

Foundations In Fasting
30 Hours
Sheldon Juell, Ph.D.

Lesson 1: Fasting and the Christian Life

Topic 1: Fasting and the Christian Life – Class Notes

1.1 – Introduction to Foundations in Fasting

- Sheldon Juell, Ph.D. in Biblical Studies
- Author of **Fasting: Unlocking Spiritual Power and Breakthrough**

1.2 – Introduction to Foundations in Fasting

- The Two-fold Purpose for Writing on Fasting:
 1. to raise the awareness that fasting is a spiritual discipline.
 2. too many Christians, like myself, struggle to find the breakthrough that we have been searching for. Through fasting, we can tap into this spiritual weapon and bring about this breakthrough.

1.3 – Lesson 1: Learning Objectives

1. Be familiarized with the spiritual discipline of fasting and its relevancy to your life and ministry.
2. Gain biblical and theological understanding of fasting, its origin, benefits, purpose, and how its regular practice can bring about an abundant life.
3. Develop an appreciation for fasting and its far-reaching magnitude into your walk with the Lord.

1.4 – Lesson 1: Fasting and the Christian Life

- **Topic 1:** The Day of Atonement
- **Topic 2:** Fasting: Is It Relevant today?
- **Topic 3:** Why and When Should Christians Fast?
- **Topic 4:** What are the Factors That Inhibit Christians from Fasting?

1.5 – Fasting and the Christian Life

- Get ready to go on a journey together that will bring transformation and empowerment to your life and ministry.

1.6 – Fasting and the Christian Life

- **Fasting is:** “The willful abstaining from natural pleasures for a spiritual purpose”. Dr. Myles Monroe (“What Is Fasting?” Video).

1.7 – The Day of Atonement

- The **exclusive fast commanded** by the **Mosaic Law** is observed annually on the Day of Atonement (*Yom Kippur*, יום יום, כַּפּוּרִים *kippurîm*).

1.8 – The Day of Atonement

- *Yom Kippur* is the conclusion to the **Ten Days of Repentance** that began with *Rosh HaShanah*, (Jewish New Year).
- *Yom Kippur* is the **holiest day** of the Jewish Year.

1.9 – The Day of Atonement

- The *Cohen HaGadol* (High Priest) would **lay both hands** on the head of a live goat, confess **all wickedness** and **rebellion** of the children of Israel. The goat is then led into the wilderness and released.
- *Yom Kippur* – the High Priest would enter the Holy of Holies and make atonement for the nation of Israel.

1.10 – The Day of Atonement

- The **observance** of *Yom Kippur* is characterized by a **sense of peace** because our confidence is in **our relationship with God** and **His provision for atonement**.
- Both Messianic and Secular Jews observe *Yom Kippur* by fasting and **refraining from all work**.
- All Jews begin a 25-hour fast and greet friends and family for two days.

1.11 – The Day of Atonement (Lev. 23:26-30)

- The LORD said to Moses, “The tenth day of this seventh month is the Day of Atonement. Hold a sacred assembly and **deny yourselves**, and present a food offering to the LORD. Do not do any work on that day, because it is the Day of Atonement, when atonement is made for you before the LORD your God. Those who do not **deny themselves** on that day must be cut off from their people. I will destroy from among their people anyone who does any work on that day”.

1.12 – The Day of Atonement (Lev. 23:31-32)

- “You shall do no work at all. This is to be a **lasting ordinance for the generations to come, wherever you live**. It is a day of sabbath rest for you, and you must **deny yourselves**. From the evening of the ninth day of the month until the following evening you are to observe your sabbath” (cf. Lev. 16:29-31; 25:9; Num. 29:7-11).

1.13 – The Day of Atonement

- “**deny themselves**”.
- “**afflict your souls**”.
- “**afflict yourselves**”.

1.14 – The Day of Atonement

- The Hebrew phrase “**must be cut off**” means “**to cut down**”, “**to exterminate**”.
- “to be a lasting ordinance for the generations to come, wherever you live” in Hebrew it means “**a statute of eternity to your generation in all your dwelling places**”.

1.15 – The Day of Atonement

- Anyone who disobeyed God’s command would be **excommunicated from the community of Israel**.
- This fast was “**to be a lasting ordinance**” (Hebrew “legal obligation”) and referred to the “**Day of Atonement**” or “**the fast**” (Acts 27:9) depending upon the translation.

1.16 – Fasting and the Christian Life

- 27 Fasts named after Bible Characters
- 13 Thematic Fasts
- 4 Topical Fasts
- 5 Abuses of Fasting

1.17 – We Fast Because . . .

- a. we’re hungry for God’s Word and the Holy Spirit in our lives.
- b. we long for God’s glory to resound in the church and God’s praise to resound among the nations.
- c. we yearn for the Son of God to return and Kingdom of God to come.
- d. we want God more than we want anything this world has to offer us.

1.18 – Topic 2: Fasting: Is It Relevant Today?

- Self-Indulgence
- The Downfall of Pride
- Our Physical Appetite
- Not Only About Food