

The description of the story in the Talmud is extremely racist and it implies that there is something special about the race of the family regardless of the goodness or evil they practice. It depicts God as a racist deity instead of a principled god. Thus, He helps the members of this one family because of who they are, disregarding the evil acts and moral depravity of its members; and He unjustly harms others or deprives them of goodness because of who they are not, rather than because of their actions and behaviours. In an attempt to impress upon the “specialness” of this one race, the story abounds in mythical statements; examples of which are given below:

(Note: All excerpts in this appendix are from the Legends of the Jews by Louis Ginzberg, with a few quotes from the Bible. Only emphasis and italicized comments are ours.)

Some examples of evil behaviour attributed to the House of Jacob:

Isaac

And as God kept the truth a secret from Jacob, Isaac did not feel justified in acquainting him with his grandson's fate, which was well known to him, for he was a prophet. Whenever he was in the company of Jacob, he mourned with him, but as soon as he quitted him, he left off from manifesting grief, because he knew that Joseph lived. (*Hypocrisy*)

Jacob

But Jacob took a piece of tin, inscribed the Holy Name upon it, and bound it about the neck of the girl, and he put her under a thornbush, and abandoned her there. (*Cruel abandoning of a granddaughter*)

She was abandoned at the borders of Egypt, only, that people might know who she was, Jacob engraved the story of her parentage and her birth upon a gold plate fastened around her neck. (*Was it gold plate or a piece of tin?*)

“How can I leave the land of my fathers, the land of my birth, the land in which the Shekinah dwells, and go into an unclean land, inhabited by slaves of the sons of Ham. (*Blatant racism*)”

The Ten Sons of Jacob

The heartless treatment they had dealt out to Joseph, paying no heed to his distress, though he fell at the feet of each of them, weeping, and entreating them not to sell him into slavery.

The brethren accepted Reuben's proposition, and Simon seized Joseph, and cast him into a pit swarming with snakes and scorpions, beside which was another **unused** pit, **filled** with offal.

Not satisfied with exposing Joseph to the snakes and scorpions, his brethren had stripped him bare before they flung him into the pit. They took off his coat of many colors, his upper garment, his breeches, and his shirt. However, the reptiles could do him no harm. God heard his cry of distress, and kept them in hiding in the clefts and the holes, and they could not come near him.

They took an oath not to betray to his father or any human being what they had actually done with Joseph. He who violated the oath would be put to the sword by the rest.

When Joseph revealed his identity: Abashed they stood there, and in their rage they desired to slay Joseph as the author of their shame and their suffering.

Joseph

The Talmud also claims "when they (Yoosuf's brothers) went down to Egypt, the slaves of Joseph took their shoes off their feet as they entered the gates, and they prostrated themselves before Joseph as before a Pharaoh, and, as they lay prostrate, they were spat upon, and put to shame before the Egyptians." (*Vengeance*)

The expression "by the life of Pharaoh" might have betrayed Joseph's real feeling to his brethren, had they but known his habit of taking this oath only when he meant to avoid keeping his word later.

they took an oath not to betray to his father or any human being what they had actually done with Joseph. He who violated the oath would be put to the sword by the rest. (*Deceit*)

He then looked upon the astrolabe, and to his great astonishment he discovered by the aid of it that he who was sitting upon the throne before him was his brother Joseph. Noticing Benjamin's amazement, Joseph asked him, "What hast thou seen, and why art thou astonished?" Benjamin said, "I can see by this that Joseph my brother sitteth here before me upon the throne." (*Superstition, divination and magic*)

Then Joseph reflected, saying to himself: "My brethren are as pious as aforesaid, and they speak no lies. They said I was dead, because when they abandoned me, I was poor, and 'a poor man is like unto a dead man'; they stood beside my grave, that is the pit into which they cast me; but they did not say that they had shovelled earth upon me, for that would have been a falsehood."

Turning to his brethren, he said: "Ye lie when ye say that your brother is dead. He is not dead. You sold him, and I did buy him. I shall call him, and set him before your eyes," and he began to call, "Joseph, son of Jacob, come hither! Joseph, son of Jacob, come hither! Speak to thy brethren who did sell thee." (*Cheating and Lying*)

The Bible says: There was no food, however, in the whole region because the famine was severe; both Egypt and Canaan wasted away because of the famine. ¹⁴ Joseph collected all the money that was to be found in Egypt and Canaan in payment for the grain they were buying, and he brought it to Pharaoh's palace.

¹⁵

When the money of the people of Egypt and Canaan was gone, all Egypt came to Joseph and said, "Give us food. Why should we die before your eyes? Our money is all gone."

