

Some interpretative issues in Genesis 32.22-33

1. What is the setting for the scene: a dream? Reality? A prophetic vision (midrash)?
2. How does the scene connect to the surrounding narrative context within the Jacob cycle?
3. Is the story primarily about the relationship between two brothers or between two nations or both?
4. With whom is Jacob wrestling: God? Esau? His inner self? A river spirit?
5. What is the nature of Jacob's injury? If his "hip" is "dislocated," how can he walk away?
6. Why does the already blessed Jacob insist on receiving a blessing from the wrestler?
7. Why the name change to "Israel"?