

WELCOME TO



BELL CREEK

Community Church



AUGUST 30, 2026

WHERE IS THE KING?

JUDGES CHAPTERS 19–21

SERMON BY: PASTOR FRED WRIGHT

CURRENT SERMON SERIES:
JUDGES—THE GOD WHO DELIVERS

WHERE IS THE KING?

JUDGES CHAPTERS 19–21

Where Is the King? Evil is running unchecked.

Where Is the King? Justice has become destruction.

Where is the King? We cannot fix what is broken.

FOR NEXT WEEK

Read the Book of Ruth, Chapter 1.

DAILY CHRONOLOGICAL BIBLE READING

AUGUST 30: EZEKIEL 13-15

AUGUST 31: EZEKIEL 16-17

SEPTEMBER 1: EZEKIEL 18-19

SEPTEMBER 2: EZEKIEL 20-21

SEPTEMBER 3: EZEKIEL 22-23

SEPTEMBER 4: EZEKIEL 24-27

SEPTEMBER 5: EZEKIEL 28-31

UPCOMING AT THE CREEK

BETWEEN TWO TREES

Our Between Two Trees study will meet to discuss *The Pilgrim's Progress* by John Bunyan on Sunday 9/13 at 9:15 AM in the prayer room. Please contact Pastor Dylan if you have any questions (dylan@bellcreek.org).

YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY

Our Young Adult group is now open for adults 18-30 years old! Our next gathering will be today, after the second service in the Prayer Room. Join us for lunch, fellowship, games, and encouragement in our faith. Other gatherings and outings will be planned for various times throughout the year. Join us as we gather and build friendships with other young people in a fun and laid-back environment!

SERVING SUNDAY

Join us in the gym on Sunday, September 13 after both services to meet the team members of Bell Creek's Ministries and learn how you can get involved!

THE GOOD FIGHT MEN'S BIBLE STUDY

Men, there is an exceptional opportunity to attend The Good Fight Bible Study - God's Plan for Every Man. This study focuses on what God's word teaches concerning the daily challenges every man faces, and how to experience a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ. Ron Peavler and Don Henderson will co-lead this Bible study. We will meet Thursdays from 6:30 - 8:30 PM for eleven weeks. Our first meeting will be September 10. To attend, contact Don Henderson at don.h@healinghearts.org or 734-837-5024.

TESTIMONY NIGHT

All women are invited to hear the testimonies of Hannah Bagnell and Renee Boyle, two of our Bell Creek sisters, on Sunday, September 20 from 4:30-6:00 PM in the Prayer Room. If you have any questions, please contact Mari McRobb (marimc31@yahoo.com). Light refreshments will be served.

WOMEN'S RETREAT

Join us for a weekend away in nature for a time of spiritual refreshment and connection with other women at Camp Living Waters from October 2-4. Please visit www.camlivingwaters.org/womens-retreat for more details and to self register. If you are interested in carpooling or if you have any questions, please reach out to Mari McRobb (marimc31@yahoo.com).

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

PRAYER MEETINGS

WEDNESDAYS 6:30 - 7:30 PM

FRIDAYS 12 NOON

PRE-TEEN & MIDDLE SCHOOL BIBLE STUDY

WEDNESDAYS 6:30 - 7:45 PM

SUNDAYS AFTER WORSHIP

2ND SERVICE

AWANA

WEDNESDAYS 6:30 - 7:45 PM

SEPTEMBER-MAY

HIGH SCHOOL BIBLE STUDY

SUNDAYS 11:00 AM

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES
AND EVENTS AT BELLCREEK.ORG

OUR MISSION

MATTHEW 22:37–40

He said to him, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the greatest commandment. The second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself. All the law and prophets depend on these two commandments.”

MATTHEW 28:19–20

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you. And remember that I am with you always to the end of the age.

STAY CONNECTED

WE HOPE TO SEE YOU HERE!

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BELL CREEK
Community Church

30000 FIVE MILE RD.
LIVONIA, MI 48154

Sermon Series | Judges – the God Who Delivers

Sunday, August 30, 2026 | Where Is the King?

Sermon Text: Judges 19-21

Where Is the King? Evil is running unchecked.

“In those days, when there was no king in Israel, a certain Levite was sojourning in the remote parts of the hill country of Ephraim, who took to himself a concubine from Bethlehem in Judah. And his concubine was unfaithful to him, and she went away from him to her father’s house at Bethlehem in Judah, and was there some four months.” (Judges 19:1–2, ESV)

We should notice something as we go through this story: *Nobody is named!* Why? Well, because there are no heroes in this story...

