

The Attackers: Stress minus Faith-Rest Causes Believers to become Whiners; Claiming Promises Restores Order in the Soul; Immutability of Promises; *Epangelía* (Promise): Faith Presupposes that God Keeps His Promises, Rom 4:16–20; to Be Effective Faith-Rest Must Be Absent Doubt but with Assurance of Divine Response; the First Generation's Lack of Faith at Meribah, Heb 4:1–3

29. The root cause for some cases of psychosis is the person's inability to handle stress caused by a lack of faith under pressure.
30. Internal stress is caused by the inability to successfully manage external pressure.
31. Adversity is inevitable and consists of circumstances that present pressure requiring personal management from an internal inventory.
32. Stress is optional and therefore its presence is due to your own personal decision to allow it.
33. The only legitimate and lasting system of managing outside adversity is the accumulation of problem-solving devices taught by the Word of God.
34. For the Spirit-filled Christian, the basic problem-solving device is the faith-rest drill.
35. Claiming promises is the initial phase for countering stress in the soul.

2 Peter 1:4 - ... He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises [**neuter plural of the noun ἐπάγγελμα (*epángelma*)**], so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust. (NASB)

2 Peter 1:4 - He has freely given to us for our advantage a great number of exceedingly valuable promises, so that through these favors you might become partners of divine grace function, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by the lust patterns of the sin nature. (EXT)

36. All major English versions of the Bible translate *epángelma* with "promises." The etymology of this word becomes extremely important to the believer if he is to successfully depend on the divine promises found in Scripture.

The Immutability of Promises:

1. If faith-rest is to be an effective problem-solving device for the Christian, then he must have absolute confidence in its veracity.
2. Failure of faith-rest function lies in the tendency to doubt that the promises apply to you or, worse, to conclude they are not trustworthy.

Romans 4:20 - With respect to the promise [**accusative singular noun ἐπαγγελία (*epangelía*)**] of God, Abraham did not waver in unbelief but grew strong in faith, giving glory to God,

v. 21 - and being fully assured that what God had promised [**consummative perfect passive indicative of the verb ἐπαγγέλλω (*epangéllō*)**], He was also able to perform.

3. From Peter and Paul's passages, we have two Greek nouns and their root verb, each of which is translated into the English as "promise" or its derivatives.

4. *Epángelma* in 2 Peter 1:4 is the neuter noun from the verb **ἐπαγγέλλω (epangéllō)**: To tell or declare. To proclaim as public announcements or decrees; to announce a message, summons, or promise.¹
5. The original definitions of *epangéllō* were “to indicate,” “to declare,” or “to report.” These are the starting-points for discussion of the history of the term.
6. The noun **ἐπαγγελία (epangeliá)** became a technical term at law for the “delivery of a judgment.”
7. A derivative of the verb is **ἐπαγγέλλεσθαι (epangéllesthai)**: “to offer to do something,” “promise,” “to vow,” “to make promises.”

In respect of promises there is often tension between word and deed. He who has been given a promise would like to see it fulfilled. In general promises are comparatively worthless, for they are so seldom kept. Thus, **ἐπαγγελτικός [epangeltikós]** comes to be used for a man who is always promising but never performs. (p. 577)

ἐπαγγελία [epangeliá] in the New Testament: Law and promise. Paul asks concerning the relationship between law and promise, between human action and divine grace (Romans 4), between the demanding will of God and His will to give (Galatians 3). Paul is sure that God keeps His promises. He can execute what He has promised (Romans 4:21). He has the power even to raise the dead and to create out of nothing (Romans 4:17). Not to believe that His promises will be fulfilled, is to do despite to His glory (Romans 4:20). If the promises are to be actualized, they must be loosed from all the human action to which Judaism had related the fulfillment, and made dependent on God alone (Romans 4:16). The promise presupposes the gracious will of the Giver. The Law and the promise are mutually exclusive. The promise is no longer promise if it has anything to do with the Law. The greatness of the divine promises and the certainty of the divine pledge are to shape the life of Christians. (pp. 582–83)

ἐπαγγελία in 2 Peter: The situation in Hebrews has now deteriorated. The fathers have now fallen asleep and nothing has happened. The delay in the promised **parousia [Second Advent]** has thus raised up scoffers: Where is the promise of His coming? (2 Peter 3:4). The answer is: The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance (2 Peter 3:9).² (p. 585)

8. The development of the word *epangeliá* in New Testament Greek indicates that it refers to both prophecies and promises backed by the integrity of God and the immutability of His Word.
9. When a promise is recited in prayer to the Father, its veracity is honored by His grace. The Bible is inerrant and infallible and thus a reliable source of divine counsel in the life of the believer.
10. To make the system work, the believer must have faith in the promises claimed:

¹ Spiros Zodhiates, gen. ed., *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament*, rev. ed. (Chattanooga: TN: AMG Publishers, 1993), 610.

² Julius Schniewind and Gerhard Friedrich, “ἐπαγγέλλω,” in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. Gerhard Kittel, trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1964), 2:577; 582–83; 585.

James 1:5 - If anyone lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

v. 6 - But he must ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind.

Hebrews 11:1 - Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

Hebrews 4:1 - Let us begin to fear [as did the Exodus generation] lest, while a promise remains unclaimed of entering into His rest, any one of you may have come short of it.

v. 2 - For we also have been evangelized, even as they. But the word they heard did not profit them since it was not blended with faith on the part of those having heard.

v. 3 - Now you see, the ones having believed do enter into rest, just as He has said, "As I promised with a solemn oath in My disgust, they shall not enter into My rest,"³ although His works existed from eternity past.

11. The Exodus generation could not enter into Canaan because they did not have the spiritual inventory to do so. There were battles to be fought.
12. Major battles were engaged by the Israelites in their conquest of the land: Victories at Jericho, Ai, and Bethel completed the first campaign.
13. A coalition army was organized by Adóni-zédek, the king of Jerusalem and it included four other kings: Hóram, king of Hébron, Píram, king of Jármuth, Japhía, king of Láchish, and Débir, king of Églon (Joshua 10:3). Joshua and the Israelite army defeated these five kings at Gíbeon.

³ Do not harden your hearts, as at Meribah, as in the day of Massah in the wilderness, "When your fathers tested Me, they tried Me, though they had seen My work. For forty years I loathed that generation, and said they are a people who err in their heart, and they do not know My ways. Therefore I swore in My anger, truly they shall not enter into My rest" (Psalm 95:8–11).