



Viewing the latest news through the lens of Scripture



Use “The Scene” to introduce *Young Teen Bible school Lesson 6*.

This week most Major League Baseball (MLB) teams opened their seasons. Along with the action on the field came action of sportswriters off of the field. These journalists began the baseball season by making a number of predictions of how the sport will look 162 games later.

The MLB official web site predicts: “No one will hit 50 homers, but someone will win 20 games. There will be zero no-hitters.” John Donovan of *Sports Illustrated* prognosticates: “The Reds will be better than you think. Barry Bonds will not get a job. And nobody will care either.” *The Sporting News*, often referred to as the “Baseball Bible,” forecasts that the American League Rookie of the Year and the American League Manager of the Year will both come from the hapless Tampa Bay Rays.

So how reliable are preseason predictions? Consider the track record of Hall of Fame baseball reporter Peter Gammons. Gammons is arguably one of the very best in his field, having been voted the National Sportswriter of the Year for 1989, 1990, and 1993 by the National Sportscasters and Sportswriters. Here are Gammon’s picks for World Champion for the past five years compared to what really happened:

- **2003**—Gammons predicted Oakland would defeat Arizona in the World Series. In actuality, the Los Angeles Angels beat the San Francisco Giants.
- **2004**—Gammons saw Chicago Cubs beating the Boston Red Sox. In October, it was Boston over the St. Louis Cardinals.
- **2005**—Gammons picked the Minnesota Twins over the Cubs. In fact, the Chicago White Sox defeated the Houston Astros.
- **2006**—Gammons favored the New York Yankees over the St. Louis Cardinals. The Cardinals took the crown over the Detroit Tigers that year.
- **2007**—Gammons predicted that the Tigers would best the New York Mets. Instead, Boston defeated the Colorado Rockies for the title.

So how certain is Gammons when he predicts that the Cleveland Indians will take it all by defeating the Atlanta Braves in the Fall Classic? “Predictions have no currency,” admits the baseball analyst. “They are non-fiction, radio-TV shock-jock stuff.”

As students arrive, give each of them a copy of the above news story to read. After all teens have had the opportunity to read the article, discuss it in this way:

What do you think Peter Gammons meant when he wrote, “Predictions have no currency”? Do you agree or disagree this year’s baseball predictions? Why? What are some bases upon which experts make such predictions?

What are some other areas in which predictions are made? (For example, consider political polling or weather forecasts.) Tell about any type of recent prediction that did not come true. Why do you think that those predictions were unreliable?

Gammons admits that baseball predictions have more entertainment value than reliability. Many predictions are like that. But such faulty predictions help us appreciate someone who is consistently right in his or her predictions. Today let’s examine some predictions made about Jesus and the resurrection to see how reliable those predictions were.