Judges 19:3-11: The Levite is given *amazing* hospitality from his father-in-law. The Levite, his servant, his concubine, go on their way and pass through Jebus and move on to Gibeah.

“And his master said to him, “We will not turn aside into the city of foreigners, who do not belong to the people of Israel, but we will pass on to Gibeah.”” (Judges 19:12, ESV)

I’m going to summarize Judges 19:13-21: No one greets them in Gibeah, or gives them hospitality, and an old man tells them “Don’t spend the night in the square.” He invites them in to his house...

“As they were making their hearts merry, behold, the men of the city, worthless fellows, surrounded the house, beating on the door. And they said to the old man, the master of the house, “Bring out the man who came into your house, that we may know him.”

And the man, the master of the house, went out to them and said to them, “No, my brothers, do not act so wickedly; since this man has come into my house, do not do this vile thing.” (Judges 19:22–23, ESV)

This is like the city of Sodom in Genesis 19:1-11! And these are God’s people! This is a doubly terrible sin because they want to harm a visitor, a guest. Guests were nearly sacred, they were supposed to be given protection and provision.

“Behold, here are my virgin daughter and his concubine. Let me bring them out now. Violate them and do with them what seems good to you, but against this man do not do this outrageous thing.”” (Judges 19:24, ESV)

The old man, their host, is a horrible coward and a horrible father! He’s reminiscent of Lot in the story of Sodom and Gomorrah!

“But the men would not listen to him. So the man seized his concubine and made her go out to them. And they knew her and abused her all night until the morning. And as the dawn began to break, they let her go. And as morning appeared, the woman came and fell down at the door of the man’s house where her master was, until it was light.” (Judges 19:25–26, ESV)

This Levite is a horrible coward. The Levites were supposed to be the priests of the Living God. Instead of defending his wife, he treats her like an expendable piece of property and saves himself by shoving her into the hands of wicked men.

I'm going to summarize Judges 19:27-29: In the morning, the callous Levite says to her, "Get up," but she has died. Then he puts her over his donkey, goes home, and cuts her body up into 12 pieces and distributes the pieces throughout the territory of Israel. This is horrendous.

"And all who saw it said, "Such a thing has never happened or been seen from the day that the people of Israel came up out of the land of Egypt until this day; consider it, take counsel, and speak."" (Judges 19:30, ESV)

Where you have been deeply wounded by the sin, cruelty, betrayal, or failure of other people, will you bring it to King Jesus? Come and entrust yourself to Him, because He is trustworthy like no other. He sees what happened to you, and He will never treat your suffering lightly. He will judge every wrong with perfect justice, and He is able to restore what sin has broken.

Where Is the King? Justice has become destruction.

"Then all the people of Israel came out, from Dan to Beersheba, including the land of Gilead, and the congregation assembled as one man to the LORD at Mizpah. And the chiefs of all the people, of all the tribes of Israel, presented themselves in the assembly of the people of God, 400,000 men on foot that drew the sword.

(Now the people of Benjamin heard that the people of Israel had gone up to Mizpah.) And the people of Israel said, "Tell us, how did this evil happen?" (Judges 20:1-3, ESV)

I'm going to summarize Judges 20:4-12: The Levite tells his story, but he makes a little change – he says, "They were going to kill me." The men of Israel are legitimately outraged, but is it really all about confronting sin, or is there some personal pride and honor at stake with that Levite? Does he want God's justice to reign in the land, or is he mad that his property has been taken from him? Then all the other tribes of Israel gather a tremendous army to go confront the Benjamites, their brothers, who live at Gibeah.

"Now therefore give up the men, the worthless fellows in Gibeah, that we may put them to death and purge evil from Israel." But the Benjaminites would not listen to the voice of their brothers, the people of Israel." (Judges 20:13, ESV)

I am going to summarize Judges 20:14-25: So, the tribes of Israel go up against the tribe of Benjamin, their brothers, who have decided to defend the rapists in the city of Gibeah. It's terrible! And the tribes of Israel inquire of the Lord two times. The first time, they ask "Who shall go up for us to fight against the people of Benjamin?" The Lord is almost terse with them. He gives them a short answer, "Judah shall go up." Remember when they asked a similar question in Judges 1:1? Same answer. It's like God is reminding them of their failure to trust Him and take the land and be His people. Well they go up and they get *stomped* by Benjamin. So they ask the Lord again, "Shall we draw near to fight against our brothers, the people of Benjamin?" (note that they call them

brothers this time – like it’s sinking in that these are *their own* people). The Lord answers, “Go up against them.” The Benjamites stomp them again. It’s like the Lord wanted to discipline ALL his people first. So now...

