Chapter - III

PRAJĀPATI IN THE BRĀHMAṆA LITERATURE

Prajāpati, who had slowly appeared on the horizon of the Rgvedic pantheon towards the end of the Rgvedic period, was, very soon, firmly established in the minds of the Vedic Aryans. Prajāpati is recognized as the distinct god mainly in the Brāhmaṇa literature. The Brāhmaṇa period was the golden age of the institution of sacrifice and Prajāpati played a very prominent role in the foundation and development of the sacrificial institution.

PRAJĀPATI AS THE CREATOR

Prajāpati, the lord of creatures, plays a very important role as the creator of this universe in the Brāhmaṇa literature. The Brāhmaṇa literature describes Prajāpati as Viśvakarman, the ‘all-creating’ god.¹

The Šatapatha Brāhmaṇa clearly states that the word ‘Prajāpati’ means productiveness² or Prajāpati is the progenitor (prajanayitr).³ He is the begetter of this earth.⁴ The Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa also introduces Prajāpati as Viśvakarman.⁵ He is the form of Gāyatrī and

1. (a) prajāpatiḥ prajāḥ srṣṭvā viśvakarmaḥ'bhavat/ A.B., 4.22
   (b) prajāpatirvai viśvakarmā/ prajāpatiṣṛṣṭā’sisyetat/ Ś.B., 8.2.1.10
2. prajananaṁ prajāpatiḥ/ Ibid., 5.1.3.10
3. (a) prajanayitā sa prajāpatiḥ/ Ibid., 2.5.1.8
   (b) saptadaśo vai saṁvatsarah prajāpatiḥ sa prajanayitā/ Ibid., 8.4.3.20
4. prajāpatirvai prthivyai janitā/ Ibid., 7.3.1.20
5. prajāpatirvai viśvakarmā/ J.B., 2.233
he is the head, the kṣatra, the support, the over-lord, all-worker and the highest-lord. He is the father of gods, he is the creator and he is the lord of wealth.

According to the Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa, Prajāpāti is the progenitor of the mankind, and he took the shape of a horse to create the creatures. The progenitor, doubtless, is Prajāpāti. Prajāpāti desired to create creatures, and then having entered into union with the seasons, the waters, the vital airs, the year and the Aśvins, he produced these creatures. In the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, it is stated that Prajāpāti created the living beings assuming the form of a Tortoise (kūrma). Now, what he created, he made; and inasmuch as he made (akarot), he is called ‘Kūrma’, and ‘Kūrma’ being the same as ‘Kaśyapa’, a tortoise, therefore all creatures are said to have descended from Kaśyapa. This perhaps is the precursor of Viṣṇu’s ‘kūrma-vatāra’ described quite often in the Purāṇas. In the Taittirīya
Brāhmaṇa, Prajāpati is stated to have assumed the form of a Boar, who lifted up the earth which remained plunged in the water. The numerous myths of creation where Prajāpati is the creator, help considerably in building him up as a major god, for in them he is associated both with cosmogony as well as etiology. The creation and protection of this world as well as the yonder world are the primary functions of Prajāpati. The Brāhmaṇas abound in a number of such references describing these two activities of Prajāpati which are dealt with in connection with the various sacrificial rites. The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa reiterates the creation of the universe and it has described Prajāpati as the lord of all creatures.

Prajāpati represents productiveness and he produced all the creatures. He is the breath and everything here is after Prajāpati. He, having created the living beings, enclosed them between the heaven and the earth. He was alone and wished to create and created.

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13. praṇaṣṭhā praṇā āṣṛṣṭa/tāsāmmanamupākṣiṣṭa/tābhyaassūdamupa
śabhinat/tato vai tāsāmmanam nākṣiṣṭa/yasya sudāsāṁbhāro bhavati/
nāsyā gṛhe’nnarā khṣiṣṭate/ āpo vā idamagre salilamāsīt/ tena prajāpatir-
āṣrāmyata/

14. bhūtānāṁ ca patiḥ sarīvatsarāyā’ diśanta bhūtānāṁ
śīduṣāḥ patnī/ patirgrhaptiṣṭa

15. praṇanāmaḥ praṇāpatiḥ/ Š.B., 6.1.3.7

16. praṇāpatiḥ praṇā āṣṛṣṭa/ Ibid., 7.1.2.1

17. praṇo hi praṇāpatiḥ/ praṇāpatiḥ hyevedaṁ sarvāmnua/ Ibid., 4.5.5.13

18. praṇāpatiṛvaḥ prajāḥ śṛṣṭva tā dyāvāpṛthīvibhyāṁ paryagrāhṇat/

19. praṇāpatiḥa vā idamagre eka evāsa/ sa aikṣata- kathāṁ nu praṇāyeyati/
so’ṣrāmyat, sa tapo’tapyat, sa praṇā āṣṛṣṭa/ Ibid., 2.5.1.1
Prajāpati is all the beings and he is everything. He assuredly is the Brahman, for Prajāpati is of the nature of Brahman. Prajāpati is stated as the Self (ātmā) and he is this universe. According to the Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa, Prajāpati created Puruṣa, i.e. Hiranyakārpa. Bhaṭṭabhāskara, the commentator of the Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa remarks on the relevant passage thus – ‘prajāpatiḥ paramātmā puruṣaṁ hiranyagarbham āsṛjata’.26

Regarding the creation of this universe, the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa states – in the beginning of this creation, there existed nothing but a sea of water (salīla) on which floated a golden egg (hīrānmayam aṇḍam); within a year, Prajāpati was produced therefrom, Prajāpati broke open the golden egg. At the end of year, he tried to speak and spoke, bhūḥ, bhuvah and svah, which became this earth, air and sky respectively. In another context of the Śatapatha

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20. prajāpatirvai bhūtaḥ/ T.B., 2.1.9.3.
21. sarvaṁ hi prajāpatiḥ/ Ś.B., 13.6.1.6
22. brahma vai prajāpatiḥ/ brāhma hi prajāpati/ Ibid., 13.6.2.8
23. ātmā vai prajāpatiḥ/ Ibid., 4.5.9.2
24. sarvam hīḍaṁ prajāpatiḥ/ Ibid., 10.2.3.18
25. prajāpatiḥ puruṣam āsṛjata/ T.B., 2.3.7.1
27. āpo ha vā idamagre salīlavāsa/ tā’akāmayaṁ kathannu prajāyemahīti tā’āsrāmayaṁstāstātapo’tapayanta tāṣu tapastapyaṁmāṁsu hīrānmayāṇḍaṁ yāvat saṁvatsarasaya velā tāvatparyaplaṁvata/ tataḥ saṁvatsara puruṣah samabhavt/ sa prajāpatistasmādu saṁvatsara’eva strī vā gaurvā vaḍabā vā vijāyate .... sa saṁvatsare vyājihīrṣat/ sa bhūriti vyāharatseyampṛt-hivyabhavadbhuva’iti tadidamantriṣamabhavatsvaritī sa’sou dyaurabhat/ Ś.B., 11.1.6.1-3
**Brāhmaṇa**, it is stated that in the beginning, Prajāpati alone was there. He desired to exist and to generate. He wearied himself and performed fervid devotions. From him, thus, wearied and having been made hot, were created — the earth (*prthivi*), the air (*antarikṣa*) and the sky (*dyau*). From these three worlds, the three lights (*jyotis*) were produced — Agni (the fire), Vāyu (air) and Sūrya (the sun). From the three lights were produced, the three Vedas — the *Ṛgveda* from Agni, the *Yajurveda* from Vāyu and the *Sāmaveda* from Sūrya. From these three Vedas, three luminous essences (*ṣukra*) were produced — *bhūḥ* from the *Ṛgveda*, *bhuvah* from the *Yajurveda* and *svaḥ* from the *Sāmaveda*. The *Ṣatapatha Brāhmaṇa* explains that, with the three *Vyāhrtis* Prajāpati generates this universe. With ‘*bhūḥ*’ he generates the earth, with ‘*bhuvah*’ the sky and with ‘*svaḥ*’ the heaven. He also generated the three varnas accordingly with these three Vyāhṛtis. With ‘*bhūḥ*’, he generated *brahma*, i.e. the Brāhmaṇa cast; with ‘*bhuvah*’ the *ksatra*, i.e. the Kṣatriya cast; and with ‘*svaḥ*’ the *Viś*, i.e. the common people. Sāyaṇa explains the term ‘*brahma*’ in the present context as ‘*brāhmaṇa jāti*’, ‘*ksatra*’ as ‘*ksatriya jāti*’ and ‘*viś*’ as general people.

With ‘*bhūḥ*’ Prajāpati also generated the self, with ‘*bhuvah*’ the human

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28. prajāpatirvā idamagramāśīt ... sa’imāni triṇi jyotīṁṣyabhitatāpa ... havīryaśī e yadi sāmataḥ svariti caturgṛhitamājyaṁ gṛhitvāhavaniye juhavatha/ Ibid., 11.5.8.1-6

29. bhūriti vai prajāpatirināmājanaya, bhuvā ityantarikṣaṁ, svariti divam/ etāvadhāda itaṁ sarvarāṁ — yāvādine lokāḥ sarvenaivādhīyate/Ibid. 2.1.4.11

30. bhūriti vai prajāpatirbrahmājanaya, bhuvā iti kṣatran, svariti viśam/ Ibid., 2.1.4.12

race and with ‘svah’ the animals.  

The Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa also narrates that, before the creation of this world there was water everywhere. While desiring to create the universe out of the vast sheath of water, Prajāpati noticed a lotus-leaf therein. He thought that the lotus-stalk was supporting the leaf. So, he assumed the form of a boar and took a plunge in the water. Reaching the earth below the water he dug the wet mud by his horn and spread it on the lotus-leaf. That became the earth. Since he spread it, so the earth got the name Prthivī. Being contended he desired for the creation of the mobile and the immobile. Thus, the world got the name Bhūmi (abhūt-itī). The wind blew everywhere only at the wish of Prajāpati to make the wet earth dry. Another version of this legend also occurs in the same Brāhmaṇa and it states that – in the beginning there was only water everywhere. Feeling loneliness the ‘daśahotṛṛupa’ Prajāpati was crying because of his inability to exist without a living company. His tears fell into water, and then it became the earth. Prajāpati also produced the atmosphere and the sky respectively. Bhaṭṭabhāskara explains the relevant passage thus -

32. bhūriti vai prajāpatirātmānamajananayata bhuva iti prajāṁ, svariti paśun/
   Ibid. 2.1.4.13
33. āpo va idamagre salilamāsit/ tena prajāpatiraśrāmayat/ kathamidaṁsyādīt/
   Ibid., 2.2.9.3
34. so ‘rodīṭprajāpatiḥ/ sa kasmā ajñī/ yadyasyā apratiśṭhāyā iti/
   Ibid., 2.2.9.3
It is also stated that Prajāpāti desired to create the beings and at that moment he perceived Daśahotṛ. With the help of this Daśahotṛ, he created the creatures, as because he himself is Daśahotṛ. The Daśahotṛ is a particular mantra which is read as follows: ‘cittih sruk/ cittamājyam/ vāgvedih …’.  

Some passages of the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa also deal with the creation and depict Prajāpāti as the creator of the universe. In a context of the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa, it is stated that in the beginning of the universe, Prajāpāti was alone there. He desired to generate and, therefore, he performed ‘tapas’ and from him all the creatures were produced. In this context Sāyaṇa holds that, Prajāpāti the supreme

35. Bhaṭṭabhāṣkara, Ibid.
36. prajāpatirakāmayata prajāssṛjeyeti/ sa etarī dasahotāramapasayat/ tato vai sa prajā asṛjata/ prajāpatirvai dasahotā/ Ibid. 2.2.1.1
37. Bhaṭṭabhāṣkara, Ibid.
38. prajāpativrā idameka evagra āsa, so’krāmayata prajāyeta bhūyān syāṃiti, sa tapo’tapyata, sa vācāmayacchat, sa sarīvatsarasya parastad vyāharad dvādaśakṛtvo dvādaśa padā vā ēṣā nividetāṃ vāvā tāṁ nividarīn vyāharat tāṁ sarvāṇi bhūtānyanvasṛjjyanta/ A.B., 2.33
god was alone in the beginning. As he was without a second one, desired of multiplying himself for further creation.  

In the *Brāhmaṇa* literature, it is frequently mentioned that Prajāpati was alone at first; he wished to become many in order to attain magnitude. The *Jaininīyopaniṣad Brāhmaṇa* states that in the beginning Prajāpati was alone here and he wished to become manifest. There was only one self-created god and he was Prajāpati. He was alone at first and created Vāc from whom emanated the rest of the creation. From the upper vital air he created the gods and from the lower the mortal creatures. Sāyaṇa is more clear in his interpretation of the relevant text that Prajāpati is sole creator of all


40. prajāpatirvāvedamagra āśīt/ so'kāmayata/ bahu syāṁ praJayeyayā/ bhūmānaṁ gaccheyaṁ iti/ J.U.B., 1.15.1.1

41. prajāpatirvā idamagra āśīn nānyaṁ dvitiyaṁ paśyamānastasya vāgeva svamāśid vāg dvitiya sa aikṣata hantemāṁ vācaṁ viśrje/ iyaṁ vāvedaṁ viśṛṣṭā sarvāṁ vibhavantya eṣyatīti/ J.B., 2.244

42. prajāpatirevemānaṁlokaṁṣṛṣṭvā prthivyāṁ pratyatiṁṣhat/ tasmāma auṣadhayo'nnamapacyanta/ tadaśnāt/ sa garbhabhyavat/ sa ūrd)bhyabhyavat eva praṇe bhya devānasṛjata ye'vāṅcaḥ prāṇāstebhyo martyāḥ prajā'ityato yatamathā'sṛjata tathā'sṛjata prajāpatistvedaṁ sarvvasaṁśṛjata yadīdaṁ kiṁca/ Ś.B., 6.1.2.11
entities of this universe. According to the *Gopatha Brāhmaṇa*, Prajāpati was commissioned by Brahman for creation. Prajāpati was alone, there was neither day nor night, in this utter darkness he desired, then followed light and revelation.

While praising and practising austerities, Prajāpati thought within himself, ‘How comes it that the living beings created by him pass away?’ He then became aware that his creatures passed away from him for want of food. He made the breasts in the fore-part of their body teem with milk. He then created living beings; and by resorting to the breasts, the beings created by him thenceforward continued to exist and did not pass away. That milk is indeed food, for in the beginning Prajāpati produced it for food. But that food also means the living beings (prajā), since, it is by food that they exist. Thus, Prajāpati is not only the creator of the universe, but he is the sustainer also.

43. srṣṭou yadyapi prakāraviśesos’sit, tathāpi sthāvaraṇaṁgaṁmāṁstmakasya jagataḥ prajāpatisrṣṭatvam niścitamiti śrutih/ yena prakāreṇa srṣṭavān, tenaiva prakāreṇa srṣṭirastu, sarvātmanā prajāpatirevedāṁ sarvamasaṁjadhiti satyamityarthah/ Sāyaṇa, Ibid.

44. brahma’bravīt prajāpateḥ prajāḥ srṣṭvā pālayasveti/ G.B., 1.1.4

45. prajāpatirvā idameka āsīnāhaṁrasinna rátrirāṣītso’smīnnandhe tamasi prāsarpatsa aicchatra etamabhyapadyata tato vai tasmai vyouchadvuṣṭiṁvā eṣa āhṛyate yadvai tajjyotirabhavattat jyotiṣo jyotiṣtvam/ T.M.B., 16.1.1

46. so’raćhirāmyanprajāpatirikṣāṇaṁcakre – kathaṁ nu me prajāḥ srṣṭāḥ parābhavantīti/ sa haitadeva dadarṣa – anaśanataya vai me prajāḥ parābhavantīti/ sa ātmana evāgre stanayoḥ paya āpyāyāṁcakre/ sa prajā asṛjata/ S.B., 2.5.1.3

47. tadvai paya evānam/ etaddhyagre prajāpatirannamajanayata/ tadvā annameva prajāḥ/ annāddhi sarībhavantī/ Ibid., 2.5.1.6
Prajāpati desired to gain both worlds, the world of the gods, and the world of men. He saw those beasts, the tame and the wild ones; he seized them, and by means of them took possession of these two worlds. By means of the tame beasts he took possession of the terrestrial world; for this world is the world of men, and yonder world is the world of gods. It is said with regard to Prajāpati that ‘the great one remained within the worlds’ and ‘the Pavamāna, i.e. the blower or Purifier entered the regions.’ Sayāna comments on the relevant text thus- ‘Itthāṁ devamanasyādirūpāsu prajāsu satīṣu tatsraṣṭā praṇāpatiḥ lokeṣu madhye adhikāṁ sarvotkarṣṇāvasthitā ityarthah’. Thus, Prajāpati is all-pervading in nature.

