



**Genesis 15:1–6; 16:1–6;
17:1–8; 21:1–7**

BIBLICAL PASSAGE

Genesis 15:6

MEMORY VERSE

Abram believed the LORD, and he credited it to him as righteousness.
Genesis 15:6

Teenagers can't often grasp the "big picture." Generally, they don't see ahead of themselves five minutes, let alone a lifetime. As you well know, teens can be prone to moodiness and depression. The one thing teens cling to is hope. When this is missing there will certainly be problems.

1 Corinthians 13:13 says, "And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love." Hope does not seem to get the exposure the other two get. Hope is about what we do not know. Since the greatest unknown is the future, the future holds our greatest hope. What we hope for is a better tomorrow. God's promises are set in the future.

Read the biblical passage listed above. In Genesis 15, God makes a promise only He could make to Abram. God seals the covenant with a ceremony. In the ceremony, God binds Himself to uphold both sides of the covenant. All Abram has to do is believe God, having faith. In Genesis 16, Abram's faith begins to

waver and he takes matters into his own hands, leading to dire consequences. But before his faith wavers, his hope in God's promise wanes. Abram does not see any evidence of God's promise. Instead, he doubts that God will follow through.

If we do not understand God's ability to keep His promises for the future, our hope may collapse. Then we will struggle to have the faith we need to survive the trials of life and temptations of the enemy in the times of waiting. We may begin to question God's professed love of us. So having hope is a pretty big thing.

Even people of faith are tempted by the enemy to doubt God and to try to make things happen in their own way. We show our faith when we exercise our hope and believe God in difficult times even when the wait seems endless.

Protect your hope. It is more important than you think.

FAMILY DEVOTIONAL TIME

Connect . . .

Lead your family to think of a movie you've recently seen together, or that individual members have seen separately, that expressed hope or hopelessness. Was there an element of hope in the end? Discuss: **How do endings without hope make you feel? Why do you think we place so much emphasis on hope in our lives?**

Explore . . .

Have someone read Genesis 15:1–6 and 16:1–6. Have someone else read 17:1–8 and 21:1–7. Read: **God fulfilled His covenant promise to Abraham despite Abraham's attempt to fulfill them his own way.**

Transform . . .

Discuss: **How do we place our hope and faith in Christ on a daily basis? How can we emphasize hope as a family?**

Pray for a refinement of hope. Pray together for a deepening of hope. Pray for ways to emphasize hope on a daily basis in each other's life. Pray that you will see your hope affecting your faith in and love of God.