“Then all the people of Israel, the whole army, went up and came to Bethel and wept. They sat there before the LORD and fasted that day until evening, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the LORD. And the people of Israel inquired of the LORD (for the ark of the covenant of God was there in those days, and Phinehas the son of Eleazar, son of Aaron, ministered before it in those days), saying, “Shall we go out once more to battle against our brothers, the people of Benjamin, or shall we cease?” And the LORD said, “Go up, for tomorrow I will give them into your hand.”” (Judges 20:26–28, ESV)

I’m going to summarize Judges 20:29–48: The Israelites go up against Benjamin again, and they set an ambush and it works. The promised that He would give Benjamin into their hands and He keeps His promise. He always does. So, thousands of Israelites are killed in this civil war, and the Tribe of Benjamin is wiped out. 25,000 men of Benjamin are dead, and 600 men are all that survive (the women, the children, the livestock are gone – it’s a scorched earth policy).

Judges 19–20 shows us that human beings are very good at identifying what is wrong with everyone else but far less capable of administering justice, or repairing what is broken in ourselves and in the world. Have you considered that what you ultimately need is not merely better circumstances or even better people around you, but a righteous King who can forgive your sin, change your heart, and make all things new?

Where is the King? We cannot fix what is broken.

“Now the men of Israel had sworn at Mizpah, “No one of us shall give his daughter in marriage to Benjamin.” And the people came to Bethel and sat there till evening before God, and they lifted up their voices and wept bitterly. And they said, “O LORD, the God of Israel, why has this happened in Israel, that today there should be one tribe lacking in Israel?”” (Judges 21:1–3, ESV)

I’m going to summarize Judges 21:4–24: After nearly destroying the tribe of Benjamin, Israel tried to preserve it by finding wives for the 600 surviving men. Their solution only created more violence and injustice: they slaughtered the people of Jabesh-gilead to obtain women, then permitted the remaining Benjaminites to seize women from Shiloh.

“In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.” (Judges 21:25, ESV)

Where is the King?

The Levite in this story was supposed to be a man set apart for the service of the Lord and His people, but instead he was a deeply flawed, weak, callous man; But King Jesus is the perfect Priest, powerful, loving, sinless Son of God.

The Levite was a coward who gave his wife into the hands of sinful men to save himself; But King Jesus gave himself into the hands of sinful men to save *us*. *The Levite sacrificed his bride for himself; But Jesus sacrificed himself for his bride.*

The Levite treated his wife as a piece of property, expendable. Even after she was dead he didn't treat her body with dignity; But King Jesus treats His people as His own precious flock, His precious children, that He provides for and protects.

The men Israel sought justice, but they didn't know how to administer justice! Their justice became vengeance and unbridled destruction; But King Jesus will judge the whole world in righteousness. He exercises mercy, grace, and justice in perfect measure without ever becoming unjust.

The men of Israel regretted wiping out the people of Benjamin but they *had no idea how to make it right*. They tried to repair the damage of sin by committing even more heinous sin by allowing kidnapping; King Jesus knows the consequences of sin, because He bore our sins on the cross, and He knows how to truly restore what sin has broken.

The men of Israel nearly wiped out the Tribe of Benjamin. They knew how to punish and destroy but not how to restore and heal; But a thousand years after these events, King Jesus confronted another murderous Benjaminite, his name was Saul. This man had been killing Jesus's followers. Jesus confronted him, broke him, conquered him by grace, forgave him, and gave him a new name – Paul, the Apostle. Then he called him to bring the life of the Gospel to God's people.

Judges shows us what happens when there is no righteous king; Jesus is the righteous King Israel—and the King we need.

For those of us who know Jesus: Are there areas where you have begun to justify your sins, your desires, your habits, or your decisions simply because they seem right to you? Where in your life are you still tempted to do what is right in your own eyes instead of submitting to the rule of King Jesus? Return to Him and trust Him. He loves you and all His ways are life and peace.



Where Is the King?

1. What did you think about the sermon "Where is the King?"

2. The sermon pointed out that nobody is named in this story because there are no heroes. What does that tell us about the condition of God's people?

3. "Everyone did what was right in his own eyes." Why do you think we are so tempted to decide for ourselves what is right instead of following what God says?

4. The people of Israel wanted justice, but their justice turned into vengeance and more destruction. What tends to happen when we try to fix things our own way instead of trusting King Jesus?

5. Jesus is the King we need! He forgives our sin, changes our hearts, and restores what sin has broken. What area of your life do you need to stop doing what seems right to you and instead trust and follow Jesus?

