

## **I Am Jewish Activity**

**By Erin Silver**

No matter what religion you practice, we all have things in common. We all love our families. We all try to help others. And we have special celebrations, traditions and even foods that we can share with each other. Here's a recipe you can try at home. It's a soft, braided egg bread we call *challah*. It's traditionally eaten on Shabbat, which takes place every Friday night. You might have already tried similar bread at one of your own celebrations. Or maybe you've eaten it as French Toast! Challah is really fun to make and to eat!



### **Ingredients:**

2 1/4 tsp active dry yeast  
1 cup warm water  
4 cups all-purpose flour (plus a bit extra if sticky)  
7 egg yolks (save the egg whites for later)  
1/4 cup sugar  
1 tsp salt  
6 Tbsp olive oil  
2-3 tbsp sesame or poppy seeds (optional)

### **Instructions:**

1. In a small bowl, combine yeast and warm water. Add a bit of sugar to help the yeast bloom. Stir to dissolve and set aside for about 10 minutes.
2. In a large bowl, combine the flour, yolks, sugar, salt and oil and mix with a wooden spoon. Add the yeast mixture to the flour mixture and mix until all the ingredients are combined.
3. Sprinkle flour onto the kitchen counter, enough to make dough not stick. Knead the dough with the palms of your hands. If the dough is sticky, add more flour. Keep kneading until the dough is soft. Form the dough into a big ball and place in an oiled mixing bowl. Cover it with a cloth and leave it in a warm spot (like on a window sill) to rise. By the two-hour mark, the dough should be twice its original size.
4. Punch the dough to deflate it, then put it back on the floured counter. Divide the dough into three equal balls. Roll each one between your palms until you have three long strips of dough that are the same size in length. On a large baking sheet lined with parchment paper, pinch the three ends of the dough together, then braid them, crossing one piece over the next. Pinch the other end to finish the braid. Allow your braid to rise again for 30-45 minutes.
5. Using a pastry brush, paint the dough with the egg whites. This will make the top of the bread shiny! Sprinkle the top of the dough with sesame or poppy seeds. Place the bread in a preheated 350-degree F oven and bake for 20-25 minutes or until the top is golden. My mom also checks the bottom of the bread to make sure it's browned. She even taps the top of the bread to tell if it's cooked inside. If it sounds hollow it's ready. If you have a thermometer the internal temperature should read 190 degrees F. Remove from the oven and enjoy!



**BEECH STREET BOOKS**