendants of a nation that had assimilated with the original Arabs, such as Moab.⁶

Acts 2:9-11 "Parthians and Medes and Elamites and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians [G690]—we hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God."

At Pentecost men from many peoples and regions were gathered together in Jerusalem. They came from Europe, the region of the Euphrates river and eastward, and from Africa. The Arabs seem to refer to people between Judea, the Euphrates and the Arabian Peninsula.

Galatians 1:17 "nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me, but I went away into Arabia [G688], and returned again to Damascus."

Galatians 4:25 "Now Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia [G688]; ..."

Mt Sinai is commonly thought to be on the Sinai Peninsula. There are good reasons to assume that Mt. Sinai was today's Mt. Lawz in North-West Saudi Arabia.⁷ In the Roman era three areas bore the name Arabia, stretching from contemporary Jordan all the way to the southern edge of the Arabian Peninsula. So Paul referred to a territory south of Damascus and mainly south-east of Jerusalem.

4. Ancient Peoples

Jeremiah 25 gives a summary of the nations of the Middle East in the sixth century B.C. Some names are missing, though previously they were significant peoples.

a) The Ishmaelites, Amalekites and Hagrites

As can be clearly seen in the table below, the Ishmaelites, the Amalekites and the Hagrites, are mentioned in the Bible up until the time of writing of Psalm 83. After that, their names do not

appear, except in historical records that describe events centuries before the time of writing. In the table this is marked with an "o." Evidently, the historians decided to use the names by which these peoples were known at the time of the events, rather than their current names. It is generally assumed that Psalm 83 has been written at the time of the big war during the reign of King Jehoshaphat. This places the Psalm at around 810 B.C.

God's command to the Israelites to destroy the Amalekites explains why these descendants of Esau disappeared. The Hagrites are only mentioned in the book of Chronicles, concerning a conflict at the time of King Saul. This indicates they were not a significant people group. This leaves the Ishmaelites, of whom God had promised Abraham they would become a numerous people. Why did their name disappear? Surely, a great nation would continue to be known and play a role in history. It could be argued that the Ishmaelites eventually became known by the dominant tribe among them. The Kedarites are mentioned most often, making them a good candidate. However, Tema and Nebajoth are mentioned specifically in the book of Isaiah.

Incidentally, as can be observed in the table, less than a century after the writing of Psalm 83, the name of Arabia appears in the Biblical record. In Isaiah, the territory of the Kedarites is described as Arabia and in Ezekiel 27 the Kedarites are mentioned in one go. This indicates that from then on, the area, where Kedar and the other Ishmaelite tribes lived, was known as Arabia. Because the Hebrew word for *Arabia* means 'steppe' or 'desert' and *Arab* 'desert dweller', the name can be seen as a nickname for the Ishmaelites.

b) men of the east

Another unique people group is missing in Jeremiah 25. The Jewish writers spoke about the people of the East: a nation without king.⁸ This fits nomadic tribes, who move from one place to the next in search of pastures for their livestock.

Since Moab, Ammon and Edom were kingdoms, this term cannot refer to them. In the book of Judges the people of the East are mentioned as a separate group, so they were not Midianites or Amalekites either (Judges 6:3,33; 7:12; 8:10). According to Genesis 25:18, the Ishmaelites settled from Shur near Egypt to Havilah near Mesopotamia, so they lived predominantly east of the Jordan. That makes them the most likely people to be called the people of the East. This is confirmed in Jeremiah 49:28, where the Kedarites are spoken of as the people of the East.

This, in turn, fits seamlessly with Ezekiel 25:4 and 10 which actually is the fulfillment of God's promise to give the land of the Rephaites to Abraham's descendants.⁹ So the people of the East were indeed descendants of Ishmael.

The Origin of the Arabs

In the table below, it becomes clear when the change in name from Ishmaelites to Arabs must have taken place.

