



Daily Verse and Comment

Judges 21:25

(25) In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes.

King James Version

Anarchism, a political theory based on *anarchy*, was a widespread movement in the early 1800s. The word "anarchy" begins with the prefix *an-*, meaning "without," and the root, *archos*, means "leader," "ruler," or "authority." Thus, *an-archos*, or *anarchy*, simply means "without rulers" or "without leaders." We commonly think of anarchy as being chaotic and lawless, which is partly correct, but the chaos and lawlessness are actually effects of an absence of leaders to give direction and establish parameters. Being without leaders results in every man doing what is right in his own eyes (see [Judges 21:25](#)).

As a political idea, anarchism rejects authority and governance in human affairs. It posits that man is essentially good, and if any sort of human oversight is removed, that inner [goodness](#) will automatically come out. Because man has a good nature—the theory goes—the best will be produced if he is left to his own devices. In anarchism, the enemy is human authority, because that authority is seen as inhibiting the natural growth of the supposed better nature that is inside.

The concept of anarchism spread throughout Europe, Russia, and America during the nineteenth century. At its height, tens of thousands considered themselves dedicated anarchists, and countless more thought that authority impedes man from reaching his potential.

— David C. Grabbe

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