FOREWORD

In November 2008, three weeks before Diane Kriger passed away, I visited her in Ottawa. I believe we both knew that it was our last face-to-face visit, but it was filled with family news, updates on students and colleagues, discussion of her book, my research projects, conferences, the academic scene in Israel, the new feminist commentary to the Talmud project, and laughter—much laughter. It was only then, that close to the end, that she was willing to let go of her book. That night she signed the contract for this book, something I had been urging her to do for several months. It was essentially complete—she needed to finish her conclusion, which she sent to me a few days later. We over-optimistically set a date for submission early in 2009. But books take longer to get all the details right. She quoted several languages, including Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, Latin, Akkadian (thankfully in transliteration) as well as German and French. Unfortunately, all foreign alphabets and diacritical marks disappeared in the transfer of material to me. Even with the help of computer technicians we were unable to recover the original languages. With the help of a scanner, nearly all lost material was keyed in very accurately by Yael Richardson, to whom I am most grateful. Nevertheless, everything needed to be checked, the notes renumbered, the bibliography finalized, and many other details with which only editors and publishers are concerned needed to be addressed. Diane had been the person who helped me with this work in my books and articles. She was an expert and I am a novice. I have tried very hard to fulfill my promise to her that we would “do her proud” in getting her book out, but I am responsible for the many delays. I had no Diane with whom to consult with my

questions, only the loss of Diane with which I had to come to terms while immersed in her thoughts and ideas. Readers will see the density with which she writes, both in the difficulty of concepts and in the terseness of presentation. I have made some modifications for the sake of clarity, remaining as faithful as possible to her ideas as I understood them. I have streamlined her presentation of variant readings of rabbinic texts, divided one chapter into two, and filled in her conclusions. This was for the sake of clarity only; I changed nothing of the content of her thoughts. I have also prepared the indices which depended on pagination and added a few notes marked [TM].

I am grateful to Harry Fox (leBeit Yoreh) with whom I regularly consulted, to Paul Heger for his support, to Yael Richardson for her help in restoring the lost texts, to Matt Iannucci for his help with the bibliography and to my colleagues P.A. Beaulieu and Doug Frayne for their help with the Akkadian references. I feel Diane's absence every day and the loss of her talents for the academic world, for those seeking justice, and for her family and friends. I hope the final outcome of my efforts would be acceptable to Diane. May her memory be blessed.

Tirzah Meacham (leBeit Yoreh)

ל"ג בעומר תשס"ע