CHAPTER VI

‘Prayer which pierces, assaults mercy itself, frees all faults’

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THE CONCEPT OF PRAPATTI OR ABSOLUTE SURRENDER

The previous chapter discussed how Shakespeare puts into effect, the quality of Mercy alone is the merit of human life through the memorable gestures of some of his characters. In the present chapter Prapatti or absolute surrender that remains in the heart of all religions and the key factor in the Sri Vaisnava tradition, is to be dealt with in detail by identifying it in a few plays of Shakespeare. Human life, in general, is determined by the three inherent realities, tattva, hita and purusartha -- the conception of reality, the required human venture and the highest ideal. Hita or sadhana, the human effort can be accomplished by two factors, the siddhopaya and the sadhyopaya. The former is man’s progress to perfection to God, the Resource-reality and the latter is man’s endeavour, the supplementary aspect of the former. Both are complementary to each other to attain purusartha meaning God realization. This is the zenith of human effort achieved through boundless love and absolute surrender noted as Prapatti. S.S.Raghavachar in his book Visistadvaita observes:

The nature of invocation is utmost love, love that spurns all other ends and hungers and thirsts for the experience of the Divine with the utmost intensity of longing that the human soul is capable of. God reveals Himself to those to whom He is the life of their lives, the soul
of their souls and who without union with Him pass, as it were, into nothingness. (55)

Since Prapatti is solely based on the outcome of Mercy, it should obviously follow the subject on compassion. The moral law on the religious level is known as dharma, a Divine command when violated is sin or papa. Human beings must be relieved of their sins. Deliverance from the sin is the fundamental aim of the religion. The hope of deliverance lies in the saving grace of the Redeemer by casting oneself on His mercy. Grace requires humility, not the humility that comes out of self-humiliation but through an affirmation of understanding that one is nothing before the immaculate Presence. John C Plott quotes Gabriel Marcel (1889-1973) the French philosopher, in his book A Philosophy of Devotion (1974):

One could even go so far as to say that (humility, true humility) does not consist in the act of humbling oneself but above all in the recognition of one’s proper negation (neant). At the root of humility there is an affirmation more or less inarticulate: “I am nothing by myself and I can do nothing by myself, but solely in so far as I am not only assisted but moved forward (promu) into being by Him who is all and who can do all. (141)

Plott asserts that “this last expression is perhaps the best ‘definition’ of prapatti that one could find anywhere” (141). Nurturing humbleness in one’s being and having absolute devotion to Him are the fundamental features of prapatti.
To seek Mercy, *bhakti* towards the Redeemer is essential and the basis for *bhakti* is Love. This love has to be subtly differentiated. Erich Fromm in his slender but a rich volume *The Art of Loving* (1976) shows this in terms of the Western and Eastern religious systems. He views:

In the dominant Western religious system, the love of God is essentially the same as the belief in God, in God’s existence, God’s justice, God’s love. The love of God is essentially a thought experience. In the Eastern religions and in mysticism, the love of God is an intense feeling experience of oneness, inseparably linked with the expression of this love in every act of loving. (69)

Both the ways denote *bhakti*, the love of God, nonetheless, is objective in the former system where God is revered and loved from a distance and subjective in the latter approach, God is loved in depth as He fills the being indissolubly. It is the total unfailing adoration that patiently bears all things with an unshakeable belief, is never provoked and takes no account of evil. Human love is but an infinitesimal expression of the Mercy of God. *Prapatti* imparts the gospel of universal love and forgiveness. Swami Adidevananda in his translation of Srinivasa Dasa’s *Yatindramatadipika* (1996) defines *prapatti* or absolute surrender:

What is called *prapatti* is to conceive what is in conformity with the will of *Iswara*, to reject what is disagreeable (to *Iswara*), to have
firm faith as “He will save me”, to seek Him alone as the Protector, and to surrender oneself to Him in all meekness. Thus it has five constituents. (99)

There is a difference between bhakti and prapatti. P.N.Srinivasachari explains bhakti: “The knowledge of the Atman leads to God consciousness, otherwise called bhakti . . . bhakti ends in kainkarya”. (381).

When bhakti is no longer a prayer to any empirical gain, it becomes love for love’s sake. Therefore bhakti becomes a ladder of love from earth to heaven seeking only the divine grace. In the ladder if one slips even one step, then he is sure to encounter a great fall. To do bhakti, the design is sublime because one has to follow the following requirements as given by P.N.Srinivasachari. The needs are:

A clear philosophic knowledge of the realms of karma, jnana and bhakti, the will vigorously to undergo the discipline in due order, the sastriac qualification of birth as an essential aid to bhakti and the satvik patience to endure the ills of prarabdha karma till it is exhausted and expiated. (381-382)

But prapatti provides an alternative path, a way to salvation for the weak and infirm. To quote P.N.Srinivasachari: “Prapatti preserves the essentials of bhakti, dispenses with its pre disposing causes or conditions which are only
contingent and omits the non-essentials like the need for ceaseless practice” (383). The supreme merit of such a course is that it is universally applicable to all castes, classes and all jivas. The Prapatti is the act or attitude of the self-surrender when the jiva realizes its utter unworthiness, as noted by Gabriel Marcel. While doing Prapatti all egoism is shed and the ultimate responsibility of jiva is absolutely left to the operation of the Divine Grace. At this juncture it will be worthwhile to include the words of Alkondavilli Govindacharya in his excellent hagiographical work The Divine Wisdom of Dravida Saints (1902) wherein he presents a scholarly distinction between bhakti and Prapatti.

