

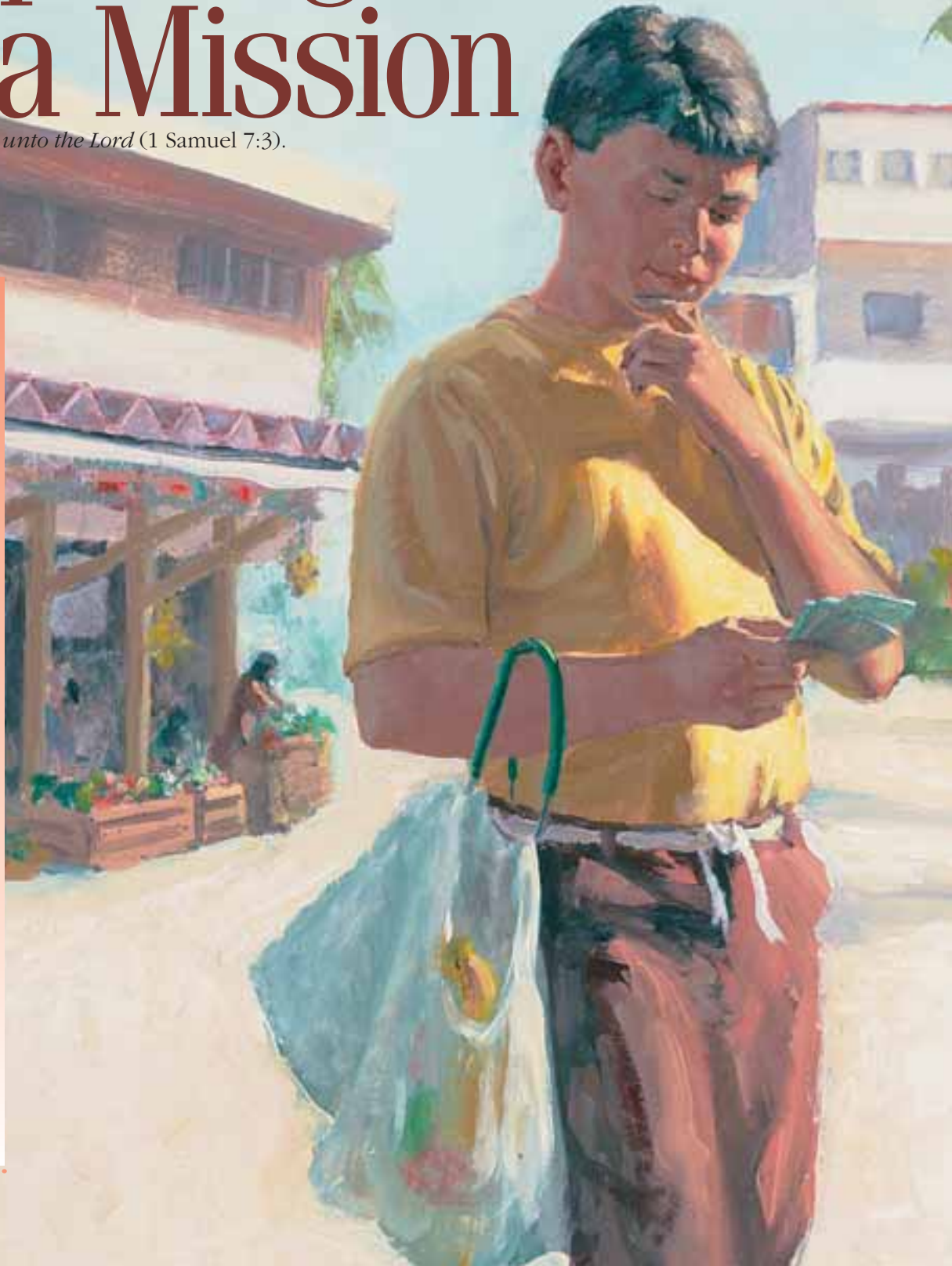



# Preparing for a Mission

*Prepare your hearts unto the Lord (1 Samuel 7:3).*



*From an interview with Elder Ulisses Soares of the Seventy, currently serving as First Counselor in the Brazil Area Presidency; by Jennifer Maddy, Church Magazines*





**F**or several years after my family was baptized, the missionaries had lunch in our home every day. I learned to love the missionaries, and I wanted to be like them.

When I was 11 years old, my bishop called me in for an interview in his office. He said, “Ulisses, it’s time to start your preparation to go on a mission.” I was astonished because I was only 11 years old! But he said, “We have to start that process now.”

My bishop said, “I’ll interview you once in a while to see how your progress is.” Then he gave me some direction. He taught me about the commandments, the priesthood, worthiness, and honesty. I was so impressed because he looked in my eyes and said, “You will serve a mission if you follow the directions I am giving you.”

I always remembered his words, especially when I faced a challenge. For example, one time my mother gave me money to go to a store to buy some fruit. For some reason the cashier gave me back more money than I gave her to pay for the fruit. I started walking home, and when I opened my hand, I saw that I had more money than I had started with.

Satan tried to convince me that I could keep the money for myself. I thought, “I have some money to do whatever I want, and then I will give back the correct change to my mother.” But then I thought, “No, that’s not what the bishop told me. To be a missionary, I have to be honest.” I felt the Spirit at that time and went back to the store to give back the money. I felt good in my heart. I thought, “I was honest, I obeyed the commandments, and I am preparing for my mission. I will be a missionary, and I need to be honest.”

When I was going to high school, I worked to save money for my mission. My parents were poor and couldn’t afford to pay for everything. I didn’t earn a lot of money, but after paying tithing, I decided to buy one piece of clothing per month for my mission. One month I bought a shirt, another month a tie, another month another shirt. During those three years, I saved enough to buy everything I needed. I saved enough to pay for my mission. I learned the principle of saving. I learned the principle of being obedient to the law of tithing and how many blessings we receive when we pay tithing.

My mission was a great experience because it helped me understand the principles of life and how to apply the gospel in my daily activities.

Boys and girls, prepare for a good mission and a good life. The Lord is waiting to give us all the blessings we need. ●