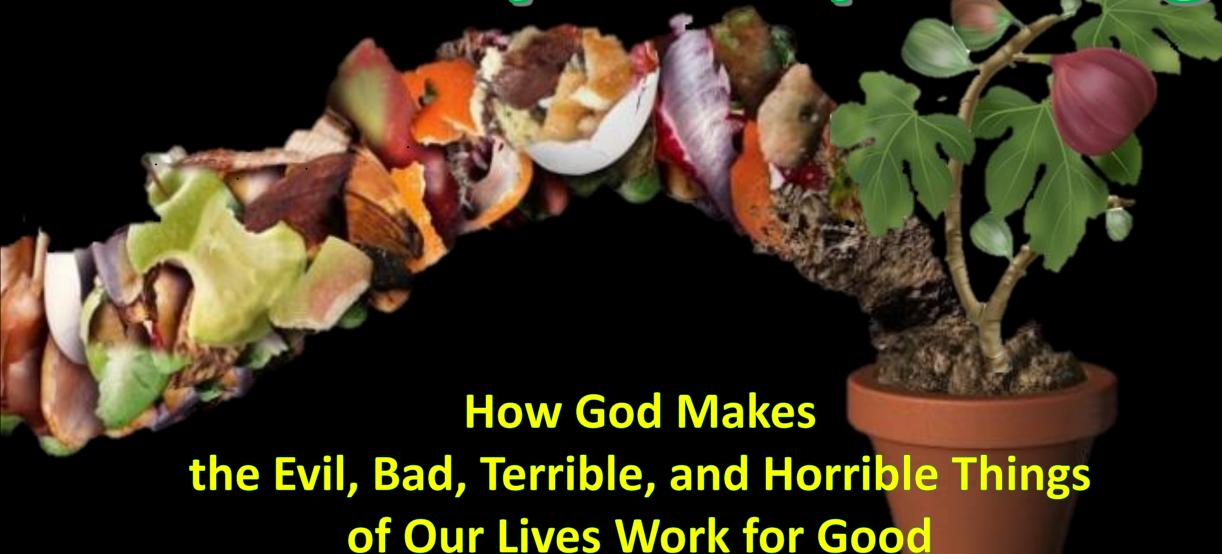
# Heavenly Composting



# Part 2 The Consequences of Your Worst Mistakes Do Not Have to be the End of the Story

Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had not been able to bear children for him. But she had an Egyptian servant named Hagar.

So Sarai said to Abram, "The Lord has prevented me from having children. Go and sleep with my servant. Perhaps I can have children through her." And Abram agreed with Sarai's proposal.

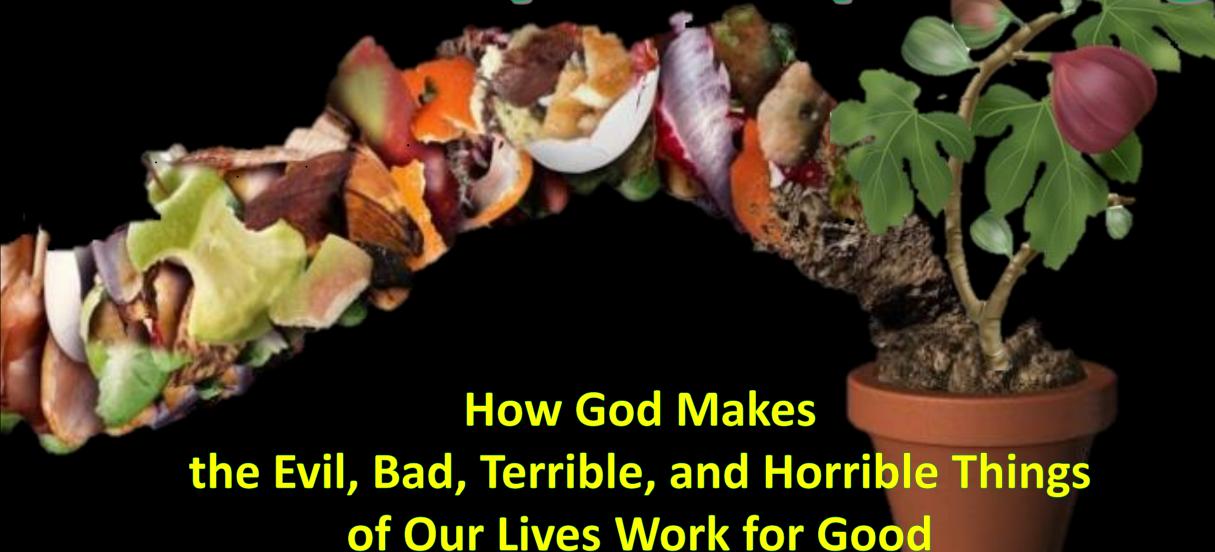
So Sarai, Abram's wife, took Hagar the Egyptian servant and gave her to Abram as a wife. (This happened ten years after Abram had settled in the land of Canaan.)

