

## Kadmonites

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### Kadmonites

The Kadmonites (MT *Qadmōnī*, “Easterner”) is according to Gen 15:19 one of ten tribes living in the land promised to Abram in pre-Israelite times. However, the list in Gen 15:19–21 is problematic. It neither fits the extant of Canaan as described in Gen 10 nor is it homogeneous. The eponymic adjective Kadmonite is related to the noun *qedem* “east,” whereas the alternative meaning “ancient” is not appropriate. Thus, the *bēnē-qedem* “sons of the East” (Gen 29:1; Judg 6:3, 33; 7:12; 8:10; 1 Kgs 5:10; Job 1:3; Isa 11:14; Jer 49:28; Ezek 25:4, 10), often mentioned, have been associated with the Kadmon-

ites. However, it is far from certain whether this designation refers to the same people. The “sons of the East” seem to have lived east of the Jordan (Judg 6–8), whereas the Kadmonites in the Negev next to the Kenites and Kenizzites. The list of pre-Israelite nations living in the promised land according to Gen 15:19–21 is geographically arranged from south to north so that it is obvious that the Kadmonites lived in the south. The “sons of the East” are also situated near Harran in the East (Gen 29:1). Furthermore, *Qedem* is according to the story of Sinuhe an area east of Canaan. Moreover, the “sons of the East” are a collective term for (semi-)nomads from the Syro-Arabian desert. Therefore, the term *bēnē-qedem* is not a specific designation for a distinct tribe called Kadmonites, i.e., “Easterners (in Judah)”, indicating a tribe living in the southeastern part of Judah. Similarly, the Kadmonites in Job 18:20 are only a general description of people in the East in contrast to the Westerners mentioned previously in the same verse. The LXX and Vg. similarly understood Kadmonites as a separate term since they transcribed it as *Κεδμωναῖος* or *Cedmoneus*. The Kadmonites were possibly absorbed later into the tribe of Judah along with the Kenites and Kenizzites.

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See also → Kenites