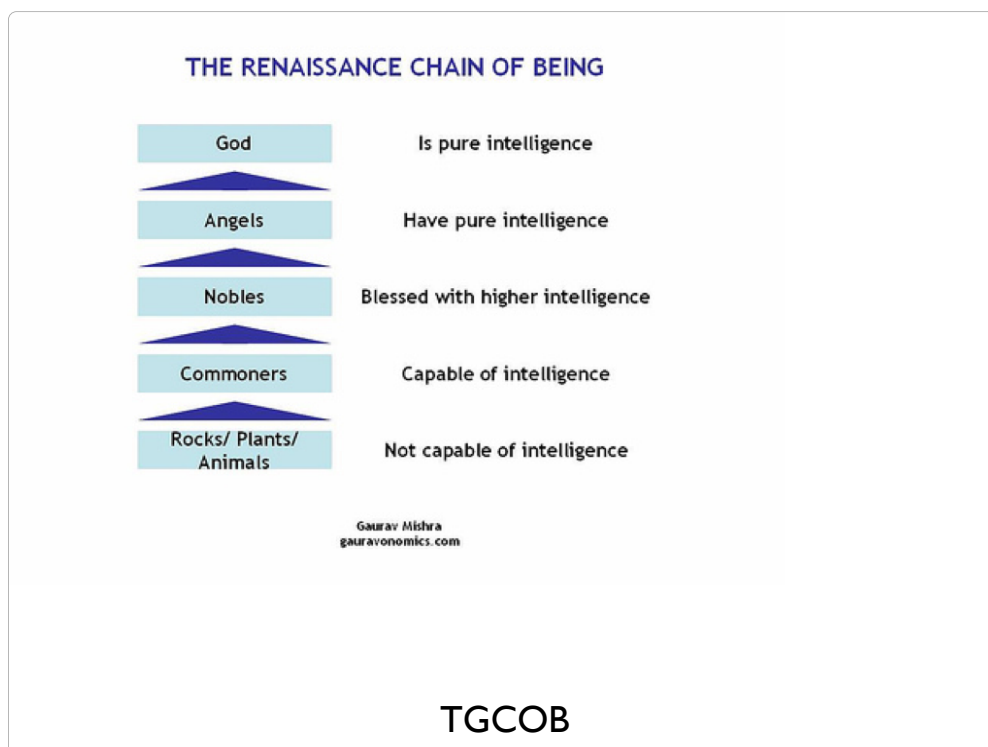


## The Great Chain of Being: a Medieval/Renaissance World View

TGCOB is a classical and western conception of the universe, whose chief characteristic is a strict hierarchical system.

This chain of being is composed of great number of hierarchical links, from the most basic and foundational elements up through the very highest perfection, in other words God, or the Prime Mover of the universe.

God, and beneath Him angels, both existing wholly in spirit form, sit at the top of the chain. They are unchanging and permanent. Earthly flesh is fallible and ever-changing. One does NOT abandon one's place in the chain; it is not only unthinkable, but generally impossible. The hierarchy is a chain, not



Each group is further divided into subgroups according to their station in life. For example:

Human subgroups would go something like this: kings, noblemen, males, females, and children.

Animals: the lion sits at the top with other animals categorized by their significance.

Metals: gold would be at the top.

Upsetting this hierarchy, like a nobleman trying to become a king, creates cosmic upheaval and this disorder is reflected throughout the cosmos.