

Unit Four* The Church Family* Being Together

We Listen to God's Word

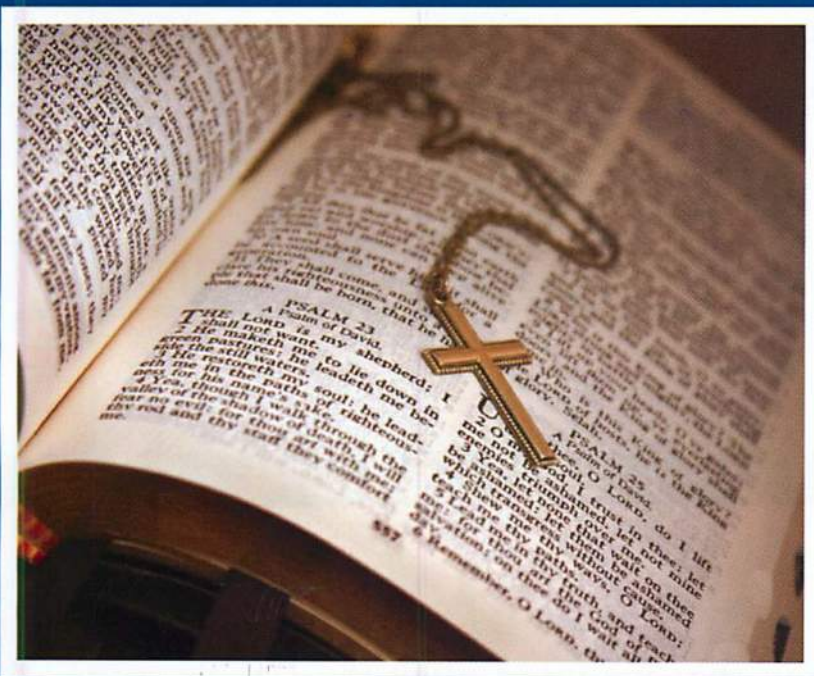


We Speak to God

Thank you, God, for the beautiful gift you gave us in the words we find in the Holy Bible. They are truly like a lamp that lights our way. Thank you for the Gospel writers who remembered all you did and wrote about it with the help of the Holy Spirit. +Hanoon Hor yev Vortvo yev Hokvooyv Srpo. Amen.

Աստուածաշուք

Let's Talk



1. Some people told stories about Jesus. Some wrote them down. The written stories appear in the Bible. Why did they want to write their stories?
2. How many parts does the Bible have?
3. What is the Armenian name for the Bible?

(Look for the answers on the next page.)

Listen to This

Danny's father took him to church every Sunday before taking him to the Sunday School class. One Sunday, Danny noticed that the deacon was holding up a special book. It was covered with a velvet cloth and decorated with silver threads. The deacon held it high and walked around the altar. Danny wondered what kind of a book it was? "It must be very special," he thought.

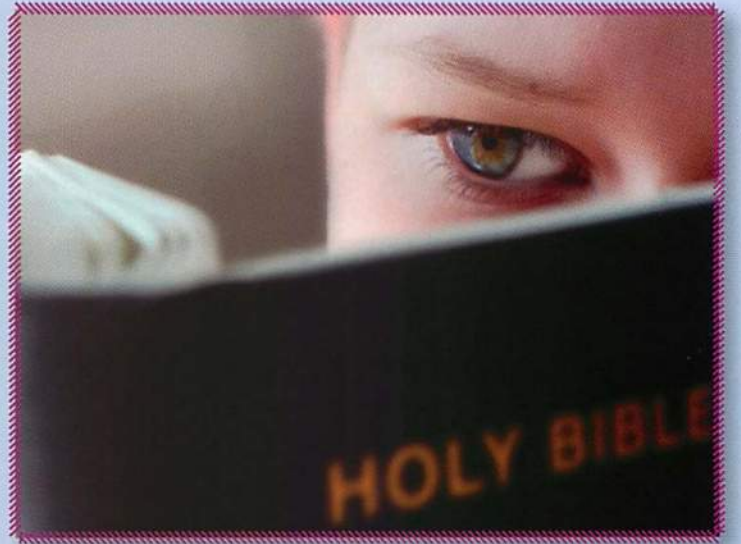


As they left church, Danny asked about this special book. His father replied, "That book is the Gospel Book. There are stories in it about Jesus' life, written by his followers who loved him."

