

APRIL

# Satisfied in the Spirit

By Alicia Crowe



## At Home

How would you define home? What words come to mind? How would you describe your home? When interviewed, young children defined home as a place where loved ones are, where they can have fun, and where they want to be. My oldest daughter, who has called over ten houses her home, answered, “home is where you belong and where you share with the people you love.” A safe place where you can be the real you. Home, not the actual building, is defined by the residents—the life and love inside!

Every human has been given a yearning deep inside their soul for a forever home (Ecclesiastes 3:11). We are hardwired for eternity. We cannot find satisfaction in the temporal things of this world. As we navigate through life in search of meaning and purpose, we long for a true home—a place of security and safety where we can belong, surrounded by those we love and who love us in return. We need a dwelling where we are known and yet loved unconditionally.

Do you sometimes get the feeling you are not home yet? Do you feel a groan in your heart and even the best gifts on earth cannot satisfy? Every person knows something is missing, broken, and not complete. We are eternal beings made in our Father’s image, intended to live forever. However, we can live with deep contentment through Jesus now because He is the One who made us, loves us, and calls us to come home to Him. Our Heavenly Father has also provided a space for us to share right now! He has poured His very presence, His Holy Spirit, into us and made His home in our hearts.

What a gift! This truth is our peace-bringing guarantee of God with us and an actual future home in Paradise with our Creator. Here we find the heart of God, to bring His children home as adopted sons and daughters with Him forever. In Him, we can have fullness of joy while waiting to be reunited. It is how we began with Him and can continue to live daily with “this mystery, which is Christ in us, the hope of

glory” (Colossians 1:27). Home is where God is! We belong to Him and can abide in Him even as we live in these fleshly tents as pilgrims.

## Lay of the Land

In this Bible study, we will examine the thread through God’s Word that speaks of God’s residence: His home and our place with Him. We can only receive true life and pleasure with Him. God’s heart longs to be with us. What does this say about God? What does this tell us about God’s character? Next, we will explore the significance of Scripture in revealing God’s blueprint for home, particularly through Israel’s Feast of Tabernacles, and gain a deeper understanding of His plan throughout human history. All of this points to Christ, in which all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell and reconcile us to our Father (Colossians 1:19-20).

## Think About It

What does this say about people? Our need to be bought and brought back? What does it tell us about living to please God? And lastly, we will see our part and response to God’s dwelling in and with us. The coming of His Spirit changes everything. How does this change the way we live right here, right now?

## God Dwells With Us

Let’s begin at the beginning. Genesis 2:8 opens with God making a home, planting a garden, and filling it with His creation. He was with humanity from the beginning, and we made our home with Him in perfect love and harmony. In this garden, complete peace and satisfaction were found. And because of our family’s disobedience, that home and, consequently, our intimacy with the Heavenly Father was lost. Adam and Eve decided not to trust our Maker, and now we face separation and eviction from our holy residence. Yet, God’s heart is seeking us to return.

His-Story lesson: He chose a people group, a family,

Israel, to show all humanity His picture of love for us. The Promised Land was their new homestead and final earthly resting place. He rescued them from slavery in Egypt where they didn't belong. Even while they were in the desert between Egypt and their new land, God established His home with them. He led them by His presence and protected them while they were homeless refugees. God designed a place to house Himself and shared the blueprints with Moses. Once it was meticulously built, the Tabernacle, or temporary tent, housed the presence of God, while Moses and specifically appointed priests acted as go-betweens.

Years later after God brought the Israelites to the land over the Jordan, His chosen king built Him a permanent home, the Temple. Read 1 Kings 8 and 2 Chronicles 7:8-16. Interestingly, Solomon dedicated the Temple during one of the prominent feasts Moses and the people were commanded to observe yearly. This is the Feast of Tabernacles, also known as the Feast of Booths, which we will discuss. "But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain you; how much less this house that I have built!" (1 Kings 8:27).

Again, His children lost their place to meet with God because of their disobedience, and their discipline followed. Assyria and Babylon destroyed the Temple of Jerusalem, and the nation of Israel was scattered. Read Ezra 3 and Nehemiah 8. Here, the captive Israelites finally return to their home to rebuild the house for God. God is trying to show us something. His heart and desire are to be with us! "And they kept the Feast of Booths, as it is written, and offered the daily burnt offerings by number according to the rule, as each day required" (Ezra 3:4).

It is tough reading how the Israelites mourned as they rebuilt God's house. They realized this project was a puny second attempt at the glory of the first temple. Nehemiah reminds them as they read the law and reinstated the Feast of the Tabernacles, "...

this day is holy to our Lord. And do not be grieved, for the joy of the Lord is your strength" (Nehemiah 8:10). These memorials had not been observed since the days of Joshua. So, the returnees made booths and lived in them, and there was great rejoicing. This feast was to be a joyful celebration after a solemn Sabbath, followed by a somber assembly on the eighth day (Numbers 29:35). God's presence was accessible again, and He filled them with joy.