¹⁶

"Then bring your livestock," said Joseph. "I will sell you food in exchange for your livestock, since your money is gone."

¹⁷

So they brought their livestock to Joseph, and he gave them food in exchange for their horses, their sheep and goats, their cattle and donkeys. And he brought them through that year with food in exchange for all their livestock.

¹⁸

When that year was over, they came to him the following year and said, "We cannot hide from our lord the fact that since our money is gone and our livestock belongs to you, there is nothing left for our lord except our bodies and our land.

¹⁹

Why should we perish before your eyes—we and our land as well? Buy us and our land in exchange for food, and we with our land will be in bondage to Pharaoh. Give us seed so that we may live and not die, and that the land may not become desolate."

²⁰

So Joseph bought all the land in Egypt for Pharaoh. The Egyptians, one and all, sold their fields, because the famine was too severe for them. The land became Pharaoh's,

21

and Joseph reduced the people to servitude, from one end of Egypt to the other. (Genesis 47:13-21)

The people were soon left without means to purchase the corn they needed. In a short time they had to part with their cattle, and when the money thus secured was spent, they sold their land to Joseph, and even their persons. (*Cruel exploitation of the needy and hungry*)

The rest of the inhabitants of Egypt, who had to part with their land, were not permitted to remain in their native provinces. Joseph removed them from their own cities, and settled them in others. His purpose herein was to prevent the Egyptians from speaking of his brethren derogatorily as "exiles the sons of exiles"; he made them all equally aliens. (*Senseless cruelty*)

How many Hebrews went to Egypt?

But in this I do not resemble my father, he had only himself to provide for, and my house consists of seventy souls, and therefore am I compelled to go down into Egypt. The blessing which my father gave me was not fulfilled in me, but in my son Joseph, whom peoples serve, and before whom nations bow down."

Then the Shekinah addressed Jacob, calling his name twice in token of love, and bidding him not to fear the Egyptian slavery foretold for the descendants of Abraham, for God would have pity upon the suffering of his children and deliver them from bondage. God furthermore said, "I will go down into Egypt with thee," and the Shekinah accompanied Jacob thither, bringing the number of the company with which he entered Egypt up to seventy.

Now, if we count all his sons and grandsons that accompanied him to Egypt, as per the lists given in the Bible and the Talmud, their number comes to 69, and Jacob himself is the 70th. But what about women and girls? Do they not count? Do they not eat? Are they not human beings? According to the Talmud, every male of his family, including the one year old, was married, which means 69 wives of his children and grand children, plus his daughter Dinah, and a granddaughter (from Zebulun), and whoever of his four wives were surviving – 74 or 75 women and girls. So why do they keep talking about only 70 Hebrews entered Egypt, instead of 144 or 145?



Mythology and Contradictions about Asenath, the alleged wife of Joseph

Dinah bore her brother a son, and from her union with Shechem, the son of Hamor, sprang a daughter, Asenath by name, afterward the wife of Joseph. When this daughter was born to Dinah, her brethren, the sons of Jacob, wanted to kill her, that the finger of men might not point at the fruit of sin in their father's house. But Jacob took a piece of tin, inscribed the Holy Name upon it, and bound it about the neck of the girl, and he put her under a thornbush, and abandoned her there. An angel carried the babe down to Egypt, where Potiphar adopted her as his child, for his wife was barren. Years thereafter, when Joseph travelled through the land as viceroy, the maidens threw gifts at him, to make him turn his eyes in their direction and give them the opportunity of gazing upon his beauty. Asenath possessed nothing that would do as a present, therefore she took off the amulet suspended from her neck, and gave it to him. Thus Joseph became acquainted with her lineage, and he married her, seeing that she was not an Egyptian, but one connected with the house of Jacob through her mother...

The day on which Asenath was exposed, Potiphar went walking with his servants near the city wall, and they heard the voice of a child. At the captain's bidding they brought the baby to him, and when he read her history from the gold plate, he determined to adopt her. He took her home with him, and raised her as his daughter...

Asenath had saved Joseph's life while she was still an infant in arms. When Joseph was accused of immoral conduct by Potiphar's wife and the other women, and his master was on the point of having him hanged, Asenath approached her foster-father, and she assured him under oath that the charge against Joseph was false...

