

A Higher and Holier Fast

Elder Ulisses Soares, *Quorum of the Twelve Apostles*

SATURDAY MORNING SESSION • SATURDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2026 • OCTOBER 2026 GENERAL CONFERENCE

THE BIG IDEA

When I fast with prayer and give a generous fast offering, I draw closer to Jesus Christ and my heart opens to people in need.

You'll need: An envelope or a fast-offering slip (or your ward's online giving page).

Parent note: Fasting is for when each person is ready and healthy. Younger kids can start by skipping a snack or one meal with a purpose and a prayer.

1 HOOK

2 MIN

QUESTION Jesus Christ was about to begin the most important mission in history. Out of everything He could have done to get ready, what did He choose? Take guesses.

Then: He went into the wilderness for 40 days to fast and pray with His Father (Matthew 4:1–2). Elder Soares said that of all the things He could have done to prepare, He chose to seek complete alignment with His Father's will through fasting and prayer.

2 KEY TEACHINGS FROM ELDER SOARES

8–10 MIN

1 Fasting + prayer = drawing near

“A sincere and faithful fast is accompanied by earnest and intentional prayer.”

— Elder Ulisses Soares • exact words

FOR AGES 8–11: MAKE IT CONCRETE

Without prayer, fasting is just being hungry. It's like putting your phone face down so you can really listen to someone you love. Fasting clears space; prayer fills it.

DEEP CUT • AGES 12–16

Elder Soares said: “Through the union of fasting and prayer, our faith, love, and devotion to Him deepen.” Isaiah 58 promises light, healing, and this: “Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am.” (Isaiah 58:9). Notice the promise isn't *you'll get what you asked for*. It's *I am here*.

2 Fasting draws heaven near, even when the burden stays

“His example teaches us that fasting and prayer may not remove every burden from our path, but they draw heaven near and endow us with divine power to overcome or endure whatever circumstances we may face, giving us the spiritual fortitude to remain faithful to the Father's will.”

— Elder Ulisses Soares • exact words

FOR AGES 8–11: MAKE IT CONCRETE

After His fast, Jesus was spiritually strong enough to say no to Satan's temptations and begin His ministry. Fasting can make us stronger too, for a test, a hard friendship, or a sick grandparent.

DEEP CUT • AGES 12–16

“Even when answers do not come in the way we expect, fasting and prayer help us develop greater confidence in the Lord, in our covenants with Him, and in His plan for our lives, as well as a deeper willingness to accept His will.” Fasting isn't leverage on God. It's letting Him change what we want.

3 A holier fast looks outward: fast offerings

“Though our fast offerings may seem small and simple, they become consecrated expressions of compassion, concern, and service.”

— Elder Ulisses Soares · exact words

“A man filled with the love of God, is not content with blessing his family alone, but ranges through the whole world, anxious to bless the whole human race.”

— The Prophet Joseph Smith, as quoted by Elder Soares

FOR AGES 8–11: MAKE IT CONCRETE

The money we would have spent on the meals we skip goes to the bishop, who uses it to help people with food, rent, and other needs. A few dollars from your family can become someone else’s groceries.

DEEP CUT · AGES 12–16

Isaiah taught that an acceptable fast helps let the oppressed go free and break every yoke (Isaiah 58:6). Elder Soares tied this to Jesus, who came down and suffered so He would know how to help His people. Fast offerings are one way we copy the Savior’s pattern of coming close to people who are struggling.

3 INTERACTIVE MOMENT

2–3 MIN

QUICK POLL Is fasting more like (A) a vending machine: put in hunger, get out a blessing, or (B) a long, quiet talk with someone who loves you? Vote, and the older kids have to defend their vote in one sentence.

Reveal: Elder Soares said fasting is more than a test of willpower or a request for specific blessings: “It is a way to align our desires with His purposes, and our expectations with His wisdom.” So, B, with a lot of listening on our side.

4 TALK ABOUT IT

3 MIN

YOUNGER (8–11)

If our family fasted for someone this month, who would you want us to fast for, and why?

OLDER (12–16)

Have you ever prayed for something and noticed your own wants changing? What was that like?

5 RECAP: THE KIDS EXPLAIN IT

2 MIN

Ask the kids: What two things make a fast higher and holier instead of just hungry? Why did Jesus fast before His mission? Then read Elder Soares’s words: “Fasting, when observed with joy and joined with prayer and generosity, brings sweeter communion with the Lord and a deeper, more personal connection with Him.”

Listen for: Prayer. Generosity (fast offerings). Joy. It draws heaven near. It helps others. His promise: miracles, nearness to the Savior, strength, more sensitivity to others’ needs.

6 TESTIMONY OF JESUS CHRIST

1 MIN

A parent shares a time fasting and prayer brought peace, strength, or an answer, and what it taught you about Jesus Christ.

7 THIS WEEK, AS A FAMILY

1 MIN

ONE THING TO DO On the next fast Sunday, choose one family purpose together, begin and end with a family prayer, and let the kids help fill out or submit the fast offering.

☐ Mon ☐ Tue ☐ Wed ☐ Thu ☐ Fri ☐ Sat ☐ Sun

Scripture: Isaiah 58:6–11; Matthew 4:1–2; Alma 17:3 · **Full talk:** [churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/2026/10/17/soares](https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/2026/10/17/soares)

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