

## ~THRESHING (305)

### .. Figurative Use

- **The process of releasing grain from its stalk and chaff.** If gleaners had a small amount to thresh, or if the grain was of small size like cumin, or if the threshing was done secretly during dangerous times, a rod or flail was used to beat the grain by hand, either on the ground or in a winepress.
- Later Yehowah's angel came and sat under the big tree that was in Ophrah, which belonged to Joash the Abi-ezrite, while Gideon his son was beating out wheat in the winepress so as to get it quickly out of the sight of Midian. ([Judges 6:11](#))
- And she continued to glean in the field until the evening, after which she beat out what she had gleaned, and it came to be about an ephah of barley. ([Ruth 2:17](#))
- For it is not with a **threshing instrument** that black cumin is given a treading, and upon cumin no wheel of a wagon is turned. For it is with a rod that black cumin is generally beaten out, and cumin with a staff. ([Isaiah 28:27](#))
- The **threshing floor**, however, was the location of normal **threshing operations**. Usually situated on a higher elevation exposed to the wind, it consisted of a flat circular area, up to 15 meters (50 feet) in diameter, made either of stone or hard-packed earth.
- **Threshing floors** not privately owned were often clustered together near a village for communal use. The sheaves of barley or wheat, the principal grains of Palestine, were spread out on the floor; today generally to a depth of 30 to 46 centimeters (12 to 18 inches).
- The treading by bulls or other animals, as they constantly circled the floor, gradually broke down the straw and freed the grain from the chaff. The animals were not muzzled while **treading the grain**.
- You must not muzzle a bull while it is **threshing**. ([Deuteronomy 25:4](#))
- And Ephraim was a trained heifer loving to **thresh**, and I, for my part, passed over her good-looking neck. I make someone ride

Ephraim. Judah plows. Jacob harrows for him. (**Hosea 10:11**)

- For in the Law of Moses it is written: You must not muzzle a bull when it is **threshing** out the grain. Is it bulls God is caring for? (**1 Corinthians 9:9**)
- Or is it altogether for our sakes he says it? Really for our sakes it was written, because the man who plows ought to plow in hope and the man who threshes ought to do so in hope of being a partaker. (**1 Corinthians 9:10**)
- **Threshing instruments** pulled by animals speeded up the process and were more thorough than animal hooves alone.
- Look! I have made you a **threshing sledge**, a new **threshing instrument** having **double-edged teeth**. You will tread down the mountains and crush them, and the hills you will make just like the chaff. (**Isaiah 41:15**)
- This is what Yehowah has said; On account of three revolts of Damascus, and on account of four, I shall not turn it back, on account of their **threshing** Gilead even with iron threshing instruments. (**Amos 1:3**)
- Models used in more modern times are either broad flat heavy sledges with sharp teeth of stone or of iron on their underside or frames that pull heavy cylindrical rollers fitted with knives to cut and break down the grain stalks.
- Such **sledges and roller devices** covered an additional swath each round, and the added weight of the driver riding on top increased the effectiveness.
- Is breadstuff itself generally crushed? For never does one incessantly keep treading it out. And he must set the roller of his wagon in motion, and his own steeds, but he will not crush it. (**Isaiah 28:28**)
- After the grain had been thoroughly **threshed**, and turned over several times in the process, it was winnowed.

