Islamic State's murderous hammer has smashed many of the Middle East's antiquities. The City of David's upcoming archeology conference will focus on the work being done to ensure these treasures don't fade from memory.

To COL. MATTHEW BOGDANOS

T his far, 2013 has not been a particularly good year for the Middle East. In addition to devastating civil war and political chaos in Syria, which has resulted in the death of thousands, citizens of Iraq, another ancient heartland of civilization, are now living under Islamic State control, and virtually all of the world’s cultural heritage lies under threat. At the end of March, Islamic State released a video showing the destruction of ancient artifacts and buildings in Nineveh, Iraq. The site, located in the northeastern part of the country, is claimed by Islamic State to be the birthplace of Christianity, Judaism, and Islam, and it is one of the most significant archaeological sites in the Middle East. It is home to a number of ancient structures, including the Temple of Bel, which was considered one of the greatest examples of Islamic architecture.

Islamic State’s campaign against cultural heritage is not new. The group has been known to destroy ancient sites and artifacts as a way of imposing its religious ideology. However, the recent destruction of Nineveh is particularly notable because it is one of the most important archaeological sites in the world, and it is home to a number of ancient artifacts, including the Temple of Bel, which was considered one of the greatest examples of Islamic architecture.

Islamic State’s attack on Nineveh is just the latest in a series of destruction of cultural heritage sites. The group has been known to destroy ancient sites and artifacts as a way of imposing its religious ideology. However, the recent destruction of Nineveh is particularly notable because it is one of the most important archaeological sites in the world, and it is home to a number of ancient artifacts, including the Temple of Bel, which was considered one of the greatest examples of Islamic architecture.

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