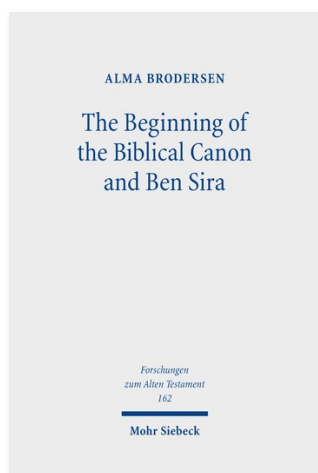


Alma Brodersen

The Beginning of the Biblical Canon and Ben Sira

[Der Beginn des Bibelkanons und Jesus Sirach.]



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The Book of Ben Sira, written in Hebrew in the early second century BCE, is often regarded as containing the earliest references to the canon of the Hebrew Bible / Old Testament. In contrast, Alma Brodersen examines methodological and historical issues regarding the beginning of the biblical canon and Ben Sira, and demonstrates that the book itself – as distinct from the later Prologue to its Greek translation – does not actually refer to texts as canonical. In addition, a systematic analysis of key passages in Ben Sira 38–39 and 44–50 in Hebrew and Greek uncovers similarities with other ancient texts which are not canonical today but preserved in the Dead Sea Scrolls. Far from proving the existence of the biblical canon in his day, Ben Sira's book indicates instead the importance of oral teaching and the relevance of a wide range of traditions.

Survey of contents

1. The Beginning of the Biblical Canon and Ben Sira

- 1.1. Introduction
- 1.2. Languages
- 1.3. Canonical Categories
- 1.4. Intertextual References
- 1.5. Aim and Structure of the Study

2. Historical Contexts of Ben Sira

- 2.1. Date and Historical Setting of Ben Sira
- 2.2. Writing at the Time of Ben Sira
- 2.3. Writing in the Book of Ben Sira
- 2.4. Conclusion

3. Greek Prologue to Ben Sira

- 3.1. Introduction
- 3.2. Greek Text and Translation
- 3.3. Analysis
- 3.4. Key Terms: Law, Prophets, and Writings
- 3.5. The Prologue and the Question of Canon
- 3.6. Conclusion

4. Ben Sira 38:24–39:11

- 4.1. Introduction
- 4.2. Hebrew Text and Translation
- 4.3. Greek Text and Translation
- 4.4. Comparative Analysis
- 4.5. Sir 38:24–39:11 and the Question of Canon
- 4.6. Conclusion

5. Ben Sira 44–50: Survey

- 5.1. Introduction
- 5.2. Textual Basis
- 5.3. Comparative Analysis
- 5.4. Sir 44–50 and the Question of Canon
- 5.5. Figures and the Question of Quotation
- 5.6. Conclusion

6. Ben Sira 44–50: Case Studies

- 6.1. Selection of Case Studies
- 6.2. Enoch (Sir 44:16; 49:14)
- 6.3. Judges (Sir 46:11–12)
- 6.4. Isaiah (Sir 48:17–25)
- 6.5. Job (Sir 49:9)
- 6.6. Twelve Prophets (Sir 49:10)
- 6.7. Conclusion

7. Results

- 7.1. The Beginning of the Biblical Canon and Ben Sira
- 7.2. Implications
- 7.3. Concluding Summary

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