



# “Flowers & Glory”

Tuesday, January 26<sup>th</sup>

□ 10 minutes. Go on a walk, sit outside, or look out a window. A few of the “spring” flowers have already started budding and coming up. Notice the buds on the trees. Simply look at the flowers.

Jesus contrasts the simple and temporary beauty of flowers with Solomon’s “glory”. Let’s quickly make sure we are remembering Solomon’s “glory” accurately. Solomon spent 20 years of his life as king in the building of two buildings. He spent 7 years building a temple which could be used to control people’s access to God, and 13 years building his own palace. To accomplish this task, Solomon used thousands of forced laborers; 30,000 men as general laborers, 80,000 stone cutters, 70,000 stone carriers, and 3,300 foremen to keep all to the slaves in line and behaving. Every year Solomon acquired 9,000 pounds of gold that was used to overlay the surfaces of the ornate buildings. Solomon preferred to use foreigners instead of those he considered true Israelites as his forced laborers. These slaves were forced to build his buildings, ironically including his “Hall of Justice” from which Solomon administered his “justice”. Talk about a politics of oppression.

Solomon’s household included 700 wives, and 300 concubines. His barns boasted 4,000 chariot horses, 12,000 horses, and 1,400 chariots. He was constantly striking up new treaties and alliances with other kings and hosting them in his palace. By his definition, he was “greater” in riches than all other kings of the earth.

The daily provisions for Solomon’s royal household included 11,000 pounds of the finest flour, 22,000 pounds of meal flour, 10 stall fed cattle, 20 pasture fed cattle, 100 sheep and goats, deer, gazelle, roebuck, and choice fowl; not to mention barley and straw for all those horses. It took 12 governors drawing from the resources of the entire nation to keep Solomon’s royal household supplied each day. God eventually raised up adversaries against Solomon. (1 Kings 3-11).

Compare Solomon’s “glory” to the worries of the daily peasant who asks, “*What will I eat and drink today? What if I am unable to clothe my children or myself?*”

Jesus says, “*And why worry about your clothing? Look at the lilies of the field and how they grow. They don’t work or make their clothing, yet Solomon in all his glory was not dressed as beautifully as they are. And if God cares so wonderfully for wildflowers that are here today and thrown into the fire tomorrow, he will certainly care for you. Why do you have so little faith? So, don’t worry about these things, saying, ‘What will we eat? What will we drink? What will we wear?’ These things dominate the thoughts of unbelievers, but your heavenly Father already knows all your needs. Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and his justice and righteousness, and he will give you everything you need. ‘So, don’t worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring its own worries. Today’s trouble is enough for today.’*” (Matthew 6:28-34)

In the midst of a world that is chasing its own versions of “glory”, what are the flowers telling you about God? Think, journal, or pray as you look at the flowers.

