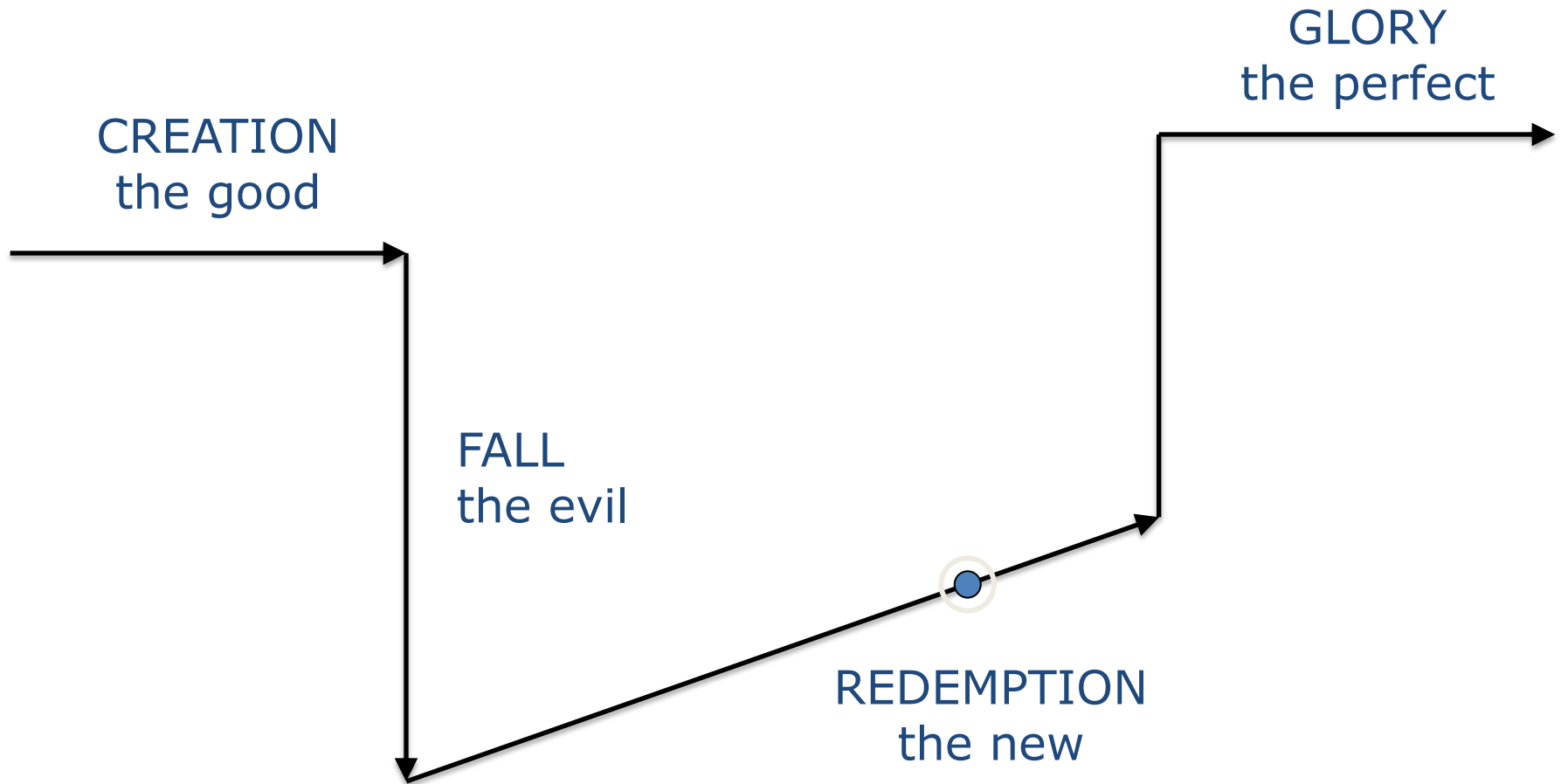


How People Think Week 4

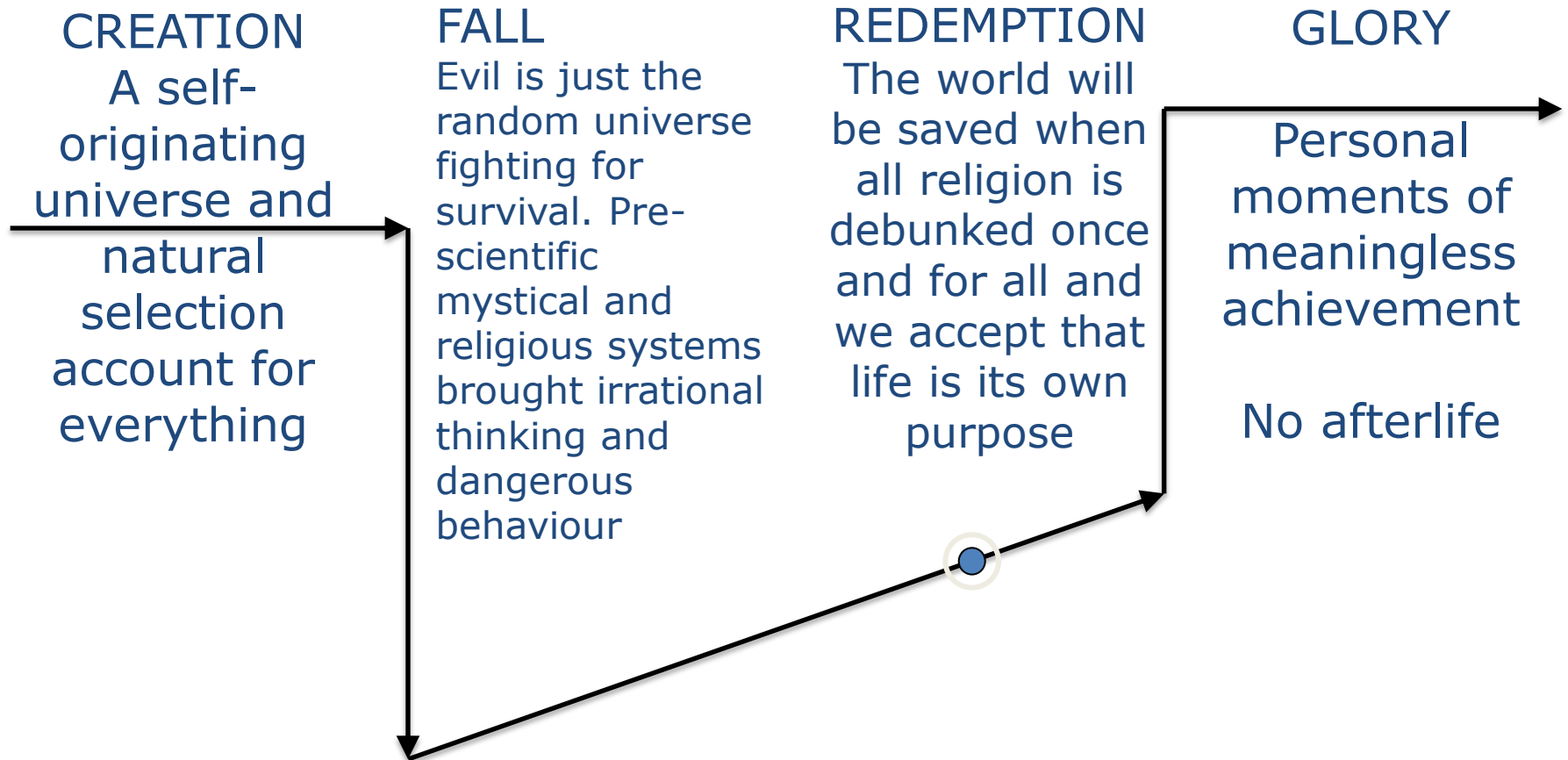
Islam and New Age

Christian Worldview

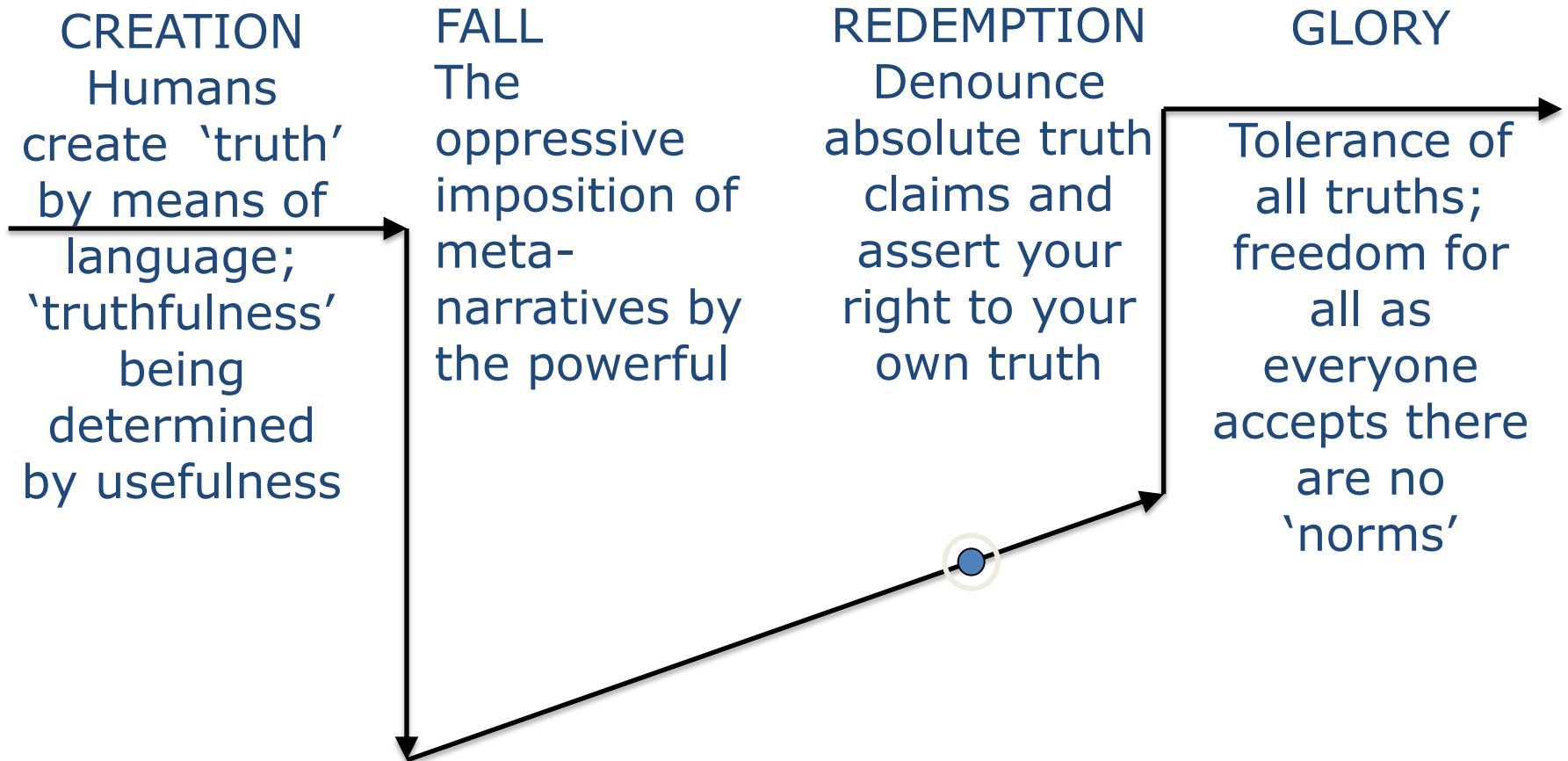


How People Think

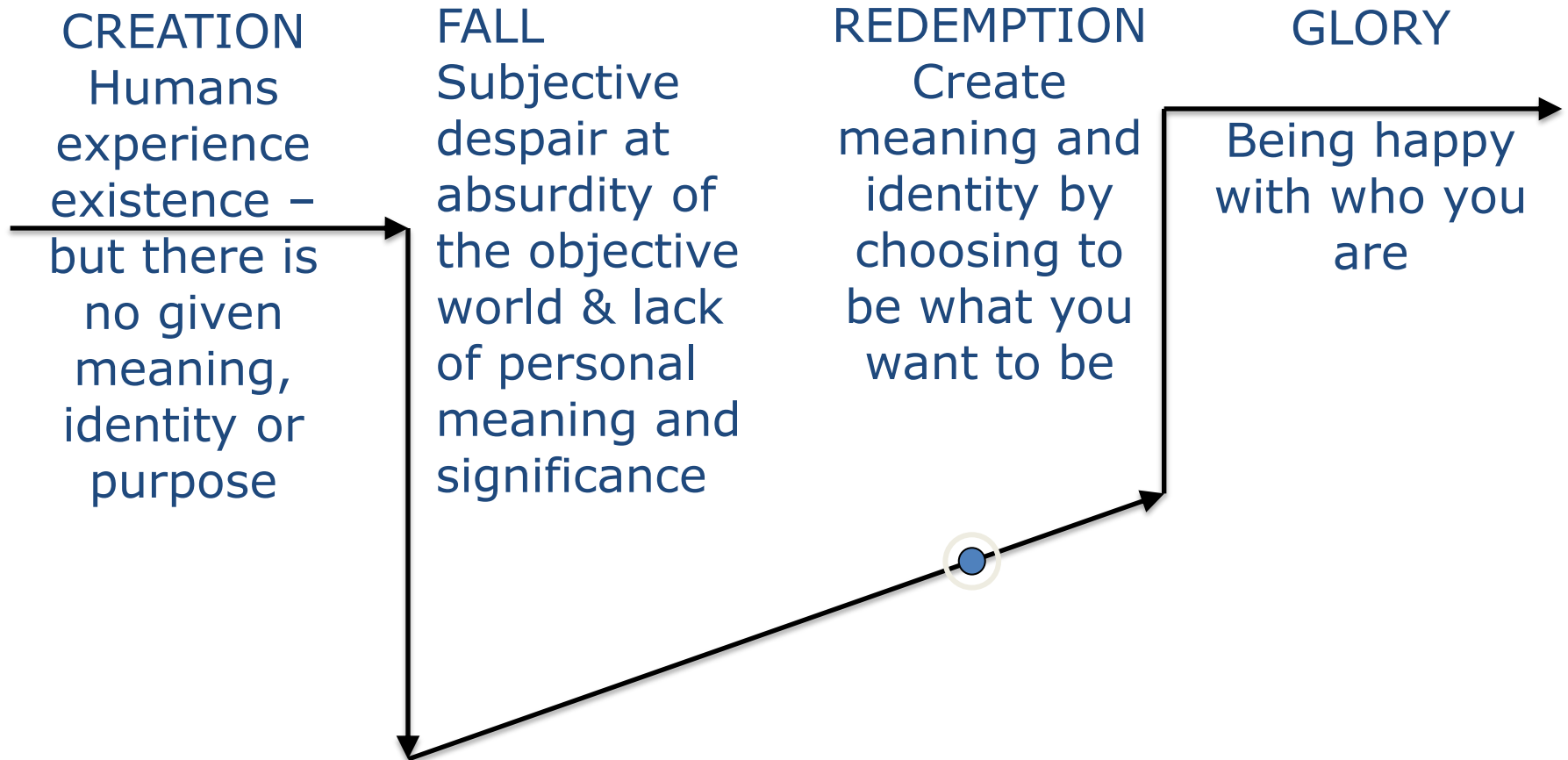
Secular Worldview



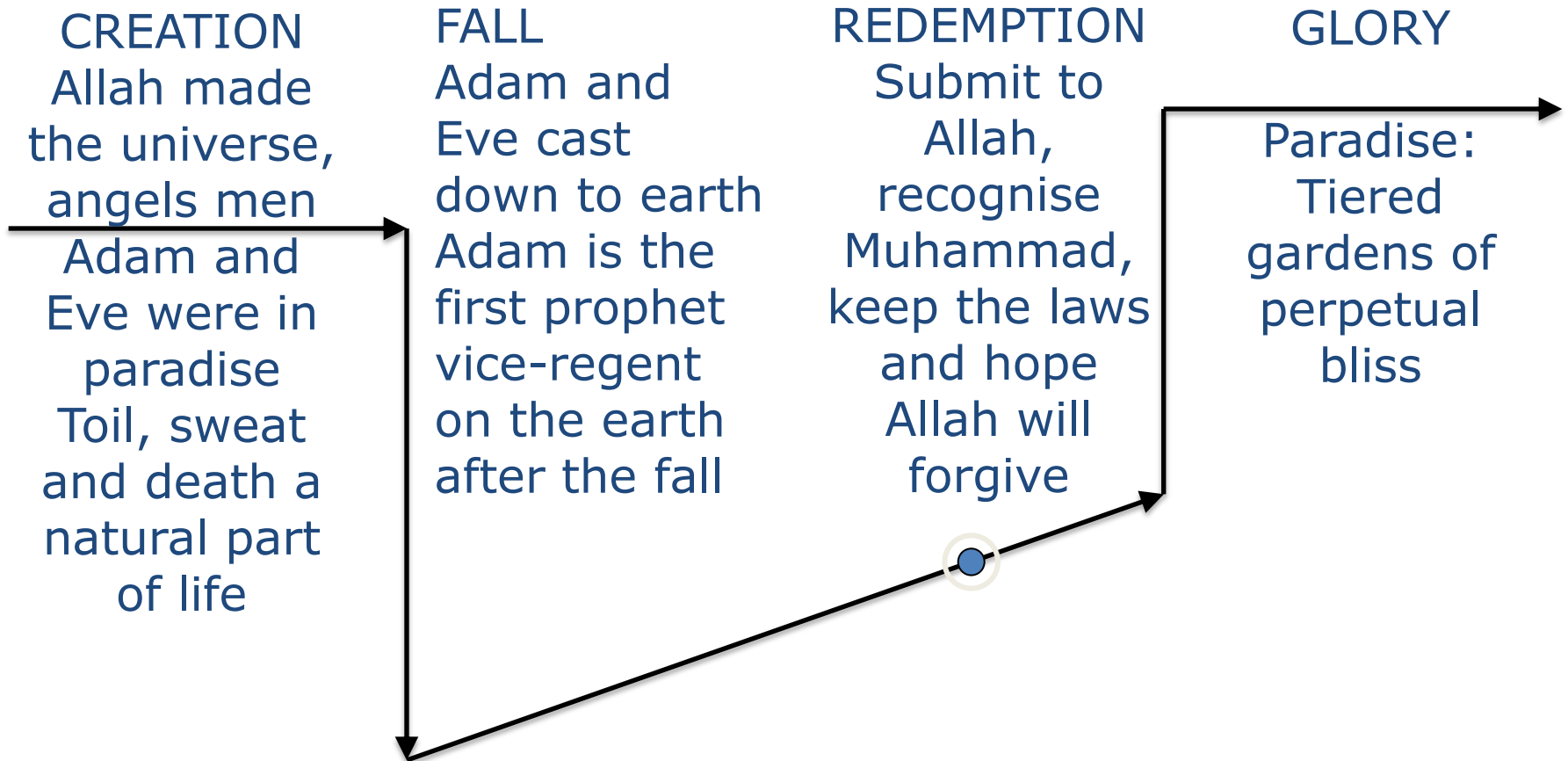
Postmodern Worldview



Existentialist Worldview



Muslim Worldview



Islam

- “submission to God” by a “Muslim”
- 1.4B worldwide. fastest growing religion
- Starts with Muhammad al-Quraishi 570AD
- Born Mecca – a very pagan place
- Influences from Zoroastrianism; Judaism and Christianity
