# Workshop Video Transcript

## Part 1: The Miller

**John Barleycorn**: Hello. I'm searching for the Miller. Do you by any chance know where I might find them?

**Miller**: Yes, right here. I am the Miller. How can I help you?

**John Barleycorn**: I was hoping you could tell me what it's done with all this grain, once it has been harvested.

**Miller**: Excellent question. Let me show you. Through time, people have created agriculture, which is the cultivation, encouragement and purposeful growing of plants. This has been happening for about 15,000 to 12,000 – er - started about 15,000 to 12,000 years ago. One of the most commonly harvested grain is barley, which you are familiar with. When we take- when we harvest it, we can grind it through milling stones, and this process makes it easier to digest, makes the material more versatile and increases the longevity of the food so that we can have it further throughout the year. In times when finding other foods might be more difficult. This process of agriculture and grinding and harvesting complements the cycles of life, death and rebirth.

Some of the tools that we use are millstones. They either looked like this- a palm sized hand stone within a concave larger stone in order to keep the grain centered to make grinding easier.

It can look like a mortar and pestle, so more of a cup-shaped vessel with a rod shaped grinding tool.

They can look like a metate, which is more of a Mesoamerican grinding millstone, which has a rectangular base and a rod shaped pestle, in order to grind maize to make tortillas.

More modern day versions might look like this millstone, with one stone being stationary and another stone being mobile. More modern one- In the past, we've had hand turned ones, but more modern ones will be larger and heavier and could use animal power, water, power, wind power to turn the top stone against the bottom stone. These stones have special grooves and channels carved into them in order to grind the material through a scissor like processes. And the channels help push the grain down and out as it becomes a flour, which gets collected along the edge of a circle.

Some questions people typically could ask themselves about the grinding or grain processing is whether or not they do it. Do they take the time to crying their own grain or do they buy it from people who have taken that time for them and sell it/ People might also wonder and think about the different tools and why they might use a metate versus a mortar and pestle versus a metal grinding machine. And what does that make you feel?

**John Barleycorn**: Well I certainly have questions. Why- why do you use earth and stone to crush the grains? Is that not a lot of extra work?

**Miller**: It is. But it also reduces the amount of work because the stones have weight in of themselves, and that weight means less pressure that you have to use to force the grain into a different shape. It's sort of a physics- you're using something else to generate power that you might not be able to output yourself cause you could try to grind it with something smaller and less weighty. But that would take extra muscle power on your own. You take a stone, you just plop it down. You just kind of move it around.

**John Barleycorn**: Oh, you're right. I always forget how weak you humans are. Well, my last question then- what is this grain then use for? What- what happens afterwards?

**Miller**: The grain, once it's been ground, it’s turned into a flour typically, and that flour can then be used mixed with water and eggs and turned into breads or pastries or cakes for cakes and ale. We could make honey cakes. We could make savory breads. It's a nourishment.

**John Barleycorn**: And as an experienced Miller, what is your favorite way to grind these grains?

**Miller**: I like the mortar and pestle method. It keeps everything confined and in a close proximity to itself. And it's easier to get a rhythm because you can incorporate more of your body into the smaller action as opposed to spreading yourself amongst a larger stone or using something else besides your own power to grind.

**John Barleycorn**: Well, thank you so much for answering my questions and giving me an idea of what to expect. I will now have to return and prepare for what is next and required of me.

**Miller**: Of course! Thank you for stopping by and visiting.

## Part 2: Ask A Baker Podcast

**Baker**: Hello, everyone. Welcome to another edition of Ask the Baker. Today we're going to start with answering questions that are regular viewers have mailed in. Then we will open it up to questions from our very own John Barleycorn. Welcome to the show, Mr Barleycorn.

**John Barleycorn**: Why thank you. It's so good to be here.

**Baker**: It’s good to have you! Okay. Our first letter is from a home baker. They write: “Whenever I bake chocolate chip cookies, they end up kind of flat with little bumps for the chips. How do I get cookies that are rounded, like the ones on the package?” Excellent question. I used to have this problem too, but don't tell anyone. The trouble comes when instead of softening your butter, you melt it. Softened butter will still hold its shape. Melted butter is completely liquid. Cookies you make with softened butter will have a nice dome shape but the cookies you made with melted butter will have a melted shape. Go figure. Both are delicious, though, so don't worry if it takes you a few tries to get the look you want.

**John Barleycorn**: Well, you can feel to send me any cookies you don’t want!

**Baker**: Yes, please. All right. Our next letter is from a student. They write: “I have been trying to bake bread, but it takes so long. How can I speed it up?” Well, I am going to guess you mean delicious, yeasty bread. Yeast cannot be rushed. It is a very small creature, but still, you can't bully it into working

faster. However, you are also a creature, and I can’t bully you into having more time. If you want to enjoy fresh, baked bread, the thing to search for is “quick breads”. Banana bread is a quick bread, for example. After you bake it, you can toast some banana bread in a pan or toaster oven and have just as much pleasure as someone who has spent hours waiting for our little yeast friends to do their magic.

