

### Expository Jotting — "Accepted in the Beloved."

Edward Dennett.

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As to the meaning of this phrase we cite a note from the New Translation by J.N.D. He says, after giving the Greek word, "taken us into His favour," "put us into a position of grace and favour." "Accepted us" is too formal a doctrine here, not so general as χαριτόω (the Greek word used). But "shewn us grace or favour" does not give the force of the word. "In the Beloved" (*mark this sentence*) is then merely in an instrument; whereas it is in the Beloved that we enter into favour. If we accept ἡς, which seems the best attested reading (and the reading, we may add, on which much has lately been founded), we should say "the favour or acceptance in grace, which he has freely bestowed upon us."

This note, like everything written by man, must be weighed and tested by the teaching of Scripture; but while insisting on this, we cannot forget that it contains the judgment of one whose life was devoted to the study of the Word. Still the reader, if a child of God, has the unction of the Holy One (1 John 2: 20), and has the means therefore of ascertaining the mind of God. It may help simple souls to point out that the whole question is summed up in the sentence to which we have called special attention. It is, whether this "favour or acceptance in grace" flows to us through the Beloved, or whether it is in Him that we enter into this blessed place. There is a wide difference between the two things. If this favour only comes to us through Christ, blessed as that would be, we might still be, as far as we understand, on the same footing before God as the Old Testament saints as to our standing; whereas if it is in the Beloved we have entered into this wonderful position, it proclaims that we are in Him before God; that "in Him" marks the true place of every believer, and in Him in the place where He is; and that consequently we are, through the ineffable grace of God, in the same position of nearness to God as the Beloved Himself, that, in a word, the place that Christ has (not His supreme place at the right hand of God, but His place in the heavenlies, as the One who has died and risen again) is now the place of every believer.

To determine which of these interpretations is correct, let the reader in prayerful dependence ponder the opening verses of the epistle, especially the third, fourth, and fifth, all of which lead up to the statement we are considering. The secret of much of the prevailing confusion lies in not clearly seeing that God has closed up all His dealings with man in the flesh in the cross of Christ, that the first man — meaning by that term Adam - Adam as the expression of man in the flesh, has been dealt with once and for all in the death of Christ, and that when Christ ascended up on high there was a totally new thing — a Man, albeit He is the Son of God, in the glory of God. Hence a Christian does not follow the order of Adam, the first man of the earth earthy; but he is after the order of the Second Man from heaven. (First Corinthians 15: 47, 48.) He is therefore heavenly in origin and character; heaven is the place to which he now belongs (and on this account he is a pilgrim and a stranger in this world); and he waits only for the time when, as he has borne the image of the earthy, he will also bear the image of the heavenly. We hesitate not to add, that if this truth is lost sight of, Christianity itself cannot be understood. Edward Dennett