The discovery of a broken clay pitcher in a bed of ashes near Shiloh, the ancient capital of Israel, suggests the city was burned to the ground, according to an article in yesterday’s Huffington Post.

The Ark of the Covenant, which was the centerpiece of a Steven Spielberg Indiana Jones movie, was kept in Shiloh by the Israelites around the 12th century B.C. until it was captured by the Philistines. Spielberg’s movie was named Raiders of the Lost Ark and included a plot in which the U.S. government asked Indiana Jones to find the Ark before the Nazis did. Although Spielberg’s film was fictional, the Ark did actually temporarily fall into the hands of the Philistines in ancient days.

Two Old Testament books Jeremiah and I Samuel describe a devastating defeat of the Israelites by the Philistines near Shiloh.

Huffington Post cited the Tazpit News Agency reports as its basis for the story which states the Book Samuel writes of the battle between the Israelites and the Philistines, but has never explained exactly how the city was destroyed.

The dating of the pitcher, 1050 B.C.E. combined with the ashes found around it suggests the city was destroyed by fire following the fierce battle.

Previous archaeological finds at the Tel Shiloh dig site indicated that after the major loss to the Philistines, the area continued to be inhabited until 722 B.C.E. Assyria defeated the Kingdom of Israel in that year.

Scholars believe Shiloh was the pre-Jerusalem capital and spiritual center of Israel.

Shiloh is reported to have been the religious center for Israel for approximately 370 years.

The Philistines achieved their battlefield victory at Even Haezel, before moving on to destroy Shiloh, according to Tazpit News Agency.

Shiloh played a major role in the Bible. It was the location where…

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