



Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple

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My Soul Doth Magnify the Lord
December 14, 2025

Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory Forever!

Pentecost 27. 12/14/2025. Entrance Church

My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my Spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior. For He hath regarded the low estate of His handmaiden. For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed; for He who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is His Name. And his mercy is on those who fear Him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with his arm, He has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts, He has put down the mighty from their thrones, and exalted those of low degree; He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He has sent empty away. He has helped His servant Israel, in remembrance of His mercy, as he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his posterity forever." (Luke 1: 46-55)

These words of the Holy Theotokos were spoken in response to her cousin's Elizabeths greeting when she went to visit her. The two cousins were both pregnant. Elizabeth with John the Forerunner, and Mary with the Savior, Jesus Christ. I grew up singing them in Vespers in the Western tradition of my boyhood church and then, when I became Orthodox, in the morning Service of Matins.

They are a hymn in the style and remembrance of an earlier hymn, a hymn called "Hannah's Song." Hannah was the mother of Samuel, one of the great prophets from right before the time of the first King Saul of Israel. And she, Hannah, sings a hymn very similar to that of the Theotokos in the Magnificat.

Our Lord and God the Father in Heaven is a God, *the* God, who has compassion, and Who expects His people to have compassion on the poor and the lowly as well: He feeds the hungry, He exalts those who are trampled underfoot; he throws the rich and powerful down from their thrones and exalts the meek. Our Lord takes this truth to a new height when He declares in the fourth Beatitude, “Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.” The meek, not the rich and powerful, not those who have much, not the intelligent or clever. But the meek. *THEY* shall inherit the earth, for they are the ones who are most likely to rely on God for help, for strength, for salvation.

The successful and wealthy, the *haves*, the clever and intelligent, those who are the so-called “beautiful people” that we all remember from High School, who grow up to be well-known, wealthy, successful and outwardly admired – *THEY* are the most in trouble. For they are less likely to rely on God for anything. They rely on their own achievements, their own beauty, their own wealth, their own security, their own wonderfulness. Like the rich man in the parable we heard last week, they go about their lives unaware of the true purpose for which God put them on earth. They know little if anything about striving to become like God in His compassion. They forget the hungry, the poor, the downtrodden, because they think they are better; they think those who are poor and downtrodden are as they are because of something they have done wrong; because in some sense they are undeserved of the good life they as rich and shining enjoy.

But nothing could be further from the truth. Jesus in today’s lesson makes it clear. It is more difficult for a rich man to enter the Kingdom than it is for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle.

Wealth distracts; security makes one falsely satisfied; success is fleeting; the opinions of others are worthless.

Only God matters. Only the Lord is worthy of our entire life’s emulation. Only He will never renege on His promise to save us.

The ancients from Old Israel along with the Mother of God even in her pregnancy understood this. Her Hymn the Magnificat is testimony to the truth of today’s Gospel Lesson and the essential truth that the Lord is always ready to pour forth His salvation and His compassion on all who will receive it. It is a reminder that we should do likewise!

Fr. Elias

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