Prajāpati created the gods and Asuras. He is the father of the gods, the progenitor of men, and the lord of the entire world. He is stated to be the creator of the animals. Prajāpati is said to have created first of all the Brahman, i.e. the Veda, the triple science. It became to him a foundation. That is why it is said that the Brahman is

48. prajāpatirakāmyata/ubhou lokāvabhijayeyam/ devalokāṁ manuṣyalokaṁ ceti/ sa etānpaśūnapaṣyaṭ/ grāmyāṁścāraṇyāṁśca/ tānālabhata/tairimou lokāvavārundha/ grāmyaireva paśubhirimaṁ lokamavārundha/ āraṇyairamum/ ayanā vai loko manuṣyalokah/ athāsou devalokah/ yadgrāmyāṇpaśunālabhate/

49. ‘mahaddha tashthou bhūvanesvantaḥ’ iti/ prajāpatimevaitadabhyanuktam/
‘pavamāno harita āviveṣa’ – iti/

50. Sayāna, Ibid.

51. prajāpatirdevāsurānasṛjata/ T.B., 2.2.7.2

52. prajāpatir prathamajāṃṭasya/ prajāpate tvair nidhipāḥ puraṇāḥ/ devānāṁ pīṭā janitā praṇānāṁ/ patirviśvasya jagataḥ paraspāḥ/

53. prajāpatiḥ paśunasṛjata/

Ibid., 1.5.2.4

Ibid., 13.2.4.1

Ibid., 2.5.1.5
the foundation of everything in the world. Resting on that foundation, he practised austerity. He then created the waters out of Vāc (speech), the world; for speech belonged to it. The Tāṇḍya Mahābrāhmaṇa also states that Prajāpati alone existed at first. He had Vāc indeed as his own, as a second to him.

It has been vividly described in the Satapatha Brāhmaṇa that the waters pervaded everything in this world, and because it pervaded (āp) whatsoever there was here, therefore it is called water (āpah). Then again Prajāpati desired to be reproduced from these waters. He entered the waters with that triple science. Thence an egg arose. He touched it and from it the Brahman was first created, the triple science. So it is said that the Brahman is the first-born of this all. He again desired to generate this earth from this water. Then, he compressed it and threw it into the water. The juice which flowed from it became a tortoise; and that which was sported upwards became what is produced above here over the water. This whole earth dissolved itself all over the waters; this entire universe appeared as one form only, viz. water. He again desired for more creation. He toiled and practised austerity; and worn out with toil and austerity, he created foam. Subsequently, he created clay, mud, saline soil sand, pebbles, rock, ore, gold, plants and trees.

54. Ś.B., 6.1.1.8-9
55. praṇāpativrā idam eva āṇttasya vāgeva svamāśīdvāg dvitiyā .../
     T.M.B., 20.14. 2
56. Ś.B., 6.1.1-2
Prajāpati again desired to be reproduced. By means or in the form of Agni, he entered into union with the Earth, thence an egg arose. He touched it and said, 'may it grow and multiply'. The embryo which was inside was created as Vāyu (the wind). And the tear which had formed itself became those birds. And the juice which was adhering to the shell became those sun-motes. By means of Vāyu he entered into union with the air, thence an egg arose. From it, yonder sun was created. By means of the sun, he entered into union with the sky, thence an egg arose. From it, the moon was created. Having created these worlds, he entered into union with speech (Vāc) by his mind (manas), he then became impregnated with eight drops; they were created as those eight Vasus, he placed them on this earth. After that with the same process he became impregnated with eleven drops. They were created as those eleven Rudras, he placed them in the air. Again he became impregnated with twelve drops. They were created as the twelve Ādityas and placed them in the sky. Then he created all gods and placed them in the quarters. Prajāpati having created these worlds, was firmly established on the earth. From the upper vital airs he created the gods and from the lower vital airs the mortal creatures. Thus it is found that it was Prajāpati who created everything here, whatsoever exists.

In another context of the Satapatha Brāhmaṇa, it is stated that in the beginning Prajāpati alone existed here. He desired to be abound in offspring and cattle and to obtain prosperity. He toiled and practised

57. Ibid., 6.1.2.11
austerities. He created living beings. The living beings created by him passed away; they are those birds. Now man is the nearest to Prajāpati, and man is two-footed, hence birds are two-footed. In this context, Sāyaṇa remarks that Prajāpati is the cause (kāraṇa) and the world is the effect (kārya). In the beginning the effect, i.e. the world was concealed in the cause Prajāpati. Prajāpati is said to have created the different species from the different parts of his body.

It has been described that Prajāpati created the creatures; but without proper division as name and colour, they became unique. So, Prajāpati gave them colour and name and entered into them. That is why rūpa and nāma are said to be Prajāpati.

The creative procedure of Prajāpati is also associated with some sacrifices or some sacrificial rites. It is stated in the Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa that Prajāpati created the creatures by the Agniṣṭoma rite.

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58. prajāpatirha vā idamagra eka evāsa/ sa aiksata – katham nu prajāye yati/
so’śrāmyat, sa tapo’tapyata, sa prajā asṛjata/ tā asya prajāḥ srṣṭāḥ
parābabhūvuh/tānimāṇi vayārṇi/puruṣou vai prajāpatemediṣṭham/dvipādvā
ayaṇi puruṣāḥ/tasmād dvipādo vayārṇi/
Ibid., 2.5.1.1

59. idaṇi drṣyamānāṁ carācarātmakaṁ yajjagat tatsamagra srṣṭēḥ prākkāle
prajāpatireka evāsīt; kāryasya jagataḥ kāraṇabhūte prajāpatou līmatvāt/ saḥ
asahāya eka eva āsidityarthāḥ/
Sāyaṇa, Ibid.

60. prajāpatirvā’idamagra’āśideka eva/ so’kāmayata – annaṁ srjeya,
prajāyeyeti/ sa prāṇebhya evādhi paśūniramimita, manasaḥ puruṣaṁ,
cakṣuṣo’śvaṁ, prāṇādgāṁ, śrotrādvīṁ, vāco’jam/
Ibid., 7.5.2.6.

61. prajāpatiḥ prajā asṛjata/ tāsrṣṭāssamaślisyan/ tā rūpenānu prāviṣat/
tasmādāhuh/ rūpari vai prajāpatiriti/tā nāmnā’nu prāviṣat/tasmādāhuh/nāma
vai prajāpatiriti/
T.B., 2.2.7.1

62. sa (prajāpatiḥ) bāhubhyāmevorasaḥ pañcicādaṣṭāṁ stoma maṣṣājata triṣṭubhāṁ
chando bṛhat sāmendraṁ devatāṁ rājanyāṁ manusyamaśvaṁ paśūṁ/
J.B., 1.68
In the *Tāṇḍya Mahābrāhmaṇa*, Prajāpati is stated to have created the world with the help of Atirātra, while the year, seasons, months and the fortnights came into being through various stomas created by him.

Prajāpati truly is the sacrifice, from which these creatures have been produced. Standing towards north-east, Prajāpati created the creatures. Standing towards north-east Prajāpati created offspring by means of the Viṣṇu-strides, and created vital power for them by means of the *vātsapra* rite. By the Viṣṇu-strides Prajāpati is stated to have created this world, the air, the sky, the regions, that which has been (*bhūtam*), wealth, the day, the former bright fortnights, the half-months, and the seasons. And by the *vātsapra* rite he created the fire (Agni), the wind (Vāyu), the sun (Āditya), the moon, that which shall be (*bhavisyat*), hope, the night, the latter dark fortnights, the months and the year.

According to the *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa*, with the help of *vaśvadeva śastra*, Prajāpati created the creatures. By *Varuṇa-prahāsa*, he freed the creatures from *Varuṇapāsa* and established

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63. sa etān stomānāpāsyaḥ jyotirgourāyurīte vai lokā ete stomā ayameva jyotirayammdhymo gaursāvuttama ayuh/ T.M.B., 4.1.7
64. eṣa vai praṇāpatiḥ ya eṣa yajñastāyate/ yasmādimaḥ praṇāḥ praṇātāḥ/ Ś.B., 5.2.2.18
65. udāni vai praṇātiṣṭhān praṇāpatiḥ praṇā asṛjata/ Ibid., 6.6.2.2.
66. etadvai tat praṇāpatirviṣṇukramairudaṇi praṇātiṣṭhān prjā asṛjata/ Ibid., 6.7.2.12
67. etadvai praṇāpatirviṣṇukramailḥ praṇāḥ śṛṣṭvā tābhya vātsapraṇāyuyuṣya-makarot/ Ibid., 6.7.4.1
68. Ibid., 6.7.4.7
69. vais'vadevena vai praṇāpatiḥ praṇā asṛjata/ T.B., 1.6.2.1
them with the help of Sākamedha sacrifice.\textsuperscript{70} The same \textit{Brāhmaṇa} also mentions that, with the help of Agnihotra, Prajāpati created the beings.\textsuperscript{71} It is also stated that, at the time of Āhavanīya ādhāna, when the sun is half-arisen, Prajāpati created the creatures.\textsuperscript{72} Bhattabhāskara remarks thus- ‘\textit{etasmin loke sthāne avakāše ardhodayakālasthāniye naktānaktaśvarūpe kāle prajāpatih prajāśṛṣṭimakarot’.\textsuperscript{73} In another context the \textit{Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa}, it is revealed that Prajāpati desired to generate and expand himself. He then produced the \textit{Trivṛt} and the \textit{Pañcadaśa stoma}. Both the stomas became the \textit{pūrvapakṣa} and \textit{aparapakṣa}, i.e. the \textit{sukla} and \textit{kṛṣṇa pakṣa} respectively. From the \textit{pūrvapakṣa}, he produced the gods and from the \textit{aparapakṣa}, he produced the \textit{asuras}.\textsuperscript{74}

Prajāpati perceived that all existing things are contained in the three Vedas; he then decided to construct for himself a body so as to contain the whole Vedas. He arranged the \textit{ṛk}-verses into twelve thousand of Brhatis, for of that extent are the verses created by

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{70} \textit{vaiśvadevena vai prajāpatih prajā āṣṛjata/ tā varuṇapraghāsairvaruṇap-āśādāmucat/ sākamedhaiḥ pratyastāhāpayat/} \textit{Ibid., 1.6.8.1}
\item \textsuperscript{71} \textit{prajāpatirakāmayaḥ prajāyeyeti/ sa etadagnihotraṁ mithunamapāṣyat/ tato vai sa prajāyata/} \textit{Ibid., 2.1.2.8}
\item \textsuperscript{72} \textit{ardhodite sūrya āhavanīyaṁādadhati/ etasminvai loke prajāpatih prajā āṣṛjata/} \textit{Ibid., 1.1.4.3}
\item \textsuperscript{73} Bhattabhāskara, \textit{Ibid.}
\item \textsuperscript{74} \textit{prajāpatirakāmayaḥ prajāyeyeti/ sa tapo’tapyaḥ/ sa trivṛtaṁ stomamaśṛjata/ tam pañcadaśaṁ stomo madhyata udatṛṇat/ tou pūrvapakṣaṁ cāparapakṣaś-cā-bhavatāṁ/ purvapakṣaṁ devā anvasṛṣṭyaṁ/ aparapakṣaṁ anvasurāḥ/} \textit{Ibid., 2.2.3.1}
\end{itemize}
Prajāpati. At the thirtieth arrangement they came to an end in the Paṅktis; and because it was at the thirtieth arrangement that they came to an end, there are thirty nights in the month; and therefore Prajāpati is known as pāṅkta, i.e. fivefold. He then arranged the two other Vedas into twelve thousand Brhatīs, eight thousand of the yajus formulas and four thousand the sāman hymns, for of that extent is what was created by Prajāpati. At the thirtieth arrangement these two came to an end in the Paṅktis; and because it was at the thirtieth arrangement that they came to an end, there are thirty nights in the month; and because it was in the Paṅktis, therefore Prajāpati is pāṅkta.

Thus Prajāpati is said to have created the whole Vedas. Prajāpati is the Supreme and he is the Lord. The gods’ subservience to Prajāpati is noticed when he is said to have anointed Indra, king Soma, Varuṇa, Yama and Manu.

Various etiological myths are ascribed to Prajāpati wherein he is depicted as the creator of the different objects in the Brāhmaṇas. Prajāpati is said to be the creator of Agni. In the beginning Prajāpati was alone existed here. He considered to be reproduced. He toiled and performed acts of penance. He generated Agni from his mouth; and because he generated him from his mouth, therefore Agni is the

75. Ś.B., 10.4.2.22-23
76. Ibid., 10.4.2.24
77. praṇāpānīḥ prameṣṭhyatradhipatirāsīt/ Ibid., 8.4.3.19
78. yābhirindramabhyāṣīnicat praṇāpanīḥ somaṁ rājānaṁ varuṇaṁ yamaṁ manum/ A.B., 8.3
79. praṇāpānīragninasṛjata/ T.B., 2.1.2.1
consumer of food.\(^{80}\)

The *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa* mentions the three creations of Prajāpati. They are water at first, time powered *Rohana śakti* in the middle and *Ośadhi* in the last.\(^{81}\) Bhaṭṭabhāskara comments on the relevant passage thus—'prajāpateḥ srjataḥ trayāṁ bhavati parastādāpah sarvasya kāraṇabhūtah, madhye kālatmikā rohanāśaktih, bhavastādośadhahyā sarvavikāraṇāmupalakṣaṇam/ yadaitrūpaṁ bhavati tadā srṣṭāṁ dṛṣyate'.\(^{82}\)

Prajāpati is these worlds.\(^{83}\) There are three worlds; Prajāpati is the fourth over and above these three worlds.\(^{84}\) Prajāpati, having freed all beings from evil, from death, desired for more procreation. He spoke unto the vital air to assist him in his creation. Prajāpati was about to perform the creation of living beings by means of sacrifice and then he required the assistance of the prāṇas (vital airs) in order to produce creatures endowed with breath.\(^{85}\)

While delineating the glorification of the word ‘*Om*’, the *Jaiminīyopanisad Brāhmaṇa* narrates a story—after creating the gods Prajāpati created the death. The gods asked Prajāpati—‘If you desire to create the death, why it is necessary to create us?’ Prajāpati advised

\(80. \) prajāpatirha vā idamagra eka evāsa/ sa aikṣata—‘katham nu prajāyeya’ iti/ so’śrāmyata/ sa tapo’tapya ta sa’gnimeva mukhājjayāṇīcakre/ tad yadenaṁ mukhādajanayata—tasmādānnādo’gnih/ \(\text{Ś.B.}, 2.2.4.1\)

\(81. \) prajāpate rohiṇi/ āpah parastādośadhahyo’vastāt/ \(\text{T.B.}, 1.5.1.1\)

\(82. \) Bhaṭṭabhāskra, Ibid.

\(83. \) ime lokāḥ prajāpatih/ \(\text{Ś.B.}, 7.5.1.27\)

\(84. \) trayo va ime lokāḥ/ prajāpatirvā’atimāmlokaṁścaturthaḥ/Ibid., 4.6.1.4

\(85. \) etadvai prajāpatih sarvāṇi bhutāni pāpmano mṛtyormuktvā’kāmayaḥ—prajāḥ srjaya, prajāyeyeti…../ Ibid., 8.4.3.1-2
them to recite the \( Rk \) mantras to get relief of death. Then the gods recited the mantras composed in different metres. Death again followed them. Thereafter they urged help from the word ‘\( Om \)’, which is the threefold science (\( trayīvidyā \)). The word gave them immortality.\(^{86}\) Thus, Prajāpati is depicted as the creator of death in the Brāhmaṇas.

