

SHINAR

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Shinar is a Hebrew place name that refers either to Mesopotamia generally or to the region of Babylon. In relating the extent of Nimrod’s kingdom, Genesis 10 lists a number of Mesopotamian cities—Babylon (King James Version “Babel”), Uruk (King James Version “Erech”), Akkad (King James Version “Accad”), and Calneh (no equivalent city)—that it places in the “land of Shinar” (Genesis 10:10). Genesis 11:2 describes the land of Shinar as one of the cradles of ancient civilization, which corresponds to modern scholarship on the influence of Mesopotamia on the ancient Near East and on Western civilization. Shinar shows up in various places in the Bible, such as in Genesis 14:1 as the place ruled by one of the kings in the coalition that attacked Sodom and captured Lot.

Related verses

Genesis 10:10

Genesis 11:2

Genesis 14:1

Joshua 7:21

Isaiah 11:1

Daniel 1:2

Zechariah 5:10–11

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