

# Ascension



## We Pray Together

Dear Jesus, you graced us with your presence on earth, teaching us how to live like you. On Ascension Day, you returned to God the Father but promised us the gift of the Holy Spirit. Thank you for all your gifts.

*Hanoon Hor, yev Vortvo, yev Hokvooyv Srpo. Amen.*

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## Let's Discover

Look at the words in the cloud, and see if you can figure out what today's lesson is about.

\_\_\_\_\_ marks forty days after \_\_\_\_\_, when Jesus lifted his \_\_\_\_\_, blessed his \_\_\_\_\_ and was carried up to \_\_\_\_\_.



# Our Story

Raffi loved his Uncle Sevag and enjoyed every chance that he had to see him. Uncle Sevag's work had him traveling all over the world. He would miss special family celebrations like Christmas, Easter and birthdays because of his work schedule.

When Raffi's mom surprised him with the news that Uncle Sevag was going to visit, Raffi's face lit up. Excitedly Raffi responded with, "Really? Uncle Sevag is coming here? Oh, I can't wait, I haven't seen him in such a long time! I want to show Uncle Sevag my Lego collection, especially the airplane I built. Maybe I can work at Uncle Sevag's company one day?" Raffi's mom smiled and said, "You never know. But right now, you need to go and clean your room and get ready, Uncle will be here very soon."

Uncle Sevag finally arrived the next day. Raffi ran to him and gave him the biggest, warmest hug. Uncle Sevag showered him with gifts from all over the world. Raffi sat down with his uncle and planned the week with him, "Today the park, tomorrow the kids' museum, Wednesday . . ." But the next day Uncle Sevag received an emergency work message stating that he needed to board the 5:00 p.m. flight to London, England. Uncle Sevag was heart-broken to have to leave his family, especially Raffi. He took Raffi aside and explained, "My work is requiring me to travel again; it's an emergency, that's why I have to leave so suddenly." I promise to return very soon. In the meantime, continue being the great boy you are, study hard, obey your parents and keep on Skyping with me. I will be back as soon as I can and promise to stay a much longer time." Raffi was sad to see his uncle leave so

quickly. However, Raffi understood and knew that his uncle would keep his word and return at the first available opportunity.

## Faith Word

### *Ascension*

*Hampartzoom Համբարձում*  
Rising, the rising of Jesus Christ from  
earth to heaven 40 days after Easter.



# God's Word

During the forty days after Jesus rose from the dead, he gave very important instructions to his disciples. One day near the town of Bethany, Jesus spoke to them about God's kingdom, saying to wait in Jerusalem until God the Father sent the Holy Spirit as promised. Jesus also told his disciples that once they received the Holy Spirit they were going to tell the whole world about Jesus. The disciples would be Jesus' special messengers. While he was speaking, he blessed the disciples, raised his hands while a cloud came and lifted Jesus out of their sight. As the disciples were looking up, two angels asked the disciples why they were still gazing into the sky. The angels told the disciples that Jesus went to heaven and would return in the same manner.

*Based on Luke 24: 50-53 and Acts 1: 1-11*



# We Learn About God



Forty days after Easter, the resurrection of Jesus, the church remembers and celebrates the feast of Ascension. This feast day falls on a Thursday and has a special Divine Liturgy and hymn. Ascension is very important because it marks the last event of Jesus' life and ministry on earth.

# Our Armenian Way

Hampartzoom is a very special feast of the Armenian people. It is not only celebrated in the church but also through festivals, songs, dance, and games. Nature was very important during Hampartzoom as the Armenians believed that on the eve of Ascension, the sky would turn extra bright and that all of nature would be in celebration. Much of the fun and excitement was directed toward the youth, especially the young girls. One such tradition is a game called *vijagakhagh*. On the morning before Ascension Thursday, the young girls would gather flowers from seven different homes. Then, that evening the girls would take a pail and travel to seven homes or seven fountains and fill them with water. The flowers would be added to the same pail.

Playing the game would also bring a small object (*nishan*) of theirs such as a ring or bracelet and place it in the pail. The pail would be placed on the side, overnight under the stars with the hope that the stars would grant the wishes of the girls. On Hampartzoom Day, Ascension Thursday, the girls playing the vijag game would go on picnic. One of the girls, usually the oldest, would dress up as a bride. Vijag songs and poems would be sung. After each song or poem, the bride would select an object from the pail. The verse or song would be about the owner of that object. One of the most popular songs sung during the Hampartzoom vijag is *Hampartzoom Yaylah*.

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