Prajāpati is also identified with the cosmic entities. He is the sky,\(^{87}\) and he indeed, is everything here.\(^{88}\) In fact, he is the manifestation of all that exist as it emerged out of the non-existent, which is clearly stated in the Nāsadiya-hymn of the \( Rgveda \).\(^{89}\) A constant refrain in the Brāhmaṇas is that Prajāpati was all in the beginning; only one god, the self-created Prajāpati, he desired to become many for creation.\(^{90}\) He created men and animals at Brahman’s behest who told him to create and preserve. In the beginning there was water in which Prajāpati wished to have a firm foothold (\( pratiṣṭhā \)). He created and consolidated this earth. Therefore, it was called \( Prthivī \) (root \( Prath =to establish \)) and he became the all enveloping.\(^{91}\) In the Jaiminiya Brāhmaṇa also, it is described that Prajāpati found himself alone, he looked around and saw another, Brahman; Prajāpati proposed that they should be united. Brahman refused to do so as Prajāpati was sinful. Brahman cut him into three pieces which became the cow,

\(^{86}\) J.U.B., 1.4.4
\(^{87}\) prajāpatirvai vyoma/ J.B., 3.309
\(^{88}\) sarvarā vā īdarā prajāpatilī/ Š.B. 5.1.3.11
\(^{89}\) \( R.V. \), 10.129
\(^{90}\) eka ha vāva devatā svayambhūḥ prajāpatir eva/ so’kāmayata bahu syāmī prajāyeyeti/ J.B., 3.341
\(^{91}\) Ibid., 3.318
dream and shadow.\textsuperscript{92} Thus, Prajāpati is also treated as an indirect factor in the process of creation.

Thus, Prajāpati is extolled as the lone creator of this universe in the \textit{Brāhmaṇa} literature. He created everything else in this universe. Therefore, it is rightly stated that Prajāpati is the progenitor and also Prajāpati means productiveness.\textsuperscript{93}

\textbf{PRAJĀPATI AS THE SUPPORTER AND PRESERVER}

Prajāpati is often described as the supporter and the preserver of this universe. He is called \textit{dhātr} in the \textit{Satapatha Brāhmaṇa}.\textsuperscript{94} The same \textit{Brāhmaṇa} also introduces Prajāpati as the lord of the world\textsuperscript{95} and he is the preserver (\textit{dhātr}).\textsuperscript{96} Prajāpati is called \textit{dharaka}, i.e. sustainer, because Prajāpati sustains the creatures.\textsuperscript{97} Prajāpati is called \textit{parameśthin},\textsuperscript{98} i.e. Prajāpati resides in the highest region. Bhattabhāskar explains the term in the present context thus—‘\textit{parameśthi parame pade sthitaḥ prajāpatirasti}’\textsuperscript{99}.

He is praised as the father of all human beings,\textsuperscript{100} the gods and

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{92} J.B., 2.369-370
  \item \textsuperscript{93} prajananaṁ prajāpatiḥ/ Ś.B. 5.1.3.10
  \item \textsuperscript{94} etadvai prajāpatiḥ/ prāpyā rāddhevāmanyakat/ sa dīkṣu pratiśṭhāyedāṁ sarvaṁ dadhad vidadhadatiśṭhad yat dadhadvi dadhdatiśṭhad tasmāddhātā/ Ibid., 9.5.1.35
  \item \textsuperscript{95} bhuvanasya hyaiṣa patiḥ prajāpatiḥ/ Ibid., 9.4.1.16
  \item \textsuperscript{96} prajāpatirdhātā/ Ibid., 9.5.1.38
  \item \textsuperscript{97} dhārakāḥ ha vai namaiaśa/ etayā ha vai prajāpatiḥ prajā dhārayāṁcakāra/ Ibid., 11.6.2.10
  \item \textsuperscript{98} prajāpatissvāraṁjyaṁ parameśthi/ T.B., 2.7.6.1
  \item \textsuperscript{99} Bhattabhāskar, Ibid.
  \item \textsuperscript{100} etarāṁ ha te pitarāṁ prajāpatiṁ sampadascyaśāvayanti sā yāvatyesā/ Ś.B., 10.2.3.7
\end{itemize}
the Asuras as well. 101

The role played by Prajāpati as creator and preserver is seriously threatened by Death, the destroyer, so he has to confront death, fight and vanquish it before his creation can be assured of safety and continuance. In several myths of the Brāhmaṇas such confrontations are met with. Prajāpati struggled with death and eventually vanquished him. 102 Death and Prajāpati sacrificed together, challenged and struggled with each other. 103 A similar threat to creation also posed from Varuṇa’s noose (Varuṇapāśa) from which Prajāpati delivered the creatures by means of the Varuṇapraghāsa rite. 104 While explaining the passage, Sāyaṇa holds that after delivering the creatures from Varuṇa’s noose, Prajāpati produced them healthy and faultless. 105

Prajāpati freed all creatures from evil, even from Death. Prajāpati is, therefore, identified as life. 106 The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa has a number of myths on this theme. When Prajāpati was creating living beings, Death, that evil, overpowered him. He practised austerities and conquered evil and death. 107 It is also stated in the

101. devāśca vā asurāśca/ ubhaye prajāpatyāḥ/ Ibid., 1.2.4.8
102. etadvai prajāpatiḥ/ etasminnātmanaḥ pratihiite sarvāṇi bhūtāni garbhayabhavat/ tānyasya garbha’eva santi pāpmā mṛtyuragṛhānāt/ Ibid., 5.2.4.2
103. J.B., 2.261-262
104. varuṇapraghāsairvai prajāpatiḥ prajā varuṇapāśātprāmuṇcat/ Š.B., 5.2.4.2
105. varuṇapraghāsayāgena pāśavimocanasya kṛtatvāt asya prajāpateḥ tāḥ vaiśvadevena srṣṭāḥ prajāḥ rogapāparahitāḥ satyaḥ putrapautrādirūpeṇa prajāyante/ Sāyaṇa, Ibid.
106. prāṇā u vai prajāpatiḥ/ Ibid., 8.4.1.4
107. prajāpatiṁ vai prajāḥ srjāmaṁaṁ pāpmā mṛtyurabhīparījaghaṇa/ sa tapo‘tapyatasahasraṁ saṁvatsarāṁ pāpmānāṁ vijihāsan/ Ibid., 10.4.4.1
Satapatha Brāhmaṇa that Prajāpati became impregnated with all beings; while they were in his womb, evil, the Death, seized him, with the help of the gods he freed these beings from evil. One half of Prajāpati was mortal and the other half immortal. With that part of him which was mortal he was afraid of Death and being afraid, he became twofold, clay and water, and entered this Death. Death searched for him, and finally the gods made him immortal.

In another context, it is stated that on one occasion, Maruts wanted to destroy the creatures created by Prajāpati. They approached Prajāpati who was sacrificing and said that they would destroy those creatures which he was about to create by means of offering. Prajāpati, being afraid of the Maruts, set aside for the Maruts the cakes on seven potsherds; and therefore cakes on seven potsherds are offered to the Maruts.

The Tāṇḍya Mahābrāhmaṇa narrates that the creatures created by Prajāpati began to quarrel—the strong destroyed the weak, so he grieved. He then saw and performed the ekopancaśatrātrasatra and thus settled them. The Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa also describes that, once the offspring

108. etadvai prajāpātiḥ/ etasminnātmanaḥ pratihi te sarvāṇi bhūtaṇi
garbhyabhavat/ tānyasya garbha’eva santi pāpmā mṛtyuragṛṇāt/
  Ibid., 8.4.2.1
109. tasya ha prajāpaterdhameva martyrāsīt/ ardhamamṛtam/ tadyadasya
martyamāśīttena mṛtyorabībhet/ sa bīyadimāṁ prāvīśad- dvaayam bhūtvā/
mṛccāpaśca..... te devā abruva- amṛtamimam karavāmeći/
  Ibid., 10.1.3.2-6
110. Ibid., 2.5.1.12-13
111. navasaptadaśatīrātreṇa prajākāmo yejeta nava vai prāṇaḥ prajāpātiḥ
  saptadaśah prāṇebhya eva tadaḥ prajāpateḥ prajāḥ prajāyante/
  T.M.B., 20.4.2
of Prajāpati ate the barley of Varuṇa. Varuṇa grasped them with his nooses. Prajāpati, their father sacrificed with the rite Varuṇa-praghasa. Varuṇa was delighted and freed them from his nooses and from all evil. The same Brāhmaṇa also contains other references delineating Prajāpati as the protector of the beings created by him. He saved the creatures that were being destroyed by Maruts by offering them an oblation in seven potsherds.

These myths depict Prajāpati as the preserver of creatures as the name implies. But even after he copes successfully with the threat of extinction, he has still another hurdle to cross. If his creation is to survive, he must provide sustenance. Many myths of the Brāhmaṇas take up this theme. In one myth it is narrated that having created offsprings, Prajāpati felt himself empty as it were; he pondered to sacrifice with a sacrificial rite to obtain proper food. He saw the set of eleven victims, he grasped it and having sacrificed with it he obtained his desires and won proper food. Great is Prajāpati, this is his sustenance, namely food.

It is also stated that by means of the Vaiśvadeva yāga, Prajāpati produced living beings. The beings produced by him ate Varuṇa’s barley

112. prajāpatiḥ savitā bhūtvā prajā asṛjata...tāḥ prajā varuṇagrhitāḥ... tairvai sa prajā varuṇapāśadamuṣicat/ T.B., 1.6.4.1
113. Ibid., 2.6.2.1
114. prajāpatih prajā sṛṣṭvā riricāna ivāmanyata sa haiksata kathāṁ nu tena yajñakratunā yajeyāṁ yeneṣṭvopakāmanāpnuṁyāṁ vānāṇyaṁ rundhiyetā sa etamekādaśiniṁmapasyattāṁhārattayā yajāṇa tayeṣṭvopakāmanāpnomadavānādmayamundha/ K.B., 12.8
115. prajāpativrāva mahānstasyāyādbratamannamāneva/ T.M.B., 4.10.2
corn; for originally the barley belonged to Varuṇa. Prajāpati healed them by means of the *Varuṇaprāghāsa* oblation. Both the creatures that were born and those that were unborn, he delivered from Varuṇa’s noose and his creatures were born without disease and blemish.  

Prajāpati is the most vigorous of the gods. With Karīra fruits he bestowed happiness on the creatures, and with the Śamī leaves he bestowed bliss. Prajāpati harnesses the mind of the people for the holy work. With the help of truthfulness Prajāpati becomes the benefactor of all beings.  

The *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* states that Prajāpati is the visible sacrifice and man is nearest to Prajāpati, and he has a life of a hundred years, a hundred powers, and a hundred energies. It is also stated that Prajāpati produces the sacrificer and provides him offspring and cattle for propagation. Prajāpati repels evil and the sacrifice inclines to him.

116. Ś.B., 2.5.2.1-3  
117. prajāpatirvai devānāṁ vīryavattamah/ Ibid., 13.1.2.5  
118. kaṁ vai prajāpatih prajābhyaḥ karīrākuruta/ Ibid., 2.5.2.11  
119. kaṁ vai prajāpatih prajābhyaḥ śāmipalāśairakurut... . śāmvevaibā etat prajābhyaḥ kurute/ Ibid., 2.5.2.12  
120. prajāpatirvai yuṭijānah, sa mana etasmāi karmane’yuṅkta/ Ibid., 6.3.1.12  
121. prajāpatirvācassatyamapāsyat/ tenāgnimādhatta/ tena vai sa ārdhnot/ T.B., 1.1.5.1  
122. esa vai pratyakṣarāṁ yajño- yatprajāpatih/ puruṣo vai prajāpaternediṣṭham/ so’yarīṁ śatāyuḥ śatajejāḥ śatavīryah/ Ś.B., 4.3.4.3  
123. sarvavatsaraḥ prajāpatih, so’sya sarvasya prajanayitā, sa yo’sya sarvasya prajanayitā, sa evaināṁ taprajayā paśubhiḥ prajanayati prajātyai/ A.B., 2.39  
124. prajāpatirhi sa tarhi bhavati/ apa pāpmānaṁ hate/ upaināṁ yajño namati/ Ś.B., 12.6.1.4
Prajapati is both father and mother. He creates food, and cuts out the root of evil. According to the *Jaiminîya Brâhmaṇa*, the rice and barley are the two breasts of Prajapati, by which the creatures are being fed. Prajapati created the progeny and they went away from him in search of food. Prajapati managed food for his progeny and then they returned to Prajapati. Prajapati created *Virâj*. The term ‘*Virâj*’ is explained by Bhaṭṭabhâskara as ‘*annam*’.

According to the *Taittiriya Brâhmaṇa*, Prajapati is *pranetr*, i.e. one who impels to do one’s duty. He is the *gopâ*, i.e. the protector of the universe. Bhaṭṭabhâskara explains the relevant passage thus—‘*prajâpatim sarvâsâṁ prajânâm pâtâram viśeṣaṇa rakṣitâraṁ yah bhuvanasya bhûtasya sthâvarajaṅgamâtmakasya gopâḥ gopâyitâ*’. Here, the character of Prajapati as a protector of the universe is expressed very well. Therefore, it is instructed to follow the path of Prajapati.

125.  *mateva ca piteva ca prajāpātiḥ/*  
126.  *prajāpātiśca itadannamaśrjantaitāḥ prāṇabhṛtāḥ/*  
127.  *prajāpātiḥ pāpmano mūlamavṛścat/*  
128.  *tou haitou prajāpaterēva stanou yad brihiśca yavaśca/ tâbhyaāminimāḥ prajā bibharti/*  
129.  *prajāpātiḥ praja āsrjata/ tā asmāthrasṭṭah/ parācīrāyan/ sa etam prajāpatirodanamapaśyat/ so’nnaṁ bhûto’tiṣṭhat/ tā anyatráṇādyamavittvā/ prajāpatim praṇa upāvartanta/*  
130.  *prajāpatirvirājamasṛjata/*  
132.  *prajāpātiḥ pranetā/*  
133.  *prajāpāti yo bhuvanasya gopāḥ/*  
135.  *prajāpatervartanimanu varatasva/*
The *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa* also states more clearly that Prajāpati is our friend. \(^{136}\) The term ‘bandhu’ is explained by Bhaṭṭabhāskara thus-

> *prajāpatiḥ mama bandhuḥ vyasaneḥbhyaḥ uttārayita hitakāri*, \(^{137}\) i.e. he releases one from all the distress and thus he is the benefactor of all human beings.

Prajāpati is the supporter of the sky and the lord of the earth. \(^{138}\) He is called the lord of house. \(^{139}\) The priest is Prajāpati, the great inspirer of devotion. \(^{140}\) Prajāpati is Manu, for he planned for this entire universe. \(^{141}\) It is also stated in the *Satapatha Brāhmaṇa* that Prajāpati, by means of the mountains and rivers, established this earth; by means of the birds and sun-rays, the air; and by means of the clouds and stars, the sky. \(^{142}\) The *Jaiminīyopaniṣad Brāhmaṇa* also states that Prajāpati is the protector of the world. \(^{143}\) Therefore, he is extolled as an actor of these worlds. \(^{144}\) He is thus, found to be the sovereign of all the creatures. \(^{145}\)

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136. prajāpatirbandhuh/ Ibid., 3.7.5.5  
137. Bhaṭṭabhāskara, Ibid.  
138. divodhartabhuvanasya prajāpatiriti/ K.B., 21.4  
139. prajāpatireva gṛhapatirāśīt/ J.B., 3.374  
140. prajāpatirvai vipro devā viprāḥ/ prajāpatirvai bṛhanvipaścit/ Š.B., 6.3.1.16  
141. prajāpatirvai manuḥ/ sa hīdāṁ sarvamamanaṇa/ Ibid., 6.6.1.19  
142. sa ha prajāpatirikṣāṁcakre/ katharī nuṁe lokā dhruvāḥ pratiṣṭhitaḥ syurītī/ sa ebhiścaiva parvataṁadībhīṣcēmāmadṛśhat/ vayobhiścēc māricībhīṣcēntārikaṁ/ jīṁūtaṁca naksatrāṁca divam/ Ibid., 11.8.1.2  
143. sa (prajāpatiḥ) u vāva bhuvanasya gopāḥ/ J.U.B., 3.1.2.11  
144. prajāpatirlokānāmaṁbhinetaḥ/ J.B., 1.139  
145. rājanāraṁ yājayedṛṣabho vai paśūnāmaḥdhipatirājanyo manuṣyānāṁ yo vā asti so’ dhīpatiḥ/ T.M.B., 19.12.3
Prajāpati is called *bharata* for he sustains this entire universe.\(^{146}\) The *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* adequately reveals the character of Prajāpati as the sustainer of the creation. In a passage of the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, it is stated that Prajāpati’s creative act was selfless, because when the gods took resort to him, he did not say what would therefrom accrue to him, as father never says to sons, but sons only do to fathers.\(^ {147}\) Thus, he is found to exercise fatherly interest in maintaining his creation. It is also stated that man is nearest to him.\(^{148}\) He created the sacrifices for gods, because these were the main food of gods. On the other hand, he produced food for other living beings.\(^{149}\) It is also stated in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* that, in the beginning Prajāpati offered a sacrifice for procreation and thereby he gained children, cattle and food for them.\(^{150}\)

Thus, Prajāpati is highly praised as the supporter and preserver of the universe in the *Brāhmaṇa* literature.

