

there may be experiences that exclude the possibility of Christian belief being true. Some such phenomena, called defeaters, are addressed in the last few chapters.

*Knowledge and Christian Belief* presents its reader with a fulminant and very convincing philosophical defense of Christian belief in the face of its modern and postmodern opponents. This book is not only thought provoking and informative, but also relaxing to a certain degree. Platinga confidently and calmly puts citations by Richard Dawkins next to Scripture and shows the philosophical shallowness of the young angry atheists and some of their predecessors. Platinga does not need to raise his voice and he does not take refuge in spurious arguments taken from fields in which he has no expertise.

There is one issue however, that makes his main thesis, the Aquinas/Calvin model, somewhat difficult for the non-Calvinist portion of Christianity. Platinga claims that belief is not subject to our voluntary decision and can therefore not be subject to moral categories (16–17). Thus, we believe what we believe and there is nothing we can do about it. This fits perfectly of course with his emphasis on the *sensus divinitatis* and the working of the Holy Spirit that cause faith in us. In good Calvinist tradition, this causation of faith is sufficient to make us believe and is not dependent on any decision of ours. If this is the case, there is no real reason to search for external arguments to convince others of my beliefs. Platinga does not spell it out, but by implication (and by association with the Calvinist tradition) the reader is led to assume that the *sensus divinitatis* is not a universal phenomenon but is found only in that portion of the populace that accepts the basic teachings of Christianity. Nevertheless, even though man is not capable of rejecting or choosing God, but is chosen passively, blame is put on those who do not believe.

The idea that beliefs are formed involuntarily is central to the A/C model, and thus, the model will not easily pass in Arminian circles. However, the concept of a *sensus divinitatis* as a cognitive function that produces faith in God is not foreign to Arminians, even though we would insist that it is possible to shake it off. In addition, the subsequent argument that our beliefs may have warrant after all remains in place and may prove useful. Other arguments are not mentioned in this review, but are nevertheless deserving of careful consideration.

Therefore, *Knowledge and Christian Belief* is a good read, especially for those who identify as Calvinist, but also for everyone else. It is creative, thought provoking, and not too difficult to read.

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SeEVERS, Boyd. *Warfare in the Old Testament: The Organization, Weapons, and Tactics of Ancient Near Eastern Armies*. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Academic, 2013. 328 pp. Hardcover, \$34.99.

The need for a comprehensive, up-to-date volume in English covering warfare in the context of ancient Israel has been felt for some time. Yet recently published works on this topic have generally confined their treatment to

narrower time periods, such as the 2003 book by Richard A. Gabriel, which only covers Israel's military history down through David's reign (*The Military History of Ancient Israel*. Westport: Praeger) or Brad E. Kelle's useful volume (*Ancient Israel at War 853–586 BC*. Oxford: Osprey, 2007), which provides a more visually oriented approach to warfare, fortified cities, and fortresses, but focuses solely on the mid ninth through early sixth centuries B.C. The book under review comprises a revision and expansion of the author's 1998 doctoral dissertation submitted to Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, which, given the immense breadth of this subject coupled with the enormous database of currently available information, is an exceptionally broad topic for the comprehensive treatment necessary in a PhD thesis. Yet the author, Boyd Seevers, effectively presents an admirable synthesis of the relevant archaeological and historical sources, shedding light into how warfare was conducted during the Old Testament. And in this published form of his doctoral work he does so in just over 300 pages.

The work is comprised of nine chapters. The first five chapters focus largely on introductory and methodological content. Within this introduction, Seevers adeptly weaves a fictional biographical sketch (based upon the conquest narratives in the book of Joshua) into his discussion, which follows the exploits of an Israelite soldier named Judah, in order to familiarize the reader with the military organization, strategies, and weaponry utilized during the Late Bronze Age. A brief survey of Israel's military history during the period of the Judges (Iron Age I) and the later monarchy (Iron Age II) follows. The final four chapters examine the armies of Israel's antagonists and their appearances in the Old Testament narratives; specifically those of Egypt, Philistia, Assyria, Babylonia, and Persia. As before, Seevers creates additional personal accounts of warriors campaigning with each of these groups, basing his fictitious stories upon historically attested names and events. Comparable treatments of Aram-Damascus and Moab are lacking but needed as both of these political entities had repeated clashes with Israel and, to a lesser extent, with Judah during the tenth-eighth centuries B.C.

The organization of the book is well thought out and its progression flows easily from page to page, which is essential for a broad reading audience. The abundant illustrations, line drawings, and maps are of exceptional quality and greatly assist in understanding the weaponry, events, and personalities discussed in the text.

Nevertheless, there are some noticeable lacunae in the book. The David and Goliath account provides one of the most detailed descriptions of armor and weaponry (1 Sam 17) and while this event is noted and briefly discussed by Seevers (e.g.; pp. 60–65, 164, 169–72), a number of recent studies providing important supporting evidence for a late Iron Age I historical setting for this famous event, notably the conclusions by Jeffrey R. Zorn (Reconsidering Goliath: An Iron Age I Philistine Chariot Warrior; *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 360 [2010]: 1–22) are regrettably neither discussed in the text nor cited in the suggested reading list.

