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JUDAISM AND VIOLENCE

*A Historical Analysis with Insights from Social
Psychology*

Robert Eisen
George Washington University



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Judaism and Violence

A Historical Analysis with Insights from Social Psychology

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ABSTRACT: This Element explores the potential in Judaism to incite Jews to engage in violence against non-Jews. The analysis proceeds in historical fashion, with sections devoted to the Hebrew Bible, rabbinic Judaism, medieval and early modern Judaism, and modern Zionism. The last topic is given special attention because of its relevance to the current Middle East conflict. This Element also draws on insights from social psychology to explain Jewish violence—particularly, Social Identity Theory.

KEYWORDS: judaism, violence, zionism, social identity theory, religion

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