

LIVING
THE WORD

CARIBBEAN BIBLE LESSONS



Leaders

Adults • Ages 19 and Up • Learner Guide

May • June • July • August • 2020



Adult • Age 19 and Up • Learner Guide

The learning activities suggested in this book are used as a part of the teaching plan provided in the *Adult Teacher Guide*. It is strongly recommended that each church provide a copy of the *Adult Learner Guide* for each adult learner and adult teacher.

Unit 1: Walk with Godly Women

May 3, 2020	The Worshippers	5
May 10, 2020	The Nurturers	8
May 17, 2020	The Subtle Influencers	11
May 24, 2020	The Godly Changemakers	14
May 31, 2020	The "Social Workers"	17

Unit 2: Experience The God-Man

June 7, 2020	Jesus: The God-Man	20
June 14, 2020	Jesus: The Answer to My Needs	23
June 21, 2020	Jesus: High Priest; Perfect Sacrifice	27
June 28, 2020	My Response to Jesus	30

Unit 3: Fight Against Human Trafficking

July 5, 2020	Beware of Human Trafficking	33
July 12, 2020	Resist Exploitation	36
July 19, 2020	Disrupt Child Trafficking	39
July 26, 2020	Engage in Godly Response	42

Unit 4: Overcome Obstacles with God

August 2, 2020	Arrest Abuse	47
August 9, 2020	Shun Sexual Sin	50
August 16, 2020	Revere God: Value Life	53
August 23, 2020	A Broken Marriage Can't Break Me	56
August 30, 2020	Leap over Job Loss	59

F E A T U R E S	Editor's Corner	2	Probing the Trade in Humans	45
	Meet Our Writers	3	Poem	46
	Congratulations!	4	Mission Point	62
	Special Recognition!	4	Shout Out!	63
	Bible Background	26	How to Become a Christian	64

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EDITOR'S CORNER

Dear brothers and sisters,



Greetings! Welcome to the summer 2020 exploration of the **Caribbean Bible Lessons Bible Leaders Learner Guide** for adults. Our engaging adventure runs from **May—August 2020**.

We are almost at the midway point of 2020 — a year of unprecedented uncertainties and problems on the international scene. It has been a year when we were jolted into disbelief, then fear, concerning reports of the phenomenal spread of the *COVID - 19 Virus* in sections of the world and the implications that could have for the entire world's population. Then, there were wildfires running amok of lives and properties in Australia, intense earthquakes in some

Caribbean territories, civil war in some countries and increasing incidents of violence becoming an uncomfortable part of our everyday reality. Let us not be distracted or distressed by our personal, national and international problems; **God is still in control!** Hallelujah!

The year 2020 is still the year of “*twenty-plenty*” for God's people, if we trust Him in the face of all unsettling challenges and in times of smooth sailing. Our God Who is always in charge, will not leave us or forsake us and will bless us abundantly. Let us be reassured of God's undying love for us and His commitment to act in our best interest, to His glory. Our responsibility is to **give God the priority** in our lives, always.

I appeal to you to **spend more time in solitude with God** this summer and beyond. Block out the distractions and seek God. Unless you spend *alone-time* with God, you will not be honouring Him totally with your life and you cannot grow in Him. Set a time and a place to meet with God, and Him alone. Develop attentiveness to God's voice to and in you.

The more we talk with God, the more we will discern His call on our lives. Yes, Jesus does not call us once or twice. He calls us many times at different intervals throughout our lives. Jesus calls us to salvation, to sanctification, to discipleship, to service, to increased faithfulness to Him, to ministry, to mission, to advocacy, to exercise compassion, to take a stand for justice, to conflict resolution, and to fulltime or part-time vocations for His honour. Be ready to obey His call! **Develop your spiritual ear and hearing** — align and tune them to God's Word.