\(^{146}\) *prajāpatirvai bharataḥ/ sa hīdaṁ sarvaṁ bibharati/* Ś.B., 6.8.1.14

\(^{147}\) *Ibid., 8.4.1.4*

\(^{148}\) *puruṣo vai prajāpatenediśṭham/* *Ibid., 5.1.3.8*

\(^{149}\) *annarṇaṁ vā'ayarn prajāpatilḥ/* *Ibid., 7.1.2.4*

\(^{150}\) *prajāpatirha vā etenāgre yajñeneje prajākāmo bahuḥ prajayā paśubhiḥ syāṁ, sriyarṇ gaccheyarṁ, yaśaḥ syāṁ, annādaḥ syāmiti/* *Ibid., 2.4.4.1*
PRAJĀPATI AS THE ANNIHILATOR

Throughout the Brāhmaṇas, one important aspect of Prajāpati is that he is identified with the life-principle. Whatever is endowed with breath is Prajāpati. As the life-principle, he is associated with fertility and procreation, and his sole enemy is death. As he fights death he becomes the champion of all creatures, but chiefly of men. Prajāpati himself is called amṛta, i.e. immorality. He is also called anta, i.e. death. Sāyaṇa remarks on the relevant passage-‘prajāpateḥ sarvottamatvād-antatvam.’ He is depicted as the god in whom the creation is concealed and in whom it ends. In a passage of the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, Prajāpati is praised as the destroyer of the living beings.

The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa reiterates that Prajāpati created living beings. From the out and in breathings he created the gods and from the downward breathings the mortal beings, and above the mortal beings he created Death as their consumer.

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151. yena māmidam pitā prajāpatirayīyajaditi, tatheti tāvayājajayat/ Ibid., 11.1.6.19

152. sa vā ekākṣaravadyakṣarānyeva prathamaṁ vadan prajāpatiravadat/tasmāde kākṣavadyakṣarānyeva prathamaṁ vadan kumāro vadati/ Ibid., 11.1.6.4

153. prajāpatirvā amṛtastasya viśvedvāḥ putrāḥ/ Ibid., 6.3.1.17

154. anto vai prajāpatiḥ/ Ibid., 5.1.3.13

155. Sāyaṇa, Ibid.

156. sa hekṣāṇacakra kathannvahamimāni sarvāṇि bhūtāni punārtmānānavapeya punārtmānaddhiya/ Ibid., 10.4.2.3

157. prajāpatiḥ prajā asṛjata/ sa tūrdhvebhya eva prāṇebho devānasṛjata/ ye vāncaḥ prāṇastebhyo martyāḥ prajāḥ/ aṭhordhvaṃava mṛtyum prajābhō ’tāramasṛjata/ Ibid., 10.1.3.1
declares Prajāpati as *mṛtyu* (Death), and he knows that everything would be destroyed.

Thus, Prajāpati is extolled as the creator, preserver and annihilator of the universe in the *Brāhmaṇa* literature.

**PRAJĀPATI AND THE SACRIFICE**

Prajāpati is intimately connected with various sacrificial rites. He is often identified with the sacrifice in several contexts of the Brāhmaṇas. The *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* states that god Prajāpati created the sacrifice. The *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* mentions that with the sacrifice Prajāpati created the gods and having sacrificed with it obtained all desires. According to the *Tāṇḍya Mahābrāhmaṇa*, Prajāpati, is as large as the sacrifice in its extent. Prajāpati is termed *Dakṣa* and because, he performed the sacrifice for the first time, it is called the *Dākṣāyaṇa yajña*. Some, however, call it the *vāsiṣṭha yajña*, for Prajāpati is indeed *vāsiṣṭha*, i.e. the best.

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158. *esa vai mṛtyuryat prajāpatiḥ prabhūmāneva nāma/ J.B., 1.29*
159. *prajāpatirmāṇaśāyānuvettā/ Ibid., 2.159*
160. *(a)yajñō vai prajāpatiḥ/ T.B., 1.3.10.10. (b) etena haviṣā yajat’ātmanamevaitad yajñāṁ vidhatte prajāpatiṁ bhūtām/ Ś.B., 2.5.1.7*
161. *prajāpatiryajñānasṛjata/ Ibid., 13.1.1.4*
162. *sa prajāpatiryajñāṁ devebhyaḥ saṁprāyatucchate devā yajñamatanvata tamāhārant/ A.B., 5.32*
163. *etāvati vāva prajāpatiṣvedirdīryāvat kurukṣetramiti/ T.M.B., 25.13.3*
164. *sa (prajāpatiḥ) vai dakṣo nāma/ tadyadna so’gre’yajat tasmād dākṣāyaṇayājīno nāmotainameke vāsiṣṭhayajñā/ Ibid., 24.4.2*
Prajāpati is the *Yajamāna* at his own sacrifice. He is stated as the Hotṛ priest. Prātaramuvāka, i.e. morning litany is Prajāpati and he is incommensurable. He himself was Hotṛ and repeated the *Prātaramuvāka* in the presence of both the Devas and the Asuras. Prajāpati is also regarded as Udgār. Prajāpati is *Anuṣṭubh* and he is the *Rathantara* and *Vāmadevya* Sāman in a sacrifice.

Prajāpati is the *daśamamaha* and he is the *dronakalasa* (soma-trough). His breath is regarded as the Paurnamāsa sacrifice. Prajāpati is the mouth of the sacrifice and he becomes greater by the sacrificial food. Prajāpati is the Viśvajit sacrifice and by the Viśvajit, Prajāpati propagated all offspring, and conquered all. When Prajāpati performed

165. yajamāno hyeva sve yajñī prajāpatiḥ/ Ś.B., 1.6.1.20
166. prajāpatou vai svyārṇi hotari prātaranuvākamanuvākṣyati/ A.B., 2.16
167. (a) prajāpatireśa yat prātaranuvākahaḥ/ J.B., 2.37
(b) prajāpatirvai prātaranuvāko'parimita u vai prajāpatiḥ/ K.B., 11.7
168. prajāpatou vai svyārṇi hotari prātaranuvākamanuvākṣyatyubhaye devāsurā/ A.B., 2.15
169. athaodgātā atmaiva prajāpatirvajñāasya/ Ś.B., 4.2.5.3
170. prajāpatirānuṣṭubhah/ J.B., 1.197
171. prajāpatirvai rathantaram/ Ibid., 1.231
172. prajāpatirvai vāmadevyaṃ/ Ibid., 1.229
173. prajāpatireva daśamamahah/ Ibid., 3.308
174. prajāpatirvai dronakalasaḥ/ Ś.B., 4.3.1.6
175. tasyaite prāṇa yatpaurṇamāṣyaḥ/ J.B., 2.393
176. prajāpatinā yajñāmukhena sarṣimitam/ T.B., 3.2.9.11
177. prajāpatirñi haviṣā vardhayanī/ Ibid., 3.1.1.2
178. prajāpatirviśvajit/ J.B., 1.6; K.B., 25.11
179. viśvajitā vai prajāpatīḥ sarvā prajā ajanayatsarvamudajayattasmā- dviśvajīdetadvā eṣa jāyate/ K.B., 25.13
the first offering, a Vaikāṅkata tree sprang forth from that place where after offering he cleaned his hands.\textsuperscript{180}

In the context of sacrificial institution Prajāpāti is stated as \textit{anirukta}, i.e. mysterious or undefined.\textsuperscript{181} While explaining the passage ‘\textit{anirukto vai prajāpatiḥ},’ in the \textit{Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa}, Sāyaṇa comments— ‘\textit{anirjñaḥ hi padārthāḥ ka iti paryanuyuyjyate/ atośāvanirukta prajāpatisca kaḥ ityucyate ‘ko ha vai nāma prajāpatiḥ}’ (\textit{T.B.}, 2.2.10) \textit{iti śrutiḥ/ atah śrutisāmyāt prajāpaterniruktatvatvam/ athavā vācakamantroccāraṇamantareṇa manasaiva prajāpaterhomādapi prajāpatiraniruktah}.\textsuperscript{182} Thus, the mystic name Ka, an appellation to Prajāpāti is interpreted by Sāyaṇa as the defined undefined one. Prajāpāti is also called \textit{anirukta} as the oblation poured to Prajāpāti in a Homa is offered without the recitation of any Vedic hymns. In another context of the \textit{Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa}, it is explained that Prajāpāti is called \textit{anirukta} as he represents all deities.\textsuperscript{183}

Prajāpāti is the sacrifice which is being performed by himself and from him these creatures have been produced.\textsuperscript{184} J. Eggeling observes thus- ‘The creation of the visible and invisible universe is represented as originating form an ‘all-offered’ sacrifice (\textit{yajña}) in

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{180} prajāpatiryā prathamāmāhutimajuhot/ sa hutvā yatra nyamṛṣṭa/ tato vikaṅkataḥ samabhavat/ Ś.B., 6.6.3.1
\item \textsuperscript{181} anirukto vai prajāpatiḥ, prajāpatiryaṃjñāḥ/ Ibid., 1.1.1.13
\item \textsuperscript{182} Sāyaṇa, Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{183} prajāpateḥ sakaladevāsaṃśāntyātmakatvenāyamasāviti nirvaktuma- śakyatvādaniṣṭvatvatvam/ Sāyaṇa Ibid., 1.6.1.20
\item \textsuperscript{184} esa vai prajāpatirya esa yajñastāyate/ yasmādīmāḥ prajāḥ prajātāḥ/ Ibid., 4.5.5.1
\end{itemize}
which the Puruṣa himself forms the offering material (havis). Prajāpati, who here takes place of the Puruṣa, the world-man, or all embracing personality, is offered up a new in every sacrifice; and in as much as the very dismemberment of the lord of creatures, which took place at the archetype sacrifice, was in itself the creation of the universe, so, every sacrifice is also a repetition of that first creative act.’ As Prajāpati employed the sacrificial rites for several purposes, so, by the Aśvamedha, the Agnihotra etc., the gods also used to please him or to restore him. The Rājasūya, the Vājapeya, the Aśvamedha, the Darśapaurṇamāsa sacrifice etc., are also created by Prajāpati.

In the Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa, it is stated that Prajāpati created the sacrifice and he is indeed sacrifice. Prajāpati refines the sacrifice.

Bhaṭṭabhāskara comments on the relevant passage-

‘tatrātmasamaṣṭirūpāḥ prajāpatiḥ svayam yajñaḥ tena yajñasamāskāreṇa kapālo pādāṇādinā tadvyāṣṭībhūta ātmā svayam saṁskriyate.’ Prajāpati is stated as the ‘ghṛta’ and the ‘madhu’, the most essential constituents of the sacrifice. He is the ‘odana’, belonging to the sacrifice.

185. Max Muller, F., Sacred Books Of the East, Vol. 43, Pt. IV, p. xv
186. prajāpatiḥ prajāḥ sṛṣṭvā prṛṇa’nuprāviṣat/ tābhyaḥ punah saribhāviturm nāṣaknot/ so’bravit/ ōdhnyavaditsah/ yo metaḥ punah saribharaṇiti/ tarī deva aśvamedhenaiva samabharaṇa/ T.B., 3.9.8.1
187. prajāpatiryaṃahasṛṣṭaḥ/yajiṇo vai prajāpatiḥ/ Ibid., 3.2.3.1
188. yajñaḥ eva prajāpatiḥ ātmāḥ eva tā sarīskaroṭi/ Ibid., 3.2.7.4
189. Bhaṭṭabhāskara, Ibid.
190. ghṛtaṁ ca vai madhu ca prajāpatirāsūtī/ Ibid., 3.3.4.1
191. prajāpatirvā odanaḥ/ Ibid., 3.8.2.3
Prajāpati allotted to the deities their different parts in the sacrifice and meters. He allotted the Gāyatrī metre to the Agni and the Vasus at the morning libation. To Indra and the Rudras he allotted the Tristubh at the mid-day libation, and to the Viśvedevāḥ and Ādityas, the Jagatī at the evening libation. His own metre was Anuṣṭubh. Prajāpati, when transforming the Ribhus who were mortals, into immortals, gave them a share in the evening libation.

The sacrificial she-goat (ajā) was produced as the bodily form of fervour of Prajāpati. Hence the sacrificer addresses the she-goat and states that she brings forth three times in the year, therefore, she is of Prajāpati’s kind. She is the most excellent of animals, because she brings forth three times in the year. Sāyaṇa explains the relevant passage thus—

**samvatsaro vai prajāpatiḥ / saṁvatsarasasya sambandhini kāle jāyamānatvena saṁvatsaradvārā saṁvatsararūpaprajāpatiśarīrasāṃrūpyāt prajāpati — varṇātmakatvam/ saṁvatsare trirjayamānādevetaṃ परमात्रयुक्तरितात ajā paramapāsuh**

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192. prajāpatirvai yajñāṇ̄i chandāṇi devebhyo bhāgaḥdeyāni vyabhajat, sa gāyatrīmevaṇγāyaṇaṣ prāṭahṣavaneḥ바ḥjat, triṣṭubhamindrāya rudreṇya mādhyamāṃdine, jagatīm viṣvebhyo devebhyāḥ ādityebhyatṛtyaṣasavane/ A.B., 3.13

193. prajāpatirvai pita ṛḥūn martyrāṃ satol martyrāṃ kṛtvā tṛtyasavane abḥjat/ Ibid., 6.12

194. esa prajāpatēḥ sambhūtā yadajā/ tasmādāḥa- tapasastanūrasī/ sā yatriḥ saṁvatsarasya viṣyate- tena prajāpatervarṇaḥ/... tena pramaḥ paśūḥ/ Ś.B., 3.3.3.8

195. Sāyaṇa, Ibid.
PRAJĀPATI AND THE VĀJAPEYA

It is stated in a Brāhmaṇa passage of the Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa that the gods searched out the Vājapeya sacrifice and entered a competition as to who should offer the sacrifice. Prajāpati performed it on behalf of Indra, and Indra became the eldest of the gods. The Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa remarks that the Vājapeya was kept reserved for himself by Prajāpati. He gave a share to the gods only when they requested him.

The Šatapatha Brāhmaṇa narrates a story regarding the Vājapeya sacrifice where Prajāpati’s greatness is extolled. The gods and the Asuras are stated to have sprung from Prajāpati and they strove together. And the Asuras, even through arrogance, went on offering into their own mouths. They came to naught for, verily, arrogance is the cause of ruin. But the gods went on making offerings unto one another. Prajāpati, the lord of creatures or generator, is both the sacrifice and the time, gave himself up to them, thus the sacrifice belonged to them, and indeed the sacrifice is the food of the gods. They conversed with one another unto whom this sacrifice belonged to. They did not agree together and then they decided to run a race for it and whichever of them would win, to him it should belong. They did accordingly. Then Brhaspati requested Savitṛ for his impulsion because Savitṛ is the impeller (prasavītṛ) among the gods. Then Savitṛ, as the impeller, impelled it for him, and impelled by Savitṛ, he won.

