



EXPLORE THE BIBLE.

Session 12: Humble Beginnings

Suggested Week of Use: November 20, 2022

Core Passage: Micah 4:6-8; 5:1-9

News Story Summary

This year's World Series, the championship series of Major League Baseball, involved an unlikely team in the Philadelphia Phillies. In June, two months into the season, Philadelphia's record stood at only 22-29. After the team's owner fired their manager and promoted their bench coach, the Phillies steadily clawed their way back into contention. They finished the season with an 87-75 record, good enough to claim the final National League spot in a new and expanded postseason bracket. Since they were seeded sixth out of six teams in the league, they had the most difficult path to the World Series. After sweeping the St. Louis Cardinals (93-69), the Phillies beat the defending World Series champion Atlanta Braves, who had won 101 games in the regular season. Finally, Philadelphia downed the San Diego Padres (89-73) to reach the World Series, where they fell in six games to the Houston Astros. The last time the Phillies went to the World Series was 2009, and they last won the Series in 2008. Back in June, experts gave them little chance to make the playoffs, much less play for a championship. But the team was able to transform itself over the course of a single season.

For more about this story, search "Philadelphia Phillies turned their season around."

Focus Attention

To supplement the opening activity under Focus Attention, ask adults to name some famous sports teams. (*Examples: the 1927 New York Yankees, the 1972 Miami Dolphins, the 1996 Chicago Bulls, and so forth*) List their responses on the board or a large sheet of paper. Direct them to vote on the most famous team on their list and the least famous team on their list. Then share the story of how the 2022 Philadelphia Phillies began the season with a losing record and ended up in the World Series. Ask: *What is the difference between the Phillies and some of the other teams on this list?* Point out that we often think of great teams in terms of what they do, but not always how they got there. Say: *The Phillies had a very humble start, but they ended up going farther and accomplishing more than most people thought was possible back in June.* Explain that today's study in Micah reminds us of that when it comes to our spiritual lives, God still uses humble beginnings to change the world.

Summarize and Challenge

To supplement the activity under Summarize and Challenge, recall the story of the Philadelphia Phillies making the playoffs after such a humble start. Ask: *Do you think teams are overlooked because they're not well known, or because they're not expected to win? Why?* Point out that the humble beginnings of Jesus could lead some people to overlook Him as the Messiah. Say:

Likewise, the simplicity of the gospel can cause people to overlook Him as the only way to God. Ask: How will Jesus's return be different from His humble beginnings? Point out that the only difference between people being judged for their sin or forgiven of sin is their faith in the humble Savior. Challenge the group to consider their relationship with Jesus. If possible, use the Plan of Salvation on the inside cover of the Personal Study Guide to briefly share the gospel. Let adults know that you are available to speak with anyone who has questions about making that decision. Close in prayer.