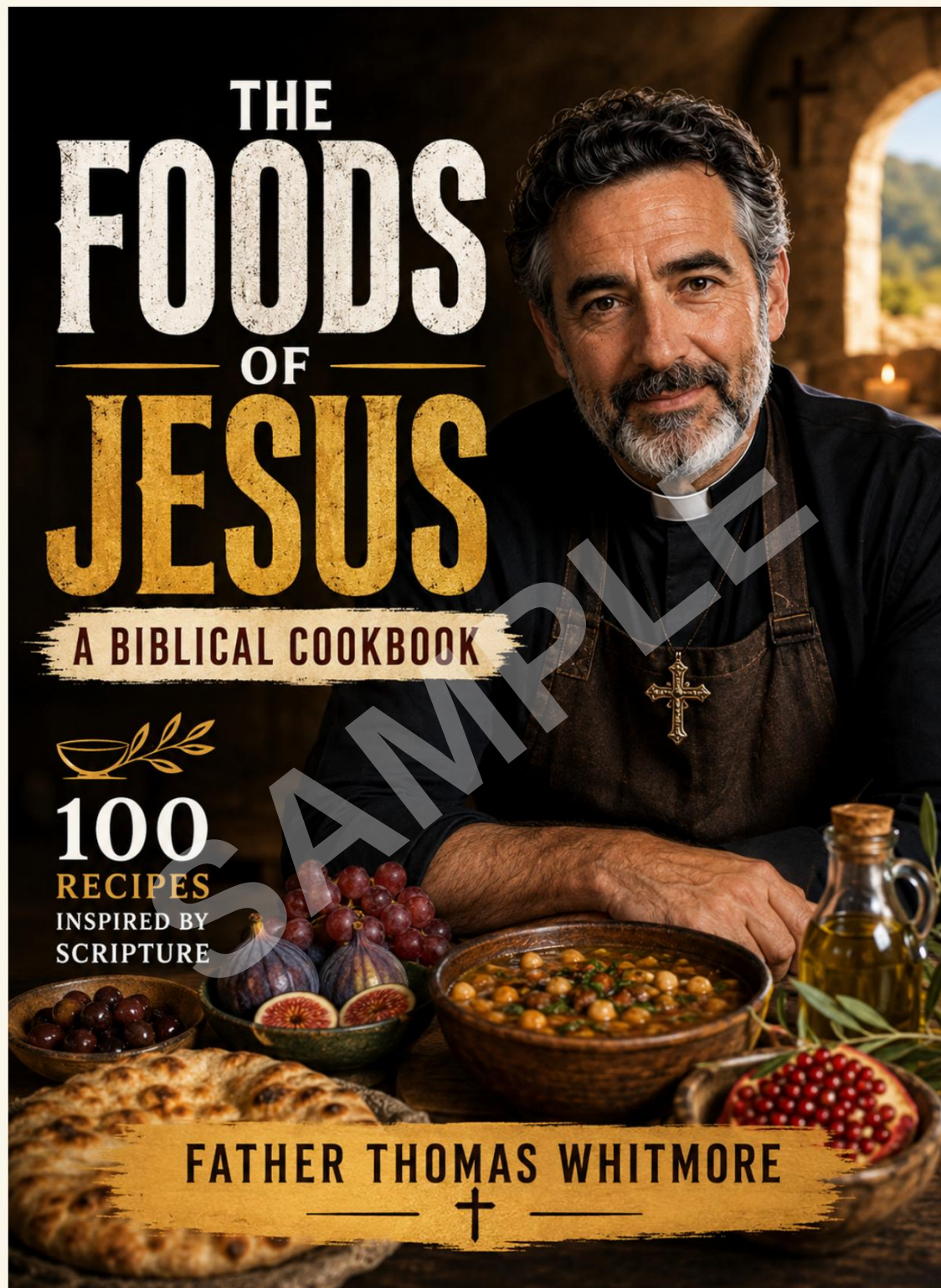




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# A Letter From Father Thomas

Dear Reader,

For most of my life, I thought of food and faith as two separate parts of the same table. My mission with the Church was centered on Scripture, prayer, service, and helping people find God in the ordinary moments of their lives. Cooking was simply something I loved. I found peace in a warm kitchen, in bread rising beneath a cloth, in the smell of olive oil and herbs, and in preparing a meal for someone I cared about.

