

**The Heel-Catcher Fears Esau & God Dislocates His Hip (Gen 32)**

Grace Chapel February 18, 2010 Dr. John Niemelä

**INTRODUCTION**

**JACOB FEARS ESAU & HIS 400 MEN (32:1–21)**

*Jacob dealing with his fear at the human level (1–8)*

**(32:1–2) Angels of God met Jacob, so he named the place Mahanaim (pair of camps)**

Consider Genesis 28

**(32:3–5) Jacob sent messengers to Esau to say that he had stayed with Laban and had livestock as gifts for Esau (so he came peacefully)**

**(32:6) The messengers returned with news that Esau was coming with 400 men to meet Jacob**

**(32:7–8) Jacob divided those that were with him into two camps out of fear**

*Jacob dealing with his fear through a petition based on the Abrahamic covenant (9–12)*

**(32:9) Jacob prayed to the Lord in accordance with the reiterated Abrahamic Covenant**

**(32:10) Jacob confessed his unworthiness to God's covenanted loyalty**

**(32:11–12) Jacob prayed for God to deliver him from Esau in accordance with the reiterated Abrahamic Covenant**

*Jacob sent the gift to Esau in an effort to show that he came peacefully (13–21)*

**(32:13–16) Jacob stayed at Mahanaim sent livestock ahead as gifts for Esau**

**(32:17–20a) The messenger in charge of each wave of livestock was to tell Esau that the animals were a gift from Jacob, who was following**

**(32:20b–21) Jacob (who remained in the camp) sent the gifts in this way in the hope that it would placate Esau**

**JACOB WRESTLES WITH GOD (32:22–32)**

*Jacob sent everyone across the river and was by himself (22–24a)*

**(32:22–23) Jacob sent his family & possessions over the Jabbok River by night**

**(32:24a) Jacob was by himself north of the Jabbok River**

*Jacob wrestled to a draw, until daybreak, when the Wrestler dislocated Jacob's hip (24b–25)*

*Jacob held onto the Wrestler to receive a blessing, was renamed Israel, but did not learn the name of the Wrestler (26–29)*

**(32:26) The Wrestler asked to be released (because it was daybreak), but Jacob held on until the Wrestler blessed him**

**(32:27–28) The Wrestler asked Jacob his name & renamed him Israel**

**(32:29) Jacob unsuccessfully asked the Wrestler's name, but the Wrestler blessed him**

*Jacob named the place Peniel & limpingly crossed over it at daybreak (32:30–32)*

**(32:30) Jacob named the place Peniel, because he saw God directly & was spared alive**

**(32:31) Jacob crossed over Peniel at daybreak limpingly**

**(32:32) Israelites do not eat the sinew of the hip in commemoration of Jacob's struggle**

This taboo is not part of the Law. It is not entirely clear whether God advocated it, but it would seem that God was alright with it.

## **SUMMARY**