Date B.C.	Bible book	Descendant of Abraham						Descendant of Lot		Aram / Syria	Sheba	Arabia / Arabs	men of the East
		Midian	Ishmaelites		Hagrites	Edom	Amalek	Moab	Ammon				
			Nebajoth	Kedar									
1460	Genesis	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X			
1460	Job									X		X	
1050	Psalms 120				X								
1020	Psalms 72									X			
1000	Song of songs				X								
980	Judges	X	X						X			X	
930	1+2 Samuel								X				
810	Psalms 83	o	X			X	X	X	X				
750	Amos						X	X	X				
700	Isaiah	X		X	X		X		X	X	X	X	
610	Habakuk	o											
600	Jeremiah				X		X	X	X	X	X	X	
586	Obadiah						X						
580	1+2 Kings	o					X	X	X	X	X	X	
580	Ezekiel				X		X	X	X	X	X	X	
530	Daniel						X	X					
450	1+2 Chronicles	o	o			o	X	X	X	X	X	X	
430	Ezra							X	X				
430	Nehemiah							X	X			X	



A nation which name disappeared after 800 B.C.

- x The name of the nation appears in the Bible book and consequently during the time of writing.
- o The name of the nation appears in the Bible book by the name it had at the time of the event. For instance, Habakuk wrote about the fear of the Midianites, pointing to the time of Gideon, one of the judges of Israel.

NB: The dates of the Bible books are estimated and may vary between sources.

5. Other Sources

The oldest reference to Arabs has been found on a rock inscription, relating a battle of the Assyrian king Shalmaneser III, who defeated the chieftain Gindibu the Aribi in 853 B.C.¹⁰

The book of Jubilees, written between 109 and 105 B.C.¹¹, states under the title, "The Dwelling-places of the Ishmaelites and of the Sons of Keturah" in chapter 20:12-13, ' And Ishmael and his sons, and the sons of Keturah and their sons, went together and dwelt from Paran to the entering in of Babylon in all the land which is towards the East facing the desert. And these mingled with each other, and their name was called Arabs, and Ishmaelites.'¹²

Targum Jonathan, a translation of the Tenach from Hebrew to Aramaic dating from 30 B.C., speaks of 'Arab' instead of 'Ishmaelites' in Genesis 37:25 and 'Arab' instead of Kedar and Nebajoth in Isaiah 60:6.¹³

In 93 AD the well-known Jewish historian Josephus wrote about the Ishmaelites in his Antiquities,¹⁴ 'But as for the Arabians, they circumcise after the thirteenth year, because Ishmael, the founder of their nation, who was born to Abraham of the concubine, was circumcised at that age.' Ant 1, ch.12, (214) and 'When the lad was grown up, he married a wife, by birth an Egyptian, from whence the mother was herself derived originally. Of this wife were born to Ismael twelve sons; Nabaioth, Kedar, Abdeel, Mabsam, Idumas, Masmaos, Masaos, Chodad, Theman, Jetur, Naphesus, Cadmas. These inhabited all the country from Euphrates to the Red Sea, and called it Nabatene. They are an Arabian nation, and name their tribes from these, both because of their own virtue, and because of the dignity of Abraham their father.' Ant 1, ch.12, (220-221)

The Targum Onkelos, written early 2nd century or late 4th century, speaks of 'Arab' instead of 'Ishmaelites' in Genesis 37:25, just like Targum Jonathan.

Incidentally, the Book of Jasher, which describes the period of creation till the death of the Israelite leader Joshua, contains 80 references to Ishmael but never 'arab' or cognate. The Book of Jasher is referred to in the Bible book Joshua, which was probably written between the 14th and 11th century B.C. That means the descendants of Ishmael were known as Ishmaelites at that time, which is in line with the Biblical record.

That means the extra-Biblical sources follow the same pattern observed in the table above.

6. Chronology with Dates

±1890 B.C.

Ismaël moves to the desert of Paran, thus becoming the first desert dweller mentioned in the Bible (Genesis 21:20-21) .

The Origin of the Arabs

±1830 B.C.

Abraham sends all the sons of his concubines to the east. Initially Ishmael probably remained in Paran in the south.

After 1830 B.C.

The descendants of Ishmael's 12 sons spread from Shur to Havilah (Genesis 25:18). The tribes of Ammon, Moab and Edom become nations and eventually turn into kingdoms (Judges 11:12; Numbers 22:4; Genesis 36:31). The Ishmaelites become known as 'men of the east' (Judges 6-8).



