

What does the quoted statement mean? How is it related? Is there any textual or archaeological evidence for this? Perhaps this statement is an inefficiency of the format. It would have been helpful if the architecture discussed had been more clearly dated, IA2a, b, or c rather than IA2. Finally, I would have preferred that this and the other pottery chapters have tables or charts showing the percentage of different vessel types. This should at least be done in the following volumes.

The final section consists of one chapter on the objects from the site. After an explanation of terminology and classification systems, the following object categories are addressed: architectural objects, beads, ceramics, coins, cooking/food preparation items, cosmetic utensils, cultic objects, figurines, flints, game pieces/tokens, Roman glass, horns, jewelry, metals, roulette, scarabs, seals/stamps, shells, specialty objects, textile-related objects, tools, trade/imports, weapons, and weights. After a brief description of the object type, there is a small picture of each object accompanied by a number, designation, and chart showing where the object was found. This chapter is essentially an appendix, very handy for getting a thorough idea of finds from the site, with the anticipation of a small finds volume to come (or specialist studies of these finds incorporated into the reports on the different periods).

For anyone looking for an introduction to the site of Tall al-Hammam, this volume has value. The color illustrations, maps, and photographs are outstanding. The abundance of pottery drawings for a site so important for the Early and Intermediate Bronze Ages also has value, despite the reservations about the quality of the drawings mentioned above. However, for the site to truly have a “remarkable” impact in scholarship, archaeologists and other experts must wait for the coming volumes to see what the stratigraphy of the site actually looks like, and how the pottery published here ties in with those strata.

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Edwards, Ruth B. *Discovering John: Content, Interpretation, Reception*.
Discovering Biblical Texts. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015. xiv + 258 pp.
Softcover. USD 22.00.

Ruth B. Edwards, an honorary senior lecturer at the University of Aberdeen and priest of the Scottish Episcopal Church, updates her previous edition of the book, *Discovering John* (London: SPCK, 2003), by taking under consideration the developments and emphases in Johannine studies over the last decade. The *Discovering Biblical Texts* series claims to provide readers with “comprehensive, up-to-date and student-friendly introductions to the books of the Bible” (ii), a task that Edwards fulfills with class. She provides the reader with a summary of the different responses that the book of John has received throughout Christianity, and covers issues ranging from authorship and historical setting to theological and sociological concerns raised by the Gospel. Her interaction with scholarship is eloquent and polished, and her ability to succinctly and thoroughly portray different views of a particular topic is remarkable. She follows the historical-critical method, demonstrates

familiarity, and engages with reader-response criticism, narrative criticism, and liberationist and feminist approaches, all the while aiming to focus mainly on the theological content of the Gospel and its dynamic message.

After introducing the Gospel of John by summarizing the story of Jesus in the book and commenting on its uniqueness in relation to the Synoptics (ch. 1), Edwards explores the different ways the Gospel has been read in the past and in contemporary approaches (ch. 2). The next three chapters (chs. 3–5) cover background issues such as authorship, use of sources, and historical setting. Edwards argues that there is not sufficient evidence to convincingly identify both the “beloved disciple” in John, and the author(s), asserting that the author was most likely not an eyewitness, but probably had access to eyewitness testimonies or traditions. As to the historicity of the Gospel, she holds that the book presumably reflects a combination of historical events with added details and reinterpreted or created dialogues. It is coordinated in such a way as to convey the primary theological purpose of the Gospel in light of the author’s understanding of Jesus and inspiration of the Holy Spirit. According to Edwards, the Gospel had a broad intended audience, from Jews to Christians to Hellenists, and, though a late first-century date of publication seems most plausible, no solid case can be made in favor of a specific place of composition.

Chapters six through nine focus on the Christology of John. Edwards notably calls attention to the fact that biblical theology “is not propositional, but rather experiential and ‘narrative’” (59). Thus, Jesus’s miracles that are narrated in John and the different titles that are attributed to him reveal his unique relationship with God and suggest divinity with the intent of triggering faith. Similarly, John’s portrayal of the passion story and the glorified Jesus, as well as the highly valued prologue, provide the Christological framework of the Gospel. A brief analysis of the characters in the book of John in chapter ten shows that they are contrasted to Jesus, have “functional” roles, and, most importantly, are witnesses to Jesus.

The final two chapters discuss anti-Semitism/anti-Judaism and replacement theology, both of which the book of John has been accused of fostering. Edwards convincingly argues that these are unfounded claims, and these misuses of the Gospel can be counteracted by accurately understanding its context, nature, and purpose. After a concluding chapter in which Edwards reviews the main discussions on John and its primary achievements, two excurses are included to examine text-critical issues and problems with Richard Bauckham’s eyewitness theory.

