

Get to the Root of It!

Tutorial 7

The Communion Hymn

Օրհնեալ է Աստուած

Orhnyal e Asdvadz

Year of Church and Home 2007

Communion Hymn

Blessed is God!
Christ is sacrificed and distributed among us. Alleluia.
He gives us his body as sustenance
and sprinkles his holy blood upon us. Alleluia.
Come to the Lord and receive the Light. Alleluia.
Taste and see that the Lord is sweet. Alleluia.

Based in part on Psalm 34.

The Communion Hymn is one of the oldest Christian Hymns. As you read the text, its clear message and function is to call people forward for communion. It is based in part on Psalm 34. Each instruction from the choir is followed by the refrain, Alleluia, a Hebrew word meaning 'Praise the Lord.' Today, the entire hymn is sung by the choir and congregation together at the deacons' instruction. However, it seems that in earlier times, the hymn was sung antiphonally, one group singing the main instruction and the other punctuating it with Alleluias.

Orhnyal e Asdvadz! Blessed is God

- օրհնեալ *orhnyal* = 'blessed'
orhn = bless + *yal*='ed'
- է e = 'is' → Eng. *is*, Lat. *est*
- Աստուած *Asdvadz* 'God' → Eng. *fasten*

The hymn begins with a fanfare: *Orhnyal e Asdvadz*: 'Blessed is God'.

• *Orhnyal* is one of the most common words in Church Armenian. It has two components: the root *orhn*- 'bless' and the *-yal* ending, which corresponds to English *-ed*, and makes a verbal adjective. We encounter other words from the *orhn*- root, for example, *orhnutyun* 'blessing', *orhnya* 'bless! (command singular)', *orhnetsek* 'bless! (command plural)', *orhnetsuk* 'let us bless', *orhnetsits* 'I shall bless'.

Now let's listen to the phrase, sung and said, and repeat the phrase. *Orhnyal e Asdvadz!*

Krisdos badarkyal pashkhi i michi merum. Alleluia
Christ sacrificed is distributed among us. Alleluia

- քրիստոս *krisdos* = 'Christ' → *chrism*, anointed
- պատարագեալ = 'sacrifice' + *yal*='ed'
- բաշխի *pashkhi* = 'distribute' → Eng. *bakshish* (hand-out)
- ի միջի *i michi* = → in → midst (d ~ j, as in Br. Eng. *immediately*)
- մերում *merum* = 'in our' *mer* = 'our' + *-um*='in' as in *Hayasdan-um* where *-um*='in'
- ալելուիա *alleluia* = Hebrew 'praise the Lord'

Krisdos badarkyal pashkhi i michi merum Christ sacrificed is distributed among us.

We know nearly all of the words in this sentence already.

- *Krisdos* 'Christ', related to English *chrism*, *the anointed one*, *Hisus* means 'savior'. so Jesus Christ *Hisus Krisdos*, means 'the anointed savior'.
- *badarkyal* 'sacrificed' from *badarak* 'sacrifice' with the *-yal* 'ed' making it into a past participle, verbal adjective 'who was sacrificed'
- *i michi* 'in midst' a short phrase composed of the preposition *i* 'in' which is related to Eng. *in*, and *michi* which is related to *mid*, *middle*. Here we see the common alteration of *d* to *j*, as in Br. Eng. *immediately*, or the quick American pronunciation of *did-you* - *dija*.
- *merum* 'in our' *mer* meaning 'our' with the *-um* ending, meaning 'in' to show that 'our' refers to *michi*. This is related to the characteristic *-um* ending in Eastern Armenian. *Hayasdan-um* 'in Armenia'.
- *alleluia* 'Alleluia' a Hebrew word meaning 'praise the Lord' and widely used in many Christian rites, like two other Hebrew words *Amen*, meaning 'so be it' and *Hosanna* meaning 'Lord, save us'.

Now let's listen to the phrase, sung and said, and repeat the phrase. *Krisdos badarkyal pashkhi i michi merum* Christ sacrificed is distributed among us.

z-marmin yur da mez geragur Body his gives us food

- զմարմին *z-marmin* = 'body'
- իւր *yur* = 'his'
- տայ *da* = 'he gives' ↔ Eng. donate
- մեզ *mez* = 'us'
- կերակուր *geragur* = 'food' ↔ Eng. devour, voracious
g~v correspondence as in *yegestse* - convene

zmarmin yur da mez geragur He gives his body to us for food.

We've seen nearly all these words before.

• *zMarmin* 'body' with the *z*-prefix indicating that *body* is the direct object of the verb *da* 'he gives' We saw *marmin* in the opening hymn of Stage 1 Greeting Each Other - *Marmin Derunagan* 'Body of the Lord' as well as Stage 2 'Remembering why we are gathered' when we remember Christ's words *Arek, gerek, ays e marmin im* when he raised the bread to break it, saying, 'Take, eat, this is my body'.

• *yur* 'his' is related to Mod. Arm. *ir*.

• *da* 'he gives' is related to Eng./Lat. *donate*, we saw the command form of this verb in the Lord's Prayer – *z-hats mer hanabazort dur mez aysor* 'Give us this day our daily bread' *dur mez, give us*.

