From stories of golden statues to deadly furnaces, from food challenges to detailed histories of Israel, this unit’s Bible Lessons remind us God is always present with God’s people. In the coming weeks, we’ll look at the books of Daniel, Jeremiah, and Nehemiah and explore ways that God cares for and supports God’s people. We’ll also see how God protects people from danger and loves them even when they are disobedient. Through it all, God never fails us and we are never alone.

LESSON 5
Over and over again in the Bible we read that God is the good Shepherd. Like a shepherd caring for sheep, God provides for us and looks out for us when we put ourselves in danger.

LESSON 6
Even though Daniel and his friends were in exile, they still wanted to retain their connection to God and avoid foods that were impure. As people of God, we always must put our relationship with God first.

LESSON 7
This Bible Lesson tells of a king who wants to be recognized as a god and the three men who refused to bow to him because they worshipped the true God. The king tried to punish them, but God protected them.

LESSON 8
As the people dedicated the newly rebuilt walls of Jerusalem and reflected on the time spent in exile, they also remembered their history, good and bad, and that it particularly highlights God’s provision.
God’s Care for the Remnant

KEY VERSE: I myself will gather the few remaining sheep from all the countries where I have driven them. I will bring them back to their pasture, and they will be fruitful and multiply. — Jeremiah 23:3 (CEB)

JEREMIAH 23:1-8 (NRSV)
1 Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! says the Lord.
2 Therefore thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, concerning the shepherds who shepherd my people: It is you who have scattered my flock, and have driven them away, and you have not attended to them. So I will attend to you for your evil doings, says the Lord.
3 Then I myself will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the lands where I have driven them, and I will bring them back to their fold, and they shall be fruitful and multiply.
4 I will raise up shepherds over them who will shepherd them, and they shall not fear any longer, or be dismayed, nor shall any be missing, says the Lord.
5 The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land.
6 In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. And this is the name by which he will be called: “The Lord is our righteousness.”
7 Therefore, the days are surely coming, says the Lord, when it shall no longer be said, “As the Lord lives who brought the people of Israel up out of the land of Egypt,”
8 but “As the Lord lives who brought out and led the offspring of the house of Israel out of the land of the north and out of all the lands where he had driven them.” Then they shall live in their own land.

DECLARES THE LORD

Underline sections of the Bible verses where Jeremiah points out how God cares for God’s people.

BRINGING US BACK

Work with a partner to answer the questions below, noting your answers in the space provided.
What does it mean to you to know that God always will care for us and bring us back no matter where we are?

God brings Israel back from exile. From what places or habits is God bringing us back? Where have we strayed?

What would it be like for you to be separated from your family or friends? What emotions would you feel?

ALONE AND SCARED
Outline or write a story about a time when you were left alone and were scared. Focus on why you felt alone, what ultimately helped you feel less alone, and what it meant to you to have someone make you feel protected again.

PRAYING THE PSALMS
As a class, sit silently and read Psalm 23. How does the meaning of Psalm 23 change when you imagine yourself as the one saying these words?

Recite the Psalm together as a closing prayer.