This edition of the **CBL Bible Leaders Learner Guide**, recognises the month of May as family month and the month for celebrating mothers. Therefore, **Unit 1** takes us to **Walk with Godly Women**. During June, when a lot of focus is placed on acknowledging the role of men, we **Experience The God-Man**, Jesus Christ, as presented in the Epistle to the Hebrews. **Unit 3** turns the spotlight on the fastest growing crime in the world, *human trafficking*. In **Unit 4**, we **Overcome Obstacles with God**. Yours in the Lord's service,

Erica James-King

MEET OUR WRITERS

UNIT ONE: Cheryl Strachan, The Bahamas

Dr Strachan is an entrepreneur who has post-graduate level expertise in Christian leadership. She is of the conviction that God has called her to write Sunday School lessons for adults and has an unrelenting commitment to the vocation.



Mrs Ward Foster is an author and independent publisher. She has post graduate training in Christian Ministry. She enthusiastically engages in discipling others, so that they too can grow in their faith.

UNIT ONE: Gay Ward Foster, USA



UNIT TWO: Olson Abrams, Guyana

Mr Abrams who is a senior energy engineer in the fuel industry in Guyana has been a Christian for twenty-two years. Residing along the East Coast of Demerara, he has been very involved with the ministries and mission of the Guyana Missionary Baptist Church. He has a passion for the teaching ministry because he is a firm believer that teaching is able to convey the Word of God in a way that truly impacts and changes lives for the Kingdom of God.

Brother Abrams believes that when people grow in understanding of the Bible, it generates a hunger for a deeper relationship with God.

UNIT THREE: Atlee Rodney, Antigua and Barbuda

Commissioner of Police for the Royal Police Force of Antigua and Barbuda, Mr Rodney, is a devout Christian. His greatest interest is leading others to understand God's law of love through faith in our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. He enjoys teaching, mentoring and encouraging others. He is excited about helping to enhance the spiritual life of the people of the region through Caribbean Bible Lessons. Deacon Rodney welcomes every opportunity to teach persons about Christ.



UNIT FOUR: Zoë Simpson, Jamaica



During her high school years, Dr Simpson became aware of her Christian responsibility to help others to find Christ and to grow in Him. Since then, she has used her writing and teaching skills to disciple others. The guiding Bible verse of her life is Ezra 7:10, because it confirms and fuels her passion for studying and sharing the Word. She has served as the Christian Education Director of the Missionary Church Association in Jamaica. Dr. Simpson is the Executive Director of a national service organization for teen mothers.

Congratulations!

Caribbean Christian Publications extends heartiest congratulations and best wishes for continued success to the following members of its regional family:

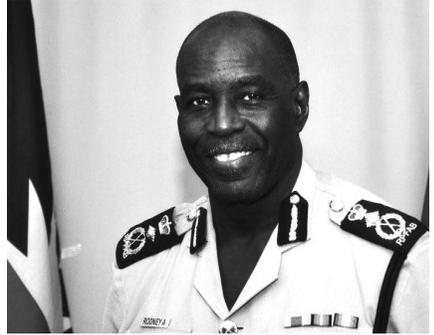
The Reverend Norva Rodney, a curriculum developer for the adult Sunday School literature, who is of Jamaican nationality.



We congratulate you for accepting God's call to serve as **President of the Jamaica Baptist Union**, a partner organization of Caribbean Christian Publications.

The members of our team applaud you for continuing to blaze a trail of accomplishing great things for God! We pray that God will continue to guide, bless and empower you as you lead the over 40,000 members of the Jamaica Baptist Union in Jamaica and Haiti. Best wishes for God's continued favour on your life, ministry and mission.

Commissioner of Police Atlee Rodney, a writer for the adult Sunday School books, who is of Antiguan nationality.



We commend you on being promoted to the rank of **Commissioner of Police** for the Royal Police Force of Antigua and Barbuda—the highest rank of the police force.

We also congratulate you for achieving another amazing feat: the Queen's Police Medal for distinguished service to national and regional security. Our team members pray that you will continue to excel in service to God, your nation and region. Best wishes for God's continued blessings on you and all your endeavours.

Special Recognition !

