

ESCAPING FROM THE

HOLE



BY JULIA OLDROYD

(Based on a true story)

Look up the following scriptures:

Exodus 20:15; Proverbs 12:17; Hebrews 13:18.

Circle the one you think fits the story best.

Time to go, Jacob!" Mom called.

Four-year-old Jacob hopped off his bed and ran downstairs. "What are we going to buy? Can we get treats? Can I help you?"

It was Jacob's turn to go shopping with Mom, and he was full of questions.

"We are going to buy groceries, and if you are a really big helper, we just might have time to make cookies for family home evening when we get home."

Jacob smiled as Mom helped him into his seat in the car and buckled the seat belt. This was going to be great!

Mom pushed the grocery cart up and down the aisles while Jacob held the shopping list. He helped organize the groceries and got to choose if they got red apples or yellow apples, and red potatoes or white potatoes.

When they were finished getting the items on the list, Jacob helped push the heavy cart up to the check-out line. He watched as Mom put the groceries on the conveyor belt.

Suddenly, Jacob noticed that the shelves he was standing by were full of candy and gum. Mom didn't buy those things very often. Jacob saw a package of Blueberry Blast bubble gum and knew it tasted *really*



good. He put the package in his pocket.

As they were driving home, Mom said, “You’re very quiet, Jacob. Are you tired?”

“No.”

“OK. Will you help me unload the groceries when we get home?”

“Sure.”

When they got home, they carried the bags of groceries inside and put them on the kitchen counter. Mom looked at Jacob carefully. “Where did you get that big piece of gum?” she asked.

Jacob shrugged his shoulders and looked at the floor. Mom knelt down and asked him again.

“Where did you get that gum, Jacob?”

Jacob took the package of gum out of his pocket.

“Did you take that gum from the store?”

Jacob felt like crying. He nodded his head slowly. Mom looked sad.

“Jacob, when we do something that is wrong—like taking gum from the store without paying for it—it’s like digging a deep hole and standing in the bottom of it. We need to do important things to get out of the hole.”

“What do we do first?” Jacob asked.

“We need to know that we have done something wrong and feel sorry about it. I think you already know that taking the gum is wrong. Are you sorry?”

“Yes. I know it was wrong. I feel sad now,” Jacob said.

“Then we need to fix the problem the best we can. Since you already opened the package of gum and ate some of it, we can’t give it back to the store. What do you think we should do?”

“I have some money. I could go back to the store and pay for the gum.”

“That’s a great idea. I’ll take you.”

Jacob ran upstairs and got his money jar. Mom helped him count out enough to pay for the gum.



When they got to the store, Mom held Jacob's hand and took him to the manager's desk. She told the manager that Jacob had something to tell her.

Jacob felt nervous. He pulled the package of gum out of his pocket and put it on the counter.

"Did you take that gum without paying for it?" the manager asked.

Jacob nodded.

"Would you like to pay for it now?"

"Yes."

Jacob put his money on the counter. The manager printed a receipt. She put the gum in a bag, gave the

receipt to Jacob, and smiled at him. "Thank you for being honest and coming back to pay for the gum," she said.

Jacob felt much better as he and Mom walked back to the car.

"You are doing a good job climbing out of the hole, Jacob," Mom said. "But there's something else you need to do."

"What?"

"You need to tell Heavenly Father that you are sorry, and promise Him that you will try to keep the commandments from now on."

When Mom and Jacob got home, they went into a quiet room and knelt down together. Mom helped Jacob say a prayer. He told Heavenly Father that he was sorry and wouldn't take anything from the store without paying for it ever again.

When the prayer was finished, Jacob was surprised that he didn't feel bad anymore. Not bad at all! In fact, he felt clean and happy again—just like he had climbed out of a hole, *and* had a bath too! ●



"The Lord has commanded us to repent, to change our ways, to come unto Him, and be more like Him."⁵

Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

