

# The Haimesian Ladder of Perfection Argument for God

## *A Minimal Metaphysical Argument Built on Comparative Perfection*

This argument is deliberately simple. It starts from one basic commitment: that some beings are genuinely more perfect than others. From that single idea, it treats perfection as a real ladder. If that ladder is real, the Haimesian stance is that it must have a top rung: a maximally perfect being. That being is what we call God.

### ***Core Idea in One Sentence***

"The moment you truly believe one being is better than another, you have already stepped halfway toward believing in God—whether you realize it or not."

## **Formal Statement of the Argument**

**Premise 1 — Real Perfection:** Reality contains a real scale of perfection: some beings are genuinely more perfect than others, not merely different in taste or preference. Here "more perfect" means "greater as a being" in an overall sense—more worthy, more excellent, closer to what a being should ideally be.

**Premise 2 — The Ladder of Perfection:** If there is a real scale of perfection, then reality contains a ladder of perfection: beings can be ordered from less perfect to more perfect along a single, objective axis of overall perfection. This is not just "better in one respect and worse in another," but a real ranking of overall greatness.

**Premise 3 — The Haimesian Ladder Principle:** A real ladder of perfection is only metaphysically complete if it has a top rung: a maximally perfect being. An endless chain of "almosts" with no top is treated as an incomplete picture of perfection—an unfinished structure that never reaches full, actual perfection.

**Premise 4 — The Top Rung:** If the ladder of perfection is real and well-formed in this sense, then there exists a maximally perfect being at the top of that ladder.

**Premise 5 — Definition of God:** A maximally perfect being—fully realizing the perfection scale and lacking no greatness proper to a perfect being—is what we call God.

**Conclusion:** If you accept that some beings are truly more perfect than others, and that a real ladder of perfection must have a top, you are committed to the existence of a maximally perfect being. Therefore, God exists.

# Interpretive Notes

## **1. What This Argument Is (and Is Not)**

This is not a rigid, mathematical proof in the style of pure logic where no alternative is thinkable. It is a *metaphysical stance with teeth*. It says: if you live as though there are genuinely more and less perfect beings, you are already standing on a world-picture that naturally leads to God. To reject the conclusion, you must either deny real perfection altogether or accept a ladder of perfection that never reaches actual perfection.

## **2. The Hidden Hinge, Made Explicit**

The crucial hinge is the **Haimesian Ladder Principle**: the claim that a real, objective ladder of perfection is incomplete without a top rung. In mathematics, we can imagine infinite chains with no maximum (like the natural numbers). But this argument is about reality and perfection, not bare numbers. Within the Haimesian system, an endless series of "almost perfect" beings with no maximally perfect being is treated as metaphysically broken. Perfection, if real, is grounded in a maximal being, not in an infinite sequence of approximations.

## **3. The Fork It Forces**

This argument is meant to sharpen a fork: either (1) there is no real sense in which any being is more perfect than another (a very flat picture of reality), or (2) there is a real ladder of perfection, and that ladder is grounded in a maximally perfect being, i.e., God. The Ladder of Perfection Argument makes explicit that many people already live as if (2) were true, simply by how they use words like "better", "higher", "more worthy" about different beings.

## Implication: Many People Already Use This Ladder

Any time someone says, sincerely, that one being is *better as a being* than another—not just more likable, but actually greater or more worthy—they are already leaning on the ladder of perfection this argument depends on. They are treating perfection as something real that can be approached more or less closely. They may not call the top of that ladder "God", but they are living inside a value-structure that only fully makes sense if there *is* a maximally perfect being at the top. In that sense, many people are already halfway to theism in practice before they ever articulate it in words.

### Callout Quote

"If you really mean it when you say, 'A is a better being than B,' then you're already halfway toward believing in God—whether you realize it or not."

## Objections and Haimesian Replies

**Objection 1 — The Infinite Ladder:** There could be an endless ladder of better and better beings with no top.

**Reply:** In mathematics, that picture is perfectly coherent. But this argument is not about abstract number systems; it is about the metaphysical structure of perfection in reality. If perfection is real, a ladder of perfection without a top is an unfinished structure: it never reaches actual, full perfection. The Haimesian stance is to reject that picture of reality and instead affirm a well-formed ladder grounded in a maximally perfect being.

**Objection 2 — Multidimensional Value:** Beings can be better in some respects and worse in others. There is no single axis of "overall perfection".

**Reply:** This argument explicitly defines "overall perfection" as a single, objective axis that integrates all relevant dimensions of greatness into a unified measure. If someone denies that such an axis is even possible, they are really denying Premise 1—that some beings are genuinely more perfect than others in an overall sense. The argument is aimed at those who already talk and think as if such an overall "better as a being" judgment is meaningful.

**Objection 3 — Maybe Perfection Is Just a Useful Fiction:** Perhaps our talk of "more perfect" is merely expressive, not tracking anything real.

**Reply:** In that case, all claims that one being is really better than another collapse into taste or social convention. The Ladder of Perfection Argument simply insists that if you treat such comparisons as *real* and not merely expressive, then you have stepped onto the perfection ladder it describes—and that ladder, on the Haimesian view, leads upward to God.