So Abram had sexual relations with Hagar, and she became pregnant. But when Hagar knew she was pregnant, she began to treat her mistress, Sarai, with contempt.

Then Sarai said to Abram, "This is all your fault! I put my servant into your arms, but now that she's pregnant she treats me with contempt. The Lord will show who's wrong—you or me!"

Abram replied, "Look, she is your servant, so deal with her as you see fit." Then Sarai treated Hagar so harshly that she finally ran away.

# Heavenly Composting



# Part 2 The Consequences of Your Worst Mistakes Do Not Have to be the

End of the Story

# Heavenly Composting

It is a collaborative process that compiles all of the evil, bad, terrible, and horrible events of your life in order to transform and repurpose them for His good and your good.

The process of Heavenly Composting requires a collaboration between you and God. Through it you get to co-labor with God to intentionally transform all of the events of your life that you thought were a total waste, forever lost, unspeakable, unforgiveable, and un-healable;

So that they can go from being a disgusting, toxic wasteland to becoming good, nutrient-rich fertilizer that will specifically feed and fuel your spiritual growth. That same spiritual fertilizer will help you produce sweet, healthy, beautiful, spiritual fruit in your life.

### The Necessary Elements

- The Word of God (the water)
- The presence of the Holy Spirit (the air)
- Love, Forgiveness, Mercy, Grace (the micro-organisms)

## The Necessary Elements

- A safe space to take all of the garbage (the compost bin)
- A spiritual guide to help you see the events from God's point of view (turning over the pile)

## The Necessary Elements

- A spiritual family that will love you through the smelly process (greens and browns)
- Repeat, repeat, repeat
- Unknown Amount of Time

## Principle #1

# God does not promise to bring good to us in every situation.

### The Not So Good

- Sarai is barren her whole life
- Hagar is a slave
- Abram's child with Hagar creates a problem between him and Sarai
- Hagar begins to treat Sarai with contempt

### The Not So Good

- The relationships between
  Abram, Sarai, Hagar, Ishmael, and Isaac are all very dysfunctional
- God's first chosen family will suffer the consequences of this decision for many, many years.

## Principle #1

# God does not promise to bring good to us in every situation.

# Principle #2

When scripture says that "all things work together for good" it also includes our worst mistakes.

Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had not been able to bear children for him. But she had an Egyptian servant named Hagar.

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If Gilimninu bears children, Shennima shall not take another wife. But if Gilimninu fails to bear children, Gilimninu shall get for Shennima a woman from the Lullu

country (a slave girl) as concubine. In that case, Gilimninu herself shall have authority over the offspring.

- Harvard Semitic Studies 5:67

Laqipum took (in marriage) Hatala, the daughter of Enishru. In the country Lagipum shall not take (in marriage) another (woman), (but) in the city (of Ashshur) he may take (in

marriage) a priestess. If within two years she has not procured offspring for him, only she may buy a maidservant and even later on, after she procures somehow an infant for

him, she may sell her wherever she pleases.

- Hamilton, Genesis 1-17, pg 444.

### Sarai's Mistakes

- Believes that she can give Abram the promised child through Hagar
- She blames Abram for the fact that Hagar is treating her with contempt

### Sarai's Mistakes

- Sarai treats Hagar so cruelly that Hagar runs away and takes what Sarai believes is the promised child with her.
- This puts Sarai back at square one

# Principle #2

When scripture says that "all things work together for good" it also includes our worst mistakes.

# Principle #3

The process of Heavenly Composting takes time. It usually takes a lot more time than we want it to take.

