

# THE BURIED WEAPONS

"Hurry up, Mom!" five-year-old Jackson shouted. He grabbed the Book of Mormon storybook and plunked down on the bright blue beanbag chair.

Four-year-old Michelle plopped down beside him. "Story time!" she cried, eagerly clapping her hands.

Mother squeezed between them on the beanbag chair and opened the book. "Let's see. . . Yesterday, we were reading about the Anti-Nephi-Lehies, weren't we?"

Jackson nodded.

"They were Lamanites. And they'd been converted to the gospel, remember?"

"And they were really wicked!" Michelle declared emphatically.

"Yes, they were really wicked. But when they were converted, they wanted to repent," said Mother. "They promised

the Lord that they would never fight again. In fact, they buried all their weapons of war in a big pit—see," she said, pointing to the picture.

"Wow!" Jackson cried excitedly. "Look at all those weapons. Swords and bows and arrows and all kinds of things!"

"That looks fun!" exclaimed Michelle. "Let's bury our weapons, too, Jackson!"

Jackson giggled. "Oh, Michelle, don't be silly. We don't have any weapons."

"Hmmm," Mother said thoughtfully, "You may not use swords and bows and arrows, but sometimes the things that come out of your mouths hurt too."

Michelle wrinkled her forehead. "What comes out of our mouths?" she asked, puzzled.

"Words," said Mother.

"You mean words like *stupid* and *dumb*, don't you?" Jackson asked.

"Right," said Mother. "Sometimes words hurt as much as a punch on the arm."

"Then we must bury our bad words,"



Michelle urged, "and never use them again!"

"I know what," said Mother. "You tell me some words that hurt other people's feelings, and I'll write them down on slips of paper. Then you can dig a big hole and bury all those bad words, just like the Lamanites buried their weapons."

"Great idea!" Jackson exclaimed. They found some paper and tore it into pieces. Then they thought of all the unkind words that they knew. Mother wrote them down.

"Come on, Michelle, let's go dig that pit now," Jackson called enthusiastically. They dragged their dad's shovel out of the garage and raced to the unplowed area behind the garden.

Jackson jabbed the shovel tip into the dark, rocky soil. He pushed as hard as he could, but the ground was so hard that he loosened only a small clump of dirt.

"Boy! You're not very strong," Michelle remarked saucily.

"Well, you're pretty weak yourself," he growled back. Then he stopped. "Hey, wait a minute. We're supposed to be burying those kinds of words! Sorry."

"Me, too," Michelle told him sincerely.

Jackson gripped the shovel handle with both hands, then jumped on the back end of its blade as he had seen his dad do. He hovered there for a few seconds as it teetered in the hard dirt; then he lost his balance and sprawled on the ground.

"Are you OK?" Michelle asked anxiously.

"Sort of," he replied, wincing. "But we can't quit now. The Lamanites didn't quit until all their weapons were buried." He gritted his teeth determinedly.

"How about trying this?" Michelle suggested, handing him a garden trowel that they used in their sandpile.

Jackson took it and chipped at the dirt while Michelle dug with a stick.

Soon they were covered with dust and dirt, but the hole was dug. They put all the papers with the unkind words written on them into the hole. Then they pushed the dirt back.

"Are you finished yet?" Mother called from the kitchen window. "I've made some hot muffins for my two hungry Anti-Nephi-Lehies."

"Yes," answered Jackson. "Our weapons are finally buried!"

"And," Michelle solemnly declared, "we won't ever use them again!"