196. T.B., 1.3.2.1-2
197. pražāpati rdevebhyo yajñānvādisat/ sa ātmānvājapeyamadhitta/ tāṁ devā abruvan/ eṣa vāya yajñāḥ/ yadvājapeyāḥ/ Ibid., 1.3.2.5
he became everything here, for he won Prajāpati, and Prajāpati indeed is everything here. So, it is said that whosoever offers the Vājapeya, he becomes everything here, he wins everything here; for he wins Prajāpati, and Prajāpati indeed is everything here.  

The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa mentions that the sacrificer in a Vājapeya sacrifice seizes seventeen victims for Prajāpati. They are all hornless, all dark-grey, all males. The sacrificer seizes the seventeen victims, because Prajāpati is seventeen-fold, he thus wins Prajāpati. In the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa and the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, he is stated as the seventeen-fold - twelve months and five seasons; this makes him seventeen-fold Prajāpati, because Prajāpati is all. He is also identified with the year and time.

PRAJĀPATI AND THE ĀŚVAMEDHA

According to the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, Prajāpati created the Āśvamedha sacrifice and he is identified with this sacrifice. Even the horse of the Āśvamedha sacrifice is related to god Prajāpati. He,

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198. Ś.B., 5.1.1.1-4
199. sa yo vājapeyena yojate/ sa idaṁ sarvaṁ bhavati sa idaṁ sarvamujjayati prajāpatiṁ hyujjayati sarvam u hyevedaṁ prajāpatiḥ/ . Ibid., 5.1.1.8
200. atha saptadaśa prajāpatyānpanaśūnālabhate/ te vai sarve tūparā bhavanti, sarve śyāmāḥ, sarve muṣkarāḥ/ .... saptadaśo vai prajāpatiḥ/ . Ibid., 5.1.3.7
201. dvādaśa vai māṣāḥ sarīvatsarasaya, paṇīcārtavaḥ/ eṣa eva prajāpatiḥ saptadaśaḥ/ sarvaṁ vai prajāpatiḥ/ . Ibid.,1.3.5.10
202. sarīvatsaraḥ praṇāpatiḥ/ . A.B., 1.13
203. sarīvatsaro vai praṇāpatiḥ/ praṇāpatiryaṁjaḥ/ . Ś.B., 3.2.2.4
204. praṇāpatiṁyaṁjaṁsaṁjata/ tasya mahimā pākrāmaṁsa mahatīvijāḥ praviśattāṁ mahatīvīrgbhirnavacchat, tam mahartīvīrgbhīranvavindat/ . Ibid.,13.1.1.4
who performs the Āsvamedha sacrifice, becomes Prajāpati and conquers the world. Prajāpati became the sacrificial horse of the gods. They selected him one day before the sacrifice. According to the Jaiminiya Brāhmaṇa, Prajāpati's eyes were swelling and from it the sacrificial horse was born. The Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa also holds that the horse of the Āsvamedha is born of Prajāpati.

The Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa also declares that Prajāpati created the Āsvamedha sacrifice. He distributed the sacrifices among the gods but preserved the Āsvamedha sacrifice for himself. It is also stated that Prajāpati wanted to perform the Āsvamedha sacrifice. He practised penance and from him seven gods were produced and they became ‘dīkṣā’. The Āsvamedha sacrifice, created by Prajāpati, was obstructed by the enemies. By performing the Naktahoma, he retained this sacrifice. As soon as Prajāpati created the Āsvamedha sacrifice, it went away from him; he returned this sacrifice with the

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\begin{align*}
205. & \text{prājāpatyośvah svayaivanandevatāya samardhayati/ } \text{Ibid., 13.1.2.3} \\
206. & \text{prajāpateraksyaśvayat/ tat parāpatat/ tadapāḥ prāvīśat/ totośvassamabhat/ yadaśvayat tasmādāśvah/ } \text{J.B., 2.268} \\
207. & \text{yadvai tatprajāpatirālabdhośvo bhata/ tasmādāśvah prajāpateḥ paśunāmanurūpatamaḥ/ } \text{T.B., 3.9.22.2} \\
208. & \text{prajāpatiraśvamedhamasṛjata/ } \text{Ibid., 3.8.11.1} \\
209. & \text{prajāpatirdevēbhya yajñānvyādiśat/ sa ātmannāśvamedhamadhatta/ } \text{Ibid., 3.8.14.1} \\
210. & \text{prajāpatirakāmayatāśvamedhena yajeyeti/ sa tapo tapyata/ tasya teppānasya/ saptātmāno devatā udakrāman/ sā dīkṣā’bhavat/ } \text{Ibid., 3.8.10.1} \\
211. & \text{prajāpatirāśvamedhamasṛjata/ tam srṣṭaṁ rakṣāṁsyajighāṁsan/ sa etānprajāpatirnaktaṁ homānapaśyat/ tānajuhot/ tairvai sa yajñādṛkaśāṁsyapāhan/ } \text{Ibid., 3.8.15.1}
\end{align*}
\]
help of āstādasin.\textsuperscript{212} The term āstādasin is explained by Śāyaṇa as—
\textit{‘āstādasasamkhya\kī ye paśavo āstādasināḥ/ teśāmagnou prakṣepalakṣaṇanam prayogam kṛtavān’},\textsuperscript{213} i.e. Prajāpati revived the lost Aśvamedha sacrifice by reciting the mantras where offering of a set of eighteen animals into the fire is mentioned.

In the thirteenth \textit{kāṇḍa} of the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, there is a great detail of Aśvamedha sacrifice with the involvement of god Prajāpati. Prajāpati created the Aśvamedha sacrifice. It went straight away from him and spread itself over the regions. The gods went in quest of it. By means of offerings, they followed it up; by offering they searched for it, and by offerings they found it.\textsuperscript{214} Again it is described that Prajāpati desired to perform a horse sacrifice. He toiled and practised fervid devotion. From his body, when wearied and heated, the deities departed in a seven-fold way. Therefrom the \textit{dikṣā} (initiation) was produced. He perceived those \textit{Vaiśvadeva} oblations. He offered them and by means of them he gained the \textit{dikṣā}. When the sacrificer offers the \textit{Vaiśvadeva} oblations, it is the \textit{dikṣā}, he thereby gains. Day after day he offers them; day after day he thus gains the \textit{dikṣā}. Seven of them he offers, for seven were those deities that departed from Prajāpati. It is by means of them that the priest gains the \textit{dikṣā} for him.\textsuperscript{215}

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textbf{212.} prajāpatirasvamedhamasrjata/ so’smāthsṛṣṭo pākrāmat/ tamaśṭādasībhīranu prāyuṅkta/ tamāpnot/ \hspace{1cm} \textit{Ibid., 3.9.1.1}
  \item \textbf{213.} Śāyaṇa, \textit{Ibid.}
  \item \textbf{214.} Ś.B., 13.1.4.1
  \item \textbf{215.} \textit{Ibid., 13.1.7.1}
\end{itemize}
It is also stated that Prajāpati poured forth the life-sap of the Horse Sacrifice. When poured forth, it weighed down the *rk* and the *sāman* verses. The *Vaiśvadeva* offerings upheld that Aśvamedha. Thus, when he offers the Vaiśvadevas, it is for the upholding of the Aśvamedha.\(^{216}\)

Prajāpati assigned the sacrifices to the gods and the Aśvamedha he kept for himself. The gods asked him to give them a share of that sacrifice. He contrived the anna homas (food-oblations) for them. Thus when he performs the anna homas, it is the gods he thereby gratifies.\(^{217}\) The Aśvamedha is Prajāpati\(^ {218}\) and he poured forth the life-sap of the Aśvamedha. He created Virāj. When created it went away from him and entered the horse meant for sacrifice. He followed it up with set of ten beasts. He found it and having found it, he took possession of it by means of the set of ten animals.\(^{219}\)

Once Prajāpati had a strong will to become great and more numerous. He perceived those two *mahiman* (greatness) cups of *Soma* at the Aśvamedha; he offered them and thereby, indeed, became great

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216. prajāpatiraśvamedhamasṛjata/ sa sṛṣṭaḥ prarcamablīṅātpra sāma/ taṁ vaisvadevānudayacchan/ yadvaisvadeväṇi juhoti/ aśvamedhasyaivodyayatāyai/ 
Ibid., 13.1.8.1

217. prajāpatirdevebhya yajñāṇaḥ vyādiṣaṭ/ sa ātmannāśvamedhamadhatta/ te devāḥ prajāpatimabruvan/ eṣa vai yajñāḥ yadaśvamedah/ api no’trāstu bhāga iti/ tebhya etān annahomān akalpayat/ yadannahomān juhoti/ devāneva tatprīṇāti/ 
Ibid., 13.2.1.1

218. prajāpatirśvamedhāḥ/ 
Ibid., 13.2.2.13

219. prajāpatirvirājamasṛjata/ sā’smāṭsṛṣṭa parācyait/ sā’śvaṁ medhyāṁ prāviṣāt....
Ibid., 13.2.5.3
and more numerous. \(^{220}\) Again he wanted to obtain all attainments. He beheld the three-day *Soma* sacrifice, the *Aśvamedha*; he took possession of it and sacrificed with it. By sacrificing therewith he obtained all his desires, and attained all attainments.\(^ {221}\)

Prajāpati’s eye swelled and it fell out; thence the horse was produced. By means of the *Aśvamedha*, the gods restored it to its place. He, who performs the *Aśvamedha* makes Prajāpati complete and he himself becomes complete. And this, indeed, is the atonement for everything, the remedy for everything.\(^ {222}\)

**PRAJĀPATI AND THE RITE OF PILING THE FIRE-ALTAR**

(AGNICITI)

It is stated that Prajāpati is no other than the fire-altar and what five mortal parts there were of him, they are these layers of earth, and those which were immortal they are these layers of bricks.\(^ {223}\) By the rite of piling the fire-altar Prajāpati became immortal.\(^ {224}\) At the beginning, Prajāpati was composed of both these, the mortals and the

\[\text{220. } \text{prajāpatirakāmayata/ mahān bhūyān syāmīti/ sa etāvaśvamedhe}
\text{grahāvapaśyat tāvajuhot/ toto vai sa mahān bhūyānabhavat/ Ibid., 13.2.11.1}\]

\[\text{221. } \text{prajāpatirakāmayata/ sarvānkāmānāpnyām/ sarvā vyaśťīrvyaśnūvīyeti/ sa}
\text{etamaśvamedhāṃ trirātraṃ yajñikratumapaśyat/ tamāharat/ tenāyajat/}
\text{tenāṣṭvā sarvānkāmānāpnot/ Ibid., 13.4.1.1}\]

\[\text{222. } \text{prajāpatirakṣyaśvayat/ tatparāpatat/ tatośvaḥ samabhavat/ taddevā}
\text{aśvamedhenaiva pratyadadhuh/ eṣa ha vai prajāpatim sarvaṁ karoti.....}
\text{sarvasya bheṣajam/ Ibid., 13.3.1.1}\]

\[\text{223. } \text{sa yāḥ sa prajāpatiḥ/ ayameva sa yo’yamagniścīyate...... athayaḥ amṛtaḥ –}
\text{etāstī iṣṭakācitayah/ Ibid., 10.1.3.5}\]

\[\text{224. } \text{tato vai prajāpatiramṛtoḥbhavat/ Ibid., 10.1.3.7}\]
immortals. By the sacrificial performance of the fire-altar, he made his body uniformly undecaying and immortal. In this context, Śāyāna explains the term ‘āmṛta’ in the sense of five life principles—

‘āmṛtaśabdene vāksahitāḥ pānca prāṇā vivakṣitāḥ.’

Prajāpati was desirous of gaining these worlds. He saw the bird-like body, the fire-altar, he fashioned it and thereby gained this terrestrial world. He saw a second bird-like body, the chant of the great rite, i.e. Mahāvrata sāman, he fashioned it, and thereby gained the air. He saw a third bird-like body, the great litany, the mahat uktha, he fashioned it and thereby gained the sky. As great as Agni is, as great as is his measure, with so much, Prajāpati made his body uniformly undecaying and immortal. Prajāpati is stated as golden Prajāpati, as because he finally made a golden form of his body with the help of this sacrifice.

In the beginning, Prajāpati created the seven-fold fire-altar. He went on constructing his body and stopped at the one hundred and one fold one. The one hundred and one fold Prajāpati, doubtless, is the

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225. ubhayaṁ haitadagre prajāpatirāsa – martyāṁ caivāmṛtaṁ ca/ tasya prāṇa evāmṛtā āsuh/ sarīraṁ martyam/ sa etena karmanaitayāʾvrtaikadāhāʾjaramamṛtam ātmānamakuruta/ Ibid., 10.1.4.1

226. Śāyāna, Ibid.

227. prajāpatirimāṇलlokanāipsat/ sa etam vayovidhamātmānamapāṣyat/ agniṁ taṁ vyadhatta/ tenemaṁ lokamāpnot/ Ibid., 10.1.2.1

228. yāvānagniryāvatyasya mātrā tāvataiva tatprajāpatirekadāhāʾjaramamṛta- mātmānamakuruta/ Ibid., 10.1.4.8

229. hiraṁmayāḥ prajāpatiriti/ tathaivaitadyajamāno rūpameva hiraṁmayamantata ātmānaḥ kurute/ Ibid., 10.1.4.9

230. saptavidho vā agre prajāpatirasṛjyata/ sa ātmānaṁ vidadhāna ait/ sa ekaśatavidheʾtiṣṭhata/ Ibid., 10.2.3.18
year, and thereto belong days and nights, half-months, months and seasons. The day and nights of a month are sixty, and in the month, doubtless, the days and nights of the year are obtained; and there are twenty-four half-months, thirteen months, and three seasons of four months, that makes a hundred parts, and the year itself is the one hundred and one fold one.\textsuperscript{231}

When the gods restored the relaxed Prajāpati, they poured him as seed into the fire-pan, for the fire-pan is a womb. In the course of a year they prepared for him the food, to wit, the fire-altar built here, and closed it in a body. Being enclosed in a body, it becomes the body itself, therefore food, when enclosed in a body becomes the body itself.\textsuperscript{232}

The \textit{Gārhapatiya} fire is also regarded as Prajāpati.\textsuperscript{233} When the gods restored the relaxed Prajāpati they cast him as seed into the fire-pan which is considered as the womb. In the course of a year they prepared for him this \textit{Gārhapatiya} altar. The \textit{Gārhapatiya} hearth being this world, therein they generated him.\textsuperscript{234}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{231} saṁvatsaro vai prajāpatirekaśatavidhāḥ/ tasyāḥorātṛāni ardhamāsāḥ, māsāḥ, ṛtavāḥ/ \quad \textit{Ibid.}, 10.2.6.1
\item \textsuperscript{232} prajāpatir tvaṁ visrastaṁ yatra devāḥ samaskurvan/ tamukhāyāṁ yonou retobhūtamasifiścan/yonivrā ukhā/ tasmā etatsamvatsare’nmāṁ samaskurvan/ yoyamagniścitaḥ/ tadatmanā paryadadhuh/ \quad \textit{Ibid.}, 10.4.1.1
\item \textsuperscript{233} prajāpatirvai gārhapatyā/ \quad \textit{K.B.}, 27.4
\item \textsuperscript{234} prajāpatirvai visrastaṁ yatra devāḥ samaskurvaṁstamukhāyāṁ yonou reto bhūtamasifiścanyonivrā ukhā tasmā’ etāṁ saṁvatsare pratiṣṭham samaskurvannimameva lokamayaṁ vai loko gārhapatyastasminnenaṁ prājanayam/ \quad \textit{Ś.B.}, 7.2.1.5
\end{itemize}
In the fire-altar, the deity of the vital air whence the seed flows is Prajāpati. The seven metres increasing by four syllables each are produced in Agni, i.e. the fire-altar which is non-different from Prajāpati. The Gāyatrī is the breath of Prajāpati, the Uṣṇik the eye, the Anuṣṭubh the voice, the Brhāti the mind, the Paṅkti the ear, the Tristubh is the generative breath and Jagati is the downward breathing of Prajāpati.

