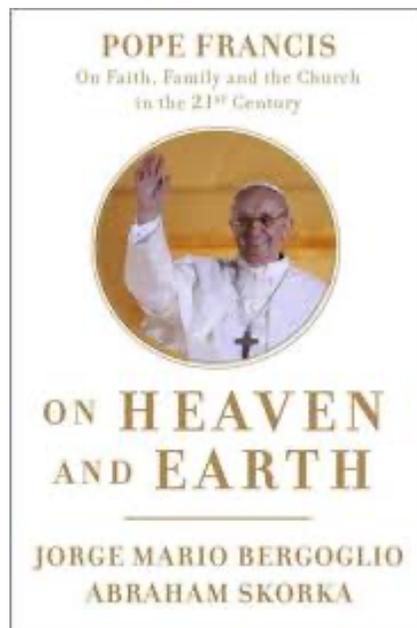


## Week One: Intro.

Abrahamic Religions refer to Judaism, Christianity and Islam as they have developed over time and as they are expressed today. We touch on areas of politics, history, economics and culture that are all part of their development. However, the core questions are critical. Who is God and how can we find common ground to understand and enrich one another?

We begin with a short overview of the City of Jerusalem as it is today. What is the historical reality of this great city as understood by Jews from the Hebrew Bible (OT) that we share in common? This book is one example of two religious leaders from Argentina who carried on a religious dialogue on topics that they shared in common from their two different heritages of Catholicism and Judaism. They were later invited for a state visit to Israel by the Prime Minister to learn more of the reality of modern Israel and to share their insights for dialogue and peace today.



Doctor Tom McCloskey, D. Min served for 23 years as an adult Christian educator and later as an adjunct professor in New Jersey at various colleges and universities. His area of expertise is philosophy and theology and he has developed and taught online courses as well.

## OBJECTIVES

Understand a common history of Jerusalem and the State of Israel.

Explore a “common ground” that will recognize the value of inter religious dialogue that can help bring about some peace and cooperation of its citizens today.

Recognize that there needs to be a recognition of human rights, the dignity of all individuals, the opportunity for a good education and possibilities for seeking employment in support of their families in a peaceful and just society.

I offer a video of some of that common history

The required reading will explore some of the amazing reality of Israel today as one of a well - developed economy that ranks very high in relation to its relatively small population.

The following weeks will go into more detail on an understanding of each of the Abrahamic Religions (Judaism, Christianity and Islam) over the centuries of living together in that land.

## METHOD FOR EACH WEEK

1. Read Overview to prepare for the week.
2. VIDEO (Print up outline and watch Video carefully while writing down some of your insights and questions.
3. Readings – Weeks 1 through 3 are provided in my materials.

Readings for Weeks 3 through 15 you need to order through Amazon, Barnes and Noble or other book sellers.

Walter Weiss, Islam, Barron’s Short Course, 2000

Nasr, Amir Ahmad, My Isl@m, (St. Martin’s 2013)

(Since this is a non-credit course, I want to make this as easy as possible for your participation. Some may choose to go with only the Video, but I encourage you to get these Books, as available, for a better understanding. If you have a Kindle option, My Isl@m is available for \$14.00. You can order one or both through EBAY for about \$5 each. They are now out of print from regular booksellers. Please give it a try.

4. Homework I will send you a schedule and then make materials available weekly. You can post your entry weekly. I suggest one or two posts of 150 words each week and you can agree or disagree with points raised in the material or in the posts of fellow students. I make these available on Monday morning and “close it up” the following Sunday at midnight. The purpose of this is to keep us studying and submitting our responses together in “real time.” Otherwise it becomes impossible.
5. Links – Some weeks have links for further reference.