

PRESS RELEASE

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THREE FAITHS, ONE GOD: JUDAISM, CHRISTIANITY, ISLAM

In the face of terrorist attacks on London, Madrid, and the United States – all reportedly committed by Islamic extremists -- there exists much confusion and misunderstanding over the doctrine of Islam and the beliefs of its followers. However, unbeknownst to many, the history and principles of Islam are intrinsically linked with the world's two other major religions, Judaism and Christianity.

Three Faiths, One God: Judaism, Christianity, Islam (APT Exchange; release: Oct. 1, 2005) thoughtfully examines the religious beliefs and practices shared by Jews, Christians and Muslims to illustrate how many individuals in the Abrahamic faith communities are dealing with historical conflicts, yet remain dedicated to facilitating understanding and respect. *Three Faiths, One God* captures a broad range of voices and ideas of ordinary people and respected scholars in the interfaith field. The program contrasts the religious practices of the three faiths, including the rituals of fasting and marriage. It also features a dramatic and moving example of reconciliation as the father of murdered *Wall Street Journal* reporter Daniel Pearl opens a dialogue between Muslims and Jews to create better understanding between the two faiths.

Three Faiths, One God: Judaism, Christianity, Islam -- offered in two versions: a two-hour program or two one-hour specials -- is produced by Auteur Productions Ltd., presented by Connecticut Public Television (CPTV) and distributed nationally by American Public Television (APT).

The structural thread of the documentary focuses on: 1) commonalities the three religions share, 2) similarities between scriptural text and religious practices, 3) historical conflicts and differences, 4) the crisis of the fundamentalist approach to religious pluralism, and 5) understanding and reconciliation.

In the program, Rabbi David Rosen (Interfaith Director for the American Jewish Committee) observes that the three Abrahamic religions “are people of the books as opposed to people of the book.” For example, in one of the scriptural comparisons viewers see how the three religions interpret Abraham offering Isaac as a sacrifice to God. From Islam’s point of view, which differs from the Hebrew scriptures, Ishmael replaces Isaac as the son who is offered for sacrifice. In Christianity, Jesus is seen as a symbolic sacrificial offering. Muslims recognize Jesus as the greatest prophet next to Muhammad and yet they see Muhammad’s mission as more akin to that of Moses.

Three Faiths, One God compares the religious practices of the three faiths, including the ritual of fasting

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as observed in Ramadan and Yom Kippur, as well as the similarities between Muslim and Jewish weddings. The documentary also examines what the Lord's Prayer and the opening passages of the Koran have in common.

The program also explores the historical conflicts between the three faiths, ranging from Mohammed's battle with the Jews in Medina, the expulsion of Jews and Muslims from Spain during the Inquisition, and the lingering negative impact of the Christian Crusades on Muslim thinking today.

After examining the fundamental crisis that impacts the three religions today, *Three Faiths, One God* presents a dramatic and moving example of understanding and reconciliation. Judea Pearl, the father of the late Daniel Pearl, the Wall Street Journal reporter who was murdered by terrorists in Pakistan, has dedicated himself to opening a dialogue between Muslims and Jews to create a better understanding between the two faiths. One of the most touching moments during the interfaith dialogue was a surprise visit by two representatives of the Pakistani government who made a public apology for the death of Danny Pearl.

We look in on a Muslim-Christian-Jewish conflict-resolution workshop as they dispel myths, misconceptions, and stereotypes about each other's faith. The group learns to deal effectively with bigoted comments and behavior and understand the personal impact of discrimination.

In Washington D.C., Imam Hendi, the Muslim chaplain of Georgetown University is invited to give a sermon at a United Methodist Church. Before the sermon, in a unique scene, he teaches the Sunday school class how Muslims pray. The children participate and then curiously ask about the prayers.

Three Faiths, One God also examines the role of women in all three Abrahamic faiths, and sits in on frank discussion of interfaith marriage, looking at the impact on families and children.

Three Faiths, One God: Judaism, Christianity, Islam presents a broad range of voices and ideas from the three faith communities, ranging from the views of ordinary people to the finest thinkers in the interfaith field, including: Karen Armstrong, noted author of some of the foremost books on the subject including, "The Battle for God" and "The Holy War;" Professor Abdulaziz Sachedina, author of "The Islamic Roots of Democratic Pluralism;" Rabbi Reuven Firestone, author of "Children of Abraham: Introduction of Judaism for Muslims;" Dr. Krister Stendahl, Professor Emeritus, Harvard Divinity School; Professor Mark Gopin, Director of the Center for World Religions, Diplomacy and Conflict Resolution at George Mason University; GWU Professor Seyyed Hossein Nasr, one of the world's leading experts on Islamic science and spirituality; Bishop John Chane, Washington National Cathedral; Imam Fiesal Rauf, author of, "What's Right with Islam;" Professor Sulayman Nyang, Howard University, co-director of Muslims in the American Public Square; and Yale University Professor Maria Rosa Menocal, author of the critically-acclaimed book, "The Ornament of the World."

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Auteur Productions, Ltd. is a television production company in Washington, D.C. The two principals of the organization, Gerald Krell and Meyer Odze, have garnered many international awards for a wide range of documentaries, public affairs, and educational programs that have taken them to every continent to cover a variety of subject matter for the private and public sector. Prior to forming their own company they were senior documentary producers with the United States Information Agency. In 2001, Auteur Productions, produced the award-winning documentary, *Jews and Christians: Journey of Faith*, exploring the common beliefs, traditions and rituals of the two religions.

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