Then, over the years, those two parts of my life began to come together. I would read of Jesus breaking bread, eating fish, sitting at a table with others, or sharing a meal beside the Sea of Galilee, and I began wondering about the food itself. What did those simple meals taste like? What ingredients would have been familiar to the people gathered around Him? What might it feel like to place some of those same foods on my own table?

The first time I began cooking intentionally with the foods I kept encountering in Scripture - barley, lentils, figs, grapes, honey, olives, fish, herbs, and simple breads - something unexpected happened. The meals did not make my faith greater, and I would never pretend that food can replace prayer or Scripture. But they made the biblical world feel nearer to me. Preparing those ingredients with my own hands gave ordinary passages a new texture. When I broke warm bread or cooked fish over high heat, I found myself lingering over familiar verses and imagining the human moments around them. In a small but meaningful way, eating the foods of Jesus made me feel closer to the world in which He walked.

That experience gradually expanded my mission into food. I began researching the ingredients named throughout the Bible, learning how people of the ancient world ate, and turning those discoveries into meals that could actually be enjoyed in a modern kitchen. This book grew from that work and from my desire to share it with you. These are not recipes handed down from Jesus' table, and I make no claim that He ate these exact dishes. They are modern recipes built thoughtfully around foods Scripture genuinely gives us.

My hope is that you will do more than cook from these pages. I hope you will read the passages beside the recipes. I hope you will invite someone to your table. I hope the smell of bread, the sweetness of figs and honey, or a simple meal of fish and herbs causes you to stop for a moment and remember that the people of Scripture ate, gathered, celebrated, struggled, welcomed strangers, and shared meals just as we do.

If this book brings good food to your table and helps even one familiar passage of Scripture feel a little more immediate, then creating it has been worthwhile.

With gratitude,  
Father Thomas Whitmore

## BREADS WORTH EATING

# 018. Ruth's Hearth Bread With Whipped Feta & Vinegar-Roasted Grapes



Finished dish: Ruth's Hearth Bread With Whipped Feta & Vinegar-Roasted Grapes. The biblical connection and modern additions are documented on the recipe evidence page.

# Ruth's Hearth Bread With Whipped Feta & Vinegar-Roasted Grapes

**SERVES 6**

**PREP 30 min + rise**

**COOK 25 min**

## INGREDIENTS

- 2 1/2 cups bread flour
- 1/2 cup barley flour
- 2 tsp instant yeast
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 cup warm water
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 1/2 cups seedless grapes
- 1 tbsp red-wine vinegar
- 1 tsp honey
- 6 oz feta
- 1/3 cup Greek yogurt
- Black pepper

## BEFORE YOU START

The vinegar is intentionally prominent but balanced by roasted grape sweetness.

## MAKE-AHEAD / STORAGE

Dough and whipped feta can be prepared a day ahead.

# Ruth's Hearth Bread With Whipped Feta & Vinegar-Roasted Grapes - Step by Step

1. Mix flours, yeast, salt, water, and 1 tablespoon olive oil; knead 7 minutes, cover, and rise 60 minutes.
2. Meanwhile roast grapes at 425°F (220°C) with remaining olive oil, vinegar, and honey for 15 minutes until blistered. Cool.
3. Blend feta and yogurt until creamy and season with pepper.
4. Shape dough into a rustic 12-inch round and bake at 450°F (230°C) for 12-15 minutes until browned.
5. Tear or cut the hearth bread into wedges. Spoon whipped feta onto a platter and top with the vinegar-roasted grapes.
6. Serve the bread warm beside the cheese and grapes, echoing Ruth 2:14 through bread and vinegar rather than pretending the modern topping is ancient.

## HOW TO KNOW IT IS READY

It is ready when the bread is deeply browned in spots, the center is cooked through, and the crumb remains tender rather than dry. Let thicker loaves cool as directed before slicing so steam can redistribute.

## HOW TO SERVE IT

Serve as a shared lunch plate.



# Ruth's Hearth Bread With Whipped Feta & Vinegar-Roasted Grapes - Biblical Connection

## SCRIPTURE

Ruth 2:14; John 6:9; Numbers 13:23

Ruth 2:14

"At meal time Boaz said to her, 'Come here, and eat some bread, and dip your morsel in the vinegar.' She sat beside the reapers, and they reached her parched grain. She ate, was satisfied, and left some of it."