### Think About It

What does this say about God: Our Father, Creator, and home builder? His character traits? His heart toward us? Think of more Old Testament passages about God and His pursuit of His children. There are many stories in the Old Testament where God showed His heart and plans to and through His children. David writes of it throughout his psalms. What patterns do you see in people's relationship with God? How does this apply to us? What truths do we need to take away from this?

Let's examine the Feast of the Tabernacles and see why it was important for Israel and for us today.

### Feast, Feast, Feast

Read Leviticus 23. This is where God sets up "appointed times" while Israel is on the way to freedom and their promised home. These "times" correspond to the seasons of the agricultural calendar as weeks set apart for God. These feasts were times to thank and honor Him and are still celebrated today. The seven feasts, Passover, Unleavened Bread, First Fruits, Pentecost, Trumpets, and Day of Atonement, conclude with the seventh and final feast of Israel (Feast of Tabernacles or Feast of Booths). For Israel these celebrations were instituted to remember God's goodness and provision yearly, as they also pointed to Christ and His life, death, and resurrection. We are still looking forward to the final fulfillment of His plan.

The Feast of Tabernacles, or Feast of Ingathering, is



*The way an infant feels safe and satiated is by staying in close connection with his mother. If we are not experiencing satisfaction in our walk with God, perhaps we are not living in a consistently intimate relationship with Him.*



one of the three annual feasts the Lord commanded Israel to observe. Leviticus 23:33-44, Exodus 23:16, and Deuteronomy 16:13-16 all describe this joyous feast, “Sukkot.” For eight days, the people of Israel were to thank God for His blessings through sacrifices and feasting between bookended Sabbaths. It was an opportunity to remember how God had delivered them from Egypt and to signify the 40 years they wandered in the desert, living in make-shift tents. They trusted God’s presence to lead them home to a promised land during this time. So, each year in the seventh month of the Hebrew calendar, mid-September to October, they built and resided in shelters or temporary structures/booths/tents and decorated them for harvest time. Think of it as their very own Thanksgiving celebrated in tents. With this one feast God commanded them to joyously celebrate His provision and protection. This feast symbolizes that

we are all sojourners wandering in the wilderness until we reach our final rest—our home sweet home with God. Even while away from city, country, and homeland, God made His home with the children of Israel and continued to meet them in tents, the Tabernacle, and, eventually, the Temple, and constantly through the word of the prophets. These weeks of remembrance are important because they encourage people to discover God and His heart and allow us to approach Him with the longing of our hearts: to live with Him and belong to Him.

### Think About It

What stands out to you about this Feast? What does it tell us about God and people? What was the importance of remembering, and how can we apply it today? How can you and your family commemorate how God has sheltered, protected, and provided for

you throughout your journey as pilgrims?

This takes us through the Old Testament trail of remembering God's goodness. Let's look ahead in the New Testament at God coming and dwelling with us in a person.

## The Word Became Flesh and Dwelt with Us

As the prophets had foretold, Jesus came and "tabernacled" or settled among us. Read John 1:14. The word dwell is the same word used for tabernacle in the Old Testament (Exodus 25:8-9). This suggests Jesus is the new Tabernacle, where God's presence is fully realized. This is like pitching a temporary tent with a significant presence. Some scholars believe Jesus' was born during the Feast of Tabernacles—the last harvest celebration. Mary's song of praise resonates with all creation as we join with her in giving thanks to God for satisfying our wandering, longing, hungry souls and filling us with good things (Luke 1:53; Psalm 107:9).

Another beautiful picture of His home with us is this first coming of God's son, His very nature in human form. He came to set up His earthly kingdom and point us to His second coming, when He will make His home with us for eternity. Read Hebrews 2:10-18 and Philippians 2:6-9 for a better understanding of Jesus' reason for coming and pitching His tent here. His coming and giving freely of His life for ours and setting us free from slavery to sin proves God loves us and wants us to live with Him forever (John 3:16).

Jesus fulfilled all but the last three feasts on earth through his life, death, and resurrection. The Feast of Booths will be fulfilled at His second coming when we will finally be HOME together. Jesus speaks during the Feast of Booths, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water" (John 7:37-39). This living water He spoke about is His Spirit,

Who will come to those who believe in Him. The Holy Spirit came after Jesus' resurrection. What else does He say about this Helper? (John 14:16-17; John 16). The very person of God who came to live inside each of us!

## Think About It

What does God's sending Jesus say about our Father? What does this say about people and our need for saving? How is the very person of Jesus pointing to God's journey to get us home? Think about Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. Write a song of praise about Jesus coming as a wanderer, living in our tents, dying for our sins, and showing us He is the way home. "He satisfies the longing soul and the hungry soul He fills with good things" (Psalm 107:9).