**See Also WINNOWNING**

- Because of providing an open, level space, **threshing floors** were often used for other purposes. The mourning rites for Jacob were held on the threshing floor of Atad near the Jordan.
- Then they came to the **threshing floor** of Atad, which is in the region of the Jordan, and there they carried on a very great and heavy wailing and he kept up the mourning rites for his father seven days. (**Genesis 50:10**)
- And the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, got to see the mourning rites in the **threshing floor** of Atad, and they exclaimed; This is a heavy mourning for the Egyptians! That is why its name was called Abelmizraim, which is in the region of the Jordan. (**Genesis 50:11**)
- At Yehowah's direction, David purchased the **threshing floor** of Araunah, or Ornan, built there an altar, and made a sacrifice to Yehowah.
- And the angel kept his hand thrust out toward Jerusalem to bring it to ruin, and Yehowah began to feel regret over the calamity, and so he said to the angel that was bringing ruin among the people; It is enough! Now let your hand drop. And Yehowah's angel himself happened to be close by the **threshing floor** of Araunah the Jebusite. (**2 Samuel 24:16**)
- And David proceeded to say to Yehowah, when he saw the angel that was striking the people down, yes, he proceeded to say; Here it is I that have sinned and it is I that have done wrong, but these sheep, what have they done? Let your hand, please, come upon me and upon the house of my father. (**2 Samuel 24:17**)
- Later Gad came in to David on that day and said to him; Go up, set up for Yehowah an altar on the **threshing** floor of Araunah the Jebusite. (**2 Samuel 24:18**)
- And David began to go up in accord with the word of Gad, according to what Yehowah had commanded. (**2 Samuel 24:19**)
- When Araunah looked down and saw the king and his servants passing along toward him, Araunah at once went out and bowed down to the king with his face to the earth. (**2 Samuel 24:20**)
- Then Araunah said; Why has my lord the king come to his

servant? At that David said; To buy from you the **threshing floor** for building an altar to Yehowah, that the scourge may be halted from upon the people. (2 Samuel 24:21)

- But Araunah said to David; Let my lord the king take it and offer up what is good in his eyes. See the cattle for the burnt offering and the **threshing sledge** and the implements of the cattle for the wood. (2 Samuel 24:22)
- Everything Araunah, O king, does give to the king. And Araunah went on to say to the king; May Yehowah your God show pleasure in you. (2 Samuel 24:23)
- However, the king said to Araunah; No, but without fail I shall buy it from you for a price, and I shall not offer up to Yehowah my God burnt sacrifices without cost. Accordingly David bought the **threshing floor** and the cattle for fifty silver shekels. (2 Samuel 24:24)
- And David proceeded to build there an altar to Yehowah and offer up burnt sacrifices and communion sacrifices, and Yehowah began letting himself be entreated for the land, so that the scourge was halted from upon Israel. (2 Samuel 24:25)
- Moreover, the true God sent an angel to Jerusalem to bring ruin to it, and as soon as he began bringing the ruin, Yehowah saw it and began to feel regret over the calamity, and so he said to the angel that was bringing the ruin; It is enough! Now let your hand drop. And Yehowah's angel was standing close by the **threshing floor** of Ornan the Jebusite. (1 Chronicles 21:15)
- When David raised his eyes, he got to see Yehowah's angel standing between the earth and the heavens with his drawn sword in his hand extended toward Jerusalem, and David and the older men, covered with sackcloth, at once fell down upon their faces. (1 Chronicles 21:16)
- And David proceeded to say to the true God; Was it not I that said to make a numbering of the people, and is it not I that have sinned and have unquestionably done bad? As for these sheep, what have they done? O Yehowah my God, let your hand, please, come to be upon me and my father's house, but not upon your people, for a scourge. (1 Chronicles 21:17)

