



INBAR RAVEH

FEMINIST REREADINGS
≡ *of Rabbinic Literature* ≡

Translated by KAEREN FISH

BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY PRESS *Waltham, Massachusetts*

Brandeis University Press
An imprint of University Press of New England
www.upne.com
© 2014 Brandeis University
All rights reserved
Manufactured in the United States of America
Designed by Vicki Kuskowski
Typeset in Bembo by A. W. Bennett Book Composition

For permission to reproduce any of the material in this book,
contact Permissions, University Press of New England,
One Court Street, Suite 250, Lebanon NH 03766; or visit
www.upne.com

The HBI Series on Jewish Women is supported by a
generous gift from Dr. Laura S. Schor.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Raveh, Inbar.
[Bi-fene 'atsman. English]
Feminist rereadings of rabbinic literature / Inbar Raveh;
translated
by Kaeren Fish.

pages cm.— (HBI series on Jewish women)
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 978-1-61168-607-4 (cloth: alk. paper)
—ISBN 978-1-61168-608-1
(pbk.: alk. paper)—ISBN 978-1-61168-609-8 (ebook)
1. Women in rabbinical literature. 2. Women in Judaism.
3. Feminism—Religious aspects—Judaism. I. Fish, Kaeren,
translator. II. Title.
BM96.9.W7R3813 2014
296.1—dc23

2014014725

CONTENTS

- Foreword by Sylvia Barack Fishman xi
Introduction xv
1. BACK TO THE BREAST
An Aspect of Feminine Sexuality in the Imagined
World of the Sages i
 2. DESIRE AND DOMINION 40
 3. "THEY LET THE CHILDREN LIVE"
The Midwives at a Political Crossroads 56
 4. JUDITH, WIFE OF R. HIYYA
A Story of Women's Pain 74
 5. THE VOICE OF DOUBT
The Wife of R. Simeon ben Halafta and the Uncanny 93
 6. OPEN TO CONQUEST
Prostitution—Temptations and Responses 100
 7. THE MYTH IN THE ATTIC
The Call of the Deep 116
 8. THE CREATION OF WOMAN
Men Are from Babylon; Women Are from the
Land of Israel 145
- Notes 157
Bibliography 179
Index 197