- married wealthy trader (later +12)
- 611AD he allegedly started receiving revelations from God via angel Gabriel
- Apparently illiterate at the time

Muhammad

- Reformer rejecting idols and calling for justice for the poor
- Persecution in Mecca, moved to Medina in 622 (hegira – flight)
- Becomes military and political leader.
- Conquered Mecca, most of Arabian Peninsula united Arabic tribes
- Died 632. After his death, the Caliphs (leaders) formed the Islamic empire.
- Muslims believe he is last and greatest of the prophets

The Qur'an

- Arabic word for "recitation"
- written in classic Arabic
- regarded as verbatim words of God
- cannot be questioned.
- explains, supersedes and takes precedent over all previous revelation from God, including the Old and New Testaments

Other holy books

- Hadiths
 - a collection of traditions about Muhammad. Used as a guide for many practical issues.
- Taurat
 - Muslims believe that the current Torah (Pentateuch) is no longer reliable.
- Zabur
 - Psalms. Muslims generally assume some of the current Psalms were written later and are not divinely revealed.
- Injeel/Injil
 - prophetic message Jesus brought which is now lost but might possibly be in the NT gospels
- Other scrolls
 - Abraham and Moses, now lost

Beliefs

- monotheistic “tawhid” oneness of God
 - reaction to paganism in Arabia at the time
- Muhammad is the last and greatest
 - After Adam, Abraham, Moses, Jesus
- Generally morals and ethics follow the Judeo-Christian model
- Judgement when good and bad deeds are weighed in the balance.
 - All people go to Paradise or Hell.
 - Muslims hope that Allah will be merciful to them

Practices (5 pillars)

- Shahada (testimony)
 - “There is no God but Allah and Muhammad is His Messenger”
- Salat (prayer)
 - Five times a day.
- Zakat (alms giving)
 - 2.5% of net
- Sawm (fasting)
 - Mainly during Ramadan between sunrise and sunset

Practices (5 pillars)

- **Hajj** (pilgrimage)
 - once in lifetime visit to Mecca
 - ritual around the holy site al-Ka'ba, a cube-like building with sacred stones including the "black stone."
 - supposedly the house that Abraham built with the help of Ishmael
- Jihad (struggle).
 - Not one of the pillars
 - violent struggle or personal struggle to live a good life or to improve society.

