

**“Moonfall: Tales from the Levant”**

**by Vanessa Morton**

May 1, 2014

WEbook Publishing

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## **AUTHOR BREATHES NEW LIFE INTO HISTORY WITH FASCINATING NEW HISTORICAL YOUNG ADULT NOVEL**

*Writer Vanessa Morton makes debut with 'Moonfall: Tales from the Levant'*

**DALLAS, Texas** – Fascinated by archeology and ancient history since middle school, author [Vanessa Morton](#) uses the storied Late Bronze Age as a backdrop in her debut novel **“Moonfall: Tales from the Levant”** (May 1, 2014, WEbook Publishing). The book paints a dramatic picture of twin sisters facing the unexpected consequences of their choices.

“Moonfall” creates a captivating and thrilling young adult story that weaves in the legendary – almost mystical – reputation that the city of Jericho has acquired over the millennia. To save her sister from torture at the insidious Moon Temple, 16-year-old Rachav allies with a mysterious nomad who wields an ancient force so powerful that it may destroy not only her sister’s captors, but the entire kingdom.

As entertaining as it is enlightening, “Moonfall” is rooted in history but touches on modern issues.

**“Youth living in the Bronze Age struggled with similar issues – teen angst, political corruption, sibling rivalry, passion and the longing for a spiritual connection with our creator,”** Morton says. **“‘Moonfall’ bridges the gap of time and culture and connects us with each other.”**

For three years, Morton immersed herself into the Late Bronze Age, researching original sources and university publications, interviewing scholars, and taking a private academic tour of ancient Jericho. The period and people become three-dimensional in her imagination.

**“Vanessa Morton has infused Biblical history with fiction to produce a novel that brings to life the history surrounding Israel's entrance into the land of promise,”** author Fay Lamb says. **“Peering inside both the camp of Israel and Jericho, the clash of societies meet, and God's promise is fulfilled. The author's imagination intertwines with fact and tells a story that is not soon forgotten.”**

Morton was a semi-finalist in the prestigious Genesis writing contest in 2012 and 2013. When she’s not writing stories or exploring ancient ruins, Morton can be found with her husband and two daughters at their vineyard in east Texas.

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# Vanessa Morton

## Author Biography



Author [Vanessa Morton](#) is an archaeology junkie and virtual time traveler.

Her love of ancient history began in middle school when she spent a sweltering summer in the air-conditioned public library reading Persian, Greek and Jewish legends. She earned a bachelor's degree in history from the University of Incarnate Word and studied writing at UCLA. She is living the dream – volunteering at and [visiting various archaeological digs](#).

Morton contributes to the group blog [The Scriblerians](#). In 2012 and 2013, she was a semi-finalist in the prestigious Genesis writing contest. **“Moonfall: Tales from the Levant”** is her debut novel, published by WEbook on May 1, 2014.

When she's not writing stories or exploring ancient ruins, Morton can be found with her husband and two daughters at their vineyard in east Texas.

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## In her own words: Interviews with Vanessa Morton

- [WEbook spotlight with Vanessa Morton](#)
- [Blog Talk Radio's Indie Books Show features guest Vanessa Morton](#)

# Advance Praise for “Moonfall: Tales from the Levant”

**“There's a journey, there's danger, there's sibling interactions from rivalry to love, and there're political and spiritual threads throughout to keep readers riveted on characters and confrontations. It's a pleasure to see quasi-history reinforced with a believable scenario (naughty teens stealing something forbidden, caught, and paying for their transgression); and it's also satisfying to see ‘Moonfall’ evolve into a much wider story than that of simple teen rebellion.”**

– D. Donovan, *e-book reviewer for Midwest Book Review*

**“‘Moonfall’ by Vanessa Morton is written as an embroidered historical Biblical fiction, yet it reads as a fantasy and delves into the lives of previously unexplored individuals. A thoroughly enjoyable story that proves itself to be both authentic and engrossing – action packed as it was, by the end I was left wanting more.”**