John 6:9

"There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what are these among so many?"

Numbers 13:23

"They came to the valley of Eshcol, and cut down from there a branch with one cluster of grapes... They also brought some of the pomegranates and figs."

## WHAT THE PASSAGE ACTUALLY ESTABLISHES

Ruth 2 describes a harvest meal in which Ruth eats bread, dips her morsel in vinegar, and is given roasted grain. It is unusually useful for a cookbook because the eating scene itself is explicit. Bread was staple food and barley was an important grain. Ancient milling, flour extraction, fermentation, and ovens differed from modern kitchens, so the dough formula here aims for a dependable modern result rather than archaeological imitation.

## INGREDIENT EVIDENCE LEDGER

Biblically attested ingredients used here, with support: honey (Genesis 43:11), olive oil (Deuteronomy 8:8), barley (John 6:9), bread (Ruth 2:14), grapes (Numbers 13:23), vinegar (Ruth 2:14).

Historical or modern additions not used as direct biblical proof: Greek yogurt (modern cultured-dairy format), feta (modern cheese format; dairy itself is historically plausible), red-wine vinegar (modern standardized vinegar; vinegar itself is biblical).

# Ruth's Hearth Bread With Whipped Feta & Vinegar-Roasted Grapes - Cook's Notes

## WHY THIS RECIPE WORKS

Grapes bring juicy sweetness; roasting or charring them deepens that sweetness while keeping a light fruit acidity. Honey rounds sharp or salty flavors and gives glazes a glossy finish; the measured amount is intentional so sweetness does not overwhelm the main ingredients. Feta supplies salinity and tang; add it late and taste before adding more salt so the cheese stays a distinct accent rather than dominating the dish. Cultured yogurt brings acidity and creaminess; add or serve it at the stage specified so it remains fresh rather than separating under excessive heat.

## TROUBLESHOOTING

Dense bread usually comes from excess flour, insufficient rest, or an oven that was not fully preheated. Keep the dough slightly tacky when directed, and judge proofing by expansion and feel rather than the clock alone. If the top browns too quickly, move it lower in the oven.

## USEFUL VARIATION

Variation: divide the same dough into smaller individual breads. Keep the toppings proportionate and begin checking early because smaller pieces brown faster.

## SERVING & MAKE-AHEAD

Serve as a shared lunch plate. Dough and whipped feta can be prepared a day ahead.

## SOUPS, STEWS & SALADS

# 026. Jacob's Red Lentil Stew With Caramelized Onions



Finished dish: Jacob's Red Lentil Stew With Caramelized Onions. The biblical connection and modern additions are documented on the recipe evidence page.

# Jacob's Red Lentil Stew With Caramelized Onions

**SERVES 6**

**PREP 20 min**

**COOK 45 min**

## INGREDIENTS

- 2 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 large yellow onions, divided
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- 1/2 tsp ground coriander
- 1 1/2 cups red lentils, rinsed
- 6 cups low-sodium vegetable or chicken broth
- 1 tsp kosher salt
- 1 tbsp red-wine vinegar
- 2 tbsp chopped parsley or mint

## BEFORE YOU START

This recipe now uses red lentils, matching its title and the “red stew” imagery associated with Genesis 25.

## MAKE-AHEAD / STORAGE

Stew keeps 4 days; onions keep 3 days.

# Jacob's Red Lentil Stew With Caramelized Onions - Step by Step

1. Dice one onion and thinly slice the other. Heat 1 tablespoon olive oil in a heavy pot and cook the diced onion with a pinch of salt 7-8 minutes until soft.
2. Add garlic, cumin, and coriander; stir 30 seconds. Add red lentils and broth. Bring to a boil, then reduce to a gentle simmer.
3. Simmer uncovered 20-25 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the red lentils have collapsed into a thick stew. Add water if it becomes too stiff.
4. Meanwhile heat the remaining olive oil in a skillet. Cook the sliced onion over medium-low heat 20-25 minutes until deeply caramelized.
5. Season the stew with salt and vinegar. The vinegar should brighten the lentils without making them sour.
6. Ladle into bowls and crown each serving with caramelized onions and herbs.

## HOW TO KNOW IT IS READY

It is ready when the main ingredient is tender without disintegrating and the liquid has enough body to coat a spoon. If meat is still chewy, continue the gentle simmer; toughness at this stage usually means it needs more time, not more heat.