The addition of this second excursus, not found in the first edition of the book, as well as the lengthy deliberation on the same topic in chapters three through five, reveals one of Edwards’s main concerns: the authorship and composition of John. She assesses the different arguments regarding the “beloved disciple” as the author, the apostolicity of the Gospel, and internal and external evidence in favor of eyewitnesses, and comes to the following conclusions: “the ‘beloved disciple’ cannot be convincingly identified with any specific individual from early Christianity” (32); claims to eyewitness material

are questionable; and there are insufficient grounds for identifying the author as the apostle John, son of Zebedee. Though she should be commended for her ability to interact with and assess different views and sources in such limited space, Edwards appears to give little value to considerations regarding the importance of authorship in Antiquity. While it might be true today that “a book’s value does not depend on knowing who wrote it, but on its intrinsic worth” (32), the same cannot be said with reference to a first-century historical setting. Yes, pseudonymity was fairly common, but acceptable only in certain literary genres and in certain circles. A number of pseudepigraphal narrative works, such as *The Acts of Paul and Thecla* and the *Gospel of Peter*, were clearly rejected by the early church for bearing a false name. No such censure is found with reference to the author of the Gospel of John as to compromise its widespread acceptance. The fact that Eusebius does not question the provenance of John is even more significant, because he is especially concerned with discussing the problematic works, as in the case of the *Gospel of Peter*. The external evidence for the Gospel’s composition might be late and unconvincing in Edwards’s view, but the importance of such debates in the early church for determining a book’s value cannot be overlooked.

When it comes to matters such as feminist and liberationist approaches, and claims of anti-Semitism/anti-Judaism and supersessionism, Edwards’s assessment is remarkably balanced. She is not afraid to emphasize what the text says, even if it might seem “unpopular.” For example, she points to the depiction of women in the Gospel, not in stereotypical terms and/or as subservient to men, but as sharing the faith in and devotion to Christ. She suggests that this should not lead to the methodologically dangerous practice of drawing “inferences about the proper roles for men and women in ministry from their portrayals in the Gospels” (130). While John should not be accused of anti-Judaism or supersessionism, the Gospel does denounce some “Jews” for their ungodly attitudes and practices, following the Jewish literary motif of judgment (140–141), and presents Christ in terms of “fulfillment” (154–155). In our society of “political correctness,” it is easy to read certain principles into the text and to use it for ideological purposes without truly understanding the historical context, the ancient standards, and the original intent of John. Edwards is able to masterfully uphold the message of John, critique misguided claims, and still maintain a respectful attitude towards other religions and people groups.

That being said, *Discovering John* did seem somewhat wanting in terms of “conveying [the Gospel’s] life-enhancing message, still relevant to the Church and the contemporary world” (23). Only four of the thirteen chapters were exclusively dedicated to the content, message, and theology of the book of John, and even then, the “life-enhancing message” was presented in a rather casual manner. Still, the book is a valuable resource for students becoming familiar with the world of Johannine scholarship. Written in simple and clear language, the reader is provided with a comprehensive introduction that will bring to mind new perspectives in studying the book of John. At the same

time, the reader will be taught to cherish and honor the original message of this fascinating Gospel.

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KELDIE PAROSCHI

Fantalkin, Alexander, and Oren Tal. *Tell Qudadi: An Iron Age IIB Fortress on the Central Mediterranean Coast of Israel (with References to Earlier and Later Periods)*. *Colloquia Antiqua* 15. Leuven: Peeters, 2015. xx + 242 pp. Hardcover. EUR 84.00.

In this archaeological report, Fantalkin and Tal have collected many surviving records, finds, and other relevant archeological data, publishing the results of two excavations at a small coastal site located at the mouth of the Yarkon River (now part of greater Tel-Aviv). Initially, P. L. O. Guy directed excavations on behalf of the Mandatory Department of Antiquities in 1936 and E. L. Sukenik, S. Yeivin, and N. Avigad of Hebrew University conducted more extensive salvage work from 1937–1938. Only brief reports with very limited information have previously appeared regarding this eighty-year-old project. Needless to say, all the principle investigators have long since passed away and Avigad's short summary statement ("Kudadi, Tell," *NEAEHL* 3:882), which appeared posthumously, remained the most authoritative treatment of the site until this volume appeared. Therefore, all interested scholars owe Fantalkin and Tal a debt of gratitude for what must have been an extraordinarily difficult task of gathering and reconstructing the stratigraphy, loci, records, and finds from this very old dig—not to mention having to sift through and interpret the suspect methodology utilized over two generations ago, with no participants left to consult.

The format of the book is unusually small for an excavation report, but fully serviceable and its compact (6.5 x 9.5 in) size is an unexpectedly welcome change from the often unwieldy, folio-sized volumes. To outline the contents of the book, five appendices provide specialist reports. Ran Zadok studies the origin of the name Qudadi, which is an incorrect rendering of the Arabic, and concludes that no pre-Islamic Semitic toponym was preserved. Ram Gophna and Yitzhak Paz present a small corpus of Chalcolithic, Early, and Middle Bronze pottery that was recovered from Qudadi, which demonstrates occupation of the site during these periods. Probable maritime activity at Qudadi during the Bronze Age is also discussed. Shahar Krispin examines flint tools. Benjamin Sass and Renate Rosenthal-Heginbottom give short reports on a late Iron Age-Persian earring and another from the Roman Period, respectively. The main body of the report is rather straightforward. Chapter one describes the site formation and history, including its role during World War I and the history of excavations. Chapter two covers stratigraphy and architecture. Chapter three describes the pottery and its analysis and Chapter four offers a summary and the conclusions of the authors. A bibliography and index complete the volume.

Fantalkin and Tal published several preliminary and related studies that preceded the final report. The two most pertinent are provisional reports in English ("Re-Discovering the Iron Age Fortress at Tell Qudadi in the Context