

Jacob
vs.
GOD



In the beginning...

“And when her (Rebekah) days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, there were twins in her womb. And the first came out **red all over like a hairy garment**; and they called his name Esau. And after that came his brother out, and **his hand took hold on Esau’s heel**; and his name was called Jacob.” (*Gen 25:24-6*)

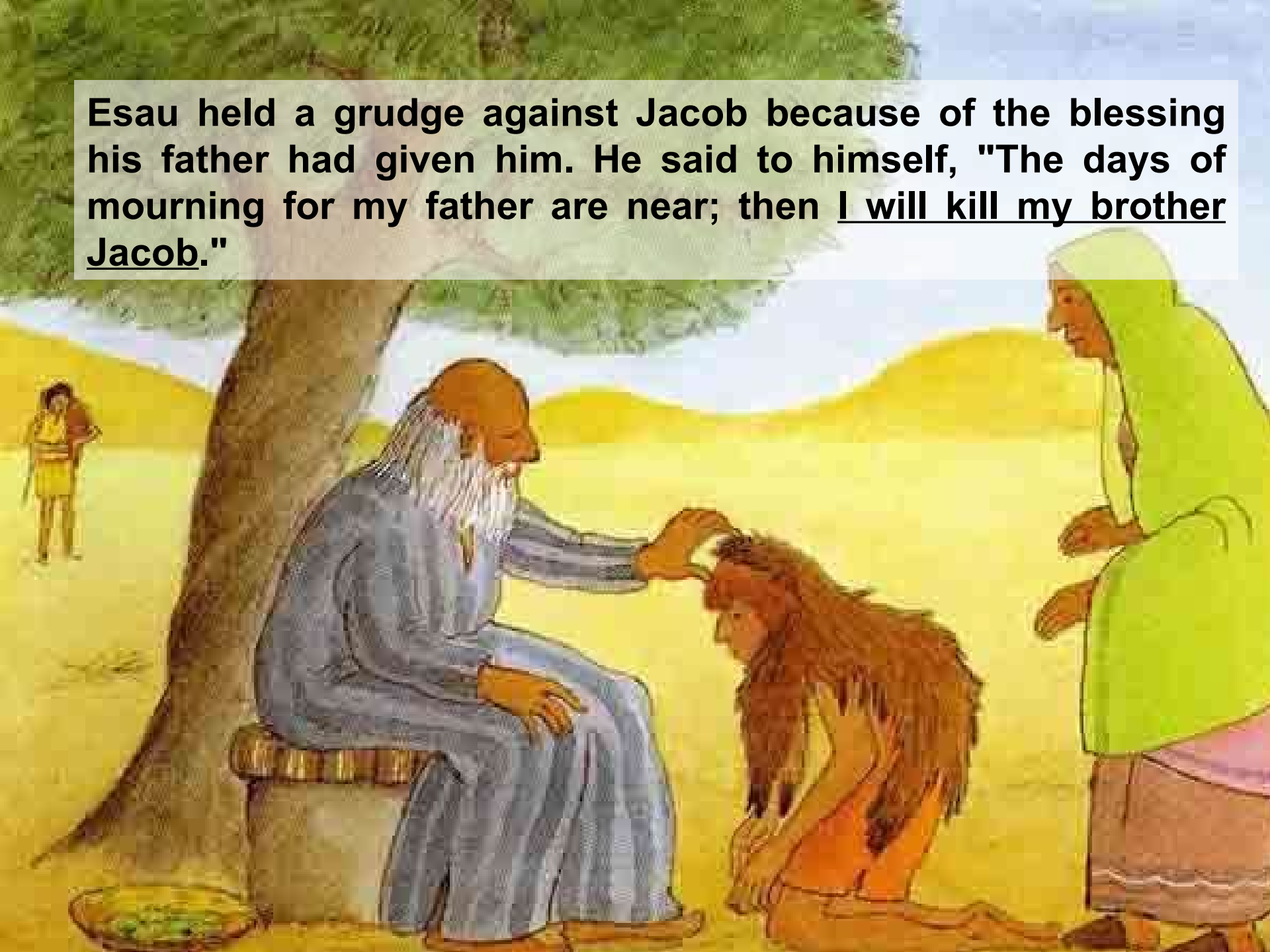
**“Jacob & Esau”
Charles Sherman**





“The Heel Grabber” Arthur Sussman

Esau held a grudge against Jacob because of the blessing his father had given him. He said to himself, "The days of mourning for my father are near; then I will kill my brother Jacob."



Many years go by...

Right before the Wrestling...

A large, dense army of men is gathered in a valley, holding numerous red and yellow flags. The scene is set against a backdrop of rolling hills and mountains under a clear sky. The men are dressed in dark, simple clothing, and the overall atmosphere is one of a significant military or tribal gathering.

**“Esau is coming to meet you and
400 men are with him...”**

(Gen 32:22-24) That night Jacob got up and took his two wives, his two maidservants and his eleven sons and crossed the ford of the Jabbok. After he had sent them across the stream, he sent over all his possessions. So Jacob was left alone...



Now, for the match...

What is UNUSUAL about this
wrestling match?!



(Gen 32:24 -)

So Jacob was left alone, *and a man wrestled with him till daybreak*. When the man saw that he could not overpower him, he touched the socket of Jacob's hip so that his hip was wrenched as he wrestled with the man. Then the man said, "Let me go, for it is daybreak." But Jacob replied, "I will not let you go unless you bless me."



The man asked him, "What is your name?" "Jacob," he answered. Then the man said, "Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel, because you have struggled with God and with men and have overcome." Jacob said, "Please tell me your name." But he replied, "Why do you ask my name?" Then he blessed him there. So Jacob called the place Peniel, saying, "It is because I saw God face to face, and yet my life was spared."