The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa furnishes a story relating to the fire-altar wherein Prajāpati’s greatness is depicted. It says that Prajāpati, the Year, is doubtless the same as Death. He, by means of days and nights, destroys the life of the mortal beings and then die. Therefore, the year is the same as Death. The gods were afraid of this Prajāpati, the Year, Death, and the End. They performed these sacrificial rites – the Agnihotra, the New and Full-moon sacrifice, the Seasonal offerings, the Animal sacrifice, and the Soma sacrifice. By offering these sacrifices they did not attain immortality. They also built a fire-altar. They laid down unlimited enclosing stones, unlimited yajuṣmati bricks, unlimited lokamprṇa bricks, even as some lay them down to this day, saying, ‘the gods did so.’ They did not attain immortality. They went on praising, toiling and striving to win immortality. Prajāpati advised the gods to lay down three hundred and sixty enclosing stones,

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235. kim chandaḥ kā devatā yasmādīdām prañādretaḥ sicyata- iti/
    aticchandāśchandaḥ, prajāpatirdevatā/           Ibid., 10.3.2.7

236. prāno gāyatrī/ cakṣuruṣṇīgvganuṣṭummano brhāti śrotraṁ
    paṅktirya’evāyaṁprajananaḥ prañāḥ eṣa triṣṭubatha yo’yanavān prañā eṣa
    jagati tāni vā’etāni saptachandārśi caturuttarāṇyagnou kriyante/
    Ibid., 10.3.1.1
three hundred and sixty yajūṣmati bricks, and thirty-six thereunto; and ten thousand and eight hundred lokamṛṇā bricks and thereby all his forms would be laid down and they would become immortal. The gods laid down accordingly and thereafter became immortal.  

PRAJĀPATI AND THE AGNIHOTRA AND AGNIŚṬOMA

Prajāpati is undefined and the Agnihota is sacred to Prajāpati. The undefined also means everything. He created the sacrifice by the establishment of the fire. He also created seed, gods, men and demons by the Agnihota. By the New and Full-moon offerings, he created Indra. For them, he created food and drink in the Haviryajñias and the Soma-sacrifice.  

It is also stated that by the Agniśṭoma sacrifice, Prajāpati created the beings. In connection with the Agniśṭoma feast, it is narrated that the gods and the Asuras, were contending for this sacrifice and they claimed that their father Prajāpati, the Year, belonged to both the gods and the Asuras. Then the gods went on singing praises and toiling. They devised this Agniśṭoma feast, and by means of this Agniśṭoma feast they appropriated the entire sacrifice and excluded the Asuras from the sacrifice.

237. Ibid., 10.4.3.1-8
238. anirukto vai prajāpatiḥ/prajāpatyamagnihotram/ sarvaṁ vā aniruktam/  
   Ibid., 12.4.2.1
239. prajāpatirha yajñāṁ sāsṛje so’gniḥdheyenaiva reto’sṛjata  
   devānmanuṣyānurāṇityagnihotreṇa dārṣapūrṇamāsābhyaṁindramāsṛjata/  
   K.B., 6.15
240. prajāpatiḥ yatprajā asṛjata tā agniśtoṣmenāsṛjata/  
   J.B., 1.67
241. devāśca vā asurasca, ubhaye prajāpatyaḥ pasprdhire-etasminyajñie  
   prajāpatou piṭari sarīvatsare asmākamayaṁ bhaviṣyati, asmākamayaṁ  
   bhaviṣyatīti/  
   Ś.B., 4.2.4.11
PRAJĀPATI AND THE SOMA SACRIFICE

Prajāpati also created the Soma sacrifice. He took it and performed it and afterwards, he felt like one emptied out. He saw the sacrificial performance, the Sautrāmaṇī, and performed it, and then he was again replenished. Indeed, he who performs the Soma sacrifice is emptied out, for his wealth, his prosperity is, as it were, taken from him. Prajāpati is regarded as the sacrifice and is the king Soma.

The upāṁśu graha in a Soma sacrifice is related to Prajāpati. It is called upāṁśu, because of the fact that the graha called aṁśu, is Prajāpati, and his out-breathing is this graha; because it is his out breathing, therefore it is called upāṁśu. In another passage of the Satapatha Brāhmaṇa, it is stated that the aṁśu (cup of Soma), indeed, is no other than Prajāpati and he is the body of the sacrifice.

PRAJĀPATI AND THE CĀTURMĀSYA SACRIFICES

By means of the four parts of the Cāturmāsyā sacrifices, viz. Vaiśvadeva, Varuṇapraghāsa, Sākamedha and Śunāsīrīya, Prajāpati fashioned for himself a body. The sacrificial food for the Vaiśvadeva sacrifice is made to be his right arm. The oblation to Agni thereof is his thumb, that to Soma his forefinger and that to Savitṛ his middle

242. prajāpatiryajñamasṛjat/ tamāharat/ tenāyajat/ tenoṣtvā riricāna ivāmmanyata/ sa etam yajñakratumapaśyat soutrāmaṇīṁ/ tenāyajata/ toto vai sa punarāpyāyat/ Ibid., 12.8.2.1

243. somo vai rājā yajñāḥ prajāpatiḥ/ Ibid., 12.6.1.1

244. aṁśurvai nāma grahaḥ/ sa prajāpatiḥ tasyaiṣa prāṇa/ tadyadasyaiṣa prāṇah- tasmādupāṁśumāma/ Ibid., 4.1.1.2

245. prajāpatirha vā eṣa, yadāṁśuḥ/ so’syaiṣa ātmāiva/ ātmā hyāṁ prajāpatiḥ/ Ibid., 11.5.9.1
finger. The cake to Savitr is the largest and hence the middle finger is the largest of these fingers. That oblation to Sarasvati is the third finger; and that to Pusan is the little finger. The oblation to the Maruts is the joint above the hand and that to the Visvedevah is the elbow. The oblation to the Heaven and Earth is the arm.

The Varunapraghása offerings are his right leg. The five oblations which are in common with the other seasonal offerings are the five toes and the oblation to Indra and Agni is the knuckles. The oblation to Varuna is the shank, that to the Maruts is the thigh and the cake to Ka is the backbone.

The offerings to Agni Anikavat of the Sākamedhaparvan in Cāturmāsya sacrifices is Prajāpati’s mouth, for the mouth is the extreme end (anika) of the vital airs. The Sāṁtapanīyāsti is the chest, the Grihamedhīyāsti is the belly to serve as a foundation, for the belly is a foundation. The Kraidina oblation is the male organ and the offering to Aditi is the downward breathing. The Sākamedha, indeed, is his left leg; the five oblations which it has in common with the other seasonal offerings are these five toes and the oblation to Indra and Agni is the knuckles. As these oblations belong to two deities therefore, there are two knuckles. The oblation to Mahendra is his shank. The oblation to Viśvakarman is his thigh.

The Sunāsirīya is his left arm; the five oblations which it has in common with other seasonal offerings are these five fingers. The Sunāsirīya is that joint above his hand, that oblation to Vāyu is his elbow; the oblation to Sūrya is his arm.246 Thus, the whole sacrificial

246. Ibid., 11.5.2.1-6
institution of the Cāturmāṣya is well-pervaded by Prajāpati and thereby his identification with the sacrifice is proved.

By means of the Vaiśvadeva sacrifice Prajāpati created offspring. They, being created, ate the barley of Varuṇa. Varuṇa grasped them with Varuṇa’s nooses. The offering ran up to their father Prajāpati and asked for a device by which they might be set free from the nooses of Varuṇa. Then Prajāpati saw the sacrificial rite, the Varuṇapraghāsa. He, then, grasped it and sacrificed with it. Thereby, he delighted Varuṇa, Varuṇa being delighted, freed offsprings from the nooses of Varuṇa and from all evil. It is also stated in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa that by means of the Vaiśvadeva, Prajāpati created all the beings.

PRAJĀPATI AND THE MAHĀVRATA

The Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa reveals that after creation Prajāpati became tired and fell in deep sleep. Then the gods gave him the juice of the earth. He became vigorous after taking the juice. The day in which gods delighted him is called as Mahāvrata. Bhaṭṭabhāskara remarks on the relevant passage thus—‘prajāpateratimahattvahetutvāt mahad idam vrataṁ karma iti mahāvrataṁ/ mahataḥ prajāpaterabhyudayasyādhanāṁ vrataṁ karma iti mahāvrataṁ.’

247. K.B., 5.3
248. vaiśvadevena vai prajāpatirbhūmānāṁ prajāh sasṛje/ Ś.B., 5.2.4.1
249. prajāpatiḥ prajāssṛṣṭvā vṛtto’sayat/ tāṁ devā bhūtānāṁ rasāṁ tejasambṛtya/ tenainamabhiṣajyaṁ/ mahānāvaiti/ tanmahāvrataṁ/ mahāvratavam/ T.B., 1.2.6.1
250. Bhaṭṭabhāskara, Ibid.
In the Śatapatha Brahmāṇa, it has been narrated that Prajāpati had created the living beings and then his joints were relaxed. With his relaxed joints, he was unable to raise himself. Then the gods went on praising and toiling. They saw the Mahāvratīya cup and drew it for him and thereby they restored his joints. With his joints thus restored, he approached the food. For what eating is to men, that is the vrata, i.e. fast-food, or religious observance to the gods. Great, indeed, is this vrata whereby he has raised himself, therefore, it is called Mahāvratīya.\footnote{251} The Gopatha Brahmāṇa also declares that Prajāpati is associated with the Mahāvrata sacrifice.\footnote{252} In the Mahāvrata, the sacrificer offers oblations to the god Prajāpati and really the sacrificer attains the fellowship and co-existence with Prajāpati.\footnote{253}

**PRAJĀPATI’S RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER GODS**

Many myths of the Brāhmaṇa literature describe Prajāpati as the creator of gods.\footnote{254} The Śatapatha Brahmāṇa describes Prajāpati as the father of gods\footnote{255} and he is also identified with

\begin{align*}
251. \text{prajāpatēraḥ vai praṇāḥ sāśrāṇasya parvāṇi visasramṣuḥ / sa visrastaiḥ parvabhinaḥ sāśāka saṁhātum/ toto devā arcantāḥ śrāmyantasaṃcruḥ/ ta etarī mahābratīyaṁ dadṛṣṭuḥ/ tamasā agrthnān/} & \quad \text{Ś.B., 4.6.4.1} \\
252. \text{atha yanmahāvratamupayanti praṇāpatimeva taddevaṁ devatāṁ yajante praṇāpatirdevo devatā bhavati praṇāpatirdevasvaṁ sāyużyāṁ salokatāṁ yanti ya etadupayanti/} & \quad \text{G.B., 1.4.10} \\
253. \text{atha yanmahāvratamupayanti/ praṇāpatimeva devatāṁ yajante/ praṇāpatirdevatā bhavanti/ praṇāpatēḥ sāyużyāṁ salokatāṁ jayanti/} & \quad \text{Ś.B., 12.1.3.21} \\
254. \text{prajāpatīḥ praṇayā saṁvidānaḥ/ ṛṭiṇi jyotiṁsi sacate sa śoḍasī... prajāpatirviśvakarṇā/ taysa mano devaṁ yajñena rādhyāsam/ T.B., 3.7.9.5} \\
255. \text{devāśca vā asurāśca/ ubhayē praṇāpatyaḥ/} & \quad \text{Ś.B., 1.2.4.8}
\end{align*}
gods and men. It is also declared that Prajāpati is the immortal one and gods are his own sons. Gods being Prajāpati’s offspring went to the heavenly world and became immortal.

In the Tāṇḍyā Mahābrāhmana, the creation of different gods, seasons, metres and stomas from different parts of Prajāpati is described. The holy nature of Udumbara is established by stating that it was produced from the ārjas or strength which Prajāpati distributed among the gods. Prajāpati is described as the consort of goddess Uṣā. In the Brāhmaṇas, Prajāpati is identified with moon, Viśvakarman, Vāyu, Savitr, Suparna Garutmat etc.

According to the Jaiminiya Brāhmaṇa, the gods are created from Prajāpati and he is the highest among the gods. He is

256. ubhayāṁ vetatprajāpatiryacca deva yacca manuṣyaḥ/ Ibid., 6.8.1.4
257. prajāpatirvā‘amṛtastasya viśvedevāḥ putrāḥ/ Ibid., 6.3.1.17
258. Ibid., 6.1.3.7
259. prajāpatirdevebhya ūrjāṁ vyabhajattata udumbaraḥ samhavatprajāpatyo vā udumbaraḥ prajāpatya udgātā yadudgataudumbarāṁ prathamamena karmmaṇān vārebhate svayaiva taddevatayatmanamārthviṣyāya vrīte/
   T.M.B., 6.4.1
260. bhūtānāṁ ca patiḥ saṁvatsarāyā’dikṣanta bhūtānāṁ patirhapatirāśiduṣaḥ patiḥ/ Ś.B., 6.1.3.7
261. asou vai candrah prajāpatih/ Ibid., 6.2.2.16
262. prajāpatirvai viśvakarmā/ Ibid., 8.2.1.10
263. sa’eṣa vāyuḥ prajāpatih/ Ibid., 8.3.4.15
264. yo hyeva savitā sa prajāpatiriti vadantastasmāt sanyupāgniṁstena yayeraṇ grhapaterevāgniṣu yayed dañjāhanyā patriḥ saṁyājaṇānti/ Ibid., 13.3.5.1
265. prajāparivai supaṁ garutmāneṣa savitā/ Ibid., 10.2.2.4
266. devā vai prajāparajāyaṇā/ J.B., 1.8
267. prajāpatiśreṣṭhā vai devāḥ/ Ibid., 2.371
regarded as the father of Sun.\textsuperscript{268} According to the \textit{Satapatha Brāhmaṇa}, by means of the Sun Prajāpati entered into union with the sky.\textsuperscript{269} Prajāpati is heaven and earth; and he is also Soma.\textsuperscript{270} Soma is regarded as food, by food Prajāpati strengthened himself. Food turned unto him, and he made food subject to himself.\textsuperscript{271} Pūṣan means cattle. By means of cattle, Prajāpati strengthened himself. Cattle turned unto him, he made cattle subject to himself.\textsuperscript{272} Bṛhaspati means the priesthood (\textit{brahman}). By means of the priesthood, Prajāpati strengthened himself. The priesthood turned unto him, he made the priesthood subject to himself.\textsuperscript{273} Viśvedvāḥ means everything (or the all). With everything, Prajāpati strengthened himself. Everything turned unto him, and he made everything subject to him.\textsuperscript{274}

Prajāpati is yonder moon, during that night of new moon, he dwells on earth.\textsuperscript{275} The \textit{Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa} also supports this statement.\textsuperscript{276} It is also stated in the same \textit{Brāhmaṇa} that Prajāpati has

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{268} prajāpativai pita’dityaḥ putraḥ/ \textsuperscript{Ibid., 2.15}
  \item \textsuperscript{269} sa (prajāpatiḥ) ādityena divāṁ mithunaṁ samabhavat/ \textsuperscript{Ś.B., 6.1.2.4}
  \item \textsuperscript{270} dyāvāprayāthiḥ hi prajāpatiḥ/ somo hi prajāpatiḥ/ \textsuperscript{Ibid., 5.1.5.26}
  \item \textsuperscript{271} annam vai somah/ annenaiva tatprajāpatiḥ punarātmānāmāpyāyayata/ \textsuperscript{Ibid., 3.9.1.8}
  \item \textsuperscript{272} paśavo vai pūṣā/ paśubhir eva tat prajāpatiḥ punarātmānāmāpyāyayata/ \textsuperscript{Ibid., 3.9.1.10}
  \item \textsuperscript{273} brahma vai bṛhaspatiḥ/ brahmaṇaivaśīpatrajanātprajāpatiḥ punarātmānāmāpyāyayata/ \textsuperscript{Ibid., 3.9.1.11}
  \item \textsuperscript{274} sarvam vai viśve devāḥ/ sarveṇaiva tat prajāpatiḥ punarātmānaṁ-āpyāyayata/ \textsuperscript{Ibid., 3.9.1.13}
  \item \textsuperscript{275} asau vai candraḥ prajāpatiḥ/ sa etāṁ rātrimiha vasati/ \textsuperscript{Ibid., 6.2.2.16}
  \item \textsuperscript{276} eṣa (candramāḥ) prajāpatiḥ/ \textsuperscript{J.B., 2.3}
\end{itemize}
given his own daughter to god Brhaspati. Mind is stated as Prajāpati. Rohini is also Prajāpati. These are same of the deities who are stated to have created out of Prajāpati- Agni, Indra, Soma and Parameşṭhin. The Šatapatha Brāhmaṇa sates that on one occasion Paramešṭhin spoke unto his father Prajāpati that he has discovered a sacrifice which would fulfil wishes and he wanted to perform that in honour of Prajāpati. Prajāpati agreed with the request of his son. He accordingly performed it for him. Having sacrificed, Prajāpati desired that he would be here! He became the breath, i.e. vital air, for breath is everything here. Prajāpati is that breath which blows here, i.e. the wind, and whatsoever knows that it is thus he blows is his (Prajāpati’s) eyesight, and whatsoever is endowed with breath is Prajāpati.