- And Yehowah's angel, for his part, said to Gad to say to David that David should go up to erect an altar to Yehowah on the **threshing floor** of Ornan the Jebusite. (1 Chronicles 21:18)
- Accordingly David went up at the word of Gad that he had spoken in the name of Yehowah. (1 Chronicles 21:19)
- Meantime, Ornan turned back and saw the angel, and his four sons with him were hiding themselves. Now Ornan had been **threshing** wheat. (1 Chronicles 21:20)
- So David came as far as Ornan. When Ornan looked and saw David, he immediately went out of the **threshing floor** and bowed down to David with his face to the earth. (1 Chronicles 21:21)
- Then David said to Ornan; Do give me the place of the **threshing floor**, that I may build in it an altar to Yehowah. For the money in full give it to me, that the scourge may be halted from upon the people. (1 Chronicles 21:22)
- But Ornan said to David; Take it as your own, and let my lord the king do what is good in his own eyes. See, I do give the cattle for burnt offerings and the **threshing sledge** for the wood and the wheat as a grain offering. The whole I do give. (1 Chronicles 21:23)
- However, King David said to Ornan; No, but without fail I shall make the purchase for the money in full, because I shall not carry what is yours to Yehowah to offer up burnt sacrifices without cost. (1 Chronicles 21:24)
- So David gave Ornan for the place gold shekels to the weight of six hundred. (1 Chronicles 21:25)
- Then David built there an altar to Yehowah and offered up burnt sacrifices and communion sacrifices, and he proceeded to call upon Yehowah, who now answered him with fire from the heavens upon the altar of burnt offering. (1 Chronicles 21:26)
- Moreover, Yehowah said the word to the angel, who accordingly returned his sword to its sheath. (1 Chronicles 21:27)
- At that time, when David saw that Yehowah had answered him at the **threshing floor** of Ornan the Jebusite, he continued to

sacrifice there. (1 Chronicles 21:28)

- Later this **threshing floor** became the site of Solomon's temple.
- Finally Solomon started to build the house of Yehowah in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, where Yehowah had appeared to David his father, in the place that David had prepared on the **threshing floor** of Ornan the Jebusite. (2 Chronicles 3:1)
- When Jehoshaphat and Ahab conferred about warring against Syria, their thrones were set up on a **threshing floor** at the entrance of the gate of Samaria.
- Now the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah were sitting each one on his throne, clothed in garments, in the **threshing floor** at the entrance of the gate of Samaria, and all the prophets were acting as prophets before them. (1 Kings 22:10)

#### ••Figurative Use

- In a figurative sense, the treatment the stalks of grain receive on the **threshing floor** is a very fitting symbol of how Yehowah's enemies will be beaten and cut to pieces.
- Look! I have made you a **threshing sledge**, a new **threshing instrument** having **double-edged teeth**. You will **tread** down the mountains and crush them, and the hills you will make just like the chaff. (Isaiah 41:15)
- For this is what Yehowah of armies, the God of Israel, has said; The daughter of Babylon is like a **threshing floor**. It is the time to tread her down solid. Yet a little while and the time of the harvest must come for her. (Jeremiah 51:33)
- But as for them, they have not come to know the thoughts of Yehowah, and they have not come to understand his counsel, because he will certainly collect them together like a row of newly cut grain to the **threshing floor**. (Micah 4:12)
- Get up and **thresh**, O daughter of Zion, for your horn I shall change into iron, and your hoofs I shall change into copper, and you will certainly pulverize many peoples, and by a ban you will actually devote to Yehowah their unjust profit, and their resources to the true Lord of the whole earth. (Micah 4:13)

- With denunciation you went marching through the earth. In anger you went **threshing the nations**. (**Habakkuk 3:12**)
- **Threshing** also illustrates **the crushing treatment men sometimes mete out to others**.
- For he had not left to Jehoahaz any people but fifty horsemen and ten chariots and ten thousand men on foot, because the king of Syria had destroyed them, that he might **make them like the dust at threshing**. (**2 Kings 13:7**)
- Or the separation of wheat from chaff may depict the separation of the righteous from the wicked by Yehowah's judgment.
- His winnowing shovel is in his hand, and he will completely clean up his **threshing floor**, and will gather his wheat into the storehouse, but the **chaff he will burn up** with fire that cannot be put out. (**Matthew 3:12**)
- In yet another sense, a long and bountiful **threshing** denotes prosperity and Yehowah's blessing.
- And your **threshing** will certainly reach to your grape gathering, and the grape gathering will reach to the sowing of seed, and you will indeed eat your bread to satisfaction and dwell in security in your land. (**Leviticus 26:5**)
- And the **threshing** floors must be full of cleansed grain, and the press vats must overflow with new wine and oil. (**Joel 2:24**)