Why *wrestling*?

1. God watched too much WWF
2. Kungfu not invented yet
3. God wanted to be creative
4. To let Jacob realise that 'relationship with God' is a contact sport
5. Full-bodied struggle mirrors Jacob's life and his fears
6. ??

Why wrestle until daybreak?

- No referee mah...
- It's kinda like tennis
- Nobody wanted to stop or sleep
- It was...*fun!*
- Life with God has no 'time-out'
- God wanted to wear Jacob out
- Jacob wanted to wear God out?
- ??

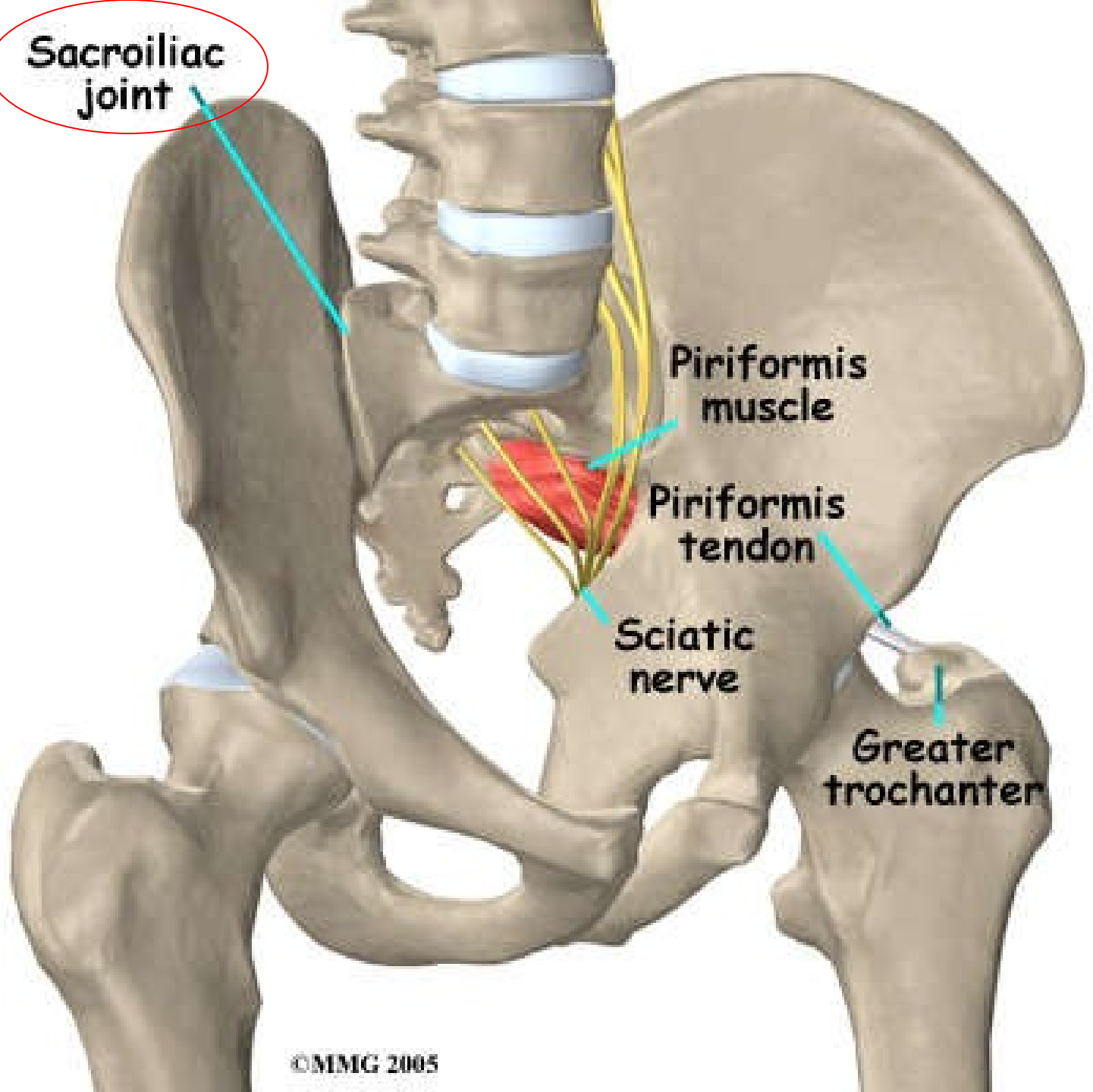
Why couldn't God defeat Jacob?

- God underestimated Jacob
- God limited Himself, played by 'the rules'
- Jacob cheated!
- God only *pretended* He couldn't win...
- God wanted an excuse to bust Jacob's hip...

Why did God dislocate Jacob's hip?

1. God wanted victory at all costs...plus, it was getting late
2. Because that's Jacob's most effective body part!
3. To teach Jacob that "PAIN is your FRIEND"!
4. To convince Jacob that God could've won easily...
5. ??

Sacroiliac joint



Piriformis muscle

Piriformis tendon

Sciatic nerve

Greater trochanter

What's with the Name-trading?

- It's the courteous thing to do mah...play then ask name lor
- When you fight someone you hard, you just HAVE to know his name
- It's about *control*
- It's about remembrance
- ??

What happened when Jacob
finally met Esau?

(Gen 33) He himself went on ahead and bowed down to the ground seven times as he approached his brother. **But Esau ran to meet Jacob and embraced him; he threw his arms around his neck and kissed him. And they wept.**



Thus, the Good News...



Our God is a God of “aggressive kindness”

Our perseverance and struggles *matter* to God!



In really difficult and scary times, it's when we must remember *both* of the above