

**The Story of the Missing Hametz\*: A Story for Passover  
By Hagit Aharonof**

**Who ever heard of hametz that went missing?**

**I did.**

**My name is Gideon, but the kids all call me Gidi.**

**I was there when the hametz got lost.**

**The whole thing happened last year, on the night of the thirteenth of Nissan.**

**You know, the night before the Pesach seder.**

**Every year all of us kids in the Yaron family (Danny, Avi, and I, Gidi) hide little packets of paper all over the house.**

**What is in those little packets? Pieces of bread.**

**Then Dad comes and searches for the hametz. He looks for all the little packets of paper and collects them, one by one. It's called bedikat hametz.**

**Last year, too, we hid seven little paper packets. Danny, who is the biggest brother, hid three, and Avi and I each hid two. Ron, our littlest brother who is only four, wanted to hide one also, but we didn't let him.**

**Danny told him: "Little kids make a crumbly mess. When you get bigger – you can also hide hametz."**

**Avi picked out his hiding places, and then he said, "Maybe we should write down where we hid the paper packets so that we can find them afterwards?"**

**But Danny said that it didn't pay, because we were already old enough to remember.**

**When everything was all ready, and the paper packets were safely hidden, Avi called: "Dad, we're ready! You can start checking for hametz!" Dad came into the room, in one hand holding his siddur open to the page of bedikat hametz, and in the other hand, he held a feather and a candle.**

**Every year I am amazed: Where does Dad get a feather? Every year I decide that I will ask Dad after bedikat hametz. But by the time we find all of the hametz, and by the time Dad says everything written in the siddur – after all that, I always forget what I wanted to ask.**

**So what happened last year?**

**Dad said the bracha (blessing): Asher kidshanu be-mitzvotav ve-tzivani al biur hametz**

**[who sanctified us with the commandment to remove the hametz]\*".**

**Then he searched in every corner: under the beds, behind the cupboards, under the table, near the chair legs, everywhere.**

**No one said a word.**

**Everyone was counting the paper packets that he picked up:**

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\* any food made by mixing grain and water and then allowed to 'rise', like bread, cake, or pasta.

**One packet, two packets, three,...six, that's almost every last one.  
There was one packet he didn't find.**

**Nu, nu, Dad was motioning to us that we kids should help him out, maybe give him a hint.**

**Ron understood right away that that was what Dad was saying and he motioned back: You found all of my hametz.**

**Avi also pointed to his packets of hametz in the pile.**

**So now it was clear to everyone- it was my hametz that was missing.**

**I was embarrassed. Where on earth did I put that last packet?**

**There was one under Avi's bed, one under the armchair, and the third...?**

**Suddenly I remembered:**

**"It must be under the bookcase!" I was so relieved. I ran to the bookcase, bent down and looked underneath. And what did I see? No packet!**

**I looked to the right and then to the left. Nothing!**

**"But that's impossible, I thought, "I'm sure that I put the hametz right here, under the bookcase. It just disappeared. The hametz got lost!"**

**Dad was beginning to lose his patience.**

**Nu, nu, he motioned to us, we have to find the lost packet of hametz.**

**Avi stretched out on the rug for a better view, Danny crawled under the bed, even Mom bent down to check under the refrigerator. Who knows, maybe it will turn up there...**

**While everyone was busy, Ron snuck back to his room. He came back holding his new toy: a big red plastic dump-truck. Ron gave a triumphant smile, and handed the truck to Dad.**

**I wanted to shout at him to say, "Ron, cut it out! We're in the middle of checking for hametz! You can't bother Dad in the middle!"**

**But to my surprise, Dad took the truck and a big smile spread over his face.**

**In the back of the truck was a little paper packet.**

**And what was in the packet? The lost hametz!**

**Dad took the hametz, added it to the rest of the packets, and recited over all of them together:**

**"All the hametz in my possession that I didn't see and didn't remove is hereby cancelled out and is ownerless, like the dust of the earth."**

**When Dad finished, he smiled at Ron and said, "Next year, G-d willing, we will let Ron hide hametz."**

**As for me, I was so happy and relieved that we found the lost hametz –I forgot again to ask Dad where he got the feather.**