

Life's Companion

Reflections in the Spirit of
J. Krishnamurti



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“In oneself lies the whole world, and if you know how to look and learn, then the door is there and the key is in your hand. Nobody on earth can give you either the key or the door to open, except yourself.”

“Truth is a pathless land. Man cannot come to it through any organisation, through any creed, through any dogma, priest, or ritual, not through any philosophical knowledge or psychological technique.”

“The ability to observe without evaluating is the highest form of intelligence.”

“Freedom and love go together. Love is not a reaction. If I love you because you love me, that is mere trade, a thing to be bought in the market; it is not love.”

“It is no measure of health to be well adjusted to a profoundly sick society.”

“When the mind is completely silent, then that which is timeless and sacred comes into being.”

“To understand yourself is the beginning of wisdom.”

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Introduction

Humanity stands at a crossroads. One sees the world moving toward increasing division—nation against nation, group against group, man against man. Each seeks security in separation, yet in separation there can only be conflict.

Fear also deepens as machines and artificial intelligence take over the labours of man. When identity is tied to work, status, and survival, the loss of work becomes the loss of meaning.

And there is the quiet trend of families shrinking to one child, or none at all—an expression of insecurity, of doubt, perhaps of indifference. What does this mean for the continuity of mankind?

So, the question inevitably arises: What is the future of humanity?

If we continue on the path of fear, division, and self-interest, the future is but the extension of the present—more conflict, more insecurity, more emptiness.

But the future of humanity is not fixed. It is being shaped now, in each moment, by the way we live, the way we relate, the way we think. If the mind remains bound by the “me”—by ambition, fear, and separation—the future is darkness. But if there is the ending of the self, if there is compassion and the flowering of a silent mind, then the future opens into an entirely different order.

The true question, therefore, is not what will happen tomorrow, but whether we can live differently today—

without division, without fear, without the burden of becoming. In such living, life itself becomes a companion—revealing clarity, love, and freedom in the very midst of our daily existence.

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The Origin of Life as per science

1. The Big Picture

Life did not appear suddenly in its complex form. Scientific understanding suggests that life on Earth emerged gradually, through a series of chemical and physical processes, beginning around **3.5–4 billion years ago**. These processes transformed simple molecules into more complex ones, eventually leading to the first self-replicating systems and primitive cells.

2. Conditions on Early Earth

- **Age of Earth:** Formed ~4.5 billion years ago.
- **Atmosphere:** Early atmosphere was very different from today. It lacked oxygen and was likely composed of gases such as methane (CH_4), ammonia (NH_3), hydrogen (H_2), carbon dioxide (CO_2), nitrogen (N_2), and water vapor (H_2O).
- **Energy Sources:** Lightning, volcanic activity, ultraviolet radiation from the young Sun, and hydrothermal vents provided the energy needed to drive chemical reactions.

These conditions were favourable for the formation of organic molecules—the building blocks of life.

3. The “Primordial Soup” Hypothesis

First proposed by **Alexander Oparin (1920s)** and **J.B.S. Haldane (1920s)**.

- They suggested that early Earth had shallow oceans rich in organic molecules—a “primordial soup.”
- With enough time and energy (lightning, UV rays), simple molecules like methane and ammonia could

combine to form more complex organic compounds such as amino acids, nucleotides, and sugars.

4. The Miller-Urey Experiment (1953)

- Conducted by **Stanley Miller and Harold Urey**.
- They recreated early Earth's conditions in a closed apparatus: water (to simulate oceans), gases (methane, ammonia, hydrogen), and electrical sparks (to simulate lightning).
- After a week, they found that **amino acids**—the building blocks of proteins—had formed spontaneously.
- This experiment demonstrated that **organic molecules can arise from non-living matter** under plausible prebiotic conditions.

5. Formation of Biological Molecules

- **Amino acids** → combine into **proteins** (enzymes, structural components).
- **Nucleotides** → combine into **RNA/DNA** (genetic material).
- **Lipids** → naturally form **vesicles or membranes** when placed in water, leading to primitive cell-like structures called **protocells**.

6. The RNA World Hypothesis

One of the most influential modern ideas:

- Suggests that **RNA** was the first genetic molecule, because RNA can both **store information** (like DNA) and **catalyze chemical reactions** (like proteins).

- Evidence: certain RNAs called **ribozymes** can catalyze their own replication.
- This implies that an early “RNA world” may have existed, where self-replicating RNA molecules kickstarted evolution.
- Later, DNA and proteins took over as more stable and efficient molecules.

7. Role of Hydrothermal Vents

- Found deep in the ocean, where superheated water rich in minerals gushes from cracks in the seafloor.
- These vents provide **heat, chemical gradients, and mineral surfaces** that may have catalyzed the formation of organic molecules.
- Some scientists argue that life may have begun in these environments, not in a surface “soup.”

8. Panspermia Hypothesis

- Suggests that the building blocks of life—or even primitive life forms—may have come from space, carried to Earth on comets or meteorites.
- Supporting evidence: some meteorites contain amino acids and organic molecules.
- However, this shifts the question to how life began elsewhere.

9. From Chemistry to Biology

- **Protocells:** Lipid molecules can self-assemble into small vesicles, trapping organic molecules inside. These structures resemble primitive cell membranes.
- When RNA or proteins entered these protocells, they gained the ability to replicate and evolve.

- Over time, natural selection favoured more stable and efficient systems.
- This gave rise to the **Last Universal Common Ancestor (LUCA)**, about 3.5–3.8 billion years ago—the ancestor of all life we see today.

10. Current Understanding

- Life originated through **abiogenesis**: the natural process of life arising from non-living matter.
- The exact pathway is still unknown, but most scientists agree it involved:
 1. Formation of organic molecules.
 2. Assembly into polymers (proteins, RNA, DNA).
 3. Development of self-replicating systems (likely RNA).
 4. Formation of protocells.
 5. Evolution by natural selection leading to true cells.

11. Open Questions

- Did life begin in shallow ponds, deep-sea vents, or even icy comets?
- Was RNA truly the first genetic system, or was there something simpler before it?
- How did the leap from chemistry to biology—non-life to life—actually occur?

Science continues to explore these mysteries with laboratory simulations, deep-ocean research, and space missions searching for organic molecules on Mars, Europa, and Enceladus.
