



ARCHIVE OF THE LOST TRIBES

BOOK CLUB AND DISCUSSION KIT

QUESTIONS, ACTIVITIES, HOSTING IDEAS, AND PRINTABLES

ONE STORM. ONE LOST BARGE. ONE PROMISED LAND NO ONE EXPECTED.

MICHAEL D. YOUNG

[BEGIN HERE](#)

Your Book Club Field Guide

Use the spoiler-light pages before or during reading. Open the full-record section only after everyone has finished the novel.



THE SPOILER GATE

Pages 2-4 are spoiler-light. Pages 5-12 discuss the entire book, including the ending and epilogue. Page 13 is a standalone invitation.

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A NOTE ON REVERENCE

The novel draws imaginative fiction from sacred records. Invite thoughtful discussion, distinguish scriptural foundations from the novel's expansions, and leave room for differing experiences of faith.

CHOOSE YOUR ROUTE

Meeting Plans & Facilitation

Three ready-to-use formats make the kit work for a quick gathering or a full evening.

60 MINUTES

ROUTE

5 min welcome / 10 min warm-up / 30 min choose six questions from pages 5-6 / 10 min activity / 5 min reflection

90 MINUTES

ROUTE

10 min refreshments / 10 min warm-up / 35 min discussion / 15 min relationship compass / 15 min activity / 5 min closing

120 MINUTES

ROUTE

15 min arrival / 15 min warm-up / 45 min discussion / 20 min activity / 15 min theories / 10 min review builder

Facilitator Notes

1

Begin with a low-stakes reaction before asking for interpretation.

2

Ask for a scene or choice that supports each claim; welcome more than one reading.

3

If one voice dominates, invite each person to answer in one sentence first.

4

Do not force personal testimony. Faith may be discussed as theme, craft, or lived experience.

5

Use the questions as a menu. Depth matters more than finishing every prompt.

6

End by naming one image, relationship, or question each reader will carry forward.

BEST OPENING QUESTION

Where did the story most strongly overturn what you expected from a promised-land narrative?

DISCUSSION TABLET

Spoiler-Light Warm-Up

These prompts reveal only the premise and early conflicts.



- 1 What expectations did the opening scripture and the date 'About 2,000 B.C.' create?
- 2 How does beginning with a wreck reshape the idea of reaching a promised land?
- 3 What do Omer and Kish reveal in their first argument over the barge's stopper?
- 4 The glowing stones provide literal light. What other kinds of light might the story explore?
- 5 Which early danger feels most powerful: storm, separation, lost supplies, fear, or rival leadership?
- 6 How does alternating between Omer and Marael change the scale of the story?
- 7 What makes an unfamiliar culture feel wondrous, threatening, or both?
- 8 Which question are you most eager for the novel to answer?

DISCUSSION TABLET

Faith, Leadership & Choice

Anchor each response in a particular decision or scene.



- 1 After the wreck, Omer feels his faith 'evaporating.' Is doubt presented as failure, honesty, or the beginning of another kind of faith?
- 2 Compare Omer and Kish. What does each believe gives a person the right to lead?
- 3 Why is Omer instructed to flee Kish rather than defeat him personally? How does that challenge his idea of courage?
- 4 The stones shine, dim, protect, and reject unworthy hands. When does a gift become a responsibility?
- 5 How does Cybil practice leadership without office, public authority, or physical freedom?
- 6 Amun repeatedly withholds information. When is secrecy protective, and when does it become manipulation?
- 7 Marael insists the light is God's power rather than her own. How does that belief shape the way she uses it?
- 8 Omer records the story without knowing its purpose. What does faithful action look like when audience and outcome remain hidden?

DISCUSSION TABLET

Culture, Power & Identity

Explore learning across cultures while resisting systems that misuse sacred language.



- 1 The sun and moon orders preserve fragments of truth while corrupting them. What makes a tradition living, distorted, or dangerous?
- 2 Compare Rehmosé's spectacle with Yahmosé's secrecy. Which form of authority is harder to challenge?
- 3 Marael gains knowledge and status through forced assimilation. What can she accept without surrendering who she is?
- 4 Her name changes from Marael to Marel. Does it signal love, political role, transformation, compromise, or several things at once?
- 5 How do Ebonique, Keket, Panya, and Cybil each survive or resist within the maidens' hierarchy?
- 6 What does the crimson ceremonial drink reveal about belonging, consent, and crowd behavior?
- 7 Amun inherits the office the novel exposes as corrupt. What suggests he can reform it, and what risks remain?
- 8 The final trade proposal offers connection without immediate unification. Is separation wise, unfinished, or both?

LOYALTIES UNDER PRESSURE

Character Relationship Compass

Use each line to discuss how duty, affection, rivalry, secrecy, and shared danger change the people at either end.



OMER + CYBIL

MARRIAGE TESTED BY SEPARATION

How do hope, clues, and trust keep their partnership active while they are apart?

OMER + KISH

COMPETING CLAIMS TO LEADERSHIP

Why does Kish's certainty attract followers even when his choices deepen their danger?

MARAEI + CYBIL

NIECE AND HIDDEN MENTOR

How does Cybil give Marael knowledge without taking away her agency?

MARAEI + AMUN

ALLIANCE, ATTRACTION, AND REFORM

Where do they save one another, and where do power differences complicate the bond?

AMUN + REHMOSE / YAHMOSE

EPHEMERAL / RELUCTANT HEIR

What must Amun inherit, reject, or reinterpret when both older rulers fall?

THE MAIDENS

EBONIQUE, KEKET, PANYA, CYBIL, MARAEI

How does rank shape solidarity, rivalry, silence, and resistance?