**John Barleycorn**: Oh, that does sound delicious.

**Baker**: It is delicious. So, Mr Barleycorn. Do you have a question for the show today?

**John Barleycorn**: Actually, I do. I wanted to know, why do you all like baking so much? What do you get out of setting grains on fire?

**Baker**: We don’t burn the grains! You heat them up. When you mix grains with some oil, sugar, salt, baking soda,  you get bread! Or, depending on the mix, cake, which is sweet, yummy, soft bread.

**John Barleycorn**: OK, but why?

**Baker**: Most delicious foods are fresh from the world. Think of apples fresh, hanging from the trees. But grains are different. We grow grains because we can store them for a long time. After all that time, they don't taste as good, so we add sugar, fat, and salt in place of freshness. The result is something that never occurs nature. It's a very human kind of magic.

**John Barleycorn**: I guess I just don't understand.

**Baker**: Give it time. I have a made barley bread today. Do you want some? Oh, wait.

**John Barleycorn**: You know, I think I would love some, though you must tell your secret recipe.

**Baker**: Mine is made without yeast. You add
3 cups barley flour
1 ¼ teaspoons salt
2 tablespoons baking powder
½ teaspoon baking soda
2 eggs
1 ½ cups buttermilk
1/3 cup olive oil
3 tablespoons honey

Then, preheat the oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit.  Spray an 8 ½  by 4 ½  inch bread loaf pan with nonstick spray.

Whisk the barley flour, salt, baking soda and baking powder together. In a separate bowl, combine the eggs, buttermilk, oil, and honey. Pour the liquid ingredients into the flour mixture and stir gently until just combined. Pour the batter into the bread loaf pan and bake 35 to 40 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean. I substituted orange zest, vanilla, cardamom, and brown sugar for the honey, and almond milk for buttermilk.

**John Barleycorn**: Oh, that does sound delicious.

**Baker**: Thank you!

# Part 3: The Brewer

**Brewer**: <humming sounds> Can I get you anything?

**John Barleycorn**: Do you have anything not made from grain?

**Brewer**: Well, I got a new flask of Romulan Ale here. Will this suit?

**John Barleycorn**: Sounds good to me.

**Brewer**: <liquid pouring sound>

**John Barleycorn**: Thanks.

**Brewer**: You look like you have something on your mind.

**John Barleycorn**: Well, yeah. They want me to die for them. I know they bring me back year after year. But still, it's kind of bullshit. Why go through all this trouble? Why bring me here? Once I'm here, I'm stronger, I'm faster than any of them. It's easier to just start the harvest.

**Brewer**: You know, growing grains is kind of dumb to start with. They have to do all this work- clearing the soil, killing the weeds, digging holes for every seed, carrying the seed by hand across the whole field. Building scare crows, moving those seats around. During the dry years, they dig trenches to carry those seeds in the field. Even once the harvest is done, you get cedar- cider or whiskey or ale- beer- I have to get the water and bring that used to boil and, well, taste test. But sometimes it doesn't work. And then I have to figure out what to do with a rancid barrel beer. Have you ever seen a drunk pig?

**John Barleycorn**: Huh? No. Is there one nearby? Will seeing one help? Do they taste like beer?

**Brewer**: No, thank goodness. That was a really bad batch of beer.

**John Barleycorn**: But that- that just seems like way too much work.

**Brewer**: Well, how do you feel, now that you've had some ale?

**John Barleycorn**: You know, not so thirsty anymore. Kind of relaxed. Less hungry too, come to think about it.

**Brewer**: I can keep that ale in a cellar for years. Once you've done the work, it stays done. Water can get dirty; wild plants can die. But ale is forever.

**John Barleycorn**: Huh.

**Brewer**: Mix a bit of water with it, you don't even get drunk- and it makes the water safer to drink.

**John Barleycorn**: You know, I always forget how fragile you all are.

**Brewer**: All that work. It means we don't have to be so lucky. We can feed more of us- the weak and the sick- even in bad seasons.

**John Barleycorn**: So bringing me here, it helps the work somehow.

**Brewer**: What do you think?

**John Barleycorn**: Oh, well, I think everything I do is better. So yeah, of course having me here helps. I mean, why do you guys even start the harvest just yet? There's so much to do, and you folks need all the help you can get. Hey, thanks for the cider.

**Brewer**: Any time. John. I wonder- whatever happened to that pig?