

# SEED & BREAD

FOR THE SOWER    ISA. 55: 1 0    FOR THE EATER  
BRIEF BIBLICAL MESSAGES FROM

**THE WORD OF TRUTH MINISTRY**

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## WHAT DOES "TA PANTA" MEAN?

In the *King James Version* of Ephesians 1:11 we read of the purpose of God "**who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will.**" This statement naturally raises the question as to what is meant by "all things." Just what does this take in, what does it include? Does it include all evil as well as all good? This passage is constantly being cited by many as an impregnable proof text that every detail of life in this universe has been determined in advance by God, the good as well as the evil. Those who hold this idea do not hesitate to claim that every move of man, his thoughts, his motives, and his acts are all predetermined by God and that they must come to pass according as He has already willed.

I came upon this doctrine in the first year of my Christian life. My father and I had greatly benefited at that time by reading certain small pamphlets written by Arthur W. Pink, and we had sought out more of his writings. One of these was *The Sovereignty of God*, which my father happened to read first, and he was somewhat disturbed by it. After I read it, I suggested to him that we did not need to be in any hurry about either accepting or rejecting his teaching - that we had only recently become students of God's Word and we had better wait until we knew more about the Bible. He agreed, but we did not drop the subject as I went on to examine with care other writings by Mr. Pink along this same line.

In one study he made use of 1 Cor. 11: 12 which says: "**For as the woman is of the man, even so is the man also by the woman, but all things of God.**" Concerning this he said: "All is according to His eternal purpose which He purposed in Himself before the foundation of the world. My friends, it was predestined by God before the world began that I

should occupy this pulpit tonight, and that you should sit in those chairs tonight, and that I should speak on the subject I am speaking on tonight, and that you should hear it. It was all fixed by God before this world began, and if any of you question that, I bring you back to the Scriptures, 'All things are of God.' "

The utter fallacy of Mr. Pink's reasoning was easy for me to see. There must have been many meetings going on that Sunday in Sydney, Australia, where, the words set forth above were spoken: High Church, Low Church, Christian Science, Catholic, Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, and even spiritistic seances. If Pink's teaching were true, then it must have been predestined by God before the world began that every preacher, priest, rabbi, and medium, should also stand in their pulpits that day and give a message that had been predetermined by God. This of course could only lead to great confusion, but I suppose it was held that the confusion was also predestined by God, which would make God the author of this confusion, something which I knew was denied in Scripture (1 Cor. 14:33). Therefore, I rejected Mr. Pink's ideas and determined that before I ever assented to any such teaching, I would need to have unimpeachable proof that it was in complete harmony with everything declared in the Word of God; especially such passages as God's word in Jer. 23:21: "I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran: I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied;" and the words of our Lord to the Pharisees, "You are out of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do" (John 8:44).

Some years later I came upon the writings of Mr. A. E. Knoch, the translator of *The Concordant Version*, and found in them such statements as: "All is out of God. The bad as well as the good," and "There are many passages in God's Word that bear the truth that all things - the evil as well as the good - find their source in the one and only God, Who alone can originate." Upon careful examination of these "many passages" I found that they all contained the peculiar Greek phrase *ta panta*, a phrase concerning which Mr. Knoch showed both ambivalence and confusion. In the sublinear of his version, for which he claimed exquisite accuracy, he sometimes translated it "the all" and in other occurrences "the universe." Then in his version he would render it "all these." This started me on a study of *ta panta*, as I determined to know what this phrase meant when used by the Spirit of God. This study has now continued for more than forty years and has been profitable to many.

In consideration of this phrase a few simple facts need to be recognized. The Greek word for "all" is *pas*. The neuter form is *pan*, and the accusative is *panta*. The form *panta* is found 269 times in the Greek New Testament, but in thirty-seven of these occurrences it is preceded by the definite article *ta*. This gives us *ta panta*, the subject of our study.

A cursory review of the thirty-seven occurrences will show that to a certain extent, this is a Pauline phrase. Mark uses it but once, and John uses it twice in Revelation, but all other occurrences are found in the writings of Paul.