±850 B.C.

The mighty Assyrian empire defeats the desert dwellers; a great accomplishment, as the nomads know far better how to live and survive in their own wilderness than a foreign army. The Assyrians refer to them as Arabs, a generic term meaning 'desert dwellers', rather than by the names of the different tribes.

The name Arabs spreads throughout the Assyrian empire all across the Middle East.

±810 B.C.

The Israelites in Judea still speak about Ishmaelites. However, this is the last time the name appears in the Biblical record (Psalm 83).

±720 B.C.

For the first time the Bible refers to Arabs, pointing to the region of the Kedarites, an important Ishmaelite tribe area (Jesaja 21:13-17). Possibly the Dedanites and other descendants of Abraham via Keturah are also called Arabs.

±600 B.C.

The Kedarites are so numerous that they are made equal to the 'men of the east' (Jeremia 49:28). Perhaps they are the leading tribe, representing all the Ishmaelite tribes. That would explain why Ezekiel specifically mentions the Kedarites, besides Arabia (Ezekiel 27:21).

After 580 B.C.

The writer of the Chronicles refers to several tribes or nations south of Judea as Arabs. In light of the meaning of 'desert dwellers' it is possible that the term applied not only to the Ishmaelites but to all peoples living in the wilderness.

This may be true for the Moabites and Edomites as well. In 582 B.C. the Moabites were defeated by the Babylonians,¹⁵ and the remnant spread out among other people, including Israel (Nehemiah 13:23). Later they lost their land to the Nabataeans¹⁶ and over time the remaining Moabites were probably referred to as Arabs.¹⁷

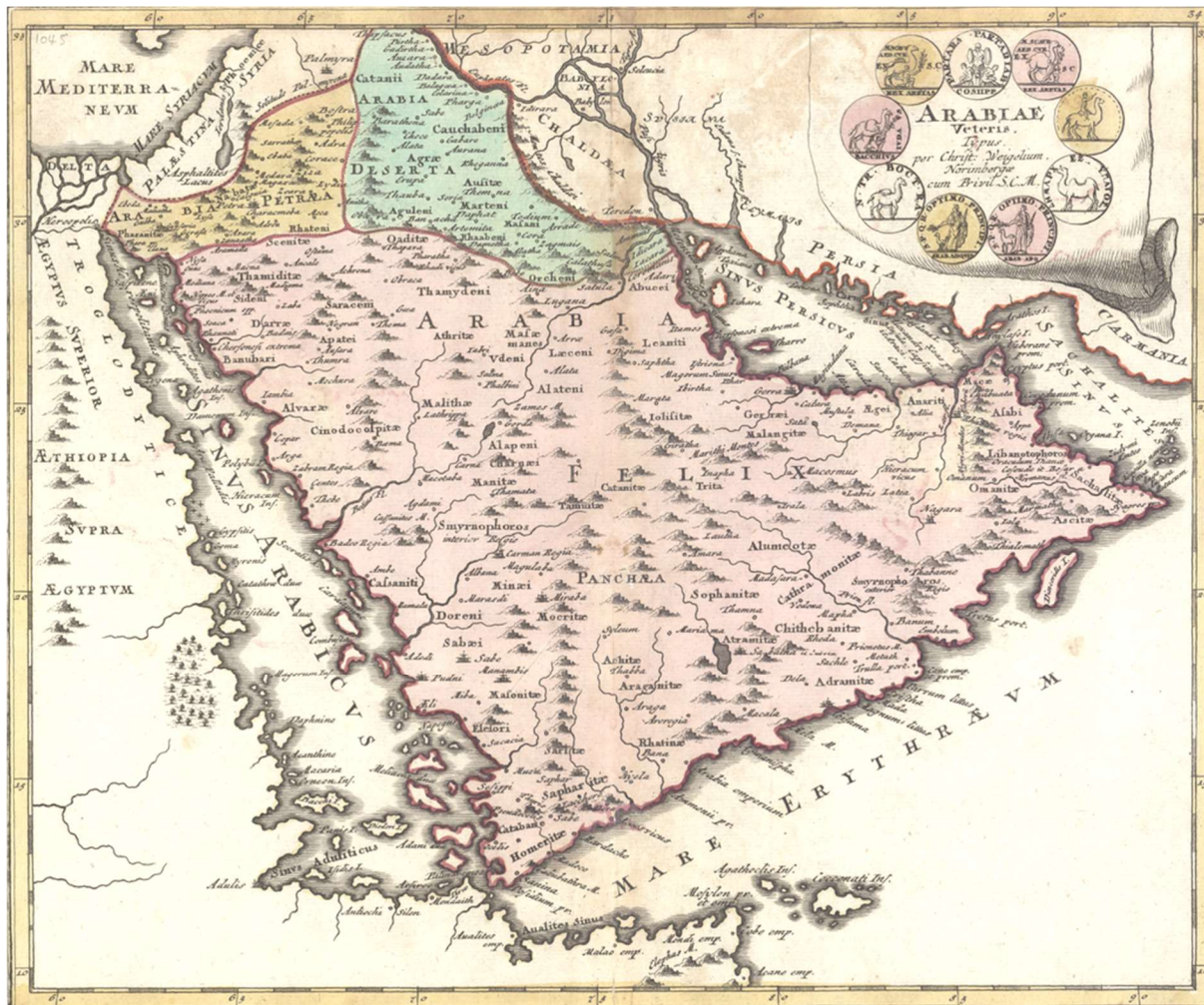
The Edomites were judged for their sins (Obadiah 1:8-10, 18) and their land was taken over by the Nabataeans as well. After the Jewish exile the Edomites aren't mentioned anymore. Many of