Danny thought about the book with its silver threads. It is really special!

Here are the answers:

1. Jesus' followers wrote down their stories so the people would never forget about him.
2. The Bible has two major parts – the Old Testament and the New Testament.
3. The Armenian name for the Bible is Asdvadzashoonch. This word means "Breath of God."



God Speaks to Us

In the Old Testament, it is written that we must obey the Lord's commandments and must not think that we are better than anyone else. If we obey his commandments, we will please him.

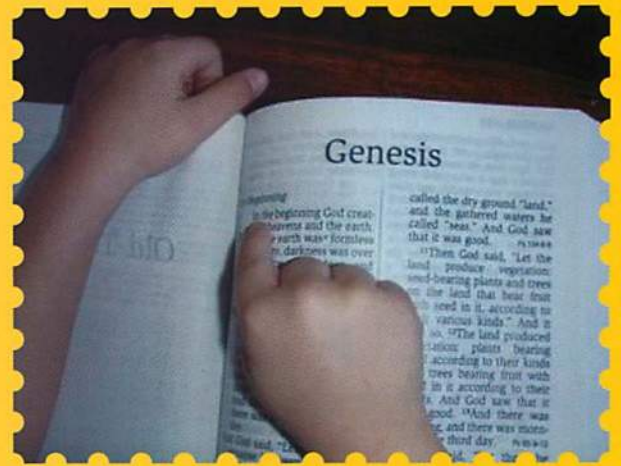
Deuteronomy 17:19-20

We Learn About God

The Old Testament contains many books. The first book is called Genesis. It tells us how God created the universe. The last books in the Old Testament are called The Prophets. The prophets reminded the people of their duty to obey God. Isaiah was one of the great prophets.

God promised that he would send his son Jesus to remind us of his great love for us and to teach us to love one another. The New Testament is the story of Jesus. It begins with the Gospel of St. Matthew.

God speaks to us during the Divine Liturgy every Sunday through Bible passages from the Old and the New Testaments.



Our Armenian Way

Before the deacon reads from the Gospel, the choir and deacon remind the congregation

Deacon: Broskhoomeh People: Aseh Asdvadz.

(Pay attention) God is speaking

Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, four of Jesus' followers, wrote about Jesus' life and teachings. These writings are called gospels. Gospel means "good news" or, in Armenian, "avedis." The gospels give us the good news about Jesus.

These four books are placed, as one collection, on the main altars of all Armenian churches.

When the deacon reads from the Gospel Book, he faces the congregation and holds the book high, covering his face. Do you wonder why?

This is so we listen to the words of the Gospel and not be distracted by the person doing the reading.

At the end of the Badarak, the congregation comes to kiss the Gospel Book. In this way, we leave church and go out into the world with God's word on our lips.



Hearts and Hands

Meet the writers of the gospels. They are called evangelists. Evangelists teach and spread the words of Jesus.



Matthew



Mark



Luke



John

For My Family



Sharing Our Faith

The children have been learning about the sacred objects on the Holy Altar and, today, in particular, about the book called the Avedaran or Gospel Book. This book contains the four gospels, the most important books of the Bible. Every Sunday, the deacon reads to us from this book. We say in wonder and prayer: "God speaks!" (Aseh Asdvadz) Your child made a miniature Gospel book.

Living Our Faith

1. Encourage your child to share the brief biographies of the evangelists in their little Gospel book.
2. Review the responses made by the deacon and the choir before readings from the Holy Scriptures.
3. Encourage your child to share what he or she learned about the Bible today.

Discuss with children the reasons Kohar's great-grandmother gave for attending church and being a part of the church family. Return to table or desks. 10 min.