So both Joseph and Asenath were living in the same house of Potiphar. Even as a child, she knew that the charge against Joseph was false. When Joseph became viceroy, she had seen him and he had seen her and known her lineage. Now, in the first year of plenty, Joseph came to visit Potiphar. Before his arrival, he talks to Potiphar to marry her to Joseph.□□

But when he disclosed his plan to his daughter, she rejected it with indignation. "Why shouldst thou desire to see me united with a vagabond, a slave," she cried out, "one that does not even belong to our nation, but is the son of a Canaanitish herdsman, a fellow that attempted to violate the honor of his mistress, and in punishment for this misdemeanor was

thrown into prison, to be liberated thence by Pharaoh for interpreting his dream? Nay, father, never will I become his wife. I am willing to marry the son of Pharaoh, the future ruler and king of Egypt."... then Standing by the window, she saw Joseph pass, and she was so transported with his divine beauty and his indescribably noble carriage that she burst into tears ...

When Joseph sees her looking from the window, he objects and Potiphar explains:

Potiphar explained to Joseph that the maiden at the window was his virgin daughter, who never permitted men to abide near her; he was the first man she had ever looked upon. The father continued and made the request of Joseph, to allow his daughter to pay him her respects. Joseph granted the favor he desired, and Asenath appeared and greeted him with the words, "Peace be with thee, thou blessed of God Most High," whereunto Joseph returned the salutation, "Be thou blessed of the Lord, from whom flow all blessings."

Was she not his niece, who witnessed his innocence? Were both not aware of each other's lineage? Did they not live in the same house? Had they not ever seen each other before?

The appearance and the speech of Joseph made so deep an impression upon Asenath that no sooner had she reached her apartment than she divested herself of her robes of state and took off her jewels, and put on sackcloth instead, strewed ashes upon her head, and supplicated God amid tears to grant her pardon for her sins. In this manner she spent seven days and seven nights in her chamber. Not even her seven attendants were permitted to enter her presence during the time of her penance. The morning of the eighth day an angel appeared unto her, and bade her put away her sackcloth and ashes and array herself in state, for this day she had been born anew, he said, to eat the blessed bread of life, to drink of the cup of life immortal, and anoint herself with the oil of life eternal. Asenath was about to set food and drink before her guest, when she perceived a honeycomb of wondrous form and fragrance. The angel explained to her that it had been produced by the bees of Paradise, to serve as food for the angels and the elect of God. He took a small portion of it for himself, and the rest he put into Asenath's mouth, saying: "From this day forth thy body shall bloom like the eternal flowers in Paradise, thy bones shall wax fat like the cedars thereof, strength inexhaustible shall be thine, thy youth shall never fade, and thy beauty never perish, and thou shalt be like unto a metropolis surrounded by a wall." At the request of Asenath, the angel blessed also her seven attendants, with the words, "May the Lord bless you and make you to be seven pillars in the City of Refuge." Thereupon the angel left her, and she saw him ascend heavenward in a chariot of fire drawn by four steeds of fire. Now she knew that she had not been entertaining a human being, but an angel.

Is this any different from Greek or Roman mythology? Does any of this make sense?

Manasseh -- The elder son of Joseph

It happened in the first of the seven years of plenty that Joseph planned to visit the place in which Potiphar resided, and he sent word to him that he would put up with him, at his house. Potiphar was enchanted with the honor in prospect for him, and also with the opportunity it would afford him of bringing about a marriage between Asenath and Joseph.

Asenath at first refused, as discussed in the previous section, but then they married. So it can be assumed that the marriage happened towards the middle or the end of the first year of plenty.

According to the Bible: ⁵⁰ Before the years of famine came, two sons were born to Joseph by Asenath daughter of Potiphara, priest of On. ⁵¹ Joseph named his firstborn Manasseh.

According to the Talmud: Asenath bore him two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, during the seven years of plenty, for in the time of famine Joseph refrained from all indulgence in the pleasures of life.

Let us give the maximum allowance and say that Manasseh was born early in the second year of plenty.

On the twenty-first day of the second month in the second of the seven years of famine, Jacob came down to Egypt, and his daughter-in-law Asenath visited him.

*Thus at that time, the maximum possible age of Manasseh when Jacob came to Egypt was: Six years of plenty+ two years of famine = **8 years** at the most. And in the first year of Famine, he could not have been more than **7 years old***

*Now read the following about what Manasseh did **when he was seven**, on the first visit of the brothers of Joseph :*

At the gates of the city of Egypt, the brethren of Joseph were asked what their names were, and the names of their father and grandfather. The guard on duty happened to be Manasseh, the son of Joseph.