The Origin of the Arabs

them went to live in Idumea, south of Judea, and eventually were forced to become Jews. Others probably came to be considered as Arabs, just like the Moabites.

After 27 B.C.

When the Roman empire stretches across the then known world, the Arabian Peninsula and the northern adjacent area were called Arabia. The Romans speak of Arabia Petraea, Arabia Deserta and Arabia Felix.¹⁸ In the illustration below¹⁹ these are respectively the yellow area that roughly includes Jordan, the green area to the right of it and the red area that covers the rest of the Arabian Peninsula. From this time its inhabitants of this area are referred to more and more as Arabs, regardless of their origin. This applies to the remaining Ammonites, after their defeat by Judas Maccabeus, as well.²⁰



From 641 AD²¹

With the spread of Islam, the nations that are subjected to the Muslims are arabized. The Arabic language and writing are introduced, so that nowadays many countries in the Middle East and North Africa are considered part of the Arab world.

7. Conclusion:

Both the Biblical and extra-Biblical sources indicate that the Ishmaelites were the first people to be called Arabs. This fits God's promise to Abraham that his son would have many descendants. Such a nation cannot suddenly disappear, either in Bible times or in modern history.

It is likely that part of Abraham's descendants through Keturah were also among the original Arabs. They too lived east of the Jordan, having been sent there by the patriarch. However, in the historical sources, the emphasis is on the Ishmaelites, who with their 12 tribal leaders will have been the majority.

Over time other peoples were also included with the Arabs. After the exile the term was applied to different groups of desert dwellers south of Judah. In the New Testament time the whole Arabian Peninsula was called Arab and today countries from the Atlantic Ocean in the West to Iraq in the East are among the Arab nations.

The inhabitants of the southern part of the Arabian Peninsula, the Yemenis, claim that they are the original Arabs. However, the table makes it clear that the land of their ancestors was known as Sheba,²² long before the introduction of the name Arabia. For example, Job was already familiar with the caravans from Sheba (Job 6:19), that brought gold, frankincense and myrrh traded. Even after the name Arabia appeared, the kingdom of Sheba continued to be known by her own name.²³ Therefore this claim cannot be confirmed on biblical grounds.

In summary, the original Arabs were descendants of Ishmael. Later other peoples merged with the them, so that today it is impossible to determine who are direct descendants of Ishmael. We may assume that a significant portion of the current Arabs are truly Ishmaelites.

