

“Raiders of the Lost Ark” starring Harrison Ford, Karen Allen, Paul Freeman, 1981, PG, 115 minutes

Major themes:

- Adventure
- Exploration
- Ark of the Covenant
- Archaeology
- Good vs. Evil
- Selflessness
- Knowledge
- Love

Major characters:

- Indiana Jones (Indy)
- Marion Ravenwood
- René Belloq
- Major Arnold Toht
- Sallah
- Marcus Brody

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Background info:

- The story is set in 1936 in Peru, the U.S., Nepal, Egypt, and the Aegean Islands. Filming took place in France, Tunisia, Hawaii, and on sets in England.
- Director Steven Spielberg improvised the Paramount logo dissolving into a natural mountain, Kalalea Mountain on the island of Kaua'i in Hawaii.
- Each Indiana Jones film is set primarily on one continent: Africa (this film), Asia (Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom), Europe (Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade), and South America (Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull).
- Paul Freeman was singled out for praise by an otherwise critical film critic for continuing his performance after a fly crawled into his mouth.
- Harrison Ford performed many of his own stunts, and suffered various injuries as a result. For the last part of the scene where Jones flees by plane, the first take ended in near-disaster when the plane crashed from a height of 20 feet because Ford's dangling leg was blocking the aircraft's right flap.
- In the scene with an out-of-control airplane, it actually ran over Harrison Ford's knee, tearing a ligament in his left leg. Instead of seeking medical treatment in the country in which they were filming, he had his knee wrapped in ice and carried on.
- Indiana Jones's hat was the "Turn Poet" model from Herbert Johnson Hatters in Saville Row, London. The current price for this hat is \$532. The costume designer aged the hat by grabbing and twisting it, then she and Harrison Ford both sat on it, transforming it into what looked like a very lived-in and well-loved hat.
- In the opening sequence which was shot twice from each of five different angles, Harrison Ford outran the boulder each time. His stumble was kept as it was deemed to look authentic.
- Indiana Jones's jacket and hat are on display at the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History in Washington D.C.

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Scriptures:

Hebrews 9:1-5a (NLT) – *“That first covenant between God and Israel had regulations for worship and a place of worship here on earth. There were two rooms in that Tabernacle. In the first room were a lampstand, a table, and sacred loaves of bread on the table. This room was called the Holy Place. Then there was a curtain, and behind the curtain was the second room called the Most Holy Place. In that room were a gold incense altar and a wooden chest called the Ark of the Covenant, which was covered with gold on all sides. Inside the Ark were a gold jar containing manna, Aaron’s staff that sprouted leaves, and the stone tablets of the covenant. Above the Ark were the cherubim of divine glory, whose wings stretched out over the Ark’s cover, the place of atonement.”*

Proverbs 2:1-5 (The Message) – *“Good friend, take to heart what I’m telling you; collect my counsels and guard them with your life. Tune your ears to the world of Wisdom; set your heart on a life of Understanding. That’s right—if you make Insight your priority, and won’t take no for an answer, searching for it like a prospector panning for gold, like an adventurer on a treasure hunt, believe me, before you know it Fear-of-God will be yours; you’ll have come upon the Knowledge of God.”*

Deuteronomy 30:15-19 (ESV) – *“See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil. If you obey the commandments of the LORD your God that I command you today, by loving the LORD your God, by walking in his ways, and by keeping his commandments and his statutes and his rules, then you shall live and multiply, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to take possession of it. But if your heart turns away, and you will not hear, but are drawn away to worship other gods and serve them, I declare to you today, that you shall surely perish. You shall not live long in the land that you are going over the Jordan to enter and possess. I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse. Therefore choose life, that you and your offspring may live”*

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Discussion points:

1. Which stunt in this film do you think is the most memorable, and why?
2. In what ways do you think folklore is one of the biggest dangers of archaeology (as Indy tells his college class)?
3. What do you think makes the opening of Raiders of the Lost Ark one of the most memorable and iconic scenes in film history?
4. Anthropology is defined as, "*the study of human societies and cultures and their development.*" How do you think this film portrays this field of study?
5. What call to adventure does Indiana Jones heed that launches him into his hero's journey?
6. What object does Indiana Jones that he thinks brings him good luck? How does it help him on his journey?
7. How does this film urge us to not interfere with things we don't understand?
8. Despite Indy's fear of snakes, he demonstrated a lot of courage and bravery. What was your favorite example of this?