• *mez* 'to us' and its related forms *mer* 'our', *mek* 'we', *zmez* 'us' and the verb ending *-mk* 'we', all related to 'we, us', and are among the most common words in Church Armenian, emphasizing that the Armenian Church is a *yegegghetsi*, a gathering of people called together for the purpose of praising God. Try to recall the phrases using these other forms of *mer, mez, mek, zmez*, and *-mk*, for example, from the Lord's Prayer, which has all of them.

• *geragur* 'food' has a root we've seen before. As in the institution of communion in Stage 2 - *Arek, gerek, ays e marmin im* - 'take, eat'. which is related to Eng./Lat. *devour, voracious*. In *ger-a-gur*, we actually see the same root twice, with a connecting vowel, *ger+a+gur*. Recall that Arm. *g* often corresponds to Eng./Lat. *v* as in *yegestse* - 'convene' from the root 'come'.

• Now let's listen to the phrase, sung and said, and repeat the phrase. *z-Marmin yur da mez geragur*.

yev surp zAryun yur tsoghe i mez. Alleluia.
and holy blood his sprinkle on us. alleluia

- եւ *yev* = 'and'
- սուրբ *surp* = 'holy' Skt. *çubhra* 'clean, pure'
- զարիւն *zaryun* = 'blood' z- = direct object,
aryun = → Eng. *hemoglobin*
- իւր *yur* = 'his'
- ցօղէ *tsoghe* = 'sprinkle' -e = 'he'
- ի *i* = 'on' → Eng. in
- մէզ *mez* = 'us' → Eng. us, Lat. *nos*,

yev surp zaryun yur tsoghe i mez. Alleluia. 'And sprinkle his holy blood upon us'.

We are purified by the holy blood of Christ, the innocent one who willingly allowed himself to be sacrificed to make up for our many unfulfilled obligations.

We have seen all the words in this phrase, so just a quick review.

• *surp* means 'holy, pure, clean' innocent.

• *z-Aryun* means 'blood'. It has a z-prefix to indicate that it is the direct object of the verb *tsoghe*, 'to sprinkle'. *Aryun* is related to Eng./Gk. *hemo* as in *hemoglobin* 'part of blood made of small spheres (globes + ule 'little')'. We have seen *aryun* twice before. Stage 1. Greeting Each Other, during the hymn *Marmin Derunagan yev Aryun prgchagan*. And again in Stage 2 - Remember why we are gathered when we remember Christ's words instituting Communion, when he lifted the cup of wine, saying, *Arpek i smane amenekyan Ays e Aryun im* 'Drink of this all of you, this is my blood'.

• *i mez* means 'on us' from the preposition *i* and the pronoun *mez us*.

Now let's listen to the phrase, sung and said, and repeat the phrase. *yev surp zaryun yur tsoghe i mez*

Madik ar Der yev arek zluys. Alleluia.
Approach to Lord and take light. Alleluia.

- մատիք *madik* = 'approach' ⇨ Eng. *meet*, Arm. *mod* = 'close', *-ik*='you do!' plural command
- առ *ar* = 'toward' ⇨ Eng. *for para*, forward
- Տէր *Der* = 'Lord' *di + ayr*, ⇨ *dignity*, *teacher + ayr* as in *android*
- և *yev* = 'and'
- առիք *arek* = 'take' *-ek* = plural command, as in *arek, gerek* 'Take, Eat'
- զլուս *z-luys* = 'light', *z-* = direct object, ⇨ Eng. *luster*, light, Lat. *lux*

Madik ar Der yev arek zluys. Alleluia. 'Come to the Lord and receive the Light'.

• *Madik* 'approach' has two components, the root *mad*, which is related to Eng. *meet*, Armenian *mod* 'close', and the plural command ending *-ik* (which has a variant *-ek*). When we approach someone we meet them or come close to them.

• *ar* 'toward' We have seen this preposition in the word *arachi* 'before', in the Peace Blessing *arachi ko, Der* Before you, Lord, which is the response to *Asdudzo yergrbakes-tsuk* 'let us bow before you God'. It is related to English *para, for*, as in *forward*, or *para-* as in *para-medic* (someone near the medics), *paralegal* (someone near lawyers)

• *arek* 'take' has two components, the root *ar* and the plural command ending *-ek* (related to *-ik* in *madik*, 'approach', which we just looked at). The same word as in Stage 2 *Remember why we are gathered*, when we remember Christ's words as he breaks the bread *Arek, gerek, ays e marmin im* 'Take, eat, this is my body'. This root is not to be confused with the preposition *ar*, meaning 'toward', which we just discussed, or the root *ar* (often repeated *arar*) meaning 'create', as in *ararich*, or *char* 'negation of creation, evil'.

• *zluys* 'light' also has two components. The root is related to English *luster*, Lat. *lux*. It has a *z-* prefix to indicate that it is the direct object of *arek* 'take'.

Now let's listen to the phrase, sung and said, and repeat the phrase. *Madik ar Der yev arek zluys. Alleluia.* 'Come to the Lord and receive the Light.'

