

# Genesis 10:9-14

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*Nimrod was a mighty hunter. He built the kingdom of Babel and in Assyria, he built the city of Nineveh. Mizraim had seven sons.*

Nimrod is credited with initiating the process of kingdom building and city-building in Mesopotamia ([Genesis 10:8-12](#); . [Micah 5:6](#)). The phrase “before the Lord” can be seen in two ways, 1. As Gods favor or approval, or most likely 2. As the Lord saw Nimrod’s activity, it stood out. God knows and keeps watch for sinful rebellions as seen by this verse, “His eyes keep watch on the nations; Let not the rebellious exalt themselves” ([Psalm 66:7](#)).

Nimrod was ambitious and was an overseer in building the Tower of Babel ([Genesis 10:10](#); [11:1-9](#)). *The beginning of his kingdom was Babel and Erech and Accad and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. From that land he went forth into Assyria, and built Nineveh and Rehoboth-Ir and Calah, and Resen between Nineveh and Calah; that is the great city.* Babylonia was known as the “land of Nimrod.” It included the area surrounding the Tigris and Euphrates rivers in southern Mesopotamia. Babylon was about 50 miles south of modern Baghdad, Iraq ([Joshua 7:21](#); [Isaiah 11:11](#); [Daniel 1:2](#)). Babylon was the earliest foundation of Mesopotamia going back to the third millennium. By the first millennium, it was the most prestigious and grand city.

After Babel or Babylon, Nimrod built three cities. **Erech** a Sumerian city is modern Warka on the east side of the Euphrates, about 40 miles up the river from Ur in southern Iraq. It was one of the earliest Sumerian cities. The Sumerian King List names this city as the seat of the second dynasty of kings after the flood, the third king of Erech was Gilgamesh. **Accad** or Akkad was located north of Babylon on the Euphrates River. This city, called Agade in Sumerian, became the center of the kingdom of Akkad founded by the famous Sargon I (ca. 2370-2295 B.C.), who established a dynasty that lasted about 150 years. Eventually, its name came to comprise all of northern Babylonia. The Semitic languages of Mesopotamia (Assyrian and Babylonian) are now called “Akkadian.”

The third city of **Calneh** was in southern Mesopotamia. Nimrod consolidated them into one kingdom under his own rule. **Shinar** is the land of Babylonia,

including Sumer and Akkad and bound on the north by Assyria, modern southern Iraq. This name was not used in Mesopotamia itself but is frequently found in Egyptian, Hittite, Mitannian, and Amarna texts or in the Bible (. [Genesis 11:2,14:1](#); [Isaiah 11:11](#); [Daniel 1:2](#)). Shinar is an old term originating before 1500 B.C. and possibly derived from an archaic pronunciation of Sumer.

Nimrod moved 300 miles further north into Assyria (. [Micah 5:5-6](#)) and founded the city of Nineveh. The city of Asshur, situated on the right bank of the Tigris, gave its name to this region. Asshur refers to Upper Mesopotamia and Shinar to Lower Mesopotamia. **Nineveh** (Assyrian *Ninua*) was an ancient Assyrian city on the east bank of the Tigris River in northern Iraq. It was the most important city of Assyria after Ashur. Nineveh was founded circa 4500 B.C. It was located about 250 miles northwest of Babylon, presently the mounds of Kuyunjik and Nebi Yunus opposite modern Mosul. The kings of Akkad, including Sargon, built at Nineveh. Its name suggests a Sumerian origin. Babylonia and Assyria (the land of Nimrod), were Mesopotamian empires that would conquer and exile Israel and Judah. Later Nineveh became central to the neo-Assyrian Empire of the eighth and seventh centuries that so grievously impacted the political history of Israel and Judah and was the focus of the prophetic ministries of Jonah and Nahum.