Other military related aspects overlooked by Seevers include the symbolic factors behind the act of (partially) breaking down the walls of an enemy's city, as demonstrated by both Jehoshaphat of Israel and Uzziah of Judah (2 Kgs 14:13; 2 Chr 25:23; 26:6) and more importantly, Uzziah's enigmatic defensive inventions (בְּשׂוּחַ תְּבַשְׂחָם תּוֹנְבִשְׂחָהּ; devices, the devising of devisers [2 Chr 26:15]; 294) are not mentioned. The latter object seems to indicate an early form of the catapult, yet some scholars suggest that this mysterious phrase may refer to fortified platforms protruding from the top of a city wall that provide defenders with a wider field of fire and the ability to hurl (drop) projectiles directly on top of the attackers massed below them. Moreover, the famous "Ban" is only mentioned in passing, with a note citing the Mesha Stele for comparison (33 n. 15, 75). Seevers neither explains the term nor expounds on its theological interpretation, whether literal, hyperbolic, symbolic, or otherwise.

I also failed to find any significant reference to the military use of towers in Seevers' book. Towers were invaluable for sending and receiving communications (via fire beacons) throughout Israel and Judah (p. 73; attested also in Scripture: Jer 6:1; 34:7) as well as serving as lookouts and redoubts for the surrounding population (A. Mazar, *Iron Age Fortresses in the Judean Hills*. *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* 114 [1982]: 87–109). See the updated synthesis by A. Faust (*The Archaeology of Israelite Society in Iron Age II*. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2012, 178–89). Strategically located towers on the summits of hills and ridges surrounding both Samaria and Jerusalem during the Iron Age II served a similar purpose (see A. Zertal, "The Heart of the Monarchy: Pattern of Settlement and Historical Considerations of the Israelite Kingdom of Samaria," in *Studies in the Archaeology of the Iron Age in Israel and Jordan*, ed. A. Mazar, *JOSTSup* 331 [Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2001], 51–60; A. Mazar, "Iron Age I and II Towers at Giloh and the Israelite Settlement," *IEJ* 40 [1990]: 96–101; G. Barkay, A. Fantalkin, and O. Tal, "A Late Iron Age Fortress North of Jerusalem," *BAŠOR* 328 [2002]: 49–71; and B. Arubas and H. Goldfus, "The Site at Binyanei Ha-Uma and its Role in the Settlement Network Surrounding Jerusalem from the Iron Age until the End of the Byzantine Period," *ErIsr* 28 [2007]: 14–20, 9\*–10\*).

The book would have benefited from a study of the functionality of forts and border defenses, for instance a discussion and interpretation of Rehoboam's fortification efforts (2 Chr 11:5–12), which Seevers only mentions in passing (69). The ebb and flow of Judah's control over the strategic Negeb and Negeb Highlands in the light of archaeological and epigraphic finds at various sites in these regions would also be a valuable addition. For a detailed examination of this topic, the reader must look elsewhere. The recent volume by Samuel Rocca (*The Fortifications of Ancient Israel and Judah 1200–586 BC*. Oxford: Osprey, 2010), as well as a number of more technical reports and papers readily provide the necessary data, but a summary treatment here would naturally be preferable.

Because Seevers devotes a substantial part of the book to presenting background information of relevance to the biblical narratives, which is well

known to established scholars, the primary targeted audiences are undoubtedly students and interested lay persons. The personal sketches he inserts into his narrative greatly reinforce, if not largely fulfill this objective.

While neither exhaustive in its treatment of warfare in ancient Israel nor containing extensive bibliographies for further study, Seevers' book provides a well written and superbly illustrated introduction to the topic of warfare and consequently deserves a place on the required reading lists for both undergraduate and seminary courses that examine related aspects of Israelite and Old Testament history.

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Tabbernee, William ed., *Early Christianity in Context: An Exploration across Cultures and Continents*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2014. 640 pp. Hardcover, \$42.99.

*Early Christianity in Context*, edited by William Tabbernee, a specialist of the history and archaeology of the Montanist movement, makes a broad contribution to the study of early Christianity. In the table of contents, the reader will notice that this lengthy 602-page work is divided according to ten geographic regions. Several specialists have contributed to each chapter in the early Christianity manifest each region. After the Introduction, ten chapters cover The Roman Near East, Beyond the Eastern Frontier, The Caucasus, Deep into China, The World of the Nile, Roman North Africa, Asia Minor and Cyprus, The Balkan Peninsula, Italy and Environs, and The Western Provinces and Beyond. After the Table of Contents, there is a list of illustrations and an extensive list of abbreviations from the vast amount of primary sources and journals utilized for research for each article. The main body of the book ends on page 475, after which there is a sixty-one page bibliography and a list of contributors. Finally there are two indices: the first, a subject index; and the second, an index of ancient writings.

The Introduction, written by William Tabbernee, states the purpose for the present volume. According to Tabbernee, the purpose of this book is to focus on the earliest available "material evidence" of Christianity, literary and non-literary. This enables the reader to study the history of early Christianity in a particular location as well as to get a glimpse into the cultural context in which Christianity developed, whether it be in China, Palestine, or the British Isles. Because of the scope of this volume, each chapter is not intended to be exhaustive, but reflects what Tabbernee describes as the "current trends in the study of early Christianity and Late Antiquity as well as the broader movement within the humanities to take account of diverse cultures." Each chapter contains black-and-white maps of the particular regions as well as black-and-white photos of various archaeological remains of architecture or inscriptions. Each chapter is written by multiple authors, whose names are written at the bottom of the first page of every chapter. This review will focus on two chapters of interest to the author.