away of all leaven and fermented substances such as beer. The second paragraph is for the most part a pastiche of biblical comment.

12

[To my brother Je[daniah and his colleagues, the garrison of the Jews (from) your brother Hananiah. May God [be concerned] about the welfare of my brothers [at all times.] And now, this year, year 5 of Darius the King (419 B.C.E.), from the king it has been sent to Asias[emes...].]

And now, you shall count fourteen days in Nisan, and on the 14th day at twilight, observe the Passover. And from the 15th day until the 21st day of [Nisan observe the holiday of unleavened bread. Seven days eat unleavened bread. Now,] be pure and be careful that you do no work [on the 15th day and on the 21st day of Nisan. All beer] you shall not drink and all matter of leaven you shall not [eat, and it may not be seen in your houses from the 14th day of Nisan] at sundown until the 21st day of Nisan at sundown. All leaven which you have in your house] look inside your storage rooms and seal it up between [these days].

3.2.2 Elephantine Temple Papyrus:

The Destruction of the Temple at Elephantine

This papyrus indicates that the Jewish military colony of Elephantine established in the 6th century B.C.E. had a Temple at which they were not established. When this Temple was violently destroyed, they appealed for the right to rebuild it, indicating in their letter that they had performed sacrifices there.

To our lord Bagas, governor of Judea, from your servants Je[daniah and his colleagues the priests who are in Elephantine the fortress. May the God of Heaven be concerned about the welfare of our lord greatly at all times, and grant you favor before Darius the King and the members of his household a thousand times more than now, and give you long life. May you be happy and strong at all times. And now, your servant Je[daniah and his colleagues say thus:

In the month of Tamnun, year 14 of Darius the King, when Ase[ was left and gone to the king, at that time the priests of Knaab the p

12 A high official in the Persian Empire directly responsible to the king.
13 A designation for the God of Israel.
14 A son of the. 15 A designation for the God of Israel.
And now, your servants Judah and his colleagues the priests, and the Jews, all of them, the citizens of Elephantine say thus: If it please our lord, we take thought of that temple to build it, as they do not allow us to build it. Look to your benefactors and friends who are here in Egypt. Let a letter be sent to them from you about the temple of YHWH the God to build it in Elephantine the fortress as it was built before. And meal-offering, incense, and burnt-offering we will sacrifice on the altar of YHWH in your name, and we will pray for you at all times, we and our wives and our children, and all the Jews who are here, if you will do so without fail, so that that temple will be built. And you will have merit before YHWH the God of Heaven more than a man who sacrifices to Him burnt-offering and sacrifices worth 100 talents of silver. Regarding this we have sent to inform our lord. Moreover, all this which was done to us, Assamit, we do not know.

On the 20th of Maschber, the 17th year of Darius the king.19

3.2.3 Marriage Contract from the Ananiah Archive: Document of Wifehood20

This record of the marriage of a free man to a handmaiden presents a unique opportunity to reconstruct the haggling that went on between the groom and master regarding the status of the bride and the rights of the parties to the contract. Tamet’s status may be described as comparable to that of the biblical “slave woman designated for a man” for the purpose of marriage (Lev. 19:20). In Rabbinic texts she was “part slave and part free.”

RECTO:

[On the 18th of [Ab], that is day 30 of the month of Pharsmon, year 16 of Artaxerxes the king,21 said Ananias son of Artaxerxes,22 a servant of YHWH23 the God who is in Elephantine the fortress,24 to Meshullam son of Zacchur, an Aramean of Syene,25 of the detachment of Varsaz, saying

19. 408 B.C.E.
21. August 9, 449 B.C.E.
22. Ananias son of Artaxerxes was a temple official of unknown status whose name was found at Elephantine.
23. An alternate spelling of the divine name.
24. The God of Israel whose single mood at Elephantine (see text 3.2.2), anointed, anointed, and sent his angel to save his children to avoid the northern border of Egypt
25. 408 B.C.E.
27. A personal name that introduces the enumeration of the items of the dowry.
28. The dowry consisted of little more than the dress on her back and some toiletries.
29. Ideally, the value of the garment was set at 5 shekels, but presumably at the time of this marriage, the scribal error was intended to add one more strokes to the number, 4 + 1 = 5.
30. One of the parties must have prevailed upon the other to charge the quantity of items to one-half of a bundle.
31. A regular component of the Elephantine bride’s dowry.
32. Indicating “see text in the future.”
33. The spouses indicate material written above the lines as an addition.
34. Originally, 1 shekel; the amount was raised by haggling to 2 1/2 shekels.
35. It seems clear that Assamit has the right to initiate divorce.
36. Ideally, Meshullam is given property rights in the event that Anan dies before his son, but the document is revised to allocate the marital property solely between husband and wife.