



## ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

# The Early Bronze Age IB temple at En Esur: formalized cult in the early urbanization of the Southern Levant

*ELAD I.<sup>1\*</sup>, PAZ Y.<sup>1</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> Israel Antiquities Authority, Jerusalem, Israel

\*Corresponding author

## Abstract

Recent excavations at the site of 'En Esur have uncovered a substantial portion of a large urban settlement dating to the Early Bronze Age IB. This settlement, approximately 65 hectares in size, included extensive fortifications, an elaborate network of streets, public buildings, public spaces and densely packed domestic complexes. Among all building complexes revealed in the excavation one complex stands out due to its unusual size and distinctive features. The finds associated with this complex, among them a unique anthropomorphic figurine, indicate that this was a public building in which cultic activities took place.

The temple at 'En Esur is one of few temples from the Early Bronze Age IB period in the Southern Levant that has been largely exposed. Detailed analysis of the findings from the temple significantly advances our current knowledge of the nature of cultic practices in this period. Comparing the findings from the 'En Esur temple with other known cultic buildings from this period contribute to our understanding of the extent to which common cultic features reflect a formalized cult practiced in the urban settlements of the late 4th millennia BC Southern Levant.

## Keywords

Early Bronze Age, En Esur, Temple, cult, urbanization

## Session

1. Advances in Near Eastern Archaeology

## Type of paper

Oral presentation