Prajāpati is stated as all the gods. In the beginning no god existed other than Prajāpati. He is the father of gods and relaxed them from evil. Prajāpati is the middle abode of the gods. He created them with five prāṇas and distributed the share of the sacrifice to them.

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277. prajāpati-rūśasāṃ svāṁ duhitaraṁ brhaspataye prayacchat/ Ibid., 1.2.13
278. prajāpatirvai manah/ Ś.B., 4.1.1.22
279. rohiṇyāṁ ha vai prajāpatīṁ/ Ibid., 2.1.2.6
280. tā vā etāḥ prajāpateradhidevatā asṛjyata/ agnirindraḥ somaḥ parameṣṭhi prajāpatyaḥ/ Ibid., 11.1.6.14
281. Ibid., 11.1.6.17
282. prajāpatissarvā devatāḥ/ T.B., 3.3.7.3
283. na prajāpaternaṁ pūrvaṁ devataśti/ J.B., 2.174
284. prajāpatiṁ vai devaṁ pitaram/ T.B., 3.9.22.1
285. prajāpatirdevānāmasṛjata/ te pāpmanā sarnditā ajāyanta/ tāntyadyat/ Ibid., 3.10.9.1
286. madhyāyatano vai prajāpatirdevatānām/ J.B., 2.349
287. prajāpatirhyetyebhyaḥ paficahyaḥ prañeḥbhoyo devān sasṛje/ G.B., 2.4.12
288. prajāpatirvai debeḥbhoyo bhagadheyāni vyakalpayat/ Ibid., 2.1.7
PRAJĀPATI AND AGNI

Agni is regarded as the lord of creatures, i.e. Prajāpati. He is the head, the progenitor of the gods.²⁸⁹ Śaṇḍya comments on the relevant passage thus—‘agnirvai devānāṁ mukham/ yah paripākahetutvena sarvasya prajanayitā agniḥ, saḥ ‘devatānāṁ mukham’ khalu/ devānāṁ pramukhatvam/ athavā devānāṁ madhye agnireva mukham prajanayitā, mukhyatvenotpādakah, ‘tāmagnirindhate, somo reto dadhātana, savitā prājanayat’—ityādou agnirevadhakatvadarśanāt/ saḥ agniḥ prajāpatinā samatvāt prajāpatih.”²⁹⁰ Thus, Agni is none other than Prajāpati.

Among the divine beings Agni was first created by Prajāpati. He generated Agni from his mouth. As he was created first (agre), so he got the name Agni. Prajāpati, then, became afraid that Agni the food-eater might devour him as there was no other food. At that time the earth had been bald. There were neither plants nor trees. Then Agni turned towards him with his mouth wide open. Being terrified, Prajāpati’s greatness departed from him. His greatness is his speech. He desired an offering in his own-self and so he rubbed his hands. So both the palms are hairless. The butter offering which he obtained had hair mixed with it. He poured it in fire saying, ‘drink while burning —oṣam dhaya.’ From it plants called oṣadhī sprang up. On the second occasion he offered with ‘svāhā.’ Thereupon that burning Sun arose and then that blowing one, viz. the wind sprang up.²⁹¹

²⁸⁹. aganirvai devānāṁ mukham, prajanayitā, sa prajāpatih/ S.B., 3.9.1.6
²⁹⁰. Śaṇḍya, Ibid.
²⁹¹. Ibid., 2.2.4.1-6
In the *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa* also Prajāpati is identified with Agni. It is also said that Prajāpati being afraid of untimely death created Āditya and offered him to Agni and thereby conquered death. The *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* states that all beings after having been created by Prajāpati walked having their faces turned aside and did not turn their backs. Prajāpati then encircled them with fire, whereupon they turned to Agni.

In a passage of the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, Prajāpati is identified with Agni. It is said that while Prajāpati was creating the living beings, he created Agni also. The later, as soon as born, sought to burn everything here and so everybody tried to drive him out of his way. The fire assuredly is Prajāpati and Prajāpati is the year. When the Agniḥotra is offered, Prajāpati being Agni casts the seed of all that he rules over, of all that is after his manner and by approaching the fire one imitates him in all this, one reproduces all this.

Prajāpati is identified with Agni and Savitṛ together. The *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* states that Agni indeed is the root, the progenitor

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292. *esa vai praṇāpatiḥ yadagniḥ/* T.B., 1.1.5.5

293. *prajāpatirdevatāḥ srjāmanāḥ.... sa mṛtyorabibhet/ so’mumādityamātmano niramimīta/ tam hutvā parārīparyāvartata/ tato vai sa mṛtyumāpajayat/ * 

Ibid., 2.1.6.5

294. *prajāpatih prajā asrjata, tāḥ srṣṭāḥ parācyā evāyan, na vyāvartanta, tā anginā paryagacchat, tā agnimupāvartanta/* A.B., 3.36

295. *yatras vai praṇāpatiḥ prajāḥ saṃśre/ sa yatṛāgnini saṃśre sa idih jātaḥ sarvameva dagdhurī dadhre...... sampēṣtu dadhrīre/ * 

Ś.B., 2.3.3.1

296. *prajāpatirvaiagniḥ/ sarināṣaṃsaro vai praṇāpatiḥ/ * 

Ibid., 2.3.3.18

297. *prajāpatirva eṣa bhūtvā yāvat iṣṭe, yāvadenamanu tasya retāḥ sīṅcati yadagnihotram juhoti idamevai tat sarvamupatiṣṭhamānā’nuvikarotि, idāṁ sarvamanu prajanayati/ * 

Ibid., 2.3.4.8
of the deities, he is, Prajāpati. \(^{298}\) Savitṛ indeed is the impeller \((prasavitṛ)\) of the gods; he is Prajāpati, the intermediate progenitor. \(^{299}\)

The superiority or the pre-eminence of Agni during the *Brāhmaṇa* period is an established fact. When Sunahśēpa, who was about to be slaughtered had recourse to Prajāpati, the first of the deities. Prajāpati told him that Agni is the nearest of gods and therefore, he should have recourse to him. \(^{300}\)

Agni, Vāyu, Aditi, Candramas and Uṣas are said to have been born of Prajāpati who underwent penance for propagation. When they practised fervour, Uṣas an offspring of Prajāpati taking the form of *apsaras* came out in front of them. To her their minds were attracted and they poured out seed. They went to Prajāpati and asked him preserve the seed. So he made a golden bowl, an arrow breadth in height and poured the seed in it. The child that came into being grasped his father Prajāpati and asked him to give him a name for without a name he would not be able to eat food. So he gave him eight names—Bhava, Sarva, Vāyu, Ugra, Asani, Rudra, Mahādeva and Īśāna. Thus he was the great god of eight names distributed eight-fold. \(^{301}\)

Hiranyagarbha is Prajāpati and Prajāpati is Agni. \(^{302}\) Agni is

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298. agnirvai devatānāṁ mukham/ prajanayitā sa prajāpātīḥ/ \(\text{Ibid., 2.5.1.8}\)
299. savitā vai devānāṁ prasavitā, prajāpātirmadhyaṁtāḥ prajanayitā\/ \(\text{Ibid., 2.5.1.10}\)
300. prajāpatimeva prathamāṁ devatānamupasāra, tam prajāpatiruvācagnirvai devānāṁ nedīśhah/ \(\text{A.B., 7.16}\)
301. K.B., 6.1
302. prajāpatirvai hiranyagarbhaḥ prajāpātiragnih/ \(\text{Ś.B., 6.2.2.5}\)
regarded as Prajāpati and he is both the gods and men. It is also said that Prajāpati having built up the fire-altar, became Agni. The Jaiminiya Brāhmaṇa also asserts that Prajāpati is none but Agni.

PRAJĀPATI AND INDRA

Prajāpati is none other than Indra which is clearly stated in the Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa. Indra took the form of Prajāpati to devour the creatures. When Indra killed Vṛtra by the Anuṣṭubh-ṛk given to him by Prajāpati, it made a sound which became a nānada sāman. Ultimately he gave him lustre of seven hotras with which he killed him. Indra is said to have obtained sakvari sāman from Prajāpati in order to kill Vṛtra. Indra is, elsewhere, depicted as the son of Prajāpati in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa. Once, Prajāpati told unto his son Indra that he would perform for Indra the wish-fulfilling sacrifice which Parameśthin had just performed for Prajāpati. He accordingly performed it for him. Having sacrificed, Indra desired to become

303. prajāpatīreṣo’gnih/ ubhayamvetat prajāpatīh- yacca devāḥ, yacca manusyaḥ/
Ibid., 6.8.1.4

304. prajāpatiṁagnim citvā’gnirabhavat/
Ibid., 6.2.2.1

305. prajāpatirvā agniḥ/
J.B., 1.290

306. yo ha khalu vāva prajāpatīh/ sa u vevendraḥ/
T.B., 1.2.2.5

307. prajāpatireva bhūtvā prajā atti/
Ibid., 2.2.10.7

308. indraḥ prajāpatimupādhāvadvṛtram hanānīti tasmātēmaṁuṣṭubhama- 

pāharasaṁ prāyacakchatyā nāstṛṇuta yadstṛtovyanadattannāṇadasya 
nānādatvam/ tam punarupādhāvattasmai saptanāṁ hotṛṇāṁ haro nirmāya 

prāyacchat/
T.M.B., 12.13.4-5

309. indraḥ prajāpatimupādhābadvṛtrahanānīti tasmādatacchandobhyā indriyaṁ 
viryaṁ nirmāya prāyachadetenā śaknuḥi śatcakvarīpāṁ śakvarītvam/
Ibid., 13.4.1
everything on earth. He became speech (Vāc), for speech is everything here. Therefore, it is said that Indra is Vāc.\textsuperscript{310}

The word ‘Indra’ means power and vigour. By power and vigour Prajāpati strengthened himself. Power and vigour turned unto Prajāpati, and he made power and vigour subject to himself.\textsuperscript{311} It is also stated that Agni means brilliance, and Indra means power and vigour. With these two energies Prajāpati strengthened himself. Both energies turned unto him and he made both energies subject to himself.\textsuperscript{312}

According to the \textit{Kauśitaki Brāhmaṇa}, the man of whom men speak in the Sun is Indra, is Prajāpati, and is the holy power.\textsuperscript{313} Prajāpati named as Ka is the father-in-law of Prāsahā, the dear wife of Indra.\textsuperscript{314} Prajāpati acted as an arbitrator between Indra and Vāyu in order to settle their dispute.\textsuperscript{315} He desired that Indra should be the

\textsuperscript{310} sa praʒāpatirindraṁ putramabravīt- anena tvā kāmapreṇa yajñena yājāyāni/ yena māmidaṁ parameṣṭhyayīyajaditi, tatheti, tamayājyat/ sa istvā’kāmaya, ahamevedaṁ sarvaṁ syāmti/ sa vāgabhavaḥ vāgva idaṁ sarvaṁ/ tasmādāhurindro vāgiti/ Š.B., 11.1.6.18

\textsuperscript{311} indriyāṁ vai vīryam/ indra indriyeṇaiva tadvīryeṇa praʒāpatiḥ/ punarātmānānapāyāyata...../ Ibid., 3.9.1.15

\textsuperscript{312} tejo vā’agnih/ indriyaṁ vīryamindraḥ/ ubhābhyyāmeva tadvīryābhhyāṁ/ praʒāpatiḥ punarātmānānapāyāyata/ Ibid., 3.9.1.19

\textsuperscript{313} .... yametamāditye puruṣaṁ vedayante sa indraḥ sa praʒāpatistad/ brahma...../ K.B., 8.3

\textsuperscript{314} sena vā indraṣya priyā jāyā vāvātā prāsahā nāmah, ko nāma praʒāpatiḥ/ śvaśūrah/ A.B., 3.22

\textsuperscript{315} ....sa praʒāpatirgraḥaṁ ddvedhā cakāra/ sa hovāca idaṁ vāyorīti/ atha punardṛhāṁ dvedhā cakāra/ sa hovāca- idaṁ vāyorīti, idaṁ taveti/ indraṁ turīyameva bhājayāṇaṁcakāra/ Š.B., 4.1.3.14
best of the gods, so he tied his own garland round the neck of Indra as a result of which the gods admitted his greatness.\textsuperscript{316} When Indra was overpowered by the magic charms of the demons, Prajāpati gave him the Vighana sacrifice with which all the enemies were killed by him.\textsuperscript{317}

Indra after having slain Vṛtra and becoming victorious in various battles, said to Prajāpati that he would have Prajāpati’s rank, that of the Supreme deity, he would be great. Thence, Indra became the great one and was known as \textit{Mahendra}, i.e. the great Indra.\textsuperscript{318}

Once, Indra and Ruśamā vied with each other for going round the earth, Indra went round the whole earth and Ruśamā went round \textit{Kurukṣetra}. But the gods declared both of them as victorious because \textit{Kurukṣetra} being the altar of Prajāpati was equal of the entire world.\textsuperscript{319}

The \textit{Aitareya Brāhmaṇa} gives a detailed description of the coronation ceremony (\textit{mahabhiseka}) of Indra, performed by the gods accompanied by Prajāpati. The gods told to one another pointing with their hands to Indra, ‘this one is among the gods the most vigorous, strongest, most valiant most perfect, who carries best out any work to be done. Therefore, they wanted to install him to the kingship over

\begin{verbatim}
316. so’kāmayatendrome prajāyāṁ śreṣṭhaḥ syāditi tāmasmai srajaṁ
    pratyamunicattato va indrāya prajāḥ śraishṭhyātiśṭhanta tacchilpam
    paśyantyo yatpitaryapaśyan/ T.M.B., 16.4.3
317. indramadevya māya asacanta sa prajāpatimupādha-vattasmā etaṁ vighanam
    prāyacchattenā sarvāṃrdho vyahata/ Ibid., 19.19.1
318. A.B., 3.21
319 indrasca ruśamā.....prajāpatervvediryyāvat kurukṣetramiti tou na
    vyajayetām/ T.M.B., 25.13.3
\end{verbatim}
them. Prajāpati, standing in front of Indra, who was sitting on the throne, turned his face to the west, and after having put on his head a gold leaf, sprinkled him with the moist branch of an Udumbara, together with that of a Palāśa tree, reciting the three Ṛk verses.

Thus, it is seen that the kingship of gods that Indra enjoyed, was only due to the efforts made by Prajāpati. As he gave his own lustre to Indra the youngest of the gods, Prajāpati got the name ‘Ka.’

