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## Lakhm

The **Lakhm** were a Qaḥṭānī Arab tribe of southern Syria closely connected to the Judhām and ‘Āmila. According to the traditional genealogy, the eponym Lakhm was of Qaḥṭānī origin and the brother of Judhām and ‘Āmila, although some argued that the tribe was actually from the Nizār (Caskel, 2:53–6; Ibn Durayd, 225–7). In historical times, these three “sister tribes” were political allies and occupied the same region in southern Syria. The Lakhm were considered the most ancient and illustrious of the three, with links to biblical figures such as Abraham and Joseph. In early Islamic times, the Lakhm became less important and were absorbed by the Judhām, who played a leading role under the Umayyads. Whereas the *nisba* “Judhamī” remained frequent, “Lakhmī” gradually disappeared and was reduced to little more than an archaic-sounding honorific title that evoked the tribe’s glorious past.

The connection of the tribe of Lakhm in Syria with the Lakhmids, the celebrated kings of al-Ḥīra in the Middle Euphrates, remains a matter of dispute. Mesopotamia

was probably the Lakhm’s original dwelling area in the third century C.E. until they migrated to Syria in the early fourth century C.E. In fact, there is no evidence of the Lakhm in the area dominated by the kings in al-Ḥīra in the late fourth century C.E. The dynasty probably kept the name of Lakhm because of the tribe’s prestige, and some scholars assume that only the first kings were Lakhmīs (Retsö, 473–80). Arabic tradition, however, continued to associate the tribe of Lakhm with the kings of al-Ḥīra. Later groups who claimed descent from the prestigious kings of al-Ḥīra, such as the Banū ‘Abbād of Seville (Ramírez, 195–203) and the present-day Druze in Lebanon (Hitti, 31), did so by asserting their affiliation with the tribe of Lakhm.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

## SOURCE

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