The best means to salvation is God Himself. Even this is two-fold. One is by Bhakti or loving Him with all the energy of one's own will; the other by Prapatti or loving him with all the force derived from God Himself when the aspirant has resigned his own will, and placed all his hope and confidence in the sweet will and dispensations of Providence. In the former case, incessant training and turning of the will to devotional meditation on God — demanding much individual effort — and which has to be performed strictly in accordance with prescribed modes, — and modes demanding qualification such as birth in holy families, rigid preliminaries, and careful watching against the slightest omissions in observance etc. — are required; whereas in the latter case neither individual effort nor conditions of birth etc., are requisites were a soul in whole-hearted devotion
unreservedly throws itself into the loving and caring hands of God. The former (Bhakti) is attended with danger inasmuch as when lacking any of the conditions imposed upon one, who would thus rise by his own strength of will, he renders himself liable not to be accepted by God, whereas in the latter case (Prapatti), the aspirant so unconditionally surrenders himself to God, and so confidently seeks shelter under His protecting wings, that even God, after giving him such protection, cannot cast him away. In the former case (Bhakti) God does not bind Himself to save, whereas in the latter case (Prapatti), He binds Himself to save. Conditions for the former (Bhakti) are untiring devotion and unceasing worship etc., on the part of the creature — the use of self-will; whereas conditions for the latter (Prapatti) are implicit trust and effacement of self-will and proneness to the complete operation of God's will alone. The former (Bhakti) is a slender stream of love proceeding from puny efforts, a creature is capable of producing in his heart; and this is necessarily subject to many accidents; but the latter (Prapatti) is the mighty flood of Grace pouring down from God the Creator, nothing withstanding the rush of the torrent. Bhakti requires pumping up with exertion; whereas Prapatti brings down His Grace in all natural downpour.
This insightful quote, though long, is perhaps the best explication of the two terms, bhakti and prapatti. John Plott in Chapter II entitled ‘Prapatti’ in his book discusses in about 75 pages this aspect of Ramanuja’s philosophy with copious illustrations from different sources.

Ramanuja’s commentary Bhagavad Gita Bashya explains the means for attaining moksa or salvation while giving the meaning for the sloka 66 in the eighteenth chapter: Sarva-dharman parityajya mam ekam saranam vraja / Aham tva sarva-papebhyo moksayisyami, ma sucah” K.K.A. Venkatachari provides an explication:

In order to succeed in starting bhakti yoga, surrender (prapatti) taking refuge with Me alone, who am supremely merciful, who am the refuge of all persons without taking into consideration the differences among them (relating to such things as birth, education and so on) and who am a sea of parental solicitude for those dependent on Me. (49)

Ramanuja views then, that even to commence bhakti yoga, one has to make a surrender to Him. This view is likely to make one think that bhakti yoga alone is the means to moksa. Ramanuja took this stand, observes Govindacharya, because he strongly felt that “the Doctrine of Grace was too holy to be exposed to the profane gaze of all mankind without reference to their preparedness to receive the same; that it could be effective only when imparted to those who were in heart
sufficiently mature to be inclined to receive, assimilate and act upon the Doctrine . . . that without the change of the heart leading it to entirely sacrifice itself for God, Prapatti would but land the soul in moral turpitude and spiritual bewilderment” (208).

Incidentally, it should be noted that in the vaisnava parlance, the terms prapatti and saranagati are used synonymously, the popular expression being ‘Vibhishana saranagati’ related to the Ramayana. Sri Vaisnavism regards the Ramayana as a Saranagati Veda, thus providing scriptural status to the epic. P.N.Srinivasachari makes a reference to this:

The main theme of all the first six kandas is the Divine assurance of forgiveness to all that seek refuge at the feet of God, whether they are human, sub-human or celestial jivas, including even rakshasas who are ever hostile to the cosmic redemptive purpose of Iswara. (396).

The fullest exposition of the divine assurance of salvation is given in the section dealing with Vibhishana Saranagati. K.K.A.Venkatachari in his book Sri Vaisnavism: An Insight–2006 justifies this by quoting Vedanta Desika in his delineation of the five constituents of prapatti in terms of Vibhishana’a surrender. (75) S.S. Raghavachar points to the five constituents and explains: (i) Anukulyasya Sankalpa: striving to cooperate in all that God designs (ii) Pratikulasya-varjana: rejecting of everything contrary thereto (iii) Akinchanya:
the full awareness of utter helplessness and total poverty of means to achieve
goal. (iv) Mahaviswasam: immense faith in the power and goodness of God to
save (v) Goptrtva-varanam: prayer to God that He may take up the role of
saviour. (59) The person who resorts to God in this way must resolve to be in
conformity to the Divine will and strive to co-operate in all that God designs.
This includes the entire kingdom of souls that are objects of God’s compassion
and the prapanna must make his love cover the entire universe.

Like the Ramayana, the Mahabharata is also referred to for the prapatti
exposition, especially the Bhagavad Gita that talks about the absolute surrender
made by Arjuna to Krishna. At the beginning of the Kurukshetra war Arjuna
seeing his relatives and friends on the opposite side is reluctant to battle against
them. He, in a great state of mental confusion and distress seeks the advice from
Krishna. In sloka 7 of Chapter II, Arjuna specifