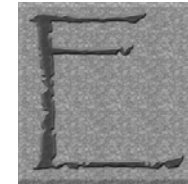


*For Rachel and Lydia, my sweet daughters who love a good story.
May you be inspired to do great things - Terri*

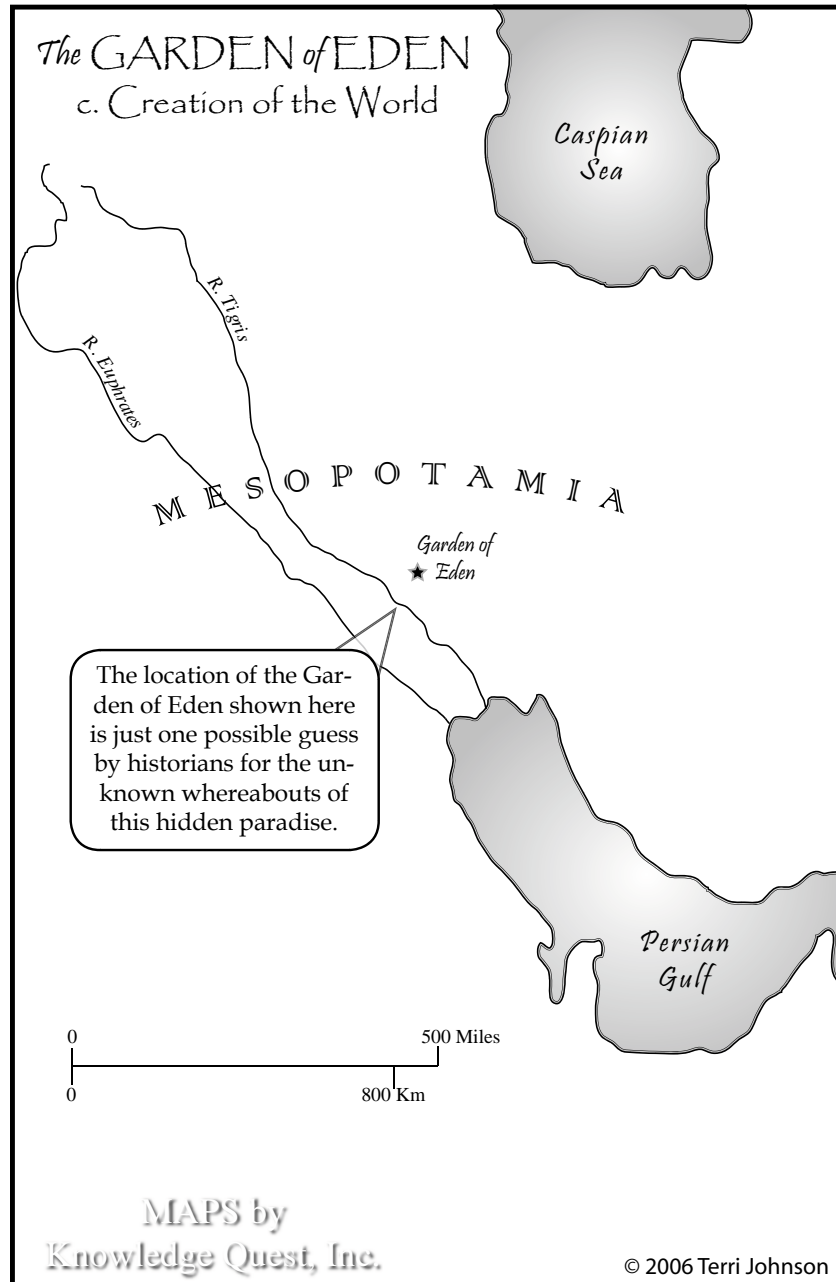
*My part of this story is dedicated to my mother, for giving me the
opportunity to help her. Thanks Mom - Nicole*



Eve
The Very First Days of the World

*by Terri Johnson
and Nicole Johnson*

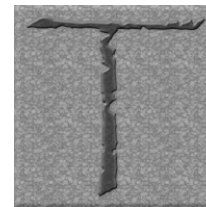




Eve

The Very First Days of the World

by Terri and Nicole Johnson



The long, thick, massive body of the slithering snake began to circle about her, taunting her, enticing her, deceiving her. Its dry scaly coils brushed against her leg, sending shivers up her spine. Once it completed its agonizingly slow circle around her, the huge head of the creature rose up ominously to confront her face to face. The hypnotic ruby eyes of the snake matched the color of the gorgeous apple it held between its jaws. "Eat," the serpent hissed, "Eat and you will become as great as He - powerful, beautiful and everywhere at once!"

Struggling between desire and disgust, she tried to turn away from those eyes, but found that she was riveted in place. Panic rose within her breast and she opened her mouth to

scream, but no sound came. She pushed down the urge to flee, mustered her courage and looked the great serpent in the eye with a confidence she did not feel. "Let me go," she pleaded in a faint whisper. "Never," it hissed. The apple it held in its mouth began to ooze and drip from its fangs, like blood spilling to the ground.

The trance broken, the woman turned and ran at an inhuman speed she did not know she possessed. Her feet barely touched the earth as she fled from the temptation that haunted her. Several breathless moments later, she turned to look over her shoulder to find that the serpent was immediately behind her. She tried to run faster, but realized with a sense of dread that she would not be able to outrun this beast.

"No!" She screamed. "No! Not again! Please, not again!"

She awoke from her nightmare in a dripping sweat. With her heart still pounding and her hands visibly shaking, she turned over to the one who would comfort her. She found that she was alone. The pale light of daybreak was filtering into their bed chamber through the reed doorway and she realized that Adam had already risen for the day's work.

In the half light, she scanned the room to see that the children were still asleep. Seth stirred and rolled over, but remained in slumber. The images from her nightmare rushed back to her mind as she considered her children and her hopes and dreams for them. She breathed a prayer to her Maker. *Why, Creator, must I continue to be plagued by these dreams? Is there still a lesson that I have not learned from the garden? God,*

please, please, erase these disturbing thoughts from my mind and give me peace. Or perhaps you may see fit to tell me the reason for their continual return. Have I not been punished enough? Is your forgiveness not yet complete?

She lay back on her mattress, pleading silently to the One who brings peace out of chaos. Suddenly a forceful wind blew through the woven reed doorway, rustling the tousled hair upon the young sleeping heads. "Teach your children..." she thought she heard in the voice of the wind. The strange moving air swirled about the room and then past her own head, brushing against her cheek. She heard it again, but this time in the form of a very low whisper meant only for her, "Teach your children..." Her breath came in short gasps as she realized that she had just heard the voice of the One from whom she had not heard audibly in over 100 years. "Teach your children," she repeated to herself. Seth stirred again and stretching, sat up in his bed.

"Mother, did you say something?" he asked groggily.

"No, son, I did not. Or at least I did not mean to," she answered, wiping the sweat from her brow and her disheveled hair from her face. Realizing there would be no more rest for her until the sun began its descent at the far end of the day, she rose quietly and tip-toed out of the animal-skin covered dwelling. Drawing water from the watering hole was the first among many tasks that must be accomplished each morning. Upon her return from the watering hole, she poured some crushed grain along with a portion of the cool water into her stone pot for the morning porridge. She stoked the smoldering

coals from last night's fire and then placed the pot directly on them until the mixture was thick and bubbly. She tossed in some fresh herbs for flavor and some dried chunks of fruit for sweetness. Adam loved the way she prepared his porridge at the dawning of each new day.

Two arms grabbed her from behind and she jumped with a start.

"It is only me, dear wife," Adam cooed softly in her ear. "What has made you so jumpy this morning?" Turning into his full embrace, she placed her head upon his broad chest.

"I had the dream again, Adam," she blurted. "I am continually haunted by it." She paused to hear his reply. When none came, she went on. "He spoke to me, Husband."

"Who spoke to you?" Adam inquired cautiously. "The serpent?"

"No, my husband. It was the One," she paused. "It was Creator God from the garden!" She looked imploringly into his eyes.

"Goodness, Wife. Speak! What did our Friend say to you? Did He walk with you as in the days of old in the cool of the garden? Did His presence fill the entire space that you beheld? Did you grow small and weak next to His grandeur and might?"

"Husband, please... one question at a time. No, He did not reveal himself as in the days of the beginning of the world. He spoke to me in a quiet whisper in the form of a strong rushing wind. But I recognized His voice. How could I not? I asked Him why my dream continued to plague me so and He answered by saying, 'Teach your children!' And that is all. He

spoke no more."

Adam dropped his arms from around her and walked away several paces. He turned and walked back. "I, too, heard His voice, but it was in the form of a dream. I didn't recall it until now," his voice trailed off.

"What did He tell you, Adam?" He opened his mouth to speak when Seth and his younger sisters emerged from the doorway of their home.

"It was just one word," he quietly answered her. "He said, 'Remember'."

Without a word, the children went about their morning routine. Seth removed the heavy pot from the fire pit and began to stoke the dying embers, adding more brushwood and timber to fuel the flames. The girls filled gourd bowls with the delicious porridge and brought the steaming food to their parents where they still stood, staring at one another as though in a trance.

"Father, Mother, the meal is cooked and ready for you. Will you not come around the warmth of the fire and break your fast?"

"What? Oh. Forgive us children, we were... that is, our thoughts were elsewhere," Eve said as she sat down on the skins which were arranged neatly beside the fire pit for the morning meal.

Sensing some unspoken tension, the children were quiet as they ate their porridge.

Eve stared into the dancing fire. Her mind kept drifting back to her dream and the Voice that she had heard in the wind. What could He have possibly meant by "teach your children"?

I thought I was teaching them! Eve mused silently to herself. *Every day I teach them skills as we go about our endless tasks. And what was Adam supposed to remember? Have we forgotten something?*

“Mother?” Seth’s words broke into her reverie.

“Yes, my son?”

“I am off to tend the sheep, if you no longer need me here.”

“No, I do not need you. Go along with your father,”

Eve said, rising to her feet. She embraced her tall and lean 11-year-old son, planting a kiss on his forehead. Adam gave her a long and reassuring look that promised they would talk more at a later time. She turned and picked up the cooking pot and beckoned to each of her daughters. The girls shook out the skins from around the fire and carefully folded each one. They collected the gourd bowls and utensils and followed their mother down to the watering hole.

Once the dishes were washed, dried and put away, the girls tidied their indoor and outdoor living quarters while Eve swept the packed dirt floors. Next, the goats were milked and then Mother and daughters fetched their woven reed baskets to gather produce from the orchard and garden on the far side of the brook. They picked juicy sun-ripened figs and glossy pink pomegranates. Clusters of powdery grapes were beginning to purple on neatly trimmed vines. In the garden, the girls dug up an assortment of root vegetables, careful to save their delicate green tops which would make a wonderful addition to their evening meal.

Throughout the course of the day, Eve contemplated God’s words to her. *Teach your children*, He had said. *Remember*,

was His command. All the while she was working alongside her daughters, she thought about His curious and important message delivered to her and Adam. Sometimes she would catch herself looking off into the distance absently. She had to force herself to concentrate on her work, and still her thoughts drifted from her tasks and her normally pleasant conversation with her girls.

At the end of the day, after supper, the family once again encircled the roaring fire. One of her daughters spoke up. “Mother, you have been distracted today. Is there something wrong?”

Eve brought her hot herbal drink to her lips, inhaling the soothing aromas of mint and lemon as she considered how best to answer this question.

“Yes, children, I... I have been distracted, as you say.” She paused again, then decided to speak plainly. “Early this morning before I arose, the Voice of God came to me in the wind.”

“What did He say?” the children exclaimed, their voices a mixture of excitement and anxiety at the same time.

“Well,” Eve replied, “He said simply ‘*teach your children*’.”

“Did He mean us, Mother?”

“Yes, I believe so, dear ones.” Eve said slowly.

“Did He say more?” queried Seth, “As in *what* you are supposed to teach us?”

“No, Seth, He just said ‘*teach your children*’.”

All eyes turned to Adam as he began to speak his churning thoughts. “I have been dwelling on this all day long,

just as you have, Eve. I believe that He means for us to teach you children about Him, and His wonders, and perhaps even about our own mistakes and failures.”

“Yes, Adam, now that you say it, I know that you are right. This is what the Lord wants from us: to teach our children about Him!” Eve responded with excitement. “When shall we begin?”

“I should think,” said Adam reverently, “that when you hear His Voice, which has been silent for over a hundred years, you had better do His bidding quickly.

Taking her usual place beside Adam, Eve asked the children if they would like to hear a story.

“Oh, yes, Mother!” they cried. They pressed closer, so they would hear every word of the tale she was about to tell.

“Yes, but what shall we tell them about first?” Eve said, who was eager to do God’s bidding, but was unsure where to start.

“Well, starting at the very beginning seems wise, does it not, Wife?”

“Yes, Husband, but if we are to start at the beginning, then you had better go first. Because children, Adam was created before I was. You see, we were not born into the world like each of you. In fact, we were never tiny babies or even half-grown children. The truth of it is that Adam lived several days before the Creator fashioned me. So, go ahead, Adam, tell them how it all started.”

Adam cleared his throat and said, “Alright then, we will tell you of the garden and the very first days of the world. Children, draw close to me and feel my skin, touch my hair,

look into my eyes. Would you believe the Creator God formed me out of the very dust of the ground? Your mother had an even more startling beginning.” Adam winked at Eve. “Now, can you imagine the incredible power it takes to create a living, breathing creature from the dirt? We cannot imagine such might! But that is how powerful and mighty our God is.” The children pressed their toes into the soft dirt at their feet as they contemplated their father’s words.

“After six days of bringing our world into existence¹, he chose to create a likeness of Himself. And I am he. The Master Creator who spoke a single word and the earth appeared, also made me.” Adam thumped his chest with both hands. “I am humbled when I think of it because He is so great and majestic. He says that I bear His likeness. Simply amazing!” he said, shaking his head.

“Father,” Seth interrupted, “What does Creator look like? Does He look like you?”

“That, my son, is a most challenging question! No, He does not look like me. I am but a dim reflection of Him. He has features, such as we do, but He is everything that we are not. His eyes are like fire, piercing and yet warm and inviting. His mouth issues words that ring with strength and authority. The earth trembles when He speaks.” Adam paused as he considered how else to describe His Friend from the garden.

Eve spoke, “His legs are like towers of might; his arms are like wings, downy soft within His embrace.”

¹ To read the full story of how God created the earth and everything in it, read Genesis 1-2 in the Bible.

“You know, Eve,” Adam continued. “There were times in the garden when I marveled why our Friend had created the sun. Yes, I knew it was a magnificent sphere giving us light. But we already had light, for He was our light, and the sun... well, it is only a dim reflection of Him. And the trees... were they not gorgeous, Eve? And yet, there were times also that I marveled that He had created them for He was our sustenance. He was our shelter. His arms provided our shade and rest. Of course, now I understand.”

“Tell us when you met Mother,” chimed in one of the children.

“Ah, your mother...What a delight she was to my eyes that very first day and she still is even now. I had been given the task of naming all of the animals, for God had given me dominion over them. I observed and commented to my Lord that I was different from the rest. Each of the animals had mates for companionship and to help populate the earth. I did not have such a mate.

“Upon hearing my words of dissatisfaction, Creator God immediately struck me down and I passed into a deep sleep. When I awoke, I felt a throbbing pain in my chest that at first I attributed to my unexpected fall. But then I saw her standing before me. She was the most beautiful creature I had ever seen. I found out later that she was fashioned out of one of my ribs, which, of course, explained the pain in my chest!”

Eve continued, “As soon as The Creator breathed life into me, I stood up, and there on the ground before me was your father, looking dazed. He was the first thing I ever saw in the Garden of Eden. Those were glorious days, were they not,

Adam? We were young and in love, carefree and in harmony with our Maker. Such days will never be again.”

“Why not, Mother?”

“Because of my disobedience, son. I ate of the forbidden fruit when I was explicitly told not to. I talked your father into eating as well.”

“Yes, dear, but you were deceived by that hideously beautiful serpent. Even so, I was, and still am, responsible for my own actions and disobedience. I could have made a different choice, but I, too, was lured by the serpent’s crafty deception.² I wanted the same thing that you wanted – power, glory and omnipresence. I wanted to be as great as the One who had created me! Oh, it is such a lie that the created could ever be as great and marvelous as the Creator. And yet I believed the serpent, just as you did, Eve.”

“Children, hear us well. This is when everything instantly changed. Before our Lord even appeared to us that evening in the cool of the garden, we knew we had done something terribly wrong. Our shame hung heavily upon us and we hid from Him behind the lush foliage. We were mortified! We had gone directly against the command of our gracious Friend. He told us that we could eat from any tree, except for one – He called it the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. And yet that was the very tree that we did not resist.

“Before we even saw Him that evening, we heard Him calling our names. ‘Adam! Eve!’ The voice, in which

² To read the rest of the story about the serpent’s deception and the fall of mankind, read Genesis 3 in the Bible.

we once took boundless delight, now sent shivers of panic through our bodies! Our fear was well-founded, for that day we were cursed. After a pathetic attempt to dodge our own responsibility and cast the blame on others, we were driven from the Garden of Eden by the Lord's mighty angel, never to return. We were indeed cursed that day. We lost not only our home, our sustenance, and our peaceful way of life, but our daily intimate fellowship with our Maker as well. I was sent to toil in the fields and your mother was cursed with pain in childbirth."

