

Use “The Scene” to introduce “Our Mission,” the High School Sunday school lesson for June 14, 2015. The lesson is found on page 11 of *High School Teacher* by Standard Publishing.

# the SCENE

Viewing the latest news through the lens of Scripture

It hadn't happened for 37 years. Many people had begun to believe it was an impossible feat. Yet despite the slim chances, every year horse owners, trainers, and jockeys ready 3-year-old thoroughbreds to race in the Kentucky Derby, the Preakness Stakes, and the Belmont Stakes to attempt the three-win sweep known as the Triple Crown. On Saturday, June 6, American Pharoah defied the odds and ended the drought, becoming only the 12th ever horse to be a Triple Crown victor.

Why is the Triple Crown so difficult to achieve? “To win the Triple Crown, a colt or filly must prevail over three different race tracks in three different states at three different distances—all within a five-week span. Each of the three races demands a different kind of ability,” explained *Star-Ledger* columnist emeritus Jerry Izenberg. He said the challenge of the Derby is the crowded track with so many horses in the race; the challenge of the Preakness is its short distance requiring speed; and the challenge of the Belmont is its far distance most horses have never run before.

American Pharoah's trainer, Bob Baffert, said, “You just have to wait for one of these superhorses to come around. They don't come around often. And then they have to be tough.” American Pharoah even amazed Baffert. “He moves like no other horse I've ever had. . . . He just moves over the top of the ground. He's quick, he's fast, and he doesn't use a lot of energy. So that's why he dominates. . . . I was in a little bit of awe.”

Baffert believes in these horses so much that he wants to continue to provide for them. He and his wife are giving away a portion of their winnings from the three races to three places: \$50,000 is going to the Permanently Disabled Jockeys Fund, in memory of jockey Bobby Adair; \$50,000 is going to the California Retirement Management Account (CARMA), a nonprofit that raises funds for retired California racehorses; and \$50,000 is going to Old Friends Farm, a thoroughbred retirement center. “I want to share this, I want to make sure that those horses that we really love, we have to take care of them. Win, lose, or draw, I was going to do it,” said Baffert.

Jockey Victor Espinoza, who rode American Pharoah to Triple Crown triumph, is giving away all \$80,000 of his Belmont Stakes earnings to a charity close to his heart—City of Hope, a California cancer treatment center.

*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:*

**Did you watch any of the Triple Crown horse races this year? If so, you have witnessed history! What is it about humans that impresses us to see with our own eyes super things—super feats of strength, super athletes, super brilliant minds, or super animals?**

**It takes a number of people to get a thoroughbred to win one race, much less the rare Triple Crown. What do you think of trainer Bob Baffert's passion for horses? People act based upon their personal missions in life. Consider Baffert's and Espinoza's donations—what do these donations say about the missions these men might have in their lives?**

**Today we will look at some words Jesus said that could be described as the mission statement for His disciples.**



MEETING GOD FACE-TO-FACE

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