Out of all occurrences of *ta panta* the first effort of the student should be to find one passage in which the meaning is so clear that even "wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein," then apply this meaning to all other places where the same phrase is found. As we trace down the list, Colossians 3:8 stands out at once. Here Paul says: "**But now ye also put off all these (*ta panta*); anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.**"

This passage shows clearly what Paul meant when he used the phrase *ta panta*. Here, the translator is almost forced to translate it correctly by rendering it "all these," which is about the only way it could be translated unless one deliberately ignores the Greek. This passage shows it does not mean "the universe," and that it cannot mean "everything without exception or distinction." Even A. E. Knoch translates it "all these" in this occurrence, although he has already translated it "the universe" in three other occurrences in the first chapter.

On the basis of this one passage, when considered in the light of all other occurrences, we can say that *ta panta* is a demonstrative expression, idiomatic in character, referring back to something which has just been said or pointing forward to something about to be mentioned. By "demonstrative" I mean serving to point out or identify, and by "idiomatic" I mean an expression that is peculiar to itself in grammatical construction, the meaning of which cannot be derived from the conjoined meaning of its elements. It can be best rendered in English by using "all this" or "all these" depending upon whether the subject requires a singular or plural construction. It always points to what it set forth in the context. This can be seen in every passage where it is found. We will note some of these.

**Mark 4:11.** In the first occurrence it has been translated correctly- "all these things (*ta panta*) are done in parables."

**Rom. 8:32.** This should read "with Him also freely give us all these" (*ta panta*), referring to the various blessings set forth in the context.

**Rom. 11:36.** "For out of Him, and through Him, and to Him are all these" (*ta panta*), pointing to the works and ways of God set forth in chapters 9, 10, and 11. I refuse to divorce this statement from its subject matter.

**1 Cor. 8:6.** This should read: "Nevertheless, to us there is one God, the Father, out of whom is all this (*ta panta*) and we for Him, even one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom is all this (*ta panta*), and we through Him." The reference is to the position and the knowledge of the Corinthian believers. All this was out of God, the Father.

**1 Cor 11: 12.** The last part of this verse should be translated, "Yet all this (*ta panta*) is out of God." In the context of this passage Paul has stated ten details of the divine arrangement God has established in regard to men and women. Then, following this, lest any should think that this is a human arrangement, imposed by the males upon the females and standing only in social custom, Paul declares, "Yet all this (*ta panta*) is out of God."

**1 Cor. 12:19.** Read here: "Now if all these (*ta panta*) were one member, where is the body?"

**1 Cor. 15:27,28.** Here we have a passage in which *panta* is found three times, *ta panta* three times, and *en pasin* once. I would translate this as follows: "For He has subjected all (*panta*) under His feet. But when it says All (*panta*) is subject, it is evident that this does not include Him who subjects all these (*ta panta*) to Him. Now, whenever all these (*ta panta*) are subjected to Him, then the Son Himself will be subject to Him who subjected all these (*ta panta*) to Him that God may be everything (*panta*) in everyone (*en pasin*)." When this passage is examined with care, it provides an excellent demonstration that *ta panta* is a demonstrative term, idiomatic in character, referring to something which has just been mentioned.

**Eph. 1:11.** I would translate the final part of this passage "according to the purpose of the One who is executing all this (*ta panta*) according to the counsel of His own will." This is the passage which is constantly used as the supreme proof text by those who insist that everything that has ever happened in the history of the universe has been determined in advance by God. Scripture denies this and this passage does not declare it. It has to do with the present operations of God. Men of good will who read these lines should pause and give thanks to God that they no longer need to believe an erroneous translation that makes the awful, ugly, realities of life to be out of God.

To examine in full all passages where *ta panta* is found would require about forty times the space I have used here. The best I can do now is furnish the student with a complete list of passages where this phrase is found and he can take it from there. These are Mark 4:11; Rom. 8:32, 11:36; 1 Cor. 8:6(2), 11:12, 12:6, 12:19, 15:27, 15:28(2); 2 Cor. 4:15, 5:18; Gal. 3:22; Eph. 1:10, 1:11, 1:23,3:9,4:10,4:15,5:13, Phil. 3:8,3:21; Col. 1:16 (2), 1:17, 1:20, 3:8, 3:11; 1 Tim. 6:13; Heb. 1:3, 2:8, 2:10 (2); Rev. 4:11, 5:13.

The student will find that to understand the true meaning of *ta panta* will shed light on every passage in which it is found. He may also find an overlay of traditional interpretations that do nothing more than obscure the true meaning. These will need to be removed and set aside. And let all remember that if any one thing in Scripture can be found which is declared not to be of God, or not to be out of God, none can say that everything is out of Him.

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