

BOOK REVIEWS

Barclay, William. *New Testament Words*. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1974. 301 pp. Paperback, \$3.95.

This volume combines the 37 articles of *A New Testament Wordbook* (n.d.) with the 24 articles of *More New Testament Words* (1958). These word studies began as a series of articles in the *British Weekly* by the Professor of Divinity and Biblical Criticism at Glasgow. According to the author, "These articles might be defined as an attempt to popularize the Greek dictionary, and to teach Greek to people who do not know Greek." Barclay has the unique ability to popularize the results of biblical scholarship and his use of this ability has been his most significant contribution. He has selected some of the great words of the NT and by tracing their meaning, where they occur in classical Greek, the LXX, Hellenistic Greek, and the papyri, has endeavored to show what these words meant to those who first read them.

This work is now published as a companion to the 17 volumes of Barclay's "Daily Study Bible." This series consists of Barclay's own translation of the books of the NT with a popular commentary arranged in small units suitable for daily reading. Larry K. Drake has prepared an index to the words discussed in this companion volume, as well as an index of references to the "Daily Study Bible" volumes where the word is mentioned. The index is arranged according to key English words translating the Greek words which are given in transliteration.

Barclay reveals a thorough knowledge of the Greek classical writers, but this knowledge has in one instance, at least, proved to be a pitfall. In his article on *aiōnios* "eternal," he reads into the NT Plato's concept of eternity, as contrasted with time. Plato conceives of eternity as "that which is above and beyond time" (p. 34). After referring to a number of passages in which *aiōnios* occurs, Barclay asserts, "In all these passages we must remember the essential meaning of *aiōnios*. *Aiōnios* is the word of eternity as opposed to and contrasted with time" (p. 36). But Oscar Cullmann (*Christ and Time*, [London, 1951], pp. 45-49), for example, has clearly shown that we are not to think of eternity in the Bible as the Greeks did. The biblical concept of eternity is not timelessness but unlimited and unending time.

But with most of Barclay's studies we have no quarrel. Students who do not know Greek but want to learn about the meaning of NT Greek words will find Barclay's book stimulating and helpful.