



Jeff Sweeten

Thus Saith the Lord
is presented by the

Park Heights Church of Christ

1300 E. Boynton St.
Hamilton
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Schedule of Services

SUNDAY

9:30 a.m. Bible Class
10:25 a.m. Morning Worship
1:30 p.m. Afternoon Worship

WEDNESDAY

7:00 p.m. Bible Study

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A SWALLOW'S WISDOM

By Jeff Sweeten

Throughout this past spring, I watched as little Swallow fledglings went from ugly, fleshy blobs with beaks to beautiful little birds with feathers preened and sheened and prepare for flight. I have to admit, I'm not the mushy, sentimental type but there was a tug on my heartstrings when I went in to the church office last week and noticed that they had flown the coup. I had been watching them since the time they could poke their tiny, bald heads over the rim of the mud-daubed nest (glued to our foyer porch light – what a mess!), mouths agape and ready for the latest meal to be delivered air express. They're gone now; I think I experienced "empty nest syndrome."

I am a nature nut; I've been a hunter, outdoorsman and conservationist all my life – a concept usually anathema to the PETA crowd (I'm identify with the "People Eating Tasty Animals" crowd). God's creatures are a valuable asset to His ecosystem and He tasked humanity to manage them wisely; *"Then the Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend it and keep it"* (Genesis 2:15). And, God's creation has many lessons to teach (Psalm 19:1ff). *"Go to the ant, you sluggard! Consider her ways and be wise..."* (Proverbs 6:6-8) and God's question to Job, *"Does the hawk fly by your wisdom...?"* (Job 39:26) are among the multitude of examples. Indeed, there is much to learn from this world in which we live.

During this brood's maturing process, I could only approach the nest if I was ever so quiet and stealthy, sneaking up to the glass door to observe these avian angels. That is, until Ms. Momma bird came swooping in like a WWII dive-bomber! With a single, unique chirp, those little opened, expectant mouths slammed shut and all five of the chicks, in perfect unison, slowly retracted their heads back into the nest like a disturbed turtle. They knew this chirp, and it was to be obeyed as if their life depended upon it.

Humans, on the other hand, seem to lack the capacity to heed simple warnings. Whereas children recognize the shrill scream or terse verbal burst of a panicked mother and respond, not so with the "mature"; warnings are just boundaries to be tested. And, oddly enough, we romanticize these "outlaws," who often draw back a bloody numb, as consequences can be just as intense as the warning.

It is a pity that the pinnacle of God's creation hasn't the instincts (or intelligence) to possess a Swallow's wisdom. God *"cares for you"* (1 Peter 5:7) and is *"not willing that any should perish"* (2 Peter 3:9), but if the warnings are not heeded, well...

"...if we sin willfully... there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation... It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." Hebrews 10:26a, 27, 31