

PREFACE

This is the third volume of our study of the traditions of Rabbi Ishmael. The present study investigates the exegetical comments attributed to Ishmael which appear in the Babylonian and Palestinian *gemarot* and Genesis and Leviticus Rabbah.

I must once more express my debt to my teacher Professor Jacob Neusner, University Professor, Professor of Religious Studies and the Ungerleider Distinguished Scholar of Jewish Studies at Brown University. Professor Neusner's constant interest in this project and his insightful comments and corrections have made this work possible.

Some of the passages discussed in this volume appeared in my doctoral dissertation for the Department of Religious Studies at Brown University. In addition to Professor Neusner, Professors Horst Moehring and Ernest Frerichs were members of my dissertation committee, and I wish to thank them for their advice and help. Professor Wendell Dietrich was graduate advisor during my tenure at Brown, and I wish to thank him for his aid during that period.

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This volume is dedicated to my parents, Shirley and David Porton. Their constant love and support have made possible not only this work, but my entire life. Their care, patience, love, concern, and kindness are the real sources of this volume, the ones which preceded, and the ones which will follow.