



## Orthodox Church of the Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple

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### *Immanuel: Our Lord's Genealogy (Notes to Ponder)* January 5, 2025

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**Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory forever!**

**Brothers and Sisters in Christ:**

- Genealogy grounded in history. The history of Israel
- The story begins with Abraham – the one who was first participant in the Covenant
- Who is born? The One who fulfills the prophecy of Isaiah – Immanuel, God is with us
- God is with us.
- God is with us. That would have been difficult for the ancient people of Israel to accept
- It must have seemed as if God had abandoned them. First the Assyrians in the 8<sup>th</sup> century BC; then the Babylonians carted them off to exile in the 6<sup>th</sup> century. Then only a few generations after the Persians freed them to return home there was a new conqueror, Alexander the Great. Then, after him, the Caesars of Rome.
- How could they have believed that God was with them?
- But some did; some looked with faith on the promises of the Prophets and believed that they would be fulfilled.

- And that fulfillment began with the Birth of the Savior.
- We are no different, are we?
- We wait, but for what? Better jobs? Fairer courts? More opportunities for comfort and entertainments?
- We forget that it will all come to a smashing and abrupt end as we chant in the second antiphon each and every week: "Do not place your trust in ... sons of men; when their breathe departs, they return to their earth; on that very day their plans perish. But God will remain forever! In Thee, O Lord, do we put our trust."
- Governments and conquerors change. We live in the wealthiest land the world has seen. But it too will end. Every earthly government comes to an end. Ours will also.
- But God is forever! And He has made Himself a part of our history, a history that we were adopted into when we were baptized in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit!
- The fulfillment of the ancient prophecies has come. He is born in a stable, a cave for animals, in Bethlehem of Judea. He has snatched us out of the hopeless ends that so many people face, and filled them with the Light of His presence. He is with us, even through all the vicissitudes and disappointments this life will certainly bring.
- **He is Immanuel. God with us! Both in this life and in the Life to come in the never-ending Day of His Kingdom.**
- To Jesus Christ be all honor and glory forever! AMEN!

Fr. Elias

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