To explain the significance of the term āsti another legend is introduced in the Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa. Prajāpati concealed his eldest son Indra because of the fear of being killed by the demons. The gods then approached Prajāpati and said that there could not be a battle without the king. So, they wanted to find out Indra. Then they employed various sacrifices like Jyotistoma etc., but it was in vain. Ultimately, they succeeded in finding out Indra after performing various āstis. The āsti was used by the gods as the means for searching, i.e. anveṣaṇasādhanas which is very clearly noted by Sāyaṇa in his commentary to the relevant text, which reads- ‘evaṁ ca

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320. te devā abruvaṁ sa praṇāpatikā,- ayam vai devānāmojiṣṭho baliṣṭhaṁ sahiṣṭhaṁ sattamaṁ pārayiṣṇutama imamevābhhiṣiṇcāmāha iti, theti, tadvai tadindrameva/ A.B., 8.12
321. Ibid., 8.13
322. praṇāpatirindramasṛjatānujāvaranāṁ devānāṁ... ko ha vai nāma praṇāpatīṁ/ T.B., 2.2.10.1
323. devāsūrāssarṇyattā āsan/ sa praṇāpatirindraṁ jyeṣṭhaṁ putramapa nyadhatta/ nedenamatur baliyaṁ sohanannte/ prahlādo ha vai kāyaṁdharavah/ virocanarāṁ svaṁ putramapa nyadhatta/ nedenam devā ahannitte/ te devāḥ praṇāpatimupasametyocuḥ/ nārājakasya yuddhamasti/ Ibid., 1.5.9.1
According to the *Kauśitaki Brāhmaṇa*, Vāyu is clearly the form of Prajāpati. One half of Prajāpati, doubtless, is Vāyu, and one half is Prajāpati. The *Jaiminīyopanisad Brāhmaṇa* also declares that Vāyu is Prajāpati. The *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* also reiterates that ‘pavamāṇah prajāpatīḥ’, i.e. Prajāpati is he who blows. The Wind, i.e. Vāyu is everywhere in the world and it is identified with Prajāpati and thereby it is hinted that Prajāpati pervades the whole world.

**PRAJĀPATI AND VĀC**

The Brāhmaṇas assert that Prajāpati is Vāc, because of its existence all over the world. Prajāpati is stated as the lord of thought and he is also lord of speech. By speech Prajāpati strengthened himself. Sarasvatī is the speech. Speech turned unto Prajāpati and thereafter the speech was subject to Prajāpati.

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324. Sāyaṇa, Ibid.
325. prajāpatiḥ pratyakṣaṃrit̐aṃ yadvāyuriti/ K.B., 19.2
326. ardhāṃ ha prajāpatērvāyuḥ/ ardhaṃ prajāpatiḥ/ Ś.B., 6.2.2.11
327. sa yo'yaṃ (vāyuḥ) pave sa eṣa eva prajāpatiḥ/ J.U.B., 1.11.2.3
328. vāyurhyeva prajāpatiḥ taduktamṛśiṇā pavamāṇah prajāpatiriti/ A.B., 4.26
329. (a) prajāpatir hi vāk/ T.B., 1.3.4.5
 (b) vāg vai prajāpatiḥ/ Ś.B., 5.1.5.6
330. prajāpatīrvai citpatīḥ/ prajāpatīrvai vākpatīḥ/ Ibid., 3.1.3.22
331. vāgyai sarasvatiḥ/ vācaiva tat prajāpatiḥ punarātmānamāpyayayata.../ Ibid., 3.9.1.7
If there is anything beyond Prajāpati, that is speech. Saṅgaṇa remarks on the relevant passage thus- Prajāpati is everything and therefore this world belongs to Prajāpati. The speech has its origin in this world and therefore, speech is nothing but Prajāpati. It is also said that whatever at the sacrifice is performed for Prajāpati, that is performed in a low voice, for speech would not act as oblation-bearer for Prajāpati.

The word Viśvakarman means the creator in the Vedas. The word is interpreted in two ways in the Satapatha Brāhmaṇa. The first Viśvakarman is speech, for by speech everything here is done. Saṅgaṇa explains the passage more elaborately—'Vis'vam kriyate 'nayeti vyutpattyā vāgeva viśvakarma.' Then, in the second etymology, Viśvakarman is interpreted, in accordance with the usual concept of Prajāpati. Prajāpati, is indeed, the all-worker, for he has created all this universe.

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332. yadi vai praṇāpateḥ paramastī-vāgeva/ 
333. praṇāpate sarvatmakatvena lokātmakatvam, tatratoṣacāsarvaḥbhūtātmakatvāficāstyeva, ato lokeṣūdyamānā vāk api praṇāpati rūpaivaitya

334. tasmād yatkiṣaṇā praṇāpateṣu yajñe kriyate, upāṁśeṣeva tat kriyate/ ahavyāvādhī vāk praṇāpataya āśīt/

335. vāgārte viśva-karmśāḥ vācāḥ hīdaṁ sarvāṁ kṛtam/tasmādvāgviśva-karmśāḥ/

336. Saṅgaṇa, Ibid.

337. praṇāpatirviśva-karmā- sa hīdaṁ sarvāṁ karot/
PRAJĀPATI AND UŚAS

The obnoxious account of Prajāpati's desire for his own daughter and the ultimate incest with the punishment awarded to Prajāpati is well-rooted in the Vedic and the Purānic texts. In the *Maitrāyaṇī Samhitā*\(^{338}\) along with the account of the incest, we find a short of an interpretation shifting the whole tale to the realm of Nature. The daughter is said to be Uśas. She assumes the form of the female deer and Prajāpati that of a stag. Rudra, getting enraged, is said to have shot an arrow at him whereupon the later promised to make him the lord of the beasts. In the *Satapatha Brāhmaṇa*\(^{339}\) also the account is narrated. Here, Rudra shoots Prajāpati for his misdeed, and it goes deep in his body causing his death. Then we have an account of how the gods cured Prajāpati and kept well the torn part of his body, for Prajāpati was no less than the sacrifice itself. Out of Prajāpati's body Āditya, Bṛḡu, Aṅgiras etc., were created. The *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa*\(^{340}\) has the tale and from it is learnt that his daughter, the Dawn or the sky who transformed herself into a female deer, was the constellation Rohinī. According to the tale, Prajāpati thought of cohabiting with his own daughter, whom some call 'Heaven', others 'Down', i.e. Uśas. He transformed himself into a buck of a kind of deer (*ṛśya*), whilst his daughter assumed the shape of a female deer (*rohita*). He approached her. The gods had come to know that

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338. prajāpatirvai svāṁ duhitaramabhyaṃkāṃmayatoṣasam/ Mai. S., 4.2.12
339. prajāpatirha vai svāṁ duhitaramabhidhyou- divaṁ vā, uṣasaṁ vā mithunyenayāsyāmiti/- Š.B., 1.7.4.1
340. A.B., 3.33
Prajāpati committed an act never done before. In order to avert the evil consequences of this incestuous act, the gods inquired for someone who might destroy the evil consequences of it. Among themselves they did not find anyone who might do that, i.e. the atonement for Prajāpati’s crime. They then put their most fearful bodies, in one. This aggregate of the most fearful bodies of the gods became a god Bhūtavat by name. The gods informed him that Prajāpati has committed an act which he ought not to have committed and they suggested him to pierce the incarnation of his evil deed. So he did and said that he would choose a boon from them. He then, chose as his boon sovereignty over cattle. That is the reason that his name is Paśumat, i.e. having cattle. Bhūtavat attacked him, i.e. the incarnation of Prajāpati’s evil deed and pierced him with an arrow. After having pierced him he sprang up and became a constellation. They called him mṛga, i.e. deer (stars in the Orion), and him who killed that being, which sprang from Prajāpati’s misdeeds; mṛgavyādha, i.e. hunter of the deer. The female deer Rohita, into which Prajāpati’s daughter had been transformed became the constellation Rohinī. The arrow by which the phantom of Prajāpati’s sin was pierced which had three parts, shaft, steel and point became such an arrow in the sky. The sperm which had been poured forth from Prajāpati, flew down on the earth and became a lake. The gods declared that this sperm of Prajāpati should not be spoiled (mā duṣat). This became the māduṣa. This name māduṣa is the same as mānuṣa, i.e. man. For the word mānuṣa, i.e. man, means ‘one who should not be spoiled (māduṣan)’.

In this context, the word ‘Rohita’ is explained by Sāyaṇa, not
as the name of a female deer, but as an adjective, meaning ‘red’. He explains the supposed Rohita as rtumati. Sāyaṇa explains thus—*purā kadācit Prajāpatiḥ svakīyaṁ duhitaramabhilakṣya bhāryātvena dhyānamakarot/ tasyāṁ duhitari mahārṣiṇāṁ matabhedāṁ āsit/ anye kecana mahārṣayo divaṁ dyūlokadevatāṁ dhyātavān ityāhuḥ/ apare tu mahārṣaya ‘uṣasam’ uṣāḥ kāladevatāṁ dhyātavān ityāhuḥ/ ṛṣyo mrgaviṣeṣaḥ/ tathācābhidhānākār āha-‘gokarṇapṛṣṭaiṇarsṣyarohitāscamaro mṛgah’ iti/ sa Prajāpatiḥ tathāvidhiḥ ṛṣyo ’bhūt/ sā ca duhitā ‘rohitam’ lohitam ‘bhutā’ prāptā, rtumatī jātetyarthah.*

The Jaiminiya Brāhmaṇa also discusses the same story. Macdonell in his ‘Vedic Mythology’ gives two references from the Rgveda as a possible origin of this myth, where we have the account of a father having evil desires for his own daughter. He interprets the father as Dyaus and his daughter as the Earth.

PRAJĀPATI AND RUDRA

The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa narrates that when Prajāpati had become disjoined, the deities departed from him, only one god did not leave him, who was Manyu (wrath). He remained within Prajāpati. Then cried, and the tears of him that fell down settled on Manyu. He became the hundred-headed, thousand-eyed, hundred-quivered Rudra. And the other drops that fell down, spread over these worlds in

341. Sāyaṇa, Ibid.
342. prajāpatirhoṣasaraṁ svāṁ duhitaramabhyadhīyat..., tasya viddhasya retaḥ parā’patat taddhimavati pratytiṣṭhat tanmānuṣamabhat/ J.B., 3.262-263
343. Macdonell, A., Vedic Mythology, p.119
countless numbers, and as such they originated from crying (rud), they were called Rudras (roarers). That hundred-headed, thousand-eyed, hundred-quivered Rudra, with his bow strung, and his arrows fitted to the string, was inspiring fear, being in quest of food. The gods were afraid of him. They told Prajāpati that they were afraid of him, because he might hurt them. Then Prajāpati asked them to gather food for him and appease him therewith. They gathered for him that food, the Śatarudriya offering, and thereby appeased him.\textsuperscript{344}

**PRAJĀPATI AS AN ARBITRATOR**

Prajāpati also acts as an arbitrator in order to settle the dispute which is found mentioned in the Brāhmaṇas.\textsuperscript{345} Once, Agni, Āditya and Vāyu approached him to settle their dispute. All these three deities, viz. Agni, Vāyu and Āditya created pranas, the body and the eyes respectively of a cow by means of a sacrifice. Then they quarreled over the issue of the possession of the milk. While coming to Prajāpati for decision, Āditya made a secret contract with Agni that if either of them were to be victorious the cow would belong to both. Then Prajāpati asked them ‘who gave an offering and to whom it was given?’ Ultimately Prajāpati gave his judgment in favour of Agni as

\textsuperscript{344} S.B., 9.1.1.6-7

\textsuperscript{345} tau praṇāpatiṁ prati praśnameyatubh/ sa praṇāpatergraḥaṁ dvēdha caṅkāra/ sa hovāca idāṁ vāyoriti/ atha punarddhaṁ dvēdha caṅkāra/ sa hovāca- idāṁ vāyoriti, idāṁ tavaeti/ indraṁ turīyameva bhājayāṅcaṅkāra/ yadvai caturthaiṁ tatturīyam/ tata eṣa aindraturīyo graho’bhavat/  

Ibid., 4.1.3.14
he had given an offering to prāṇas. While glorifying pañcāgnṛdhāna rite the cow is said to be the creation of Prajāpati in the Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa. After the creation he found to have lost all his semen. So he performed penance and found some additional semen flowing forth from him. That became Vīrāj or cow. When the gods and the demons quarreled over its possession he said that the cow was his property and the milk belonged to them. The cow attempted to run away from him five times. But on each occasion he prevented her by reciting sacrificial formulae. Thus the fire became five-fold.

**PRAJĀPATI AS THE KĀLA**

The Brāhmaṇa literature describes Prajāpati as Kāla or Time. As Prajāpati is the creator of the universe Time is also associated with him.

The primeval act of creation was accomplished by Time. Undivided Time or eternity offered itself in a sacrifice and the universe came into existence. The creative process which the Rgveda credits

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346. te prajāpatim praśnamāyan/ sa ādityo’gnimabravit/ yataro nau jayāt/ tannou sahāsaditi/ kasyaiko’housiditi/ prajāpatirabravitkasyaika iti/ prāṇānāmahamyagnil/ T.B., 2.1.6.2
347. prajāpatiḥ prajā aṣṭi/ja/ sa riricāno’manyata/ sa tapo’tapyata/ sa atmānāryamapaṣyat/ tavadardhata/ tadasmāthisahasordhamsṛjyata/ sa virādabhavat/ tāum devāsura vyagṛhṇata/ so’bravitprajāpatiḥ/ mama vā eṣa/ Ibid., 1.1.10.1
348. R.V., 10.121.1-2
with Prajāpati, is entirely attributed to Kāla in the Atharvaveda, which produces in order the sky, earth, creatures, tapas (fervour), the directions, sun, wind, the firmament, the regions, the ṛcas and the yajus, sacrifice, the gandharvas and the apsarasas.

Prajāpati is Timeless, i.e. eternal; he is unlimited; Prajāpati is the ancient god. He is the only god, the self-created one, he pervades all, he is the whole Brahman, and he is the end. All these appellations of Prajāpati show his identity with Time.

The identity of Prajāpati with the year is reiterated in the Brāhmaṇas. It is noticeable that all time units came from the split self of Prajāpati; of these, one most frequently identified with him is the year, i.e. samvatsara. In this connection the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa states very clearly—‘Now Prajapati doubtless is the year and his joints are the junctures of day and night, the full moon and new moon and the beginning of seasons’.

349. A.V., 19.53.5,6,10
350. Ibid., 19.54.1-4
351. anyā devatā yātāyāmnih praţāpatievāyātayāma/ Mai. S., 4.8.9
352. aparimito hi praţāpatih/ G.B., 1.17
353. praţāpatirvai pratanaḥ/ J.B., 3.286
354. ekā ha vāva devatā svayambhūḥ praţāpativrā/ Ibid., 3.341
355. sa vyāptum prāpnot/ idaṁ sarvanabhavat/ Ibid., 3.309
356. sarvanu brahma praţāpatih/ Ś.B., 7.3.1.42
357. anto vai praţāpatih/ Ibid., 5.1.3.13
358. sa vai samvatsara eva praţāpatih, praţāpatih tasyaitāni parvāṇi ahorātryoḥ sandhī, paurnāmassi ca amāvāsyā ca ṛtumukhāni/ Ibid., 1.6.3.35
It is mentioned in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa that on one occasion, the gods and the Asuras, both of them sprung from Prajāpati, entered upon their father Prajāpati’s inheritance, to wit, these two half-moons, i.e. suklā and kṛṣṇa. The gods entered upon the one which waxes, and the Asuras on the one which wanes. Sāyaṇa remarks that this division of Prajāpati’s inheritance as of the two half-moons, i.e. kṛṣṇa and suklā is due to the identification of Kāla as Prajāpati. Thus, Prajāpati is here identified with Time, i.e. Kāla.

Thus, in the Brāhmaṇa literature, Prajāpati is recognized as the prime god. He is the father of the gods, having existed alone in the beginning. As the creator, he is associated with the creation of the entire universe. His role as the supporter and the preserver of this universe is often described in the Brāhmaṇas. His greatness as the life-principle is also well-rooted in this text. As the life-principle, he is associated with fertility and procreation. Prajāpati is also described as the first sacrificer and he is intimately connected with several sacrificial rites. His association with other Vedic gods as well as his supremacy amongst them is also reflected in the passages of the Brāhmaṇa literature. Another important aspect of Prajāpati as noticed in the Brāhmaṇas is that, he is described as Kāla or Time.

359. devāśca vā asurāśca ubhaye prajāpatyāḥ prajāpateḥ piturdāyamupeuuh etāvevārdhamāsou/ Ibid., 1.7.2.22
360. prajāpateḥ kālātmakatvādanayostadvattvam/ Sāyaṇa, Ibid.

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