Jashagetsek yev desek zi kaghtsr e Der. Alleluia.
Taste and see that sweet is Lord. Alleluia

- ճաշակեցէք *jashagetsek* = 'taste!'
jashag = 'taste' + -ek 'pl. command' as in *arek, gerek* 'take, eat'
- և yev = 'and'
- տեսէք *desek* = 'see' ↔ Eng. *dragon*
- զի *zi* = 'that'
- քաղցր *kaghtsr* = ↔ Eng. *sweet*
k~s correspondence *kuyr* *sister* *sorority* + -r adjective suffix as in *parts* 'high'
- է e = 'is'
- Տէր *Der* = 'Lord' *dl+ayr* ↔ *dignity, teacher + android*

Jashagetsek yev desek zi kaghtsr e Der. Alleluia. 'Taste and see that sweet is Lord. Alleluia'

This is the call to come forward for communion, and comes from Ps. 34:8

We've seen several of the words in this sentence before. Of course *yev* 'and', *zi* 'that, since' as in *Zi ko e arkayutyun* at the end of the Lord's Prayer. *e* 'is', and finally *Der* 'Lord', related to English *dignity, teacher anthroid*.

• *jashagetsek* 'taste!' consists of 2 parts both in extended form: the root *jash* 'meal' with an -ag extension and the plural command ending -ek with an -ets- extension. The command ending is familiar from *arek, gerek* 'take, eat'. You may recognize *jashag-* from the pre-meal prayer, *Jshagestsuk khaghaghutyamp* 'let us eat in peace'. You may also recognize the basic root *jash* from Indian Restaurant menus - for example, *rogan josh* = 'lamb curry'

• *desek* 'see!' consists of 2 parts. The suffix -ek is the already familiar plural command suffix, we saw in *jshagestek* 'taste', *arek* 'take', *gerek* 'eat'. The root *des*, however, is has an interesting origin. It appears to be related to Eng. *dragon*. You may think what do *dragons* have to do with seeing? Well, dragons have large eyes, and that must have impressed ancient speakers of Armenian and Greek. After all, we say, 'why are you bug-eyed' in a reference to the oversized eyes many bugs have. Greek *k* to corresponds to Armenian *s*, as in *cardio - sird* 'heart'; so *drak* becomes *dras* becomes *des* in a somewhat convoluted way.

• *kaghtsr* 'sweet' is actually related to Eng. *sweet* and exhibits the regular correspondence of Armenian *sw* to *k* in English, as in Eng. *sister, sorority* and Arm. *kuyr*.

Now let's listen to the phrase, sung and said, and repeat the phrase. *Jshagetsek yev desek zi kaghtsr e Der. Alleluia.* 'Taste and see that the Lord is Sweet. Alleluia'

Practice words line by line

Օրհնեալ է Աստուած, Քրիստոս սատարագեալ

orhnyal e Asdvadz Krisdos badarakyal

Blessed is God! Christ is sacrificed

բաշխի ի միջի մերում: Ալելուիա:

pash-khi i michi merum alleluia

distribute in midst us alleluia

and distributed among us. Alleluia.

Չմարմին իւր տայ մեզ կերակուր

z-marmin yur da mez geragur

body his give us food

He gives us his body as sustenance

This hymn has additional verses with Alleluias and more blessings and praise. Sometimes they are sung, and sometimes not. In any event, the core message of this hymn is contained in 6 lines we just studied.

Now let's try saying the words line by line.

Practice words line by line

Եւ սուրբ զարինն իւր ցօղէ ի մեզ: Ալելուիա:

yev surp z-aryun yur tsoghe i mez alleluia
and holy blood his dew on us alleluia
and sprinkles his holy blood upon us. Alleluia.

Մատի՛ք առ Տէր եւ առէք զլոյս: Ալելուիա:

mad-ik ar Der yev ar-ek z-luys alleluia
come-you to Lord and take-you light alleluia
Come to the Lord and receive the light. Alleluia.

Ճաշակեցէք եւ տեսէք զի քաղցր է Տէր: Ալելուիա:

jashag-etsek yev des-ek zi kagh-tsr e Der alleluia
taste-you and see-you that sweet is Lord alleluia
Taste and see that the Lord is sweet. Alleluia.

This hymn has additional verses with Alleluias and more blessings and praise. Sometimes they are sung, and sometimes not. In any event, the core message of this hymn is contained in 6 lines we just studied.

Now let's try saying the words line by line.

Let's practice singing it

Օրհնել է Աստուած

Օրհ - նել է Աս - տուած: Գրիս - տու օր - տու - թա - վել
orh - nyal e as - dvadz kreec - dos ba - da - ra - kyal

բա - խի ի մի - շի մե - թոմ. ա - լե - լու - իս:
pash - khch ec mee - chch me - room a - le - loo - ya

Չնոր - մի՛ն յոր տոյ մեզ կե - թա - ղոր էս սորբ օր - թի՛ն
zmar - meen yoor da mez ge - ra - goor yev soorp za - ryoon

Now let's practice singing it. Listen and follow along, then practice it line by line and from beginning to end.

