

Last Scenes of This Earth

The Buddha's description of the last scenes of the present universe as they would appear to a being then living on this Earth is extremely interesting. The Earth would then have its harsh climate, and the beings would be with smaller physiques and a very low morality. The standards of climate, and morality descend lower and lower, and many of the beings on this Earth die and disappear. Fresh beings arriving to settle on this Earth keep dwindling in numbers and further deterioration takes place. After further lapse of time beings on this Earth are reduced to very small numbers and a period of long drought with intensive heat occurs. Owing to this drought, rivers dry up, and crops fail; and, in consequence, most of the remaining beings die and disappear.

Probably by encountering an inter-stellar cloud of water vapour, a spell of rain then beings to occur. This rain which pours down continuously for 7 consecutive days, begins with slow drizzling and, at its worst, rain drops several feet in diameter fall. This rain causes floods all over, the only points escaping inundation being a few mountain tops. The floods kill a further number of the remaining beings on this Earth.

Then follows a second drought and within a few weeks all the flood water evaporate and shortly afterwards all the oceans too dry up. By this time, the universe is also crumbling in a mad dash. Our solar system meets other solar systems and at its final stage, the Earth comes within the orbit of 7 suns.

Fire that Burns out the Universe

The Earth at this stage is without a drop of water and her envelope of air is in tatters. It is heat all over, and the surface is burning at many places. And finally, the 7 suns radiate on to this Earth so much of heat, that the whole Earth turns ablaze. After burning for a short while in this manner, the Earth blows up and ceases to exist.

In the meantime, all the other planets and stars in the universe too blow up and disappear, some in the same manner as this Earth and the others in different other ways. Ultimately, the entire universe of space becomes completely void of all planets and stars. The condition of the universe remains for some time in this confused state of blank darkness.

During the Darkness of Time

Although during this period the whole universe turns into a condition of blank darkness, no part of it gets destroyed. All the units of mind and all the abstract units of matter remain in it perfectly intact. All that gets destroyed in this catastrophe, are the various substances and the various material foundations of beings. The units of abstract matter, during this period, establish the homogeneous dispersal over space towards which they always keep pulling themselves, and as in this state the units of abstract matter are too much stretched out in space to remain in atomic combinations, they exist only in the form of energy (paramattha). Since matter in the form of energy is not discernible to environment sense organs, the only way we could visualize the condition of the universe then is as space in a state of blank darkness.