Caribbean Christian Publications expresses appreciation to the following persons for their contribution to this issue of the **Caribbean Bible Lessons Bible Leaders Teacher and Learner Guides:**

Curriculum Developers: The Reverend Arthur Edgar, Arlene Edwards, Dr Sharon Earle Edwards, Erica James-King, Elizabeth Sherman, and the Reverend Doreen Wynter. We are grateful for the advice provided by the Reverend Dr Margaret Fowler, late pastor of Hope United Church, Jamaica, in the curriculum development of Unit 3.

The Worshipers



BIBLE FOCUS

Exodus 15:1-21; Luke 1:46-55; 2:36-38

KEY VERSE

Then Miriam the prophet, Aaron's sister, took a timbrel in her hand, and all the women followed her, with timbrels and dancing. Miriam sang to them: "Sing to the Lord, for He is highly exalted."

– Exodus 15:20-21a NIV

BIBLE TRUTH

When we live a life of worship, our lives, speech and actions revere God and testify about His greatness to Christians and non-Christians.

LIFE QUESTION

How is my life an offering of worship to God?

THAT'S LIFE

Sister Lowe had already made up her mind that she would not be in for "NO praise in worship today!" She had come to church to hear the Word of God preached and to see her friends. She could never understand why the church had to have a special time of "Praise in Worship" anyhow. After all, wasn't the singing of the hymns enough?

Things were just changing too much and too fast for her. "The younger generation look like they want to mash up our church with them crazy praise

in worship," Sister Lowe thought shaking her head in dismay.

She had made up her mind to time her arrival at church for when she thought the praise in worship session was over. The pastor's sermon that day was on worshippers of the Bible. Sister Lowe decided to listen intently to the sermon.

What advice would you give to Sister Lowe concerning her reservations about praise in worship sessions?

What would be your response to someone who said, "Praise in worship is not a session, but a lifestyle"?

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE TEACH?

Today, we begin a five-week exploration of the exemplary conduct of women of faith. This first lesson in the Unit, "Walk with Godly Women", will focus on some women in the Bible who lived lives that were dedicated to the worship of God. Worship is the demonstration of reverence and adoration to God. The women we will study were also instrumental in leading the people of God in corporate worship.

1. Worship God for Who He Is – Exodus 15:1-21

The song of Moses, sung by all the people of Israel, and recorded in this chapter is believed to be the oldest recorded song in history. The people rejoiced over their miraculous emancipation from slavery and the drowning of Pharaoh's armies, which pursued them. This song of praise and thanksgiving records in detail what happened to the pursuing Egyptian army (vv. 4-10). The details of that victory are aptly summed up in verse 5: "*The deep waters have covered them: they sank to the depths like a stone*" (v. 5). The Israelites praised God for being their Deliverer. The worship also extolled God and His attributes: His holiness, splendour, power, unfailing love and guidance (vv. 11-18).

In her joy and exuberance, when she thought of the great deliverance that they had just experienced, Miriam, the prophet, took a timbrel or tambourine and became a worship leader. A prophet is someone who speaks on behalf of God and who speaks by divine inspiration. The prophet communicates God's messages. Prophet Miriam was showing leadership in worship and service to God. Along with the other Israelite women who also had timbrels, Miriam who was the sister of Aaron and Moses, continued the song Moses started and led a praise dance (vv. 20-21).

Miriam became a psalmist repeating the words of Moses and the people which were sung previously in verse one, "*Sing to the Lord for He is highly exalted. Both horse and driver He has hurled into the sea*" (v. 21). The women sang, danced and played instruments in worship to God, rejoicing in God's deliverance of them from slavery and for His goodness to them. That worship and ministry in song, and dance would have reinforced in the minds of the Israelites the miracles of God in the deliverance they had received from their enslavers, the Egyptians.

Before and during Miriam's era, today and forever God is worthy of praise. His name is still to be exalted in our lives and churches through our lifestyles, testimonies, prayers, sermons, songs, music and dances. Our personal knowledge and experiences of the God Who is awesome in power and strong to deliver should be enough reason for us to praise Him.