## HOW TO SERVE IT

Serve with warm bread.



# Jacob's Red Lentil Stew With Caramelized Onions - Biblical Connection

## SCRIPTURE

Genesis 25:29-34; Genesis 25:34; Numbers 11:5

Genesis 25:29-34

"Jacob boiled stew. Esau came in from the field, and he was famished... Jacob gave Esau bread and lentil stew. He ate and drank, rose up, and went his way."

Genesis 25:34

"Jacob gave Esau bread and lentil stew. He ate and drank, rose up, and went his way."

Numbers 11:5

"We remember the fish which we ate in Egypt for nothing; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlic."

## WHAT THE PASSAGE ACTUALLY ESTABLISHES

Genesis 25 places lentil stew in one of Scripture's most memorable food scenes: Jacob is cooking when Esau returns exhausted from the field. The text makes lentils and bread explicit, while the seasonings and modern technique here are our own. Pulses stored well and could turn modest pantry staples into sustaining meals. Scripture establishes the ingredient or meal scene; the modern aromatics, ratios, and simmering method are culinary reconstruction.

## INGREDIENT EVIDENCE LEDGER

Biblically attested ingredients used here, with support: olive oil (Deuteronomy 8:8), lentils (Genesis 25:34), garlic (Numbers 11:5), onions (Numbers 11:5), mint (Matthew 23:23), cumin (Matthew 23:23), vinegar (Ruth 2:14).

Historical or modern additions not used as direct biblical proof: red-wine vinegar (modern standardized vinegar; vinegar itself is biblical).

# Jacob's Red Lentil Stew With Caramelized Onions - Cook's Notes

## WHY THIS RECIPE WORKS

Lentils provide earthy body and absorb surrounding aromatics, which is why acid and fresh herbs are most effective near the end. Garlic provides the savory aromatic base; roasting mellows it, while briefly cooked garlic keeps more pungency. Onions build sweetness and savoriness as they brown, so the recipe gives them time before wetter ingredients are added. Mint is a finishing herb here: late addition preserves its cooling aroma and prevents cooked, muddy flavors.

## TROUBLESHOOTING

If the meat is tough, keep cooking gently rather than increasing the heat. If the broth is thin after the solids are tender, uncover and reduce it. If lentils or barley are becoming too soft, stop the simmer and adjust the liquid separately.

## USEFUL VARIATION

Variation: make a slightly thicker version by simmering uncovered for the final 10 minutes after the lentils or meat are tender. Do not add extra starch; reduce the existing cooking liquid instead.

## SERVING & MAKE-AHEAD

Serve with warm bread. Stew keeps 4 days; onions keep 3 days.

## **041. Jesus' Broiled Fish With Garlic, Olive Oil & Fresh Herbs**



Finished dish: Jesus' Broiled Fish With Garlic, Olive Oil & Fresh Herbs. The biblical connection and modern additions are documented on the recipe evidence page.

# Jesus' Broiled Fish With Garlic, Olive Oil & Fresh Herbs

**SERVES 4**

**PREP 15 min**

**COOK 10 min**

## INGREDIENTS

- 4 skin-on white-fish fillets, 6 oz each
- 2 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- 3/4 tsp kosher salt
- 1/4 tsp black pepper
- 3 garlic cloves, finely grated
- 2 tbsp chopped parsley
- 1 tbsp chopped dill
- 1 tbsp chopped mint
- 1 tbsp lemon juice

## BEFORE YOU START

Luke 24 explicitly says Jesus ate broiled fish. The garlic, herbs, lemon, and oil are modern seasoning choices, not part of that verse.

## MAKE-AHEAD / STORAGE

Best cooked immediately before serving.

# Jesus' Broiled Fish With Garlic, Olive Oil & Fresh Herbs - Step by Step

1. Position an oven rack 6 inches from the broiler and preheat the broiler to high. Line a heavy sheet pan with foil and oil it lightly.
2. Pat fish completely dry. Brush both sides with olive oil and season with salt and pepper.
3. Place skin-side down and broil 6-9 minutes, depending on thickness, until the top is browned and the center reaches 145°F (63°C).
4. While the fish cooks, stir garlic, parsley, dill, mint, and lemon juice with 1 tablespoon of the pan oil or fresh olive oil.
5. Rest fish 2 minutes, then spoon the fresh garlic-herb oil over the top.
6. Serve immediately so the broiled surface remains crisp.

