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Christianity and Islam - I

Lead: Daily headlines confirm an ongoing conflict between Islam and Judaism, less noted is the centuries old struggle between Islam and the other part of the so-called Sons of Abraham, Christianity.

Intro.: *A Moment in Time* with Dan Roberts.

Content: At the center of tension between the three great religions that see him as their founder is the enigmatic character of Abraham. His willingness to sacrifice comfort and security, reject the multiple gods of his ancestors, and answer the call of a

single deity forms the foundation of the three great monotheistic religions, the people of the Book, Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Despite their common lineage by the two sons of Abraham, Isaac and Ishmael, and many common beliefs and practices, peace between these faiths often has been the exception rather than the rule.

Vastly outstripping the Jews, the most ancient of the three, in size and militancy, Christianity and Islam have had a tense relationship, punctuated by sometimes long periods of open violent conflict.

Christianity was perceived by contemporaries to be a Jewish heresy.

It emerged in Palestine in the first century of the Christian era when its founder, Jesus of Nazareth was a popular preaching rabbi executed by the Romans as a political rebel. They were urged to do so by some Jewish authorities who considered his claims to be the Son of Man to border on religious sedition if not out-right blasphemy. His followers asserted that he made good his claims to be the Son of God through resurrection from the dead after his martyrdom. They further claim that he was both God and man in the curious and difficult doctrinal modification of monotheism known as the Trinity.

Muhammad, the founder and first prophet of Islam was born 540 after

Jesus' death. He was born into a prominent commercial clan, the Hashim of Mecca, in what is today central Saudi Arabia. Next time: submission to the will of God.

At the University of Richmond, this is Dan Roberts.

Resources

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