Abram was eighty-six years old when Ishmael was born.

When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to him and said, "I am El-Shaddai—'God Almighty.' Serve me faithfully and live a blameless life.

The process of Heavenly Composting takes time. It usually takes a lot more time than we want it to take.

God's ability to bring blessings from even our most terrible and horrible mistakes flows from His merciful loving heart, because He is a Good, Good Father.

When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to him and said, "I am El-Shaddai—'God Almighty.' Serve me faithfully and live a blameless life.

I will make a covenant with you, by which I will guarantee to give you countless descendants."

At this, Abram fell face down on the ground. Then God said to him,

"This is my covenant with you: I will make you the father of a multitude of nations.

What's more, I am changing your name. It will no longer be Abram. Instead, you will be called Abraham, for you will be the father of many nations.

Then God said to Abraham, "Regarding Sarai, your wife—her name will no longer be Sarai. From now on her name will be Sarah.

And I will bless her and give you a son from her! Yes, I will bless her richly, and she will become the mother of many nations. Kings of nations will be among her descendants."

God's ability to bring blessings from even our most terrible and horrible mistakes flows from His merciful loving heart, because He is a Good, Good Father.

Whenever and wherever our terrible and horrible mistakes increase, God's gracious unmerited favor increases even more!

Then Abraham bowed down to the ground, but he laughed to himself. "How could I become a father at the age of 100?" he thought. "And how can Sarah have a baby when she is ninety years old?"

## Genesis 17:18 So Abraham said to God, "May Ishmael live under your special blessing!"

But God replied, "No—Sarah, your wife, will give birth to a son for you. You will name him Isaac, and I will confirm my covenant with him and his descendants as an everlasting covenant.

Then one of them said, "I will return to you about this time next year, and your wife, Sarah, will have a son!" Sarah was listening to this conversation from the tent.

Abraham and Sarah were both very old by this time, and Sarah was long past the age of having children.

So she laughed silently to herself and said, "How could a worn-out woman like me enjoy such pleasure, especially when my master, my husband, is also so old?"

Then the Lord said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh? Why did she say, 'Can an old woman like me have a baby?'

Is anything too hard for the Lord? I will return about this time next year, and Sarah will have a son."

Sarah was afraid, so she denied it, saying, "I didn't laugh."

But the Lord said, "No, you did laugh."

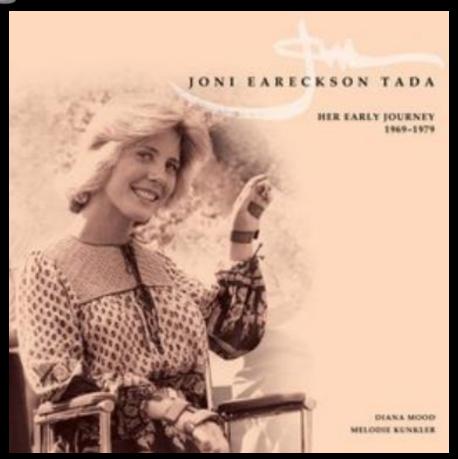
Whenever and wherever our terrible and horrible mistakes increase, God's gracious unmerited favor increases even more!

With God, our mistakes are never wasted, because He repurposes them as excellent training grounds aimed at propelling us forward into the next level of our faith and true Christlikeness.

# Good must always be defined from God's point of view.

## Where's My Miracle?





Joni Eareckson - 1967

- At 17, a careless dive into shallow water left her as a quadriplegic
- Too disabled to commit suicide
- Came to Christ after her accident,
  -If I can't die, show me how to live.

- She is a best selling artist
- She is a best selling author
- Her daily radio program received
   *The Radio Program of the Year award* from the national religious
   broadcasters in 2002.

- Founder and President of Joni and Friends, an organization that "accelerates Christian ministry in the disability community."
- She has earned 8 honorary doctorates & won over 22 awards

- Several appearances on Larry King Live
- Diagnosed with stage 3 breast cancer in 2010. Has been cancer free since 2015.

- Diagnosed with a different cancer
  2018. Cancer free again in 2019.
- Married Ken Tada in 1982
- She remains a quadriplegic today,
  54 years later.

# Good must always be defined from God's point of view first.

## Heavenly Composting