"What happened to the serpent?" asked one of the girls. "It seems to me that he was perhaps the worst of all and certainly deserves some kind of punishment."

"Ah, the serpent," said Eve. "Yes, he too was cursed. He must forever slither along the ground on his belly, despised by the greater part of God's creatures, most prominently me. And the other half of the curse I did not understand. Something about him bruising the heel of my seed and my seed crushing his head.³ I did not comprehend this then, nor do I now. I do know that 'my seed' refers to our offspring, but I do not see how our children have yet or will in time 'crush this serpent's head'.

³ "The Seed of the woman is the Promised One, the coming Messiah of Israel. Bruise His heel speaks of a serious injury, but it is contrasted with the crushing of his head - the defeat - of the serpent, or Satan. When Jesus went to the cross, He was bruised in His heel. That is, he suffered a terrible but temporary injury (John 12:31; Col 2:15). In His resurrection, He defeated His enemy. From that moment on, Satan has lived on borrowed time. He is already defeated; only the announcement of victory needs to be made (see Rom 16:20)." From the Nelson Study Bible, copyright 1997 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission.

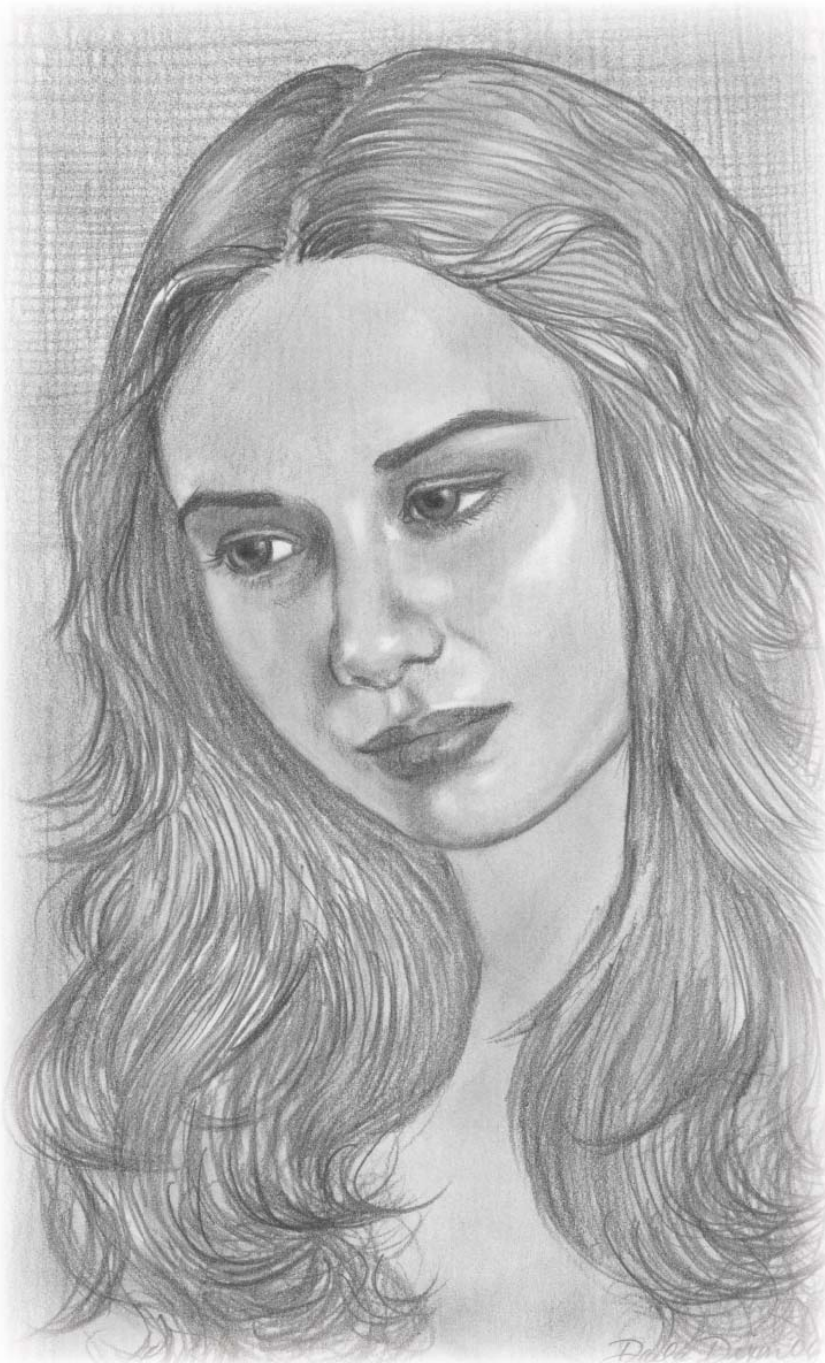
Some things in life remain a mystery, I suppose."

