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Ben Sira

Ben Sira was known as a Hellenistic Jewish scribe from the second temple period. The book of Ben Sira speaks a lot about Jewish traditions in this period. There is instructions on knowledge, discipline and understanding. He also speaks on fearing the Lord. Its also stated that the reader should be always prudent in their speaking. It is said that Ben Sira's grandson was the person to translate his writings in Greek. The Original book of Ben Sira was shared with Israel. It was originally written and gathered in Hebrew. The text has a theological point of view and geared towards a Torah stance.

Ben Sira's focus within the text is fearing the Lord. He describes it as the start point of wisdom. Many describe this as the main point of his writings. All the truths lead back to fear of the Lord. There are others who identify Sira's writings as wisdom and are connected to the Torah. However, this can only be seen when one submits to the Lord. Fear can be described as having respect and obedience towards God and His commandments. Knowledge can be knowing Gods ways and having insight.

Wisdom is another main source of Sira's writings. Simon is the high priest is referenced as he gave service to the temple in Jerusalem. Ben Sira described Jerusalem as the center of the earth. Ben Sira's writings can be described as poems like Proverbs. There is no specific order to the writings and teachings. The first part of the book is based on wisdom, which takes up almost half of the text. There are instructions on how to control anger, respect for parents, humility,

friends, honor and shame, women, care for the poor and characteristics of the rich. The second part of the text is based on wisdom and is referred to as a woman. Ben Sira recognizes her as the law of Moses. He goes on to share about his own experiences with examples of rivers, water, and canals.

The last section goes on to speak about the celestial bodies. The sun, moon, stars rainbow, snow, thunder, and winds. He describes this as Hymn of the Fathers. These verses shine honor upon those who are in authoritative leadership within the bible. He pays homage to Enoch and those who were obedient to Gods ways. Those who are named are said to be of Israel's wisest and most honorable men. Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Aaron, and Joshua.

Ben Sira's writings remind me personally of the 10 commandments in Exodus. He gives instruction to the children of God, as Moses was called to do. We are called to understand whom our lives belong to and what our purpose is on earth. That is to spread the gospel as well live obedient lives according to Gods will and ways. These writings are the blueprints of how God wants us to live our lives, treat others and share His gospel. The Old Testament in general gives us examples of what it means to serve God. We not only receive commandments, but we also receive testimonies of our ancestors and their experiences.

Cited Work:

Patrick W. Skehan "The Wisdom of Ben Sira" A new translation with notes. (The Doubleday Religious Publishing Group, 1987). Introduction and commentary by.

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