2. Magnify God in all Circumstances – Luke 1:46-55

Are you able to worship in circumstances that are life threatening? Can you praise God when your character is being assaulted or is at risk of being sullied? Mary, the mother of Jesus, did just that (Luke 1:38, 46-55)! Mary found herself pregnant before marriage through the power of the Holy Spirit. During that time, it was expected that a woman would be a virgin until her marriage. Mary knew all of this; she knew that if she accepted the Lord's Will for her life, she could possibly be thrown out of her father's house, have the marriage called off and be stoned to death. Dreadful circumstances indeed, and yet Mary said yes to God through His messenger: "*Yes Lord, may everything you have said about me come true*"? (Luke 1:38). If you were in Mary's situation, would you have said "yes" to God?

Mary's cousin, Elizabeth, gave outward and upward praise to the Lord for Mary's obedience to God and for the Child, Mary was carrying. In response, Mary broke out into song (vv. 46-55), which praised God and expressed complete faith that God would work everything out for her good. Mary's song is called "The Magnificat", which in Latin means, "My Soul Magnifies".

She may not have known the full extent of what accepting to be the mother of God's Incarnate Son was going to be but she surrendered her life completely to God's Will (v. 38). Mary's worship showed her gratitude for God remembering her; she spoke of God's mercy throughout the generations. She thanked God for the mighty deeds He had done for the humble, the hungry, His servants and the generations of Abraham to come. One could say that Mary was being prophetic in this song, telling not only of her present time but unknowingly hinting of how the Son she was expecting, Jesus, would change the future.

3. Live a Life of Worship – Luke 2:36-38

Anna the prophet became a widow after only seven years of marriage. From then and until the age of eighty-four she lived a life that was completely dedicated to the worship of Almighty God in His Temple. *She never left the Temple but worshipped night and day, fasting and praying* (v. 37b).

Upon seeing Jesus when His earthly parents Mary and Joseph presented Him to God in the Temple at eight days old, according to Jewish tradition, Prophet Anna began praising God. She worshipped God with her voice, heart and whole being. She also spoke prophetically about the mission of Jesus to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem (v. 38).

Reality Check

Would you describe yourself as a worshipper? Why? What similarities exist in the role worship plays in the lives of the women in today's lesson and in your own life?

The Nurturers



BIBLE FOCUS

Proverbs 31:26-27; Exodus 6:20, 2:1-10; Matthew 15:21-28;
Mark 10:13-16

KEY VERSE

She speaks with wisdom, and faithful instruction is on her tongue. She watches over the affairs of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness.

– Proverbs 31:26-27 NIV

BIBLE TRUTH

Mothers play a primary role in caring for their children and providing for their physical and spiritual nurture.

LIFE QUESTION

In my opinion, what are the most important qualities that a mother should have?

THAT'S LIFE

Case Study 1:

A teenager became pregnant. She tried everything she could, using home remedies to terminate the pregnancy. God spared the life of the unborn child. The teenager gave birth to the baby. The mother tried to give the child to the father's mother after birth, but the child was soon returned to her as the father refused to acknowledge the child as his own. Throughout the child's life, the mother acted as if she had anger towards her child. Nevertheless, the child was a blessing to the mother in many ways; through provision of all of her mother's needs. The mother nonetheless

showed favouritism to the other children born to her later in life.

Case Study 2:

When the first child was born she was a teenager and unmarried. She got married when the second child was on the way. She and her husband had three more children. Sometimes, all she had to give her children for dinner was porridge. The mother lovingly looked after her children and also cared for any child who came into her sphere of influence. The mother spent many hours on her knees praying for her children and the children of her community.

Which of the two mothers is a nurturer? Why? What advice would you give to the two mothers?

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE TEACH?

Happy Mothering Sunday to all our sisters who are mothers, adoptive mothers, female guardians, mothering aunts, mother mentors and grandmothers. Today's lesson is a reminder of the nurturing role that all of you should perform, and by extension, all parents should play. Nurturers are persons who care for, protect, provide support or nourishment for, or help to encourage and develop others (especially youngsters).