"Life outside the garden was barren and dry," she continued. "Our first days were miserable and we thought we would perish. We were hungry, dehydrated and bitterly cold when the sun went down at the end of the day. Our first task was to find a reliable water source and set up shelter. Then, without delay, your father set to work and, after much toil, raised a handful of crops for harvest, and gathered a good number of animals to shepherd and butcher for food. As time wore on, my belly began to expand and I felt movement inside. Lo and behold, I was with child! Upon his astonishing and painful birth, we named him Cain. He was the joy of my life. Some years later, Abel was born. His birth was just as astonishing and certainly just as painful! Yet, he was the delight of my soul. Were those not amazing years, Adam? Those rambunctious boys kept us hopping, so full of energy, so full of creativity. We could never sit still as they were always getting into trouble!⁴ Ah, I loved them with all my heart!"

Eve dropped her head into her hands and began to sob. How could a mother describe the loss, the pain, the heartache? How could she describe the deep ache that squeezes her heart whenever she reflects on her short time with her beloved boys? *Oh Father, she breathed desperately, Only You can heal my grieving heart!*

"But Cain still lives, Mother. Does this not bring you any comfort?" Seth asked tenderly, intuitively feeling his mother's agony.

⁴ To read the exciting tale of Cain and Able, turn to Genesis 4 in your Bible.



“Cain walks in sin and defiance against the Lord. He does not recognize his Creator, nor the parents who raised him. It is as though we have two dead sons.” Adam placed his arm about his wife’s trembling shoulders and continued, “Children, we made some grievous mistakes with our two older boys. We did not teach them diligently about the Lord, our Maker and our Friend. Now I see that this is what He wants us to do differently with you. He wants us to teach you about Him so that you can lead a long and purposeful life in the land⁵, so that you can tell your children and your grandchildren after them. Listen to our stories as we tell them to you tonight and again tomorrow and the night after that, for we still have much to tell. We have painful stories to share with you as well as ones that will bring much laughter and joy. Remember them and tell them to your children and to your children’s children. Bind these stories of our Lord on your hearts and minds, so that sin and disobedience do not overtake you.”

Silence descended upon the small family as they huddled together about the dying embers of the fire. The darker the night became around them, the more brilliantly the stars shone overhead. No one wanted to speak and yet no one wanted to leave. Eve looked from her husband of many years to her young children who had full lives yet ahead of them. Her mother’s heart longed for a way to keep them always safe – from temptation, from sin, from the angry hand of another.

⁵ To read about Seth’s “long and purposeful life in the land”, read Genesis 4: 25-5:8 in your Bible.

Yet she knew that she could only do the bidding of her Lord. At this moment, she realized with an inexplicable assurance, all was well. She would rest and take comfort in this thought tonight. As if by an unspoken cue, their three children stood and crept quietly into the tent. Adam and Eve followed behind.

The End

About the Authors:

Terri Johnson is the creator of Knowledge Quest maps and timelines (www.knowledgequestmaps.com). Her mission for the company is to help make the teaching and learning of history and geography enjoyable for both teacher and students. She has created and published over 20 map and timeline products. Her *Blackline Maps of World History* have been widely recommended in the education community and published in *The Story of the World* history series by Susan Wise Bauer. Terri and Knowledge Quest recently won the “Excellence in Education” award granted by The Old Schoolhouse magazine for best geography company of 2003 and 2004. Terri resides in San Antonio, Texas with her husband Todd and their five children whom she teaches at home.



Nicole Johnson is Terri’s eldest daughter. She has three younger sisters and one brother who keep her entertained most of the time. Nicole, who is 12 years old, has homeschooled since kindergarten. She has many hobbies and pasttimes, when she is not doing her schoolwork. She enjoys reading, writing, sewing, making candles, swimming and spending time with friends. She loves the rain and the beauty of nature. Nicole stays in touch with her long distance friends through the convenience of modern email and blogging.