## HOW TO KNOW IT IS READY

It is ready when the fish is opaque at the thickest point and reaches 145°F (63°C). The surface should be browned or lightly charred where called for, but the flesh should still separate in moist flakes.

## HOW TO SERVE IT

Serve with barley or warm bread.



# Jesus' Broiled Fish With Garlic, Olive Oil & Fresh Herbs - Biblical Connection

## SCRIPTURE

Luke 24:42-43; John 21:9-13; Numbers 11:5

Luke 24:42-43

"They gave him a piece of a broiled fish and some honeycomb. He took them, and ate in front of them."

John 21:9-13

"When they got out on the land, they saw a fire of coals there, with fish and bread laid on it... Jesus said to them, 'Come and eat breakfast!' ... Then Jesus came and took the bread, gave it to them, and the fish likewise."

Numbers 11:5

"We remember the fish which we ate in Egypt for nothing; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlic."

## WHAT THE PASSAGE ACTUALLY ESTABLISHES

Luke 24 is one of the clearest food statements about Jesus: he is given broiled fish and eats it in front of the disciples. The verse establishes the fish and cooking style, not the modern seasonings. Fish was economically and culturally important around the Sea of Galilee. The Gospel scenes establish fish as food and, in John 21, place it beside bread on a charcoal fire, but they do not preserve species, seasoning, or a full recipe.

## INGREDIENT EVIDENCE LEDGER

Biblically attested ingredients used here, with support: olive oil (Deuteronomy 8:8), garlic (Numbers 11:5), fish (Luke 24:42-43 / John 21:9-13), mint (Matthew 23:23), dill (Matthew 23:23).

Historical or modern additions not used as direct biblical proof: lemon/citrus (historical or modern addition; not used here as direct biblical proof).

# Jesus' Broiled Fish With Garlic, Olive Oil & Fresh Herbs - Cook's Notes

## WHY THIS RECIPE WORKS

Fish is the delicate center of the dish; drying the surface and stopping at the proper internal temperature protect both browning and moisture. Garlic provides the savory aromatic base; roasting mellows it, while briefly cooked garlic keeps more pungency. Mint is a finishing herb here: late addition preserves its cooling aroma and prevents cooked, muddy flavors. Dill contributes a fresh, grassy note and is kept away from prolonged heat so its aroma remains distinct.

## TROUBLESHOOTING

If fish will not brown, pat it drier and make sure the pan, broiler, or grill is fully hot. If it flakes into dry pieces, it cooked too long; begin checking earlier next time. Sugary glazes belong near the end because honey and fruit reductions can scorch.

## USEFUL VARIATION

Variation: substitute another firm, mild fish of similar thickness. Keep the same seasoning and doneness endpoint, but begin checking several minutes earlier if the replacement fillet is thinner.

## SERVING & MAKE-AHEAD

Serve with barley or warm bread. Best cooked immediately before serving.

## LAMB, BEEF & CELEBRATION MAINS

# 053. Slow-Roasted Passover-Inspired Lamb With Garlic & Herbs



Finished dish: Slow-Roasted Passover-Inspired Lamb With Garlic & Herbs. The biblical connection and modern additions are documented on the recipe evidence page.

# Slow-Roasted Passover-Inspired Lamb With Garlic & Herbs

**SERVES 8**

**PREP 25 min**

**COOK 3-3 1/2 hr**

## INGREDIENTS

- 1 bone-in lamb shoulder, 5-6 lb
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 8 garlic cloves
- 2 tbsp chopped rosemary and thyme
- 1 1/2 tsp kosher salt
- 1 tsp black pepper
- 1 cup water or broth

## BEFORE YOU START

This is Passover-inspired, not a claim to reproduce the Exodus meal. Exodus specifies fire-roasted lamb; this slow roast prioritizes tenderness in a modern oven.

## MAKE-AHEAD / STORAGE

Season the lamb 1 day ahead if desired.

