

Read Numbers 3:11-51. This chapter invites us to remember two truths that can easily become blurred in everyday life: God deserves our first and our best, and God is solemnly holy. Israel's firstborn sons belonged to the Lord because He was their Creator and Deliverer. The first of the harvest, the firstborn of the animals, and the firstborn sons were reminders that everything Israel possessed ultimately came from God. The Levites were then set apart in place of the firstborn, belonging especially to the Lord for His service. The principle reaches beyond ancient Israel: worship begins when we recognize that our lives are not ultimately our own. What we have, who we are, and whatever good we accomplish are gifts from the God who made us.

But Numbers 3 also confronts us with the weight of God's holiness. The Levites were not simply religious workers; they were appointed to surround, guard, dismantle, carry, and reassemble the Tabernacle. They formed a living boundary around the place where God's holy presence dwelt. Sinful humanity could not casually approach the holiness of God. Without atonement, the encounter between God's holiness and our sin is deadly. The arrangement of the Tabernacle taught Israel something we desperately need to remember: God is not merely an accessory to our lives. His presence is glorious, sacred, and utterly worthy of reverence.

And yet the gospel gives us an astonishing privilege. What was once guarded by boundaries and approached through priests and sacrifices has been opened to us through Jesus Christ. Those who belong to Christ have been cleansed by His blood and set apart for God's service. Peter calls Christians a "holy priesthood" and a "royal priesthood" (*1 Peter 2:4-12*). We are now called to make God known in the world while also enjoying confident access to His presence. God does not merely dwell among His people; He dwells in His people through Holy Spirit. That should humble us, awaken reverence, and fill us with joy. The God whose holiness once required a guarded sanctuary has made us His dwelling place.

So, as you enter this day, consider what it means to belong wholly to the Lord. What are you currently giving God that is merely left over rather than your first and your best? Where in your life have you become casual about the holiness of God, and what would renewed reverence look like? How might knowing that you have been cleansed, set apart, and made a dwelling place of God's Spirit change the way you serve Him and represent Him to others?

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**Weekly Memory Verse:**

The Lord said to Moses, "Make a fiery serpent, and put it on a flag pole; and it shall come about, that everyone who is bitten, and looks at it, will live."

Numbers 21:8

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**Weekly Affirmation:**

**I HAVE BEEN  
SET APART FOR  
THE LORD**

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**SEPTEMBER 2026 GROWTH GOALS**

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|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Read the Book of Numbers                                                         | <input type="radio"/> Memorize one of the weekly memory verses.                                                                         |
| <input type="radio"/> Watch the Bible Project video on Numbers<br>( <i>available on the website</i> ). | <input type="radio"/> Consider removing a daily comfort or luxury this month, using its absence to focus on your relationship with God. |