

Luke 12:27

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Consider the lilies how they grow: they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

Analysis

Consider the lilies how they grow: they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Jesus commands **Consider** (katanoesate, κατανοήσατε)—observe carefully, study attentively, examine thoroughly. The imperative calls for more than casual glancing; disciples must meditate on **the lilies** (ta krina, τὰ κρίνα), likely referring to various wildflowers carpeting Galilean hillsides in spring—anemones, poppies, irises—rather than cultivated garden flowers.

The observation: **they toil not, they spin not** (ou kopiae oude nethei, οὐ κοπιᾷ οὐδὲ νήθει). The verb kopiao (κοπιάω) means to labor to the point of exhaustion, while netho (νήθω) specifically refers to spinning thread—women's work essential for producing clothing. Wildflowers neither engage in hard agricultural labor nor textile production, yet they are magnificently clothed by God's creative provision.

The stunning comparison: **Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.** King Solomon epitomized wealth, wisdom, and splendor (1 Kings 10:4-7, 14-23)—his throne, temple, and robes were legendary. Yet oude Solomōn en pase te doxe autou periebaletō hos hen touton (οὐδὲ Σολομὼν ἐν πάσῃ τῇ δόξῃ αὐτοῦ περιεβάλετο ὡς ἐν τούτων)—not even Solomon in all his doxa (δόξα, glory/splendor) was clothed (periebaletō, περιεβάλετο) as one of these. God's artistry in nature surpasses human magnificence. If God clothes ephemeral wildflowers with such beauty, He will certainly clothe His children (v. 28).

Historical Context

Solomon's wealth was proverbial in Jewish tradition—the temple's gold, his 1,000 garments, his legendary wisdom and prosperity made him the standard for regal splendor. Yet Palestinian wildflowers, though beautiful, lasted only days before withering in the intense sun or being gathered for oven fuel (v. 28). Jesus uses creation's beauty as evidence of the Creator's generous provision. First-century hearers would immediately grasp the comparison: if God lavishes such care on transient flowers, how much more will He provide for His image-bearers? This teaching contrasts sharply with Roman and Hellenistic emphasis on self-sufficiency and displays of wealth as social power.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. What does God's meticulous care in adorning temporary wildflowers reveal about His character and priorities?
2. How does contemplating God's provision in creation reduce anxiety about His provision for your needs?
3. In what ways does consumer culture tempt you to pursue 'Solomon's glory' rather than trusting God's simple, sufficient provision?

Interlinear Text

κατανοήσατε τὰ κρίνα πῶς αὐξάνει· οὐ κοπιᾶ οὐδὲ
Consider G3588 the lilies how they grow not they toil not
G2657 G2918 G4459 G837 G3756 G2872 G3761

νήθει· λέγω δὲ ὑμῖν οὐδὲ Σολομὼν ἐν πάσῃ τῇ
they spin I say and yet unto you not that Solomon in all G3588
G3514 G3004 G1161 G5213 G3761 G4672 G1722 G3956

δόξῃ αὐτοῦ περιεβάλετο ὡς ἐν τούτων
glory G846 arrayed like one of these
G1391 G4016 G5613 G1520 G5130

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