Shi'ites and Sunnis

- began with a dispute over successors to Muhammad
- vast majority of Muslims in the world are Sunni.
- Shi'ites minority in most Islamic countries except Iran, Iraq, Bahrain and the Lebanon.
- Sufism is branch of Islam which is more contemplative and experiential

Islam in the UK

- 1649 first English version of the Qur'an
- sailors recruited in India for the East India Company were first large group
- Big increase since 1950's due to need for labour from former colonies (especially Pakistan and Bangladesh)
- 1,500 mosques. London has more mosques than any other western city
- 2.7M Muslims about 4.5% of the total population, mainly Sunni

Differences

- The person of Jesus Christ
S5:72 "They do blaspheme who say: "Allah is Christ the son of Mary."
- The work of Christ
S5:157 they said "We killed Christ Jesus the son of Mary, the Messenger of Allah" but they killed him not, nor crucified him, but so it was made to appear to them, and those who differ therein are full of doubts, with no (certain) knowledge, but only conjecture to follow, for of a surety they killed him not
- The Trinity, salvation, eternal life, reconciling justice and love, personal relationship with God...

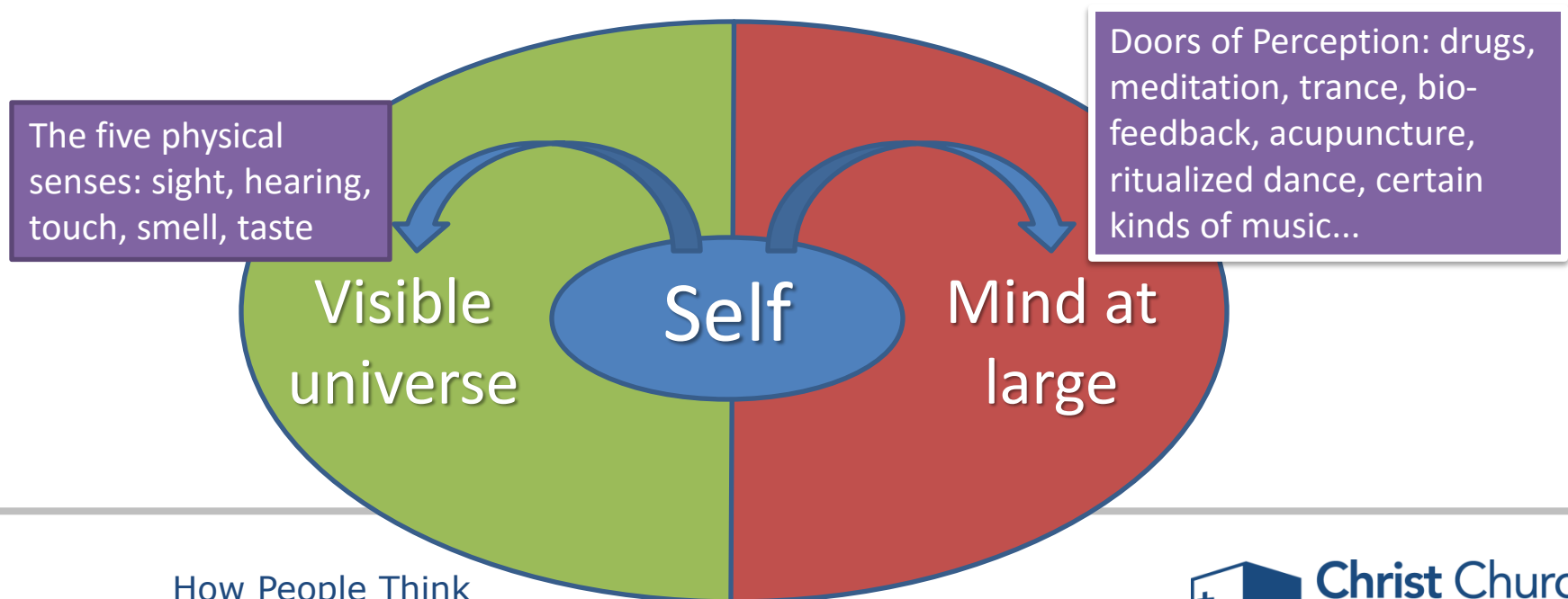
The New Age

New Age

- Not one religion, more pick and mix
- Pantheistic Monism
 - Pantheism: God is everything and everything is God
 - Monism: Belief in the unity of all things
 - the soul of each and every human being is the Soul of the Cosmos
 - God is the one, infinite-impersonal, ultimate reality
 - God is the cosmos
 - Nothing exists that is not God

two dimensions

- The Visible Universe
 - Accessible through ordinary consciousness
- The Invisible Universe (or 'Mind at Large')
 - Accessible through altered states of consciousness



