

## ~MILL (184)

- A simple apparatus generally consisting of two circular stones, one placed atop the other, between which various edible threshed grains are ground into flour.
- It was possible to pound grain with a pestle in a mortar, rub it on a stone slab with a stone, or grind it with a hand mill, the method employed in most ancient Palestinian homes. Such devices were used from early patriarchal times, for Abraham's wife Sarah made round cakes from fine flour.
- So Abraham went hurrying to the tent to Sarah and said; Hurry! Get three seah measures of fine flour, knead the dough and make round cakes. ([Genesis 18:6](#))
- In the wilderness the Israelites ground the divinely provided manna, in hand **mills** or pounded it in a mortar.
- Incidentally, the manna was like coriander seed, and its look was like the look of bdellium gum. ([Numbers 11:7](#))
- The people spread out and picked it up and ground it in hand **mills** or pounded it in a mortar, and they boiled it in cooking pots or made it into round cakes, and its taste proved to be like the taste of an oiled sweet cake. ([Numbers 11:8](#))

## See Also MORTAR 1

- Bread was generally baked every day, and usually each family possessed its own hand **mill**. The grinding of grain into flour was ordinarily a daily activity of the women in the household.
- Two women will be grinding at the hand **mill**, one will be taken along and the other be abandoned. ([Matthew 24:41](#))
- Let my wife do the grinding for another man, and over her let other men kneel down. ([Job 31:10](#))
- And every firstborn in the land of Egypt must die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who is sitting on his throne to the firstborn of the maidservant who is at the hand **mill** and every firstborn of

beast. ([Exodus 11:5](#))

- Come down and sit down in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon. Sit down on the earth where there is no throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans. For you will not experience again that people call you delicate and dainty. ([Isaiah 47:1](#))
- Take a hand **mill** and grind out flour. Uncover your veil. Strip off the flowing skirt. Uncover the leg. Cross over the rivers. ([Isaiah 47:2](#))
- They rose early in the morning to prepare the flour needed for the days bread. The sound of hand **mills** is referred to in the Bible as a symbol of normal peaceful conditions. Conversely, abandonment and desolation were indicated when the sound of the hand **mill** was absent.
- And I will destroy out of them the sound of exultation and the sound of rejoicing, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the sound of the hand **mill** and the light of the lamp. ([Jeremiah 25:10](#))
- And all this land must become a devastated place, an object of astonishment, and these nations will have to serve the king of Babylon seventy years. ([Jeremiah 25:11](#))
- And a strong angel lifted up a stone like a great **millstone** and hurled it into the sea, saying; Thus with a swift pitch will Babylon the great city be hurled down, and she will never be found again. ([Revelation 18:21](#))
- And the sound of singers who accompany themselves on the harp and of musicians and of flutists and of trumpeters will never be heard in you again, and no craftsman of any trade will ever be found in you again, and no sound of a **millstone** will ever be heard in you again. ([Revelation 18:22](#))
- In the day when the keepers of the house tremble, and the men of vital energy have bent themselves, and the grinding women have quit working because they have become few, and the ladies seeing at the windows have found it dark. ([Ecclesiastes 12:3](#))
- And the doors onto the street have been closed, when the sound of the grinding **mill** becomes low, and one gets up at the sound of a bird, and all the daughters of song sound low. ([Ecclesiastes](#)

## 12:4)

- Like its modern counterpart in the Middle East, the common hand **mill** of ancient times consisted of two round stones, the upper grindstone made to fit and revolve on the lower one.
- No one should seize a **hand mill** or its upper grindstone as a pledge, because it is a soul that he is seizing as a pledge. (**Deuteronomy 24:6**)
- Its heart is cast like stone, yes, cast like a **lower millstone**. (**Job 41:24**)
- Today, the heavy lower, nether stone is usually made of basalt and is often about 46 centimeters (18 inches) in diameter and 5 to 10 centimeters (2 to 4 inches) thick. A peg fitted into the center of the lower stone serves as a pivot for the upper stone.
- The grinding surface of the stationary lower stone is convex, allowing the pulverized grain to drift out to the **mills** perimeter. The concave lower surface of the upper **millstone**, called the rider, matches the top of the lower stone.
- A funnel-like hole in the center of the upper stone accommodates the peg and also serves as a place to put the grain into the **mill**. Toward the outer edge of the upper stone there is a hole into which a wooden stick is inserted, this serving as a handle for the upper grindstone.
- Two women generally operated this kind of hand **mill**.
- There will be two women grinding at the same **mill**, the one will be taken along, but the other will be abandoned. (**Luke 17:35**)
- They sat facing each other, each placing one hand on the handle to turn the upper stone. With her free hand, one woman fed unground grain in small amounts into the filler hole of the upper stone, while the other gathered the flour as it emerged from the rim of the **mill** and fell to the tray or the cloth spread beneath the **mill**.
- Since bread was usually baked daily and grain was ground into flour frequently, God's Law given to Israel mercifully forbade the seizing of a person's hand **mill** or its upper grindstone as a pledge.

- A family's daily bread depended upon the hand **mill**. Hence, to seize it or its upper grindstone meant seizing a soul or means of life.
- No one should seize a **hand mill** or its **upper grindstone** as a pledge, because it is a soul that he is seizing as a pledge. (**Deuteronomy 24:6**) Footnote
- Larger **mills** are also mentioned in the Scriptures. Jesus Christ referred to a **millstone** such as is turned by an ass.
- But whoever stumbles one of these little ones who put faith in me, it is more beneficial for him to have hung around his neck a **millstone such as is turned by an ass** and to be sunk in the wide, open sea. (**Matthew 18:6**)
- Which may have been similar to the one that blind Samson was forced to turn for the Philistines when he came to be a grinder in the prison house.
- So the Philistines grabbed hold of him and bored his eyes out and brought him down to Gaza and bound him with two fetters of copper, and he came to be a **grinder** in the prison house. (**Judges 16:21**)
- During Abimelech's attack on the town of Thebez a certain woman pitched an upper **millstone** upon Abimelech's head and broke his skull in pieces.
- And Abimelech proceeded to go to Thebez and to camp against Thebez and capture it. (**Judges 9:50**)
- Then a certain woman pitched an upper **millstone** upon Abimelech's head and broke his skull in pieces. (**Judges 9:53**)
- Who was it that struck down Abimelech the son of Jerubbesheth? Was it not a woman that pitched an upper **millstone** upon him from on top of the wall so that he died at Thebez? Why did you men have to go so close to the wall? You must also say; Your servant Uriah the Hittite died too. (**2 Samuel 11:21**)
- In Revelation the sudden and final destruction of Babylon the Great is likened to the hurling of a stone like a great **millstone** into the sea.

- **And a strong angel lifted up a stone like a great millstone and hurled it into the sea, saying; Thus with a swift pitch will Babylon the great city be hurled down, and she will never be found again. (Revelation 18:21)**