

Sisters for Yah

Unleavening Our Lives

(Sister Debbie Reed)

Each spring, prior to Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, we are commanded to rid out homes, and our lives, of all leavened products. This Scripturally-mandated activity has ever since been known as “spring cleaning.” At this important time of year, leavening represents “sin”, the puffed up and vain self-centeredness of which we are all guilty. We thoroughly clean our dwellings of all products that contain leavening, as well our lives of sin, to demonstrate our desire to rid ourselves of evil. When the ancient Israelites left Egypt in haste, having no time to make leavened bread, they demonstrated this obedience for us.

Just as we strive to be perfect, we all fall short. No matter how diligent my efforts, I always seem to miss something. Last year, after the Feast of Unleavened Bread, I found a small box of baking soda in the back of my upright freezer in the basement. This year, instead of just checking the freezer contents, I will actually empty and clean the freezer.

Our food, also, must not contain any leavening during the Feast days. This may seem like a daunting task to new believers, but with a few adjustments, they will find that it is not hard to do. We are fortunate to live in a society in which there is a variety of foods available and preparing meals that contain no leavening is relatively simple.



The nutrients found in leavened bread are also found in other grain products. In place of sugary cereals, try oatmeal, eggs, cheese, and fruit for breakfast. Rice, pasta, barley, and millet are just a few of the grains that round out the meal, but beware of crackers and flour tortillas, as most contain leavening. Instead of cake, pies make a good leaven-free dessert. Crunchy carrots or crisp apples are delicious snacks, but if you must have cookies, there are homemade recipes that contain no leavening, too. This may also be an opportune time to rely less on pre-packaged processed food and add more fresh vegetables and fruit to your family’s diet. You may be surprised at just how creative your cooking and how satisfying your meals will be.

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Cream puffs

1 cup boiling water
 1/2 cup butter (1 stick)
 1/8 teaspoon salt
 1 cup flour
 3 eggs, unbeaten

Add butter and salt to boiling water and stir over medium heat until butter is melted and mixture boils again. Remove from heat, immediately add the flour, all at once, and stir vigorously until the mixture leaves the sides of the pot. Transfer mixture to a large mixing bowl, and let cool for about 20 minutes – THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT. With a mixer, beat in one egg at a time, beating thoroughly after each addition. Using a tablespoon, place dollops on an ungreased cookie sheet. You should have about 14 or 15 puffs. Place in center of a preheated 450 degree oven for 20 minutes. Without removing the puffs, turn the oven down to 350 degrees and bake for an additional 20 minutes. Remove from oven and place puffs on a rack to cool. Cool thoroughly! When cold, cut the top off each puff, fill with vanilla pudding, replace the top and frost top with fudge frosting. You can change fillings or toppings of your choice.



Our Favorite Unleavened Bread



4 cups all purpose flour
 1 t. salt
 2/3 cup cooking oil
 1 1/3 cup milk

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Mix all the ingredients with a fork. Divide into two balls. Roll between waxed paper and place on two ungreased cookie sheets. Bake until lightly golden brown, about 12 to 15 minutes. This bread is very versatile. You can add sugar and cinnamon if you prefer it more “dessert-like.” Some even use this as a pizza crust.

Unleavened Corn Muffins

1 cup cornmeal
 1 cup flour
 1/4 cup sugar
 1 egg, beaten
 1/4 melted butter and 1 cup milk



Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Line 12 cup muffin pan with paper liners. Mix ingredients and pour into liners. Bake 20 to 25 minutes until center comes out clean.

Easiest Unleavened Butter Cookies

(Makes 24 cookies)

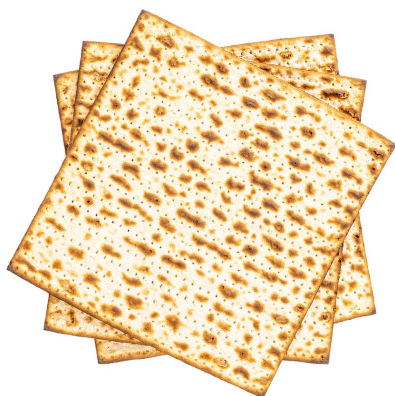
2 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 cup powdered sugar
2 sticks very soft butter

Preheat oven to 180 degrees. Line baking sheets with parchment paper for easy removal. Gently incorporate all the ingredients. It may seem crumbly, but simply press together to form 24 balls of dough. Flatten each ball on the parchment paper-lined cookie sheets. Bake about 15 minutes until a pale brown color. Do not overbake or they will be too hard. Allow to cool completely.

Note: This is a very basic recipe. They taste good as is, but feel free to add your favorite flavorings such as vanilla extract. Some people like to dust them with sugar crystals. You can even frost them with icing if you want.



Make Your own Matzah!



2 cups flour
1 t. salt
1 T. olive oil
1/2 cup warm water (more if needed)

Preheat oven to 475 degrees. Mix up your ingredients. Pinch off pieces of dough and roll or pat into a small circle. Poke with fork and bake on ungreased cookie sheet for about 3 to 5 minutes.

Layered Enchiladas

4 bell peppers (any color, and combination of red, green, yellow, and orange), chopped
1 jalapeno, chopped
1/2 of a red onion
2 cups corn kernels
2 t. chili powder
2 t. cumin
1 t. salt, or to taste
2 cups Mexican cheese
18 corn tortillas
1 can refried beans (look for the no-lard kind)
2 cups red enchilada sauce.



Grease a 9 by 13 baking pan. Mix the sauce with the spices and refried beans. Cook the first three ingredients in a little oil until soft. Put some sauce in the bottom of pan. Layer the tortillas with the corn, sauce and cheese. Be sure to save a little of the sauce and cheese for the top layer of tortillas. Bake until heated through and cheese is melted.

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LOOKING FOR MATZAH?

Question:

Our local supermarket doesn't sell matzahs, and I'd rather not try to make my own! Any idea where I can order some?

Answer:

We know of two good companies that sell matzah (although there are many others, of course). We are obviously not affiliated with them, but check out their websites:

StreitsMatzohs.com
Aron Streit, Inc.
171 Route 303,
Orangeburg, NY 10962.

ManiSchewitz.com
The Manischewitz Co.
Bayonne, NJ 07002.



Unleavened Chocolate Chip Cookies

- 2 ¼ c. all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 c. (2 sticks) butter, softened
- ¾ c. granulated sugar
- ¾ c. brown sugar (packed)
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- 2 large eggs
- 1 ½ c. (12 oz. pkg.) chocolate chips
- 1 c. chopped nuts (optional)

Preheat oven to 375°. Combine flour and salt in small bowl. Beat butter, granulated sugar, brown sugar and vanilla extract in large mixer bowl until creamy.

Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Gradually beat in flour mixture. Stir in chocolate chips and nuts. Drop by rounded tablespoon onto ungreased baking sheets. Bake for 9-11 minutes or until golden brown.

Cool on baking sheets for 2 minutes. Remove to wire racks to cool completely. Makes 4 ½ doz. Cookies.

