

THE UPWARD CALL

*Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet;
but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead,
I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God
IN CHRIST JESUS.*

(Philippians 3.13-14 NASB)

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THE ALL—TA PANTA

If you have read much of my recent material, it should not be too difficult to discern that I greatly appreciate the word **all**. Though it is a very small word with only three letters, it is a mighty comprehensive word and one that speaks of the very heart of God. God's purpose of the eons, and even beyond, is summed up in this word, for He has purposed that His Son, our Lord Jesus, shall be **all in all** so that He, that is, God the Father shall be **all in all**. Some reading my material might become a bit weary of me stating this glorious fact, but in a day in which very few are teaching on this matter, I feel it is my obligation to keep it before anyone who has an ear to hear.

In the New Testament, the word *all* and the expression *all things* (appearing about 110 times), are most often translated from the Greek word *panta*, which is a neuter plural form that refers to "wholly, together, in all ways, in all things" (*Vine's Expository Dictionary*). In other words, *panta* is a very comprehensive word, just as the word *all* is in the English, which, as an adjective, refers to "the whole extent or quantity of or number of," "every one of," or "the greatest possible; as much as possible." For example, Paul declared: **God our Savior, Who will have all [*panta*] men to be saved** (1 Timothy 2.3-4 KJV). By the way, is anyone excluded from God's all? No!

A search of New Testaments written in transliterated Greek reveals that the expression *ta panta* appears about 34 times, depending on the particular Greek version. The word *ta* is most often translated as the definite article *the*. *Ta panta* is generally translated as *all things*, which, in its own right, is a very comprehensive expression. However, in some cases, especially in reference to what God is doing through His Son, one could make the case that a good rendering of *ta panta* is *the all*, for it speaks clearly of the comprehensiveness of God's purpose. In other words, we could say that God's purpose is **the all**. It might sound like a strange expression, but really it is not because it intensifies the word *all* to include everything and exclude nothing.

Now, to make the point, I am simply going to list some of the *ta panta* references with a brief explanation and leave it for the reader to discern. As a note of interest, of the 34 references, 26 are discovered in Paul's epistles. If Hebrews is included in his material, then the number jumps to 32, nearly the entire list. For me, this is one of the proofs that Paul indeed is the writer of Hebrews.

God is the Creator and Builder of **the all**.

... to bring to light what is the administration of the mystery which for ages has been hidden in God who created all things [*the all, ta panta*].... (Ephesians 3.9 NASB)

For by Him all things [*the all, ta panta*] were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things [*the all, ta panta*] have been created through Him and for Him. (Colossians 1.16 NASB)

For every house is built by someone, but the builder of all things [*the all, ta panta*] is God. (Hebrews 3.4 NASB)

"Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things [*the all, ta panta*], and because of Your will they existed, and were created." (Revelation 4.11 NASB)

As if this is not enough, Paul wants us to know that **the all** is from, by, through, and for God and His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. In other words, God is not merely the Creator of the all, but God and His Son are intimately joined to **the all**.

Yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom are all things [*the all, ta panta*] and we exist for Him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things [*the all, ta panta*], and we exist through Him. (1 Corinthians 8.6 NASB)

For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things [*the all, ta panta*]. (Romans 11.36 NASB)

For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things [*the all, ta panta*], and through whom are all things [*the all, ta panta*], in bringing many sons to glory, to perfect the author of their salvation through sufferings. (Hebrews 2.10 NASB)

Not only is God the Creator, but He is the life-giver of *the all*.

I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things [*the all, ta panta*].... (1 Timothy 6.13 NASB)

Also, He not only creates and gives life, but His purpose is and will be worked out in *the all*.

Also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things [*the all, ta panta*] after the counsel of His will.... (Ephesians 1.11 NASB)

Turning specifically to Christ, Paul declares that He existed before all things came into being. After all, He is the Creator and in Him *the all* holds together, that is, by the word of His power He keeps *the all* together. We could say that He keeps, sustains, and preserves *the all*.

He is before all things [*panton*], and in Him all things [*the all, ta panta*] hold together. (Colossians 1.17 NASB)

And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things [*the all, ta panta*] by the word of His power. (Hebrews 1.3 NASB)

In a most amazing statement, Paul declares to all who have an ear to hear that Christ who created *the all* will also fill *the all* with His very life, and He will begin with the ecclesia, which is His spiritual, glorified body.

He who descended is Himself also He who ascended far above all the heavens, so that He might fill all things [*the all, ta panta*]. (Ephesians 4.10 NASB)

And He put all things [*kai panta*] in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church [*ecclesia*], which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all [*the all, ta panta*] in all [*pasin*]. (Ephesians 1.22-23 NASB)

How will He do this? Through reconciliation; *the all* has been shut up under sin so that *the all* will be reconciled back to God through the One who fills *the all*. Oh, the glory of God's purpose and plan!

But the Scripture has shut up everyone [*the all, ta panta*] under sin, so that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. (Galatians 3.22 NASB)

Through Him to reconcile all things [*the all, ta panta*] to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven. (Colossians 1.20 NASB)

How will Christ complete this great plan? He will sum up or gather up *the all* in Himself.

An administration suitable to the fullness of the times, that is, the summing up of all things [*the all, ta panta*] in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth. (Ephesians 1.10 NASB)

Paul actually defines *the all* for us. *The all* is everything in the heavens and on the earth. In other words, *the all* is God's entire creation as we know it and, most likely, as we don't know it, for it includes the unseen as well.

There is nothing left out of *the all* of God. Nothing! Praise God!