# Slow-Roasted Passover-Inspired Lamb With Garlic & Herbs - Step by Step

1. Heat oven to 325°F (165°C). Pat lamb dry and score the fat lightly without cutting deeply into the meat.
2. Rub with olive oil, garlic, herbs, salt, and pepper. Place in a roasting pan and pour water around, not over, the lamb.
3. Roast uncovered 30 minutes, then cover tightly and continue 2 1/2 hours.
4. Uncover and roast 30-45 minutes more until deeply browned and a fork twists easily in the shoulder meat.
5. Rest 25 minutes before pulling or slicing.
6. Skim excess fat from pan juices and spoon the concentrated juices over the meat.

## HOW TO KNOW IT IS READY

It is ready when the meat is fork-tender and the sauce or pan juices have the body described in the method. For slow-cooked shoulder, tenderness is the key cue; if it is still chewy, continue gentle cooking rather than raising the heat.

## HOW TO SERVE IT

Serve with bitter greens and unleavened-style flatbread.



# Slow-Roasted Passover-Inspired Lamb With Garlic & Herbs - Biblical Connection

## SCRIPTURE

Exodus 12:8-9; Numbers 11:5; Deuteronomy 8:8

Exodus 12:8-9

“They shall eat the meat in that night, roasted with fire, and unleavened bread. They shall eat it with bitter herbs. Don't eat it raw, nor boiled at all with water, but roasted with fire.”

Numbers 11:5

“We remember the fish which we ate in Egypt for nothing; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlic.”

Deuteronomy 8:8

“A land of wheat, barley, vines, fig trees, and pomegranates; a land of olive trees and honey.”

## WHAT THE PASSAGE ACTUALLY ESTABLISHES

Exodus 12 gives unusually specific Passover food instructions: lamb roasted with fire, unleavened bread, and bitter herbs. Modern oven temperatures, marinades, and serving styles in this book remain contemporary adaptations. Meat appears in biblical narratives in hospitality, sacrifice, feast, travel, and scarcity contexts. This recipe uses the named animal or meat as a starting point and does not imply that the modern seasoning combination was everyday biblical fare.

## INGREDIENT EVIDENCE LEDGER

Biblically attested ingredients used here, with support: olive oil (Deuteronomy 8:8), garlic (Numbers 11:5), lamb (Exodus 12:8-9).

# Slow-Roasted Passover-Inspired Lamb With Garlic & Herbs - Cook's Notes

## WHY THIS RECIPE WORKS

Lamb supplies deep savory richness; fruit, herbs, or acidity are used as counterpoints rather than as heavy coverings. Garlic provides the savory aromatic base; roasting mellows it, while briefly cooked garlic keeps more pungency. Olive oil carries aromatic flavors and provides richness; finishing oil is used more sparingly than cooking oil so the dish stays fresh rather than greasy.

## TROUBLESHOOTING

For better browning, work in batches and leave space around the meat. If a braised cut is still tough, continue gentle cooking rather than raising the heat. Apply sweet glazes late, and rest roasts before slicing so the juices remain in the meat.

## USEFUL VARIATION

Variation: scale the meat portion down for a smaller table while keeping the aromatic mixture generous. Use a smaller pan when appropriate and judge doneness by temperature and tenderness rather than simply halving the cooking time.

## SERVING & MAKE-AHEAD

Serve with bitter greens and unleavened-style flatbread. Season the lamb 1 day ahead if desired.

## DESSERTS & SWEET THINGS

# 100. Father Thomas's Biblical Feast Cake



Finished dish: Father Thomas's Biblical Feast Cake. The biblical connection and modern additions are documented on the recipe evidence page.

# Father Thomas's Biblical Feast Cake

**SERVES 14-16**

**PREP 60 min**

**COOK 35 min + cooling**

## INGREDIENTS

- 2 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 cup barley flour
- 2 1/2 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 1 tsp salt
- 4 large eggs
- 1 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 1/4 cups Greek yogurt
- 1 cup honey
- 1 cup chopped dried figs
- 1 cup chopped dates
- 3/4 cup raisins
- 1/2 cup chopped almonds
- 1/2 cup chopped pistachios
- 16 oz cream cheese, softened
- 1 cup Greek yogurt, for filling
- 1/2 cup honey, for filling and drizzle
- Fresh figs and pomegranate arils, for garnish

## BEFORE YOU START

This finale intentionally gathers many recurring biblical foods into one modern celebration cake. Dates and cream cheese are not presented as direct scriptural evidence.

## MAKE-AHEAD / STORAGE

Cake layers can be baked and frozen 1 month; assemble the day of serving.