The brethren of Joseph knew not that the viceroy of Egypt understood Hebrew, and could follow their words, for Manasseh stood and was an interpreter between them and him. *Did the brothers wonder how a seven year Egyptian learnt Hebrew?*

Joseph sent word to Pharaoh to let him have seventy of his valiant men, to aid him in arresting robbers. But when the seventy appeared upon the scene, and were about to lay hands on Simon, he uttered a loud cry, and his assailants fell to the floor and knocked out their teeth. Pharaoh's valiant men, as well as all the people that stood about Joseph, fled affrighted, only Joseph and his son Manasseh remained calm and unmoved. Manasseh rose up, dealt Simon a blow on the back of his neck, put manacles upon his hands and fetters upon his feet, and cast him into prison. Joseph's brethren were greatly amazed at the heroic strength of the youth, and Simon said, "This blow was not dealt by an Egyptian, but by one belonging to our house."

The following is what he accomplished when he was 8:

He ordered his son Manasseh, the steward of his house, to bring the men into the palace, and make ready a meal for them.

They were not yet far beyond the city gates, when Joseph dispatched Manasseh, the steward of his house, to follow after them, and look for the silver cup that he had concealed in Benjamin's sack.

Joseph bade his son Manasseh make haste and gather together all the inhabitants of Egypt, and all the valiant men, and let them come to him on horseback and afoot. ... In the meantime (*which was a matter of minutes when the arguments were still taking place*

) Manasseh had assembled a great army, five hundred mounted men and ten thousand on foot, among them four hundred valiant heroes, who could fight without spear or sword, using only their strong, unarmed hands.

When Judah gave utterance to this threat, Joseph made a sign, and Manasseh stamped his foot on the ground so that the whole palace shook. Judah said, "Only one belonging to our family can stamp thus!" and intimidated by this display of great strength, he moderated his tone and manner.

When Judah heard this, he was exceedingly wroth, and he took a stone weighing four hundred shekels that was before him, cast it toward heaven with one hand, caught it with his left hand, then sat upon it, and the stone turned into dust. At the command of Joseph, Manasseh did likewise with another stone, and Joseph said to Judah: "Strength hath not been given to you alone, we also are powerful men.

At his behest, Manasseh laid his hand upon Judah's shoulder, and his touch allayed Judah's fury, for he noticed that he was in contact with a kinsman of his, because such strength existed in no other family.

One cannot help but wondering that when they kept realizing that these feats can be accomplished only by one of their kinsmen, why they could not recognize Joseph? Why were they stupefied when Joseph revealed his identity?

Behold, I am Joseph your brother! "Their souls fled away from them, and they could make no answer, but God permitted a miracle to happen, and their souls came back to them. Joseph continued, ..."I speak with you in Hebrew, and I am truly your brother." But they would not believe him. ... Therefore Joseph bared his body and showed them that he belonged to the descendants of Abraham.

But the age of Manasseh should not be surprising in the light of the following:

Such was the manner of Jacob's arrival in Egypt. He came with his whole family ... All the males in his family were married men; even Pallu and Hezron, the latter of whom was **but one year old**

at the time of their migration, and the former but

two years

, had the wives with them that had been chosen for them by their parents. In general, all the sons and grandsons of Jacob had married young,

some of them had been fathers at the age of seven

.

□

Some Other Examples of the Talmud Mythology – without Comments

"Brethren, let us not slay him, but let us cast him into one of the dry pits, which our fathers dug without finding water." That was due to the providence of God; He had hindered the water from rising in them in order that Joseph's rescue might be accomplished, and the pits remained dry until Joseph was safe in the hands of the Ishmaelites.

Then Simon rose up, and with bared sword he sprang upon the Midianites, at the same time uttering a cry that made the earth reverberate. The Midianites fell down in great consternation, and he said: "I am Simon, the son of the Hebrew Jacob, who destroyed the city of Shechem alone and unaided, and together with my brethren I destroyed the cities of the Amorites. God do so and more also, if it be not true that all the Midianites, your brethren, united with all the Canaanite kings to fight with me, cannot hold out against me.

These aromatic substances were well suited to Joseph, whose body emitted a pleasant smell, so agreeable and pervasive that the road along which he travelled was redolent thereof, and on his arrival in Egypt the perfume from his body spread over the whole land, and the royal princesses, following the sweet scent to trace its source, reached the place in which Joseph was. Even after his death the same fragrance was spread abroad by his bones, enabling Moses to distinguish Joseph's remains from all others, and keep the oath of the children of Israel, to inter them in the Holy Land.

There was a reason why God did not reveal the real fate of Joseph to Jacob. When his

brethren sold Joseph, their fear that the report of their iniquity might reach the ears of Jacob led them to pronounce the ban upon any that should betray the truth without the consent of all the others. Judah advanced the objection that a ban is invalid unless it is decreed in the presence of ten persons, and there were but nine of them, for Reuben and Benjamin were not there when the sale of Joseph was concluded. To evade the difficulty, the brothers counted God as the tenth person, and therefore God felt bound to refrain from revealing the true state of things to Jacob. He had regard, as it were, for the ban pronounced by the brethren of Joseph.