1. A Mother Risks All to Save Her Son – Exodus 6:20; 2:1-10

The closing scenes of the book of Genesis reveal that the people of Israel had survived several years of famine, by God's sovereign provision through Joseph. After Joseph's death they stayed in their *safe haven* in Egypt, but when the country's leadership changed, the descendants of Joseph found themselves in a negative situation. The new Pharaoh, threatened by their great numbers, decided to enslave them (Exodus 1:11). Choosing to limit their continued numerical growth, he also ordered that newborn boys be killed (Exodus 1:22).

Amram and Jochebed, both of the tribe of Levi, had a son, Moses, during this troubling time in Israel's history. Moses could have been one of the fatal *statistics*, of the new Pharaoh's deadly campaign against Israelite baby boys, were it not for Jochebed, his mother (Exodus 6:20). Initially, Jochebed hid the baby for three months. In order to protect her son from being killed, she prepared a papyrus basket using tar and pitch (a waterproof glue, also mentioned in Genesis 6:14). The material used for the basket kept it dry inside and prevented it from sinking. Jochebed placed her young son in the watertight basket on the River Nile, among the reeds, a type of tall, coarse grass which grows in wetland areas. Under the watchful eye of Miriam, Moses' older sister, the best of outcomes unfolded.

Because of Jochebed's carefully devised plan, the baby was "rescued" by one of the servants of Pharaoh's daughter on the instructions of the latter. Miriam was there to offer to find him a "nurse". In that society, the "nurse" would have breastfed, as well as devotedly cared for and protected the child. Jochebed, thus, became the "nurse" for her own biological child, allowing her the time and opportunity she needed to care for him and to impact his young life. When Moses grew older she took him to Pharaoh's daughter *and he became her son* (Exodus 2:10).

Not only did Jochebed act astutely, to preserve her son's life, but her actions display love and dedication to doing what she could to set him on a good path, despite the sacrifices that were required of her. That attitude is a clear display of what it means to have a mother's nurturing and loving heart.

2. A Mother Seeks Healing for Her Child – Mathew 15:21-28

Jesus was in the Gentile areas of Tyre and Sidon, when a Canaanite woman with a desperate request approached Him. It was not for her well-being that she sought Jesus' help, but for that of her ailing daughter. We know very little about the condition of the girl, described as "*demon-possessed and suffering terribly*" (Matthew 15:22). What we do know is that reflected in her mother's plea is an urgent and agonising call for help. It is likely that any other possible means of relief and deliverance had been tried and exhausted.

Despite what seems like an initial non-response it is evident that she was persistent in her cry for help (Matthew 15:23). Jesus' first response did not deter her. She understood that she was not the first priority of His ministry at that time. Yet, she continued to ask and to trust that He would heal her daughter. The woman not only called out repeatedly for Jesus' help for her daughter; she escalated her beseeching of Jesus by kneeling before him with her simple petition: "*Lord, help me*" (v. 25). She appealed for His help in a way that showed that she owned this problem.

Jesus had presented her with a potential obstacle to her request, but she was quick to point out a potential solution that would ensure she got what she needed. She humbly insisted, that He grant her plea, and He did. It is notable that at the end of this exchange Jesus commended the mother for her "*great faith*" in Him (v. 28): a faith that would not let go of the only solution to her daughter's deliverance. It is obvious that this mother of the "*demon-possessed*" daughter also demonstrated persistence and perseverance in seeking her daughter's healing from Jesus.

3. Mothers Ask Jesus to Bless Their Children – Mark 10:13-16

Even though people with various pressing needs surrounded Jesus, some mothers were determined to bring their children so Jesus could bless them. They understood that the trajectory of the lives of these children would be impacted by having Jesus bless them. The disciples probably thought the children would have been a nuisance and distraction to their (the disciples') Teacher and Friend, Jesus. The disciples reprimanded the mothers for taking the young children to Jesus. Jesus was very displeased with the attitude of the disciples. He took the children into His arms, put His hands on them and blessed them.

Even in our era, godly mothers and fathers seek Jesus' blessings on their children, by taking them to church for dedication (or christening), as well as pray frequently and diligently for them, always. Parents who are genuine nurturers model Christlikeness for their children, and guide them with the principles and teachings of God.

Reality Check

In what ways are you a nurturer of the young? How can you help to influence a child or young person to surrender his or her life to God?