

# Brahma's Night (SB 1.6.30 and SB 3.11.22)

Question: Srila Prabhupada writes in his **SB 1.6.30 purport** –

“The duration of a day in the life of Brahma is 4,320,000,000 solar years. This is stated also in the Bhagavad-gita. So for this period Brahmaji rests in yoga-nidra within the body of the Garbhodakasayi Visnu, the generator of Brahma. Thus after the sleeping period of Brahma, when there is again creation by the will of the Lord through the agency of Brahma, all the great rsis again appear from different parts of the transcendental body, and Narada also appears.”

How to understand this, in light of what is stated in Srimad Bhagavatam and Brhat Bhagavatamrta, the night of Brahma is preceded by a huge fire within the lower planetary systems, namely from svarga down to the lowest planets. Due to the intense heat, the residents of Maharloka travel by vimanas to the Janaloka region.

“When devastation takes place due to the fire emanating from the mouth of Sankarsana, the great sages, headed by Bhrgu, transport themselves from Maharloka to Janaloka, being distressed by the heat of the blazing fire that rages through the three worlds below.” **[SB 3.11.30]**

[BB 2.2.61] “At the end of one thousand cycles of ages—for that place, one day—the conflagration of the three worlds forced us to take refuge on Janaloka.”

## COMMENTARY

Maharloka exists for the same duration as the planet of Lord Brahma, but because Maharloka is adjacent to Svarga its inhabitants are forced to evacuate by the heat created during the fire of annihilation that burns the lower worlds. After Maharloka, Janaloka is the next higher planetary system.

Answer by Romapada Swami:

Chronologically, after a fire within the lower portion of the universe occurs, a universal flood rises, at which time Brahma rests, and all the planets below Maharloka become submerged in water. See **SB 3.11.31**, below.

“At the beginning of the devastation all the seas overflow, and hurricane winds blow very violently. Thus the waves of the seas become ferocious, and in no time at all the three worlds are full of water.”

## PURPORT

It is said that the blazing fire from the mouth of Sankarsana rages for one hundred years of the demigods, or 36,000 human years. Then for another 36,000 years there are torrents of rain,

accompanied by violent winds and waves, and the seas and oceans overflow. These reactions of 72,000 years are the beginning of the partial devastation of the three worlds.

Additional Reference:

SB 4.7.42 – The demigods said: Dear Lord, formerly, when there was a devastation, You conserved all the different energies of material manifestation. At that time, all the inhabitants of the higher planets, represented by such liberated souls as Sanaka, were meditating on You by philosophical speculation. You are therefore the original person, and You rest in the water of devastation on the bed of the Śeṣa snake. Now, today, You are visible to us, who are all Your servants. Please give us protection.

PURPORT – The devastation indicated in this verse is the partial devastation of the lower planets within the universe when Lord Brahmā goes to sleep. The higher planetary systems, beginning with Maharloka, Janaloka and Tapoloka, are not inundated at the time of this devastation.

Also: “When Brahma goes to sleep in his nighttime, the three planetary systems below Brahmaloaka are all submerged in the water of devastation. In his sleeping condition, Brahma dreams about the Garbhodakasayi Visnu and takes instruction from the Lord for the rehabilitation of the devastated area of space.” (SB 3.11.22, purport)

The understanding is that just as when we sleep, we may be in our bed but in our subtle body we seem to be in another place; so also with Brahma.

In his purport, Srila Prabhupada’s explanation is that Brahma dreams of Garbhodakasayi and takes instructions from the Lord about how to reconstruct the devastated area of the universe.

Q: Where does Brahma reside during his night?

Ans: During the partial annihilation, Lord Brahma remains in Brahmaloaka. He also has a residence on top of Mount Meru, but that is part of Svarga and is thus inundated at the time. His abode on Brahmaloaka is, however, undisturbed.

Q: After the partial annihilation, what portion of the universe must Brahma re-create during each day of his life?

Ans: During each of the subsequent days of Brahma, he has to re-create all 10 of the planetary systems which were devastated during his night.

Q: For those jivas whose residences have been devastated during the night of Brahma, where do they go? What is their interim residence?

Ans: There is a conversation wherein Bhaktisvarupa Damodara Maharaja asked Srila Prabhupada about how the bodies of the living entities become manifest after the partial devastation. Srila Prabhupada answered, " There is no body. They are reserved in the Visnu's body. And again, when there is creation, they come out."

The jiva's who were residing in the devastated lokas - dissolved at the time of partial annihilation - enter within the body of Garbhodakasayi Visnu, who is the Supersoul of the universe.