Many (if not all) roads lead to the One

- There are many paths from illusion to reality
- The goal is not to be on the same path as others but to be heading in the right direction on our own path
- Realizing oneness with the One is not a matter of doctrine but technique
 - Chanting mantras, meditation, endless repetition of prayers or acts of homage

oneness with the cosmos

- Karma (you reap in the next life what you sow in this life) appears to imply morality
- But all actions are merely part of the whole world of illusion
- Real reality is beyond differentiation, beyond good and evil

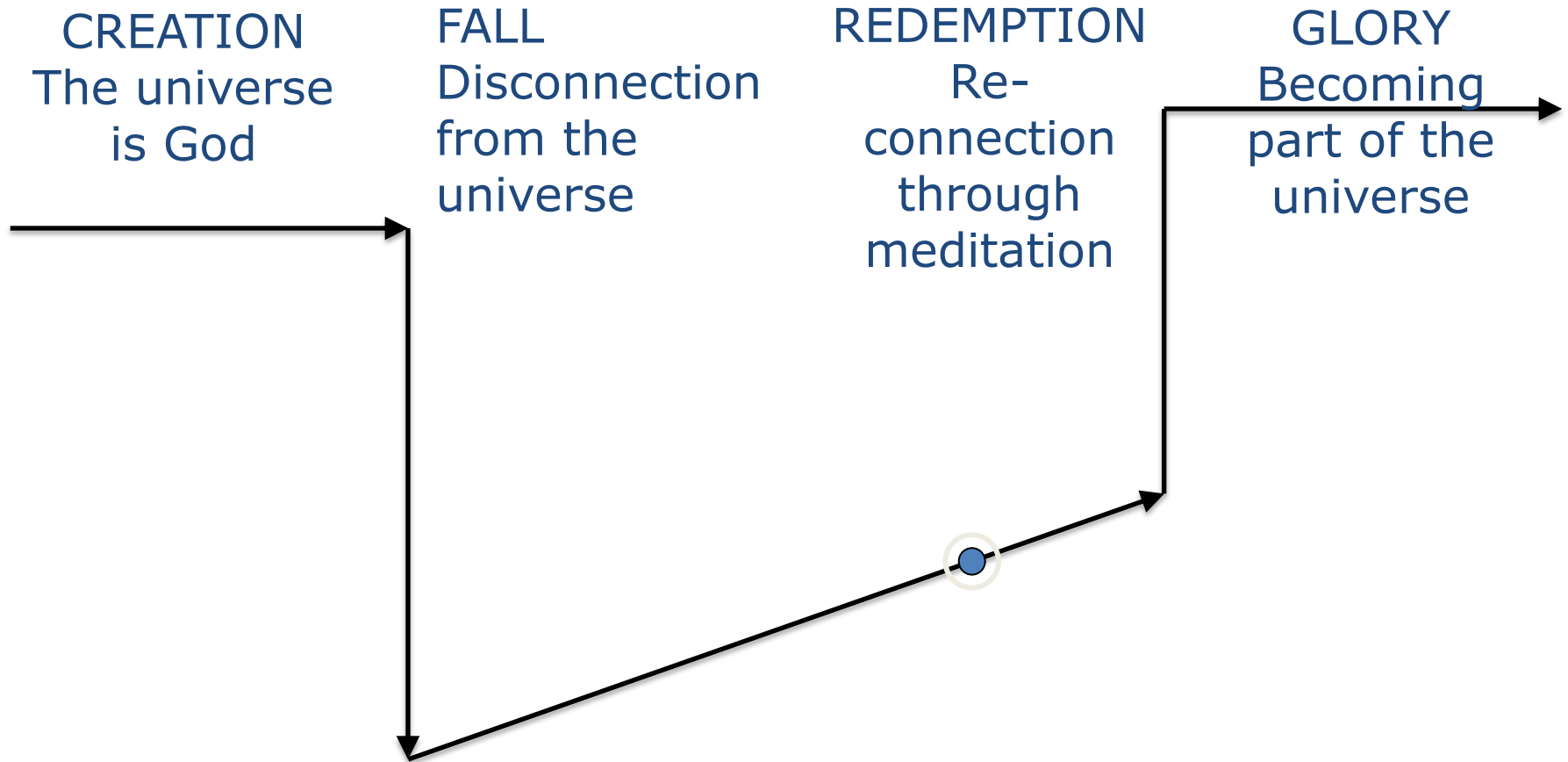
New Age thinking

- Like animism
- The natural universe is inhabited by countless spiritual beings
- The universe has a personal dimension but not an infinite-personal Creator-God
- These spiritual beings range from bad to good
- The evil spirits must be placated and the good ones wooed
- Witch doctors and sorcerers have learned to control the spirit world
- Ultimately there is a unity to all life – animals may be ancestors of men; trees and stones may possess souls

