



OCTOBER 2026 GENERAL CONFERENCE · SATURDAY MORNING SESSION

A Higher and Holier Fast

Elder Ulisses Soares · Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

Words to remember

- *“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.”*
- *“As you do so, I promise, in the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ, that miracles will come into your life.”*

In Elder Ulisses Soares’s own words, from the talk.

Elder Ulisses Soares of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said he had prayerfully pondered the sacred blessings the Father and the Son offer as we draw near to Them through sincere and faithful observance of the law of the fast. From the bottom of his heart, he testified of the sanctifying spiritual power that flows into our lives as we seek to live this law in a higher and holier way, a divine pattern of devotion that brings strength, guidance, peace, and help throughout mortality.

The Lord’s call to fast in the latter days, he said, echoes His message through Isaiah, a message of healing, covenant power, and blessing still offered to all of God’s children. In Isaiah 58, the Lord lifted His people’s vision beyond outward observance and revealed fasting’s purpose as an act of worship that shapes and refines our discipleship. Isaiah recorded the blessings: “Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily. ... Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am.” (Isaiah 58:8–9). “What a tender promise: light after darkness, healing after weariness, and the comforting assurance that when we call upon the Lord, He is near.”

He quoted President Joseph F. Smith, who taught that proper fasting places the body in subjection to the spirit and promotes communion with the Holy Ghost, bringing us nearer to God. A faithful fast is accompanied by earnest and intentional prayer. Through the union of fasting and prayer, our faith, love, and devotion deepen; we become humbler and more aware of our complete dependence upon the Lord; our hearts soften; and we become more receptive to the Holy Ghost and better prepared for personal revelation as we move along the covenant path.

This pattern finds its highest and holiest expression in the life of Jesus Christ. The Savior did not merely teach principles; He exemplified them. Before His ministry, He withdrew into the wilderness

and spent 40 days communing with His Father (Matthew 4:1–2). Of everything the Only Begotten could have done to prepare, he chose to seek complete alignment with his father’s will through fasting and prayer. Spiritually fortified, He triumphed over the adversary’s temptations and began the ministry that fulfilled His destiny as Redeemer. The lesson: 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.

A holy fast, he said, is more than a physical test of restraint or a petition for a specific blessing. It is an elevating expression of faith and trust in the Lord, a way to align our desires with his purposes and our expectations with his wisdom. Even when answers don’t come as expected, fasting and prayer build confidence in the Lord, in our covenants, and in His plan, and a deeper willingness to accept His will.

Fasting also turns us outward. Isaiah taught that an acceptable fast helps “to let the oppressed go free” and “break every yoke” (Isaiah 58:6). Joseph Smith taught that “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.” So our fast becomes both personal devotion and outward charity, expressed today in generous fast offerings, each reflecting a willing heart, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and a sincere desire to bless those in need.

That generosity mirrors the Savior, who came down from heaven and suffered pains and afflictions and temptations of every kind so He would know how to succor His people (Alma 7:12). As we seek to succor God’s children, our hearts open and we minister more like Him. Offerings that may seem small and simple become consecrated expressions of compassion, and as we give our means and time, we give more fully of ourselves to building God’s kingdom and become instruments in His hands.

Elder Soares said he has seen the blessings of fasting enter lives quietly and tenderly, softening hearts, strengthening testimonies, sanctifying souls, and transforming lives, and he has felt increased inspiration and revelation as he has tried to live the law more fully. Fasting observed with joy and joined with prayer and generosity brings sweeter communion with the Lord.

His invitation was to prayerfully ponder Isaiah’s teachings and more intentionally embrace the divine purpose of the law of the fast in a higher and holier way. He promised in the name of Jesus Christ that miracles will come into your life: we will draw nearer to the Savior, receive strength to overcome weaknesses, and become more sensitive to others’ needs. He closed by restating Isaiah’s promise in the first person plural: “Our ‘light [shall] break forth as the morning’; our ‘health shall spring forth speedily’; then shall we ‘call, and the Lord shall answer’; we shall cry, and He shall say, ‘Here I am.’”

Let's talk about it

What did this talk teach us about the Savior? What is one small thing our family can do this week?

Kid-friendly summary in our own words · Read or watch the full talk: [churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/2026/10/17soares](https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/2026/10/17soares)