

## Some reading times and places of the Jacob story

**2000-1500 BCE: STORY TIME** i.e., when the narrated events purportedly took place

**Place:** land of Canaan

**social situation:** *cultural clash between the first followers of YHWH and Canaanites and Mesopotamians*

**presumed reading method:** *oral storytelling*

**600-500 BCE: WRITING TIME (?)**: when the stories were written down in Hebrew

**Place:** Babylon in Exile or Jerusalem after Exile

**social situation:** *cultural clash between exiled Jerusalemites in Babylon with the locals and returned Jerusalemites with "Samaritans" and other indigenous peoples in Canaan*

**presumed reading method:** *as historical revelation from time of Moses.*

**250 BCE: TRANSLATION TIME (?)**: when the Hebrew was translated into Greek (Septuagint)

**Place:** Alexandria in Hellenistic Egypt

**social situation:** *challenge of Greek culture (e.g., philosophy) to Diaspora Jews*

**presumed reading method:** *mix of history and allegory*

**50-100 CE: NEW TESTAMENT TIME**: when the Scriptures were read by Jews in light of the Jesus event

**Place:** Palestine and various Greco-Roman cities around the Mediterranean

**social situation:** *clash between Jews and Romans on the one hand, and challenge of the Jesus movement on the other over the meaning of Scripture*

**presumed reading method:** *"typology" predicting and fulfilled by Jesus events*

**350-450 CE: ROMAN TIME**: when Christianity became the imperial religion and rabbinic midrash was written down

**Place:** ??

**social situation:** *adoption of the Hebrew Bible by the Romans as part of the imperial religion amidst oppression of Jews by Christians*

**presumed reading method:** *midrash (i.e., playful but serious commentary to fill in "gaps")*

**2000 CE: OUR TIME**: when we as readers encounter the ancient stories

**Place:** right here!

**social situation:** *challenges of scientific, global economic, and fundamentalist worldviews on Jews and Christians*

**presumed reading method:** *choices among literalism, historical and narrative criticisms and other methods deriving from scholarship and/or religious commitment*