Nimrod also built three nearby cities **Rehoboth** (Lit. broad open places of the city) was probably a suburb of Nineveh called Rebit Ninua, "greater Nineveh." Rehoboth could be understood as unbuilt areas around Nineveh. **Calah** or Kalah was south of Nineveh and is presently known locally as Birs Nimrud. It was located twenty miles south of Nineveh on the left bank of the Tigris near where that river is joined by the Great Zab. Calah was first settled in the early third millennium. Shalmaneser I (ca. 1265–1235 B.C.) rebuilt Kalah and made the capital of Assyria in the ninth century B.C. after abandoning Asshur.

**Resen** was northwest of Calah in Assyria. It could be an Akkadian word meaning "spring-head." The *great city* used here refers to Nineveh ([Jonah 1:2, 3:1,3](#)). Rehoboth, Calah, and Resen became Nimrod's northern kingdom. For many centuries afterward the two cities of Babylon and Nineveh, both founded by Nimrod, were the leading cities in the world. Nimrod's empire extended from Babylonia in the south to Assyria in the north. Babylon is second only to Jerusalem as the most mentioned city in the Bible (280 times), but every reference is negative.

*Mizraim became the father of Ludim and Anamim and Lehabim and Naphtuhim and Pathrusim and Casluhim (from which came the Philistines) and Caphtorim.* There were seven peoples connected with Mizraim all descendants of Ham. *Mizraim* had seven sons:

**Ludim** or Ludites lived west of the Nile delta. They founded a city named Lud and were known as the Lydians in western Asia Minor. The Bible mentions these people with Cush and Put in prophecies concerning Egypt ([Jeremiah 46:9](#); [Ezekiel 27:10,30:5](#)).

**Anamim** or Anamites settled near Cyrene, west of Egypt and the Libyan plateau ([1 Chronicles 1:11](#)).

**Lehabim** were inhabitants of North Africa west of Egypt. These descendants became the Libyans. They are known as the Lehabites, who are commonly identified with the “Lubim,” referring to the Lybians. The Lybians resided west of Egypt (c.f. [Daniel 11:43](#); [Nahum 3:9](#); [2 Chronicles 12:3](#)).

**Naphtuhim** settled in the northeast delta region of northern Egypt perhaps near Memphis.

**Pathrusim** or Pathrusites moved to southern Egypt. They lived in Pathros, which is Egyptian for the “Southland” ([Isaiah 11:11](#); Jeremiah 44:1,15; [Ezekiel 29:14](#), [30:14](#)). Pathros stretches from Cairo to Aswan. King Esarhaddon of Assyria called himself the “King of Musur (Mizraim), Paturisi (Pathros), and Cush.”

**Casluhim** or Casluhites from whom came the Philistines. The Philistines from Crete were known from Egyptian sources as the “Sea Peoples,” who lived in southwest Canaan during the period of the exodus and later ([Exodus 13:17](#); [Amos 9:7](#)). They were among Israel’s most troublesome enemies during the early monarch (see 1-2 Samuel). They were part of the Mediterranean peoples who invaded Syria, Palestine, and Egypt during the latter half of the thirteenth century. They were successfully repelled by Rameses and settled along the Mediterranean coast in southwestern Canaan.

**Caphtorim** or Caphtorites became the Cretans from the Aegean isle Crete and the surrounding Mediterranean islands. The Caphtorim settled in Gaza, which became a major stronghold of the Philistines in the times of the Judges ([Deuteronomy 2:23](#)). Both [Amos 9:7](#) and [Jeremiah 47:4](#) say that these people came from Caphtor.

## Biblical Text

<sup>9</sup> He was a mighty hunter before the Lord; therefore it is said, “Like Nimrod a mighty hunter before the Lord.” <sup>10</sup> The beginning of his kingdom was Babel and Erech and Accad and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. <sup>11</sup> From that land he went forth into Assyria, and built Nineveh and Rehoboth-Ir and Calah, <sup>12</sup> and Resen between Nineveh and Calah; that is the great city. <sup>13</sup> Mizraim became the father of Ludim and Anamim and Lehabim and Naphtuhim <sup>14</sup> and Pathrusim and Casluhim (from which came the Philistines) and Caphtorim.