

# Preface

Where did we come from? What are we here for? Where are we going? Most people have had one or more of these questions pop up in their minds at some point in their lives. Most move on soon after harboring such thoughts – too busy with worldly humdrum, too intimidated by the gravity of the matter, or too afraid to look deeper.

How did everything come into existence? How did life begin on Earth? What makes life so diverse? Where did humans come from? These are scientific questions – too hard for most people to comprehend, too profound to wrap their heads around, or too intimidating to explore.

Is there a God? Is there any meaning to life? What happens after we die? These are philosophical questions – too heavy for worldly consumption, too turbulent for our comfortable lives, or too abstract to ponder.

Why are there so many religious beliefs? Are they divine or manufactured fabrications? Is there any truth to them? These are religious questions – too offensive to ask, too dangerous to entangle in, or too outdated for our times.

The big questions of life conceal its profound mysteries. What are the correct answers to unlock the mysteries of life? How can we understand them objectively? How do they all fit together? How do we make sense of everything around us in a rational, coherent narrative? And where do we belong – if we do at all – in the big scheme of things?

This book attempts to answer such questions – all of them – rationally and methodically using scientific, metaphysical, philosophical, historical, and religious perspectives. It crafts diverse viewpoints into a single, coherent narrative woven as a holistic picture that makes sense of everything around us.

If any of these questions intrigue you, this book is for you. We will go on a quest to find answers to life's big questions. Along the way, we will examine some of these problems based on what science tells us. We will ponder a few of the dilemmas philosophically. We will try to make sense of still others from several religious viewpoints. At the end of our journey, we will construct a rational, coherent narrative from the clues we collected. We will end up with a meticulously crafted picture that hopefully will make sense to you. Just like the

outcome of a giant jigsaw puzzle. Or the fusion of primary colors to reveal the picture in true color.

Human beings have always tried to understand life. The spiritually inclined have used faith and religion to make their case. The philosophically minded have used logical reasoning to make sense of it. More recently, the scientifically minded have tried to explain it with advances in fields related to the natural sciences. Each faction rationalizes it from its peculiar perspective, much to the chagrin of the others. None of them see eye to eye on many of the major issues. Life remains a mystery.

While we have landed on worlds beyond our own and have unraveled deep mysteries of the universe and life, there remains a huge void in the grand unification of life's big questions. What is missing from the world's intellectual discourse is a coherent, rational, and holistic picture of the mystery of life. How do you unravel and present the grand picture of life in a single panorama? This vacuum stimulated the writing of this book. It is an attempt to fill this yawning gap.

Not everyone may agree with the conclusions drawn in this work. That is expected from the diversity of human thought. But the hope is that the reader will appreciate that logic, reasoning, and balanced critical thinking were employed in meticulously examining the diverse topics and that the resulting analysis was even-handedly woven into a coherent narrative. If the reader approaches this work rationally – with an open mind and sincerely looking for answers – they will start looking at the world differently. Their perspective on life will be reshaped for the better. They will find the book life changing.

Asad Islam

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