

Acknowledgments

I wish to take this opportunity to thank several of my teachers and mentors. First, I must express my profound gratitude to Professor Berachyahu Lifshitz, who supervised my doctoral dissertation and advised me on the articles that followed it.

I am grateful to my mentors at the Institute for Advanced Torah Studies, Bar-Ilan University, and to my rabbi, Rabbi Aaron Katz. For many years I was privileged to study with Rabbi Katz and learn from his leadership skills. I must also gratefully acknowledge my rabbis and teachers at Yeshivat Shaalvim who first introduced me to high-level Torah study and taught me to love the Torah.

For approximately fifteen years, I have been a faculty member at Ono Academic College, an institute that has become a warm and supportive home for me. I thank Mr. Ranan Hartman, founder and chairman of Ono Academic College, for his personal guidance; Professor Dudi Schwartz, to whom I owe most of my academic development; and Dr. Rivi Cohen, the vice president, whose administrative talents have enabled me to dedicate a significant amount of my time to research.

I am grateful to Rabbi Dr. Michael A. Shmidman, dean and professor of medieval Jewish history and editor in chief of Touro University Press, for his very significant assistance and wise advice during our work together on both this book and my previous publication *The Unique Judicial Vision of Rabbi Meir Simcha of Dvinsk: Selected Discourses in Meshekh Hokhmah and Or Sameah* (2016).

I wish to sincerely thank Alisa Shilor, the translator of this book, for her professional, dedicated, diligent work, and especially for her patience and warm welcome throughout the years of working together. I also thank Mr. Stuart Allen for his professional and dedicated editing work.

The gratitude that I owe my parents and parents-in-law is immeasurable. With genuine love, I wish to bless my parents, Mordecai and Esther, for their boundless dedication and self-sacrifice that instilled in me a love of learning and

awe of Heaven. Likewise, I wish to offer my heartfelt blessings to my in-laws, Nehemiah and Rachel Stern, and I wish to thank them for their assistance and for remaining by our side throughout the years. May the Lord grant my parents and in-laws many years of health and happiness.

Last, but not least, I must thank my own family: to my wife Shuli, my earthly partner, for her great faith in me, her never-ending encouragement, and her tireless devotion to the education of our children—Efrat, Tamar, Naama, Gilad, Ariel, and Hila; and to my children, who gave up their time with me so that I could devote it to the publication of this book.

Words cannot express my gratitude to the Creator of the World for all the goodness that He has bestowed upon me. I humbly ask that He continue to enable me to study His Torah and to lead our family on the path of righteousness, and that He bestow upon myself and my family His grace and blessings. May the Torah remain in my mouth and in the mouths of my offspring in perpetuity. “May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Thy sight” (Psalms 19:15).