

13<sup>th</sup> June 2020

## Nests

**“O tell her, Swallow, that thy brood is flown:  
Say to her, I do but wanton in the South,  
But in the North long since my nest is made.”**

*Alfred, Lord Tennyson, The Princess*

There's a nest of tables in our lounge, a "part of the furniture". But these tables aren't just decorous. They have a practical purpose. Yes, they're familiar and often taken for granted, but they're useful all the time.

Having lived in a manse for many years, we were excited when we bought our first home. We called it "Swallow's Nest", inspired by words from Psalm 84, which we were familiar with from both home and church. Here are the final three stanzas from the Scottish Metrical Version.

*Behold the sparrow findeth out  
A house wherein to rest;  
The swallow also, for herself,  
Hath purchasèd a nest.*

*Ee'n Thine own altars, where she safe  
Her young ones forth may bring,  
O Thou, almighty Lord of hosts,  
Who art my God and King.*

*Blest are they in Thy house that dwell,  
They ever give Thee praise,  
Blest is the [one] whose strength Thou art,  
In whose heart are Thy ways.*

Like our nest of tables, we've taken our home for granted sometimes, because it's part of what we know and understand of life. But we're rediscovering it as a place of purpose as well as familiarity; of praise as well as safety; more than merely "a house wherein to rest". For our nest is a place where God's blessing rests on all who dwell within it.

### **A prayer for today**

*South of North; bringing up young ones or with a brood that's flown; building a nest or wishing we could: "How lovely is thy dwelling place, O Lord of hosts, to me!" Amen*

*An original reflection by © Tom Gordon*

Also available at <https://swallowsnestnet.wordpress.com>