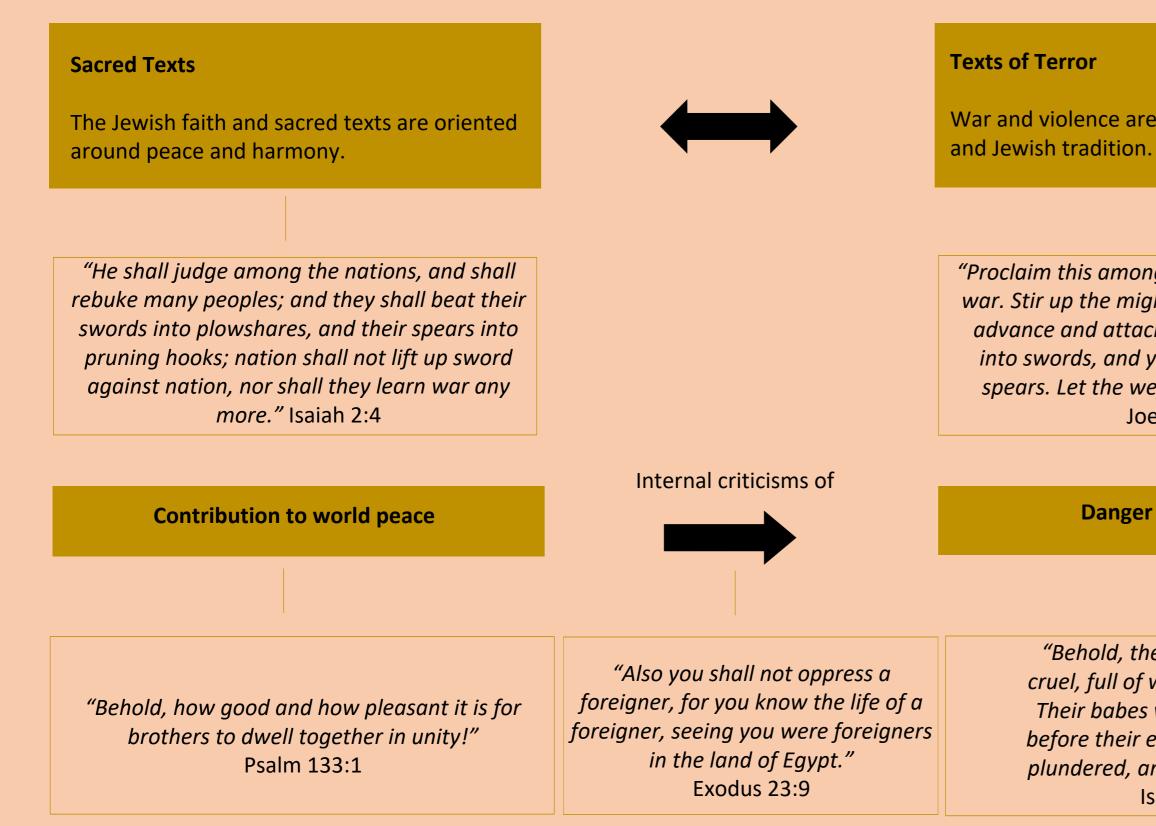
JUDAISM



Judaism is with ca. 14 million members both the oldest and smallest monotheistic religion.



The Jews dispersed all over the world, outside of Israel, constitute the 'diaspora'. Some Jews are Zionists, which means they support a Jewish nation state in Zion, another word for Jerusalem.





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War and violence are part of the Hebrew Bible

"Proclaim this among the nations: Prepare for war. Stir up the mighty men. Let the warriors advance and attack. Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruning knives into spears. Let the weak say, "I am strong."" Joel 4:9-10

Danger of radicalization

"Behold, the day of Adonai comes, cruel, full of wrath and fierce fury [...] Their babes will be dashed in pieces before their eyes. Their houses will be plundered, and their wives ravished." Isaiah 13:9-16



Judaism has a decentralized structure, with many different branches or denominations, from ultra-Orthodox to Liberal. Each denomination has its own institutions and religious leaders.



Because of its decentralized structure, Judaism offers no uniform way of approaching contemporary challenges:

Polarization

Because of the many Jewish denominations, intra- and interreligious dialogue can be very strained. Orthodox communities usually live very secluded from their surroundings, and often refuse to acknowledge the existence of other branches of Judaism as legitimate.

Environmental issues

Judaism, together with Christianity, has been accused of being responsible for the ecological crisis, because it purportedly promotes an uncaring attitude toward nature in the Torah. However, there are also denominations in Judaism that have taken significant steps to revalue nature.

Zionism

There are denominations in Judaism that very strongly defend the State of Israel, and also the politics of the State of Israel. There are also denominations in Judaism that are critical of the politics of the State of Israel and even against Zionism as such.