## Filled With the Holy Spirit

Read Acts 2:1-4 and chapters 36-41. After Jesus' ascension, the Spirit of God came and took up residence in His people, just as Jesus had promised. At Pentecost, 50 days after Jesus' ascension into Heaven, Peter quotes David in Psalm 16:11. God shows us the "path of life" and fills us with gladness in His presence. He sent His Helper to form a temple, a holy place to live, inside each person. God's very own portable tabernacle is filling up the vacancy in our fleshly tent. Wow! The mighty God Himself fills these jars of clay (2 Corinthians 4:7). We don't have to look very far for contentment, peace, love, joy, and true satisfaction. We possess Him!

## Think About It

How does this fact move you to worship and praise God? He gave us His presence and access to Him with no more veil separating us from the Holy of Holies. Christ's sacrifice opened the way. Spend time praising God for this indescribable gift of His Spirit in us!

If you read the whole account of Pentecost in Acts

2, you will see the result of the Helper coming to us. Each individual and then the entire community was affected. These separate human buildings became united in the person of God through the Spirit, forming the body of Christ, the Church. Our place of belonging in and with Him carries into the bigger plan of God for us to live with one another in perfect harmony and love.

### Think About It

Note the result of the group's meeting that day (Acts 2:42-47). List the fruits. How do we show the fruits of the Spirit in our lives (Galatians 5:22)? We are God's temple and house His presence (1 Corinthians 3:16-17). How does this change the way you live this week? Those who believed His message and followed Christ's testimony wrote practical instructions to follow today. Written by the Apostle Paul, Ephesians 4 is a good example. Write down some samples of life in the Spirit and in the unity of the body of Christ. Pray this for your life, home, family, and church.

### The Dwelling Place of God is With Man

The Feast of Tabernacles points to what God has done to be with us, saving us from slavery to sin. Christ proved it by His work to show God's heart. His Spirit is with us now to help us. It points to the future when we finally go HOME and live with God! Zechariah 14:16 speaks of the coming day of the Lord when all nations will go to Jerusalem and celebrate the three annual feasts, including the Feast of the Tabernacles. as the new Jerusalem comes to the new earth. When the new Jerusalem comes to the new earth, this beautiful gift of God 'filling' us will eventually fill the world.

God is fulfilling His desire to make His home with us. He has already done so and will complete His plan. God carried us, His precious children, through the wilderness to a place we can call home. When humanity lost its garden, city, and temple, He sent His Son to live among us, die for us, and make a way for us to be reunited with Him. The Father has never left



us and will never forsake us. He keeps His promises. He fills our empty, vacant hearts with His Spirit, and in them, He places true treasure—overflowing rivers of life and the fruits of the Spirit. He wants us all to know Him and make our home with Him.

Now, we await the second coming of Christ, when His tabernacle will descend from Heaven, and He will establish His home here—a new heaven and a new earth. As Revelation 21:3-6 says, “He will dwell with them, and they will be His people, and God Himself will be with them as their God” (see also Leviticus 26:11-12; Ezekiel 37:27; 2 Peter 3:13). All our brokenness will be healed, our relationships restored, our homes perfected, and our deepest longings fulfilled in Him. Our greatest satisfaction will be living with the One who made us, knows us, and loves us. In our Father’s home, we will find safety, perfect love, and a place where we truly belong.

## Obedience and Application


What about our current house? Read Romans 8. What does this passage say about our life in the Spirit? How can we fix our minds on the Spirit? How does this change how we treat others? How does this change how we live? What would you like to do differently this week to be a better person or make the world better? Can you share these truths with someone? Who can you invite to eat at the table so they can “taste and see that the Lord is good”? (Psalm 34:8).

We not only live with the deep joy of Jesus now, but we have the hope of future glory when we are finally home, completely satisfied, and living where we were made to be with our God and our family!

Our bodies, this house, have become a home for God. He takes residence in our hearts, minds, and souls, filling us with His presence and satisfying us. Living by the Spirit requires our attention. We focus our minds on the things of the Spirit, not on the flesh. We invite Him to fill every corner of our lives, leaving no space for pride, selfishness, or worldly desires. Our hearts long to abide in His love, and His living waters flow out of us to touch everyone we encounter (1 John 4:13; John 15:1-11). Our home is being transformed, with the Creator and Master of the house living inside us. He knows us intimately and has placed eternity in our hearts, drawing us closer to Him. He has spoken these words to us so His joy may dwell in us, and our joy may be complete (John 15:11).

## Think About It

In what ways do my life and my physical body honor the Master of the House? How does my daily life show acts of worship? How can I be satisfied with Him and those He has given me?

This incredibly valuable gift of God Himself filling us is a miracle we should praise Him for daily! We are God’s temple, His home, and only with the very Creator inside of us can we have true satisfaction as we wait in hope for Christ’s return to take us home, where we belong. 

### *About the Writer:*

*Alicia Crowe and her husband, Josh, are missionaries who formerly served in Japan and now reside in “Little Japan” in Dublin, Ohio. She loves sharing God’s story as she wanders through life in wonder of her Maker and Storywriter! Her greatest adventure is homeschooling and growing alongside her four kids, Ruby (16), Ellie (14), Josie (11), and Jude (6). She enjoys meeting other travelers from the “Land of the Rising Sun” and telling them about the love of God through His Risen Son.*