In a little while Joseph's prophecy was confirmed: that year and the six following years were years of plenty, as he had foretold. The harvest was so ample that a single ear produced two heaps of grain, and Joseph made circumspect arrangements to provide abundantly for the years of famine.

(Arguing with Joseph, Judah [\[3\]](#) said) "If I but utter a sound, death-dealing pestilence will stalk through the land as far as No. In this land Pharaoh is the first, and thou art the second after him, but in our land my father is the first, and I am the second. If thou wilt not comply with our demand, I will draw my sword, and hew thee down first, and then Pharaoh."

The other brethren withheld themselves intentionally from taking part in the dispute between Judah and Joseph, saying, "Kings are carrying on a dispute, and it is not seemly for us to interfere between them." Even the angels descended from heaven to earth to be spectators of the combat between Joseph the bull and Judah the lion, and they said, "It lies in the natural course of things that the bull should fear the lion, but here the two are engaged in equal, furious combat."

His outcry reached to a distance of four hundred parasangs, and when Hushim the son of Dan heard it in Canaan, he jumped into Egypt with a single leap and joined his voice with Judah's, and the whole land was on the point of collapsing from the great noise they produced. Joseph's valiant men lost their teeth, and the cities of Pithom and Raamses were destroyed, and they remained in ruins until the Israelites built them up again under taskmasters. Also Judah's brethren, who had kept quiet up to that moment, fell into a rage, and stamped on the ground with their feet until it looked as though deep furrows had been torn in it by a ploughshare. And Judah addressed his brethren, "Be brave, demean yourselves as men, and let each one of you show his heroism, for the circumstances demand that we do our best."

Then they resolved to destroy Mizraim, the city of Egypt, and Judah said, "I will raise my

voice, and with it destroy Egypt."

Reuben: "I will raise my arm, and crush it out of existence."

Simon: "I will raise my hand, and lay waste its palaces."

Levi: "I will draw my sword, and slay the inhabitants of Egypt."

Issachar: "I will make the land like unto Sodom."

Zebulon: "Like unto Gomorrah will I render it."

Dan: "I will reduce it to a desert."

Then Judah's towering rage began to show signs of breaking out: his right eye shed tears of blood; the hair above his heart grew so stiff that it pierced and rent the five garments in which he was clothed (*It must have been freezing cold*); and he took brass rods, bit them with his teeth, and spat them out as fine powder. When Joseph observed these signs, fear befell him, and in order to show that he, too, was a man of extraordinary strength, he pushed with his foot against the marble pedestal upon which he sat, and it broke into splinters.

Judah: "If I pluck out a single hair from my body, I will fill the whole of Egypt with its blood."

...but Simon interposed, saying, "Let not this thing trouble you, I will go to the mount, and take up one huge stone from the mount, throw it over the whole of Mizraim, the city of Egypt, and kill all therein."

Judah, however, called to them, "Why are you terrified, seeing that God grants us His mercy?" He drew his sword, and uttered a wild cry, which threw all the people into consternation, and in their disordered flight many fell over each other and perished, and Judah and his brethren followed after the fleeing people as far as the house of Pharaoh. Returning to Joseph, Judah again broke out in loud roars, and the reverberations caused by his cries were so mighty that all the city walls in Egypt and in Goshen fell in ruins, the pregnant women brought forth untimely births, and Pharaoh was flung from his throne. Judah's cries were heard at a great distance, as far off as Succoth.

Abashed they stood there, and in their rage they desired to slay Joseph as the author of their shame and their suffering. But an angel appeared and flung them to the four corners of the house. Judah raised so loud an outcry that the walls of the city of Egypt tumbled down, the women brought forth untimely births, Joseph and Pharaoh both rolled down off their thrones, and Joseph's three hundred heroes lost their teeth, and their heads remained forever immobile, facing backward, as they had turned them to discover the cause of the tumult. Yet the brethren did not venture to approach close to Joseph, they were too greatly ashamed of their behavior toward their brother. He sought to calm them, saying, "Now be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither, for God did send me before you to preserve life."

Jacob rewarded her therefor with the words, "My daughter, may death never have power over thee, for thou didst revive my spirit." And so it was. Serah did not die, she entered Paradise alive.

Manasseh also shall become great, the judge Gideon shall descend from him, but his younger brother will be the ancestor of Joshua, who will bring the sun and the moon to a standstill, though they have dominion over the whole earth from end to end.

Who in their right mind would believe such nonsense?