6. Read "Heaven Belongs to Them" in *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children*. Distribute snack and discuss questions. 10 min.
7. Review the text and vessels in **Our Armenian Way**. Then distribute diorama sheets, markers, scissors, and glue sticks and help children construct their church dioramas. Have them first color the altar and church, then cut and affix to the sides of the shoebox with glue.
8. Bag the dioramas for each child and end with a prayer: "Lord, help us always remember the power we have in you when we gather, even two or three of us, to be together in your name. Amen." 20 min.

Unit Four* The Church Family* Being Together We Listen to God's Word

Lesson

2

Key Concepts

1. The Avedaran (Gospel Book) contains the writings of the four evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.
2. The Gospels were written to tell the good news about Jesus.
3. The Word of God is read to the people of God.
4. The name of the Bible in Armenian is Asdvadz-a-shoonch (Breath of God).

Objectives

During this session, students will

1. Discuss some basic facts about the Bible.
2. Listen to a story about a boy named Danny.
3. Listen to the Bible reading from the Old Testament.
4. Take part in a discussion about the Old and New Testaments.
5. Read "A Farmer Planting Seeds" from *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children*.
6. Learn and recite the deacon's and choir's responses before a Scripture reading.
7. Make and illustrate a book about the holy evangelists.
8. Attend church for the Final Blessing to kiss the Gospel Book.

Materials Needed

1. A Bible
2. Red construction paper for book cover (8 ½" x 11"), one for each child
3. White paper, one for each child
4. Rectangular strips – 5" and 7" (one set for each student) cut from silver paper for cross on book cover
5. Templates of biographical material (from back of this manual)
6. Glue sticks, stapler, colored pencils, crayons, markers, scissors

Procedure

1. Greet the children as they enter and then stand in place or a circle to pray.
2. Hold up the Bible and ask: “Children, do you remember what this special book is?” (A Bible, and they’ve been hearing stories from the Bible for many weeks.) Then ask, “Do you remember the name of this book in Armenian?” Before or while they are answering, distribute today’s lesson and read questions in **Let’s Talk**. Guide children to bottom of the page and answers. 10 min.
3. Let them follow as you read the story about Danny in **Listen to This**. Explain that the Gospel book on the altar is just the first four books in the Bible on display (flip through it to demonstrate). Direct their attention to the Scripture verse in **God Speaks to Us**. Help children review it a few times until they can say it smoothly. Ask “What do you think it means to obey God’s commandments?” (Discuss; remind them of the Ten Commandments and rules for us to follow such as always honoring God’s name, setting aside Sunday for God’s day; honoring our parents, etc, also being peacemakers, being a good sister or brother, etc.)
4. Continue with **We Learn About God** and **Our Armenian Way**. As you talk about the Old and New Testaments, open a Bible to show these sections to the children. Ask the children to repeat the deacon’s and choir’s responses after you. Practice them several times. 15 min.
5. Read “A Farmer Planting Seeds” from *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children*. You might want to demonstrate the effect of holding the Bible in front of your face while reading, by reading the Bible story both ways. Distribute snack and discuss questions. 10 min.
6. Describe the evangelists (using text from the Teacher Manual hand-outs) in **Hearts and Hands** as the children look at the portraits. Distribute red construction paper and have students fold it in half and glue the silver strips (one short, one long) to make a cross and glue on the cover. Then have them fold the white sheet in half, cut and glue each evangelist’s description on a different page and draw a picture of each over the text. They may use the illustrations in their lesson as models. Staple the pages inside the cover. 20 min.
7. Clean up and attend the Final Blessing in church so the children can kiss the Gospel. 5 min.

Unit Four* The Church Family* Being Together ***We Say What We Believe***

Lesson

3

Key Concepts

1. Prayer can help us grow stronger and surer in faith.
2. The Havadamk is a special statement of faith of what we, as Armenian Christians, believe.

Objectives

During this session, students will

1. Attend church especially to participate in and hear the Creed (this may affect the order of your activities).