# Father Thomas's Biblical Feast Cake - Step by Step

1. Heat oven to 350°F (175°C). Grease and line three 9-inch cake pans. Whisk flours, baking powder, baking soda, cinnamon, and salt.
2. In a large bowl whisk eggs, olive oil, yogurt, and 1 cup honey until smooth and glossy. Fold in the dry ingredients just until combined.
3. Fold in dried figs, dates, raisins, almonds, and half the pistachios. Divide evenly among the three pans.
4. Bake 28-35 minutes, rotating once, until the centers spring back and testers show moist crumbs. Cool 15 minutes in pans, then completely on racks.
5. Beat cream cheese, 1 cup Greek yogurt, and 1/3 cup honey until smooth and thick. Chill 20 minutes if soft.
6. Place the first layer on a stand and spread with one-third of the filling. Repeat with the second layer. Add the final layer and spread the remaining filling over the top, leaving the sides mostly exposed.
7. Garnish the top generously with fresh figs, pomegranate arils, remaining pistachios, and almonds. Drizzle with the final honey only just before serving.
8. Chill 30 minutes to set the layers, then bring to cool room temperature for 20 minutes before slicing with a long serrated knife.

## HOW TO KNOW IT IS READY

It is ready when the structure has set: cakes spring back and a tester shows moist crumbs, tarts hold their filling, and puddings no longer look watery. Respect the cooling time because slicing too early can collapse or smear the finished dessert.

## HOW TO SERVE IT

Serve in modest slices; it is rich and meant for a gathering.

# Father Thomas's Biblical Feast Cake - Biblical Connection

## SCRIPTURE

John 6:9; 1 Samuel 25:18; Song of Songs 2:5

John 6:9

“There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what are these among so many?”

1 Samuel 25:18

“Then Abigail hurried and took two hundred loaves of bread, two containers of wine, five sheep ready dressed, five seahs of parched grain, one hundred clusters of raisins, and two hundred cakes of figs, and laid them on donkeys.”

Song of Songs 2:5

“Strengthen me with raisins, refresh me with apples; for I am faint with love.”

## WHAT THE PASSAGE ACTUALLY ESTABLISHES

John 6 names barley loaves and fish in the feeding of the crowd. The food is explicit; the Gospel does not give a recipe or say how the loaves were formulated. Fruit, honey, grain, and nuts are individually attested in Scripture, but modern cake, pastry, custard, freezing, and cultured-dairy techniques are not treated as recovered biblical recipes.

## INGREDIENT EVIDENCE LEDGER

Biblically attested ingredients used here, with support: figs (1 Samuel 25:18), honey (Genesis 43:11), olive oil (Deuteronomy 8:8), barley (John 6:9), pomegranates (Numbers 13:23), raisins (1 Samuel 25:18), almonds (Genesis 43:11).

Historical or modern additions not used as direct biblical proof: cream cheese (modern dairy product), Greek yogurt (modern cultured-dairy format), baking powder (modern chemical leavener), baking soda (modern chemical leavener), pistachios (often proposed for Genesis 43:11 nuts, but translation/botanical identification varies), dates (historically plausible Near Eastern fruit; not relied on here as direct biblical proof), all-purpose flour (modern milled flour specification).



# Father Thomas's Biblical Feast Cake - Cook's Notes

## WHY THIS RECIPE WORKS

Figs contribute jammy sweetness and soft texture; roasting them concentrates their flavor without needing much additional sweetener. Pomegranate contributes tartness, freshness, and a juicy pop that keeps richer components from feeling heavy. Dates add dense caramel-like sweetness and body; the recipe's measured salt, acid, dairy, or spice provides the counterbalance. Raisins give concentrated sweetness and chew; dispersing them through the dish prevents any one bite from becoming too sweet.

## TROUBLESHOOTING

A dense cake often means the batter was overmixed after flour was added. A sunken center usually needs more baking or more cooling before handling. Keep fruit garnishes and syrups for the end so they do not make the crumb or crust soggy.

## USEFUL VARIATION

Variation: serve a smaller portion with plain cultured yogurt or unsweetened fresh fruit. The added acidity and freshness balance the concentrated sweetness of dried fruit without changing the core recipe.

## SERVING & MAKE-AHEAD

Serve in modest slices; it is rich and meant for a gathering. Cake layers can be baked and frozen 1 month; assemble the day of serving.