

# What is the Land of Shinar and Where is it Located?

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**Ge 10:10** And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar.

**Ge 10:11** Out of that land went forth Asshur, and built Nineveh, and Rehoboth-ir, and *Kālah*,

**Ge 10:12** and Resen between Nineveh and *Kālah*--the same is the great city.

In the past, many have argued with me about the true location of the land of Shinar. I, among a majority of scholars in the same field, have identified this to mean the land of Sumer. While the Sumerians themselves called their land *ki-en-gir* ("place of the civilized lords"), the name Sumer is derived from the Akkadian Shumer. Shinar is simply a Hebrew corruption of the Akkadian word. It literally translates to "country of two rivers" which could only mean the Tigris and Euphrates when taking into account the cities mentioned above. Erech/Uruk, Akkad/Agade, and Babylon<sup>1</sup> existed nowhere else but the land of Shinar. In times past, early rulers used to differentiate the lands between Sumer and Akkad when boasting of their achievements, making the one the southern kingdom (Sumer) and the other the northern kingdom (Akkad). Collectively this had evolved to one piece of land between the two rivers. Further evidence of its location, outside of Genesis 10:10-11 comes to us from the Book of Daniel:

**Da 1:1** In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon unto Jerusalem, and besieged it.

**Da 1:2** And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with part of the vessels of the house of God; and he carried them into the land of Shinar to the house of his god, and the vessels he brought into the treasure-house of his god.

Nebuchadnezzar, a Neo-Babylonian king to whom Jerusalem fell under which also resulted in the Jewish Exile, was said to have come from the land of Shinar or Chaldea. Please reference the map below for the locations mentioned.

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<sup>1</sup>Erech has been identified with the Mesopotamian city of Uruk (Sumerian Unug); the home and kingdom of Gilgamesh. Akkad has been identified with Agade, the capital of the Akkadian Empire. Babel was the native name of the city the Greeks called Babylon, which literally translates to "gate of god", corresponding to the Akkadian *Bab-ili*. As for the location of Calneh, modern day scholars have located this to be Nippur (modern day Niffer), which is situated in the marshes of east bank of the Euphrates; roughly 60 miles southeast of Babylon. Although this is still being disputed. I propose another location in my book titled An Adopted Legacy: Neo-Assyrian Origin to Hebrew Lore.



Illustration 1: Map of Mesopotamia