– Jennifer Sadler-Venis, *Concourse Online*

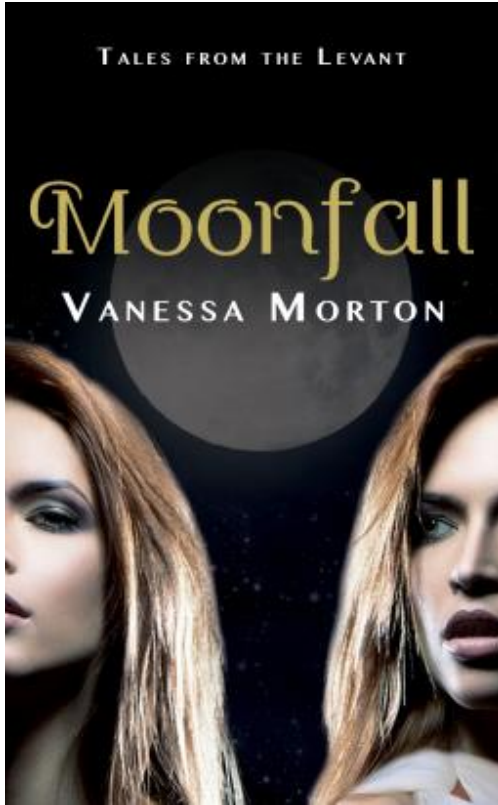
**“Vanessa Morton has infused Biblical history with fiction to produce a novel that brings to life the history surrounding Israel's entrance into the land of promise. Peering inside both the camp of Israel and Jericho, the clash of societies meet, and God's promise is fulfilled. The author's imagination intertwines with fact and tells a story that is not soon forgotten.”**

– Fay Lamb, *author of “Stalking Willow,” “Better than Revenge” and “Charisse”*

**“Through the lovely young Rachav's eyes, Vanessa Morton gives a stunning, accurately detailed portrayal of the life and times surrounding a real Biblical event in 1406 B.C. The fictional Rachav comes to life and represents women of courage and selflessness – from anywhere and any point in history – who accept and endure difficult challenges presented to them. With beautiful language and poignant storytelling, Morton inspires today's young women to be strong in faith and love. Congratulations to this debut author on a satisfying and memorable read!”**

– Cynthia T. Toney, *author of “Bird Face”*

# Book Details for “Moonfall: Tales from the Levant”



Paperback  
ISBN: 978-1909958081  
Young Adult  
WEbook Publishing, May 1, 2014

When 16-year-old Rachav drinks the Moon Temple’s forbidden wine, she hardly expects it to result in the death of a priestess. But when King Nur orders Rachav to serve the Queen of the Night—the kingdom’s powerful goddess—as restitution, Rachav’s identical twin, Zaron, has her own reasons for joining the priesthood and offers to take her twin’s place.

But choices have consequences.

Now Rachav’s family is in danger. As she uncovers the shocking reason why, she finds an ally in Salma, a brooding nomad who wields an ancient force powerful enough to destroy the entire kingdom. While the epic showdown rages above the city, Rachav plays a dangerous game of her own. Can she rescue her sister and right the wrongs of that fateful choice? Or will the king succeed and trap her in the doomed city?

# Q&A with Vanessa Morton

**As part of research for “Moonfall,” you actually visited the ancient city of Jericho. What was that like?**

No high-rises or industrial compounds mar the surrounding landscape today, which gives the sense that little has changed over the millennia. Inside the city fortifications, archaeologists have exposed structural walls that would have been coated with smooth plaster and a wash of bright colors. It was easy to imagine my characters partying by torchlight, while musicians entertained with throaty flutes, pounding drums, and hand-plucked strings. The experience was surreal.

**What fascinates you most about the Late Bronze Age?**

Sky gods were highly revered, especially the moon god, whose appearance marked the arrival of cooler temperatures each evening. Celestial phenomena regulated even the most mundane activities, for example, digging up certain flowers was only done after sunset.

**Do you have to know a lot about history to enjoy reading “Moonfall?”**

Open the book armed only with a desire to be entertained. My teen daughters were my initial audience, so Moonfall's primary focus is on the lives and adventures of two 16-year-old twins who can't seem to stay out of trouble. As an added perk, Moonfall will immerse you in the exotic culture of the ancient near east.

**In what ways will modern teens relate to sisters Rachav and Zaron?**

Regardless of the era or realm, teens face many of the same issues and have similar concerns, for example: am I attractive; can I trust my friends or even my family; or why should I comply with rules that make no sense? Some feelings are hard-wired into our nature: jealousy, loyalty, and the longing to love and be loved. Then as now, the transition into adulthood is at times awkward, emotional, and downright exhilarating.

**What will surprise readers the most about “Moonfall?”**

The characters' resistance to conformance, how they handle the pain of betrayal, and their determination to carve their own path in an adult world, all played out in a mystical realm, where supernatural forces are not only accepted, but expected.

**As a world traveler who visits archeological sites, where is the most interesting historical place you've explored?**

I am intrigued by the enigmatic aura of Jericho, but I also admire the ingenuity of Roman fort construction along Hadrian's wall in Britain and the haughty desolation of the Mayan pyramids near Cancun. Even newer sites, such as the settlement at Jamestown or the medieval castles of Europe, are fascinating. It's impossible to pick only one!

**The end of “Moonfall” leaves readers wanting more. Are you working on a follow-up to the story?**

Moonfall is the first installment of the "Tales from the Levant" series, and the second book will be coming in 2015. Readers will be happy to see one of their favorite Moonfall characters return for an exciting new role.