



World Kids

Fun for kids! True stories!



PAL Project

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If I were to ask you to describe your home, I expect that since many of you live in other countries around the world we would get a lot of very different answers! Some of you might relate more to the picture at the top left, but others would relate more to the picture on the right! Some of you live in an apartment in a tall building in a city; some live in a two-storey house with a lawn and fence; others live in a mud hut in a village; and there are even some, I know, that live in an orphanage with lots of other children. Then of course, it is sad to say that some of you may not even have a home, and instead have to live on the street or sleep in a park or railway station!

A place to call "home" is very important - where we can feel safe and be with our family and loved ones. Sometimes we have a lovely home and then something happens and our parents tell us we have to move to another place which is very different and it takes time for us to adjust and be happy there. Often when we can stay in our home for a long time we can slowly make changes and make it better. You may think that everyone that lives in the **United States** lives in a nice house - like you usually see on the movies. But lots of people here have homes that are



very different. Many live in a "mobile home" which is moved onto a piece of land by putting wheels under it and pulling it down the road! Some people in cities turn part of an old warehouse into a big, open-plan apartment. There are people that live on a houseboat or even build a big tree-house! Over 20 years ago, my husband and I moved our family of 6 children into a railroad boxcar, much like in the picture! We had to do a lot of work and build more rooms onto it over the years, but now it is much better and we are happy with our home, even if it is strange!

You may remember that in the Bible Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and many others did not live in houses - instead they lived in tents because they traveled around with herds of goats, sheep and camels that had to graze on the land. Even today there are believed to be over 30 MILLION people around the world who still do this and are known as "nomads" - most still live in tents like this picture of a Bedouin tent in **North Africa**. The tents are often made of goat hair and life has changed very little through the centuries - though nowadays maybe you will find they have some plastic water containers and a few people may wear t-shirts! Most nomads are found in desert regions in **Central Asia, the Middle East and Northern Africa**, and because the life is so hard, they are usually very hospitable and do not turn away travelers. 10-15% of people in **Iran** and **Saudi Arabia** are nomads; almost half the population of **Mongolia** lives this way, and half a million **Chinese** are nomads on a remote high plateau where it is bitterly cold and the main food is roasted barley flour and yak butter tea! There are also several groups of wandering people in **Europe**, who often travel in caravans or carts with horses. They are known as "Gypsies" or Romany people. Then of course, there are millions of refugees around the world who have lost their homes in a disaster or fled because of war, and they are forced to move to another country or land where they can safely make a new home - it is reported that at present there are about 42 million refugees in all!



How well do YOU know the Bible?



See if you can name other famous Bible characters that lived for a time in:

- 1) a boat (clue - Genesis 8:1)
- 2) a tent (clue - Numbers 1:52)
- 3) a cave (clue - 1 Samuel 22:1)
- 4) homeless in the desert (clue - 1 Kings 17:5)
- 5) wandering in the land (clue - Luke 9:58)



During the first few centuries after Christ when many Christians were killed, hundreds of Jesus' followers lived alone as monks in caves in the **Judean Desert**, and still some live there today in remote monasteries. Other people also still live in caves around the world - some 300 families fled the Taliban in **Afghanistan** and are believed to be hiding and living in caves. There is a region of **Granada, Spain**, where about 10,000 people live in caves that have been modernized and are quite comfortable! This is a picture of a cave home in **Turkey** where families have lived for many years; people live in other cave homes in **Greece** and **Israel**; and even some people in the **USA** are turning caves into modern, comfortable homes!

About 150,000 people in **Greenland, Canada, Alaska and Siberia (Russia)** are known as Inuit or Yupik people and many of them live in "igloos" - the Eskimo word for house. Sometimes these are made of just blocks of ice, but they can also be made of whalebone and hides that are covered with snow for insulation. The outside temperature can be as low as -45°C (-49°F) yet inside the igloo it can be as warm as 16°C (61°F) when warmed up by body heat alone. Small igloos are used temporarily for hunting but larger ones with up to 5 rooms can be a permanent home for up to 20 people!



Many native people in **Asia**, especially **Borneo** and **Malaysia**, live in large communal homes. There are about 3 million Dayaks in Borneo and many live in "longhouses" built of wood. A longhouse can be 100 yds long - even up to 500 yds long! Families live together inside but each family has its own door and there can be up to 200 doors (and



families!). Similar longhouses were built centuries ago in **Europe** and even in **North America**, where some built by the Iroquois Indians have been reconstructed today. This picture shows a "modern" longhouse in **Malaysia**, where sheets of tin have been used for the roof and some walls. The Tankas in **China** are people who for many years have lived on narrow boats called "junks". They are found in many coastal areas and also in **Hong Kong**, where they earn a living by fishing, and gather together in bays as floating villages.

According to the United Nations, ONE BILLION people around the world live in slums - desperately poor neighborhoods, usually on the edge of large cities, and often without any water, electricity or sewage. It is said that 70% of people who live in cities in **Africa** live in slums, and in hundreds of cities on every continent you can find people living like this little boy in the photo - searching through mountains of garbage for something of value or some scrap of food to eat. Garbage City outside **Cairo, Egypt**; Babar Nagar Slum in **Mumbai, India** (demolished 26 times in the last 8 years but still always rebuilt); Smoky Mountain Garbage Dump in **Manila, Philippines**; and Kibera in **Nairobi, Kenya** (where toilets are so few that people use plastic bags and throw them as far away as they can - leading to the name of "flying toilets") are just a few of thousands of slums that could be mentioned, and in each one many thousands of sad stories could be told. Maybe you have heard of a recent movie that won many awards - it's called *Slum Dog Millionaire* and tells the story of a young boy living in a terrible slum in **India**. I hope LOTS of people see it, especially in the West, so that more help will be given to those in such desperate need.



Finally we must mention the 100 MILLION or so people worldwide who are without any home at all! Some have lost their home through disaster or war; others because they have no money for rent; some are children who were orphaned or abandoned; some people have physical or mental problems, or are addicted to drugs or alcohol and so their family will not help them. They can be found everywhere: sleeping in parks, on the beach, in alleyways or even in the jungle. Let's pray God will show us ways WE can help some of them. Even though they may be dirty and smelly, ugly and sick, Jesus loves them and He understands what it is like to have no home. But He has given us all a wonderful promise and so we must share it with these very poor people who do not have a home like we do.

'Til next time,

Your friend, Shirley

Read John 14:1-3



Facts from: www.nationmaster.com

Answers: 1) Noah; 2) Moses and Children of Israel; 3) David; 4) Elijah; 5) Jesus.

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