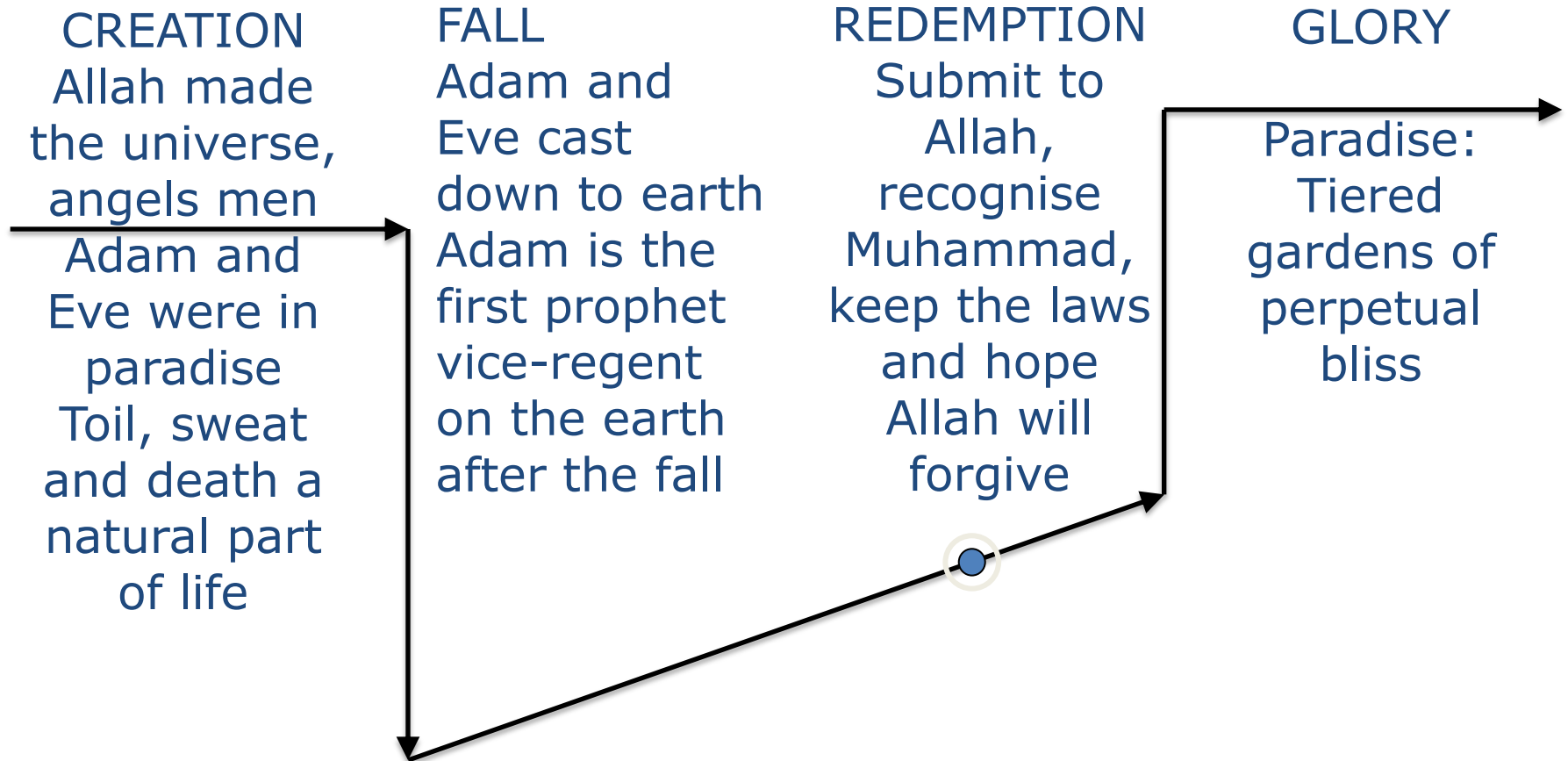
The mind at large'

- Time and space are elastic
 - The conscious self can travel hundreds of miles in the twinkling of an eye
 - Interplanetary travel is possible
- Extraordinary power can surge through a person and be transmitted to others
 - Physical healing can be effected
- It is populated by special beings
 - Allies, helpers, guardians, demons, spirits, angels

New Age Worldview



Muslim Worldview



Questions and comments