Postscript

How many of today's Arabs can truly claim to be descendants of Ishmael? This question cannot be accurately answered. However, based on current statistics of the nations covering the territory of the Ishmaelites, we can make a rough estimation. Not taking into account the descendants of Ishmael who moved to other regions, this results in the following table.²⁴

Country	Total Population		Arabs		Ishmaelites	
	in millions	%	in millions	%	in millions	
Gaza	2	100%	2,0	30%	0,6	
Israel	8,9	21%	1,9	30%	0,6	
Jordan	11	97%	10,7	50%	5,3	
Iraq	40,5	75%	30,4	20%	6,1	
Syria	21,5	50%	10,8	20%	2,2	
Saudi Arabia	35,4	90%	31,9	30%	9,6	
Westbank	3	80%	2,4	50%	1,2	
TOTAL			89,9		25,5	

God promised Hagar that Ishmael would become a great nation and with more than 25 million Ishmaelites that happened indeed.

God promised Abraham the same for the line of Israel, and with 14,8 million Jews worldwide that became true as well. If the Holocaust hadn't taken place, there would have been even more Jews today.

¹ *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, © The Moody Bible Institute, 1980 p693-695

² This verse and all others have been taken with permission from *The Holy Bible*, English Standard Version, Copyright © 2001 by Crossway Bibles

³ King James Version

⁴ *e-Sword* version 10.1.0, Rick Myers - commentaries to 1 Kings 10:15.

⁵ After the Jews were dispersed in the first century, the Hebrew language was spoken less and less. In the 5th century a group of Jewish scholars added vowel signs to the Hebrew text. This has become known as the Masoretic manuscripts.

⁶ Compare Nehemia 13:23 where Ashdod, Ammon en Moab are mentioned and Nehemia 4:7 where Ashdod, Ammon and the Arabs are mentioned. See also <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moab>: Decline and fall

⁷ <http://www.wyattmuseum.com/mt-sinai.htm>

⁸ Genesis 29:1, Judges 6:3 & 33, 7:12, 8:10, 1 Kings 4:30, Job 1:3, etc.

⁹ See study Land for the Arabs on godlovesishmael.com

¹⁰ <http://www.ismaili.net/histoire/history03/history302.html>

¹¹ *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament*, R.H. Charles Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913

¹² <http://www.sacred-texts.com/bib/jub/jub45.htm>

¹³ <http://targum.info/pj/pjgen36-40.htm>

¹⁴ <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3atext%3a1999.01.0146>

¹⁵ <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/1382752/Moab>

¹⁶ <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/179376/Edom>. Thus the prophecy in Ezekiel 25:10 was fulfilled.

¹⁷ See footnote 5 and [Keil and Delitzsch Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament](#) on Jeremiah 48, "After the return of the Israelites from Babylon, the Moabites are no longer mentioned as a people, except in Ezra 9:1 and Nehemia 13:1 and 23, where it is stated that some Israelites had married Moabitish wives; nor is any mention made of this people in the books of the Maccabees, which, however, relate the wars of Judas Maccabeus with the Ammonites and Edomites (1 Macc. 5:3 and 6, cf. 4:61); neither is there any further notice taken of them in Josephus, who only now and then speaks of Moab, i.e., the country and its towns. This name seems to have been merged, after the exile, in that of the Arabians."

¹⁸ Source: <http://www.bible-history.com/isbe/A/ARABIA/>

¹⁹ Source: <http://www.wdl.org/en/item/2923/>

²⁰ 1 Maccabees 5:3-8

²¹ In 641 the first non-Arab territory was subjected to Islam, namely Egypt.

<http://www.isgeschiedenis.nl/nieuws/buitenland/verspreiding-van-de-islam-in-noord-afrika/>

²² The Ethiopians claim that their land is the Biblical Sheba. However, during the reign of king Solomon there was no influential kingdom in Ethiopia. At that time there was one in Yemen, so the queen of Sheba must have come from South-Arabia. This fits the expression of 'ends of the earth' in Matthew 12:42 and Luke 11:31, as Yemen is located at the edge of the Peninsula

²³ See for instance Ezekiel 27:21-22

²⁴ <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook>, accessed on 24 September 2022