COMPASS QUESTION

Which relationship changes the direction of the story most - and which changes a character most deeply?

SYMBOLS CARRIED FORWARD

Themes, Symbols & Scripture

The novel expands scriptural foundations through imagined characters, cultures, dangers, and records.

GLOWING STONES

Guidance, covenant memory, discernment, and power inseparable from responsibility.

STORMS AND WATER

Chaos, passage, rebirth, and the possibility that apparent disaster can still lead toward purpose.

SUN, MOON, AND MASKS

Sacred images made political: public radiance, hidden authority, rivalry, and performed identity.

RECORDS AND WALLS

Memory preserved across centuries. Writing becomes service to readers the recorder may never meet.

NAMES AND ROBES

Identity assigned, adopted, concealed, or transformed across cultural boundaries.

YELLOW CLOTH

A fragile trail of relationship and hope: an ordinary remnant becomes a message because someone notices.

Scriptural Source Trail

ETHER 2:6	Journey and barges	ETHER 2:16-25	The vessels and their problems
ETHER 3:1-6	The sixteen stones and divine light	ETHER 6:4-12	The sea crossing and storms
ABRAHAM 1:27	Author-note context for imitated ordinances	ALMA 63:5	Hagoth's westward voyage

TEST A CLAIM TO AUTHORITY

Who Would You Follow?

Score each candidate from 1-5 in every category. Add the scores, then defend the value you weighted most heavily.

CANDIDATE	FAITH	OPENNESS	PROTECTION	ADAPTATION	RESTRAINT
Omer Stewardship and faith	 1-5	 1-5	 1-5	 1-5	 1-5
Kish Decisiveness and control	 1-5	 1-5	 1-5	 1-5	 1-5
Rehmosé Tradition and spectacle	 1-5	 1-5	 1-5	 1-5	 1-5
Yahmosé Mystery and ritual knowledge	 1-5	 1-5	 1-5	 1-5	 1-5
Amun Adaptability and reform	 1-5	 1-5	 1-5	 1-5	 1-5

Debrief the Vote

- Which criterion changed your ranking most?
- Did you score intention, action, or outcome?
- Whose leadership improves most over time?
- What important quality is missing from the table?

FROM WRECK TO RECORD

Pivotal Moments & Sequel Theories

Trace the decisions that redirect the narrative, then use unresolved clues to speculate responsibly.



The Story's Turning Points

- 1 The barge breaks and the survivors divide.
- 2 Omer recovers the stones but loses public authority.
- 3 Marael enters the Sun Maidens' world.
- 4 Marael and Amun retrieve the urn and record.
- 5 The sacrifice, poisoned drink, eclipse, and bird swarm collapse the old order.
- 6 Amun inherits power; Omer returns to confront Kish.
- 7 Marel carries her account to Omer, who carves the wall.
- 8 Hagoth discovers the chamber centuries later - but is told, 'Not yet.'

Open Threads for the Trilogy

- 1 What is the key in the Temple of the Dawn - object, knowledge, authority, or something else?
- 2 Where are Abasi and the two missing wives, including Amun's mother?
- 3 What will trade change on both sides of the island?
- 4 Why must Hagoth wait before using the carving tools?
- 5 Who is the intended future reader of Omer's record?

SET THE TABLE AND THE MOOD

Host the Gathering

Keep the atmosphere evocative and simple: storm-dark colors, warm gold, pale-blue light, and food inspired by the story's imagery.



LIGHT

Use the Glowing Stone Lantern Papercraft or cool battery-powered LED tea lights. Never use flame inside the paper lantern.

COLOR

Layer navy, jungle green, weathered gold, and crimson accents. Add silver and gold circles for the moon and sun orders.

RECORDS

Place kraft paper and metallic markers at each seat so readers can record a favorite line or question.

DESERET HONEY

Serve honey with flatbread, crackers, or fruit as a nod to the Jaredite word for honeybee.

ISLAND FRUIT

Offer a bright fruit tray or skewers. Label unfamiliar combinations as provisions from the choice land.

CRIMSON DRINK

Make a non-alcoholic berry or hibiscus punch. Keep the label playful and do not pressure anyone to partake.

OPTIONAL OPENING MOMENT

Dim the room, switch on one pale-blue light, and invite everyone to name a kind of guidance they would want after a shipwreck.

CARRY THE STORY FORWARD

Reflection, Review & Author Questions

Use these prompts for journaling, a closing round, a website review, or a future author visit.

Personal Reflection

Which character's choice will remain with you, and what did it clarify or complicate about faith, leadership, or belonging?

Build a Helpful Review

1

Open with one sentence naming the premise without revealing the ending.

2

Name the character, theme, or relationship that engaged you most.

3

Describe the experience: adventurous, reflective, mysterious, tense, hopeful, or another quality.

4

Identify the audience most likely to appreciate the book.

5

End with an honest overall impression - without revealing the final discoveries.

Questions for Michael D. Young

1

Which part of Ether first suggested this untold branch of the journey?

2

How did you decide where scriptural foundation should end and invention begin?

3

Which character changed most during drafting?

4

What research shaped the island's sun and moon imagery?

5

Why did you choose Omer as keeper of the record?

6

Which unresolved clue should readers remember most strongly?

AN INVITATION FROM THE ARCHIVE OF THE LOST TRIBES

JOIN THE VOYAGE

A BOOK-CLUB GATHERING FOR

THE LOST BARGE

DATE

TIME

PLACE

HOST / CONTACT

Come prepared to discuss faith, leadership, hidden records,
and the promised land no one expected.

LIGHT IS GIFT AND RESPONSIBILITY

PRINT, TRIM ALONG THE OUTER FRAME IF DESIRED, OR SHARE DIGITALLY