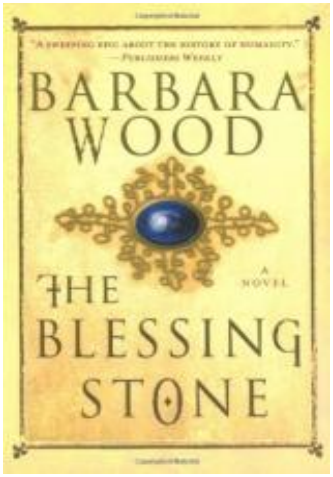
ReadingGroupGuides
The online community for reading groups

The Blessing Stone

by Barbara Wood



About the Book

From the #1 internationally best-selling author comes a sweeping epic that chronicles the history of humanity as it traces the path of a mysterious blue stone

Three million years ago, a meteorite plunged to earth in a cataclysmic collision, out of which emerged a beautiful blue stone. One hundred thousand years ago, a girl named "Tall One" discovers the crystal on the African plain and finds her destiny after looking into the mysterious stone.

Thus begins the story of **The Blessing Stone**, an account of the ways in which the stone changes the lives and reveals the destinies of those it comes into contact with. The history of the world unfolds as the stone is passed from generation to generation, and across 5 continents from the Jordan River Valley to ancient Israel, from Imperial Rome to Medieval England, from fifteenth-century Germany to the eighteenth-century Caribbean and finally to the pioneers of the American West. Wood's 19th novel is comprised of eight individual books linked by a common thread?**The Blessing Stone**.

Each story is set in a different country and period of time featuring Wood's trademark attention to historical detail. This backdrop provides a compelling canvas on which are painted the lives of the book's characters as they search for truth, courage, solace and even revenge, aided they believe, by the mystical powers of a cosmic blessing stone.

In **The Blessing Stone**, Barbara Wood has created a compelling narrative of the epic sweep of human history. Her fans will find **The Blessing Stone** is like nothing they've read before. New readers will discover a writer to treasure.

Discussion Guide

Africa: 100,000 Years Ago

The primitive humans described in Book 1 did not use a verbal language. How did they communicate with each other?

Group Exercise: Choose two people and give one of them a question/command/statement to communicate to the other. Verbal language is not allowed:)

As a primitive person, imagine how you would have viewed **The Blessing Stone**. What significance would you have placed on it? Where would you think it originated? (Tall One, for example, thought that it was a small pool of water.)

The Near East: 35,000 Years Ago

The moon was believed to regulate a woman's menstrual cycle, and women held tremendous power within their tribes due to their ability to create life. Do women hold such power now? Is a mother's role greater than a father's?

The Jordan River Valley: 10,000 Years Ago

Separation between rich and poor became evident. Trade and commerce gained in importance and families no longer lived in communal dwellings, opting instead to live with their own family group in separate dwellings. People began to settle in specific geographic areas and no longer led nomadic lives. What are the advantages and disadvantages of such a society?

The concept of conception was still a mystery and the idea of a father did not exist. A child's bloodline came from his or her mother. What freedoms did this give women? Compare this to present society where a child is automatically given his/her father's last name and a woman commonly takes her husband's name when she marries. Should children receive both names?

Rome: 64 C.E.

In this story, negative connotations are associated with the blessing stone for the first time. Up until this point, what had the stone represented to its owners?

This was a male dominated society where women had little power, privileges or rights. Compare this society to the matriarchal societies described in earlier stories; was power shared equally between genders in these societies?

Compare Amelia's infidelity to Cornelius' abandonment of his newborn child and the way in which society reacted to each situation.

England: 1022 C.E.

To escape male dominance, one option was to become a nun. Was this truly an escape?

Germany: 1520 C.E.

Katharina's quest to find the blessing stone, and through it her father, became an obsession. How did this affect the

decisions she made? Can obsessions be positive?

The American West: 1848 C.E.

In this story, Matthew depended on the blessing stone to make decisions, or did he? Did the blessing stone exhibit mystical or mysterious powers in the previous stories? What role did the blessing stone play in each person?s life?

Why do you suppose the book is called **The Blessing Stone**? Can you suggest another title?

If in your discussion of **The Blessing Stone** you should happen to come up with additional questions and would like to pose those questions to Barbara Wood, please visit this site's Discussion Boards. Ms. Wood is a regular contributor and would be happy to answer any additional questions you might have. You may also or Contact us to arrange for a personal appearance or teleconference.

Author Bio

Barbara Wood was born January 30, in Warrington, England (near Liverpool). Together with her parents and older brother, she immigrated to the United States. She grew up in Southern California and attended Los Angeles Schools. After High School, Barbara attended the University of California at Santa Barbara but left to train as a surgical technician. During this time, Barbara held numerous jobs, before she sold her first novel in 1976. To date, Barbara has written 25 books, including three under a pen name. She is an international best selling author with books translated into over 30 languages. The reader is transported to exotic countries that Barbara has meticulously researched to provide her fans with a true sense of the culture and history relevant to each story. At the heart of every book, is a strong, independent woman. Currently, Barbara is busy working on her next story that will, no doubt, showcase an extraordinary heroine in an exciting and intriguing adventure.

When not writing, Barbara often takes time to enjoy the work of other authors, and that of a certain well-known martial artist, whose name is listed among the "Ten things you might not know about Barbara." She also likes to play golf with her husband, Walt.

Critical Praise

"Wood's subject is nothing less than the history of the entire world. . . . an absorbing adventure tale."

The Blessing Stone
by Barbara Wood

Publication Date: January 17, 2004
Genres: Fiction
Paperback: 464 pages
Publisher: St. Martin's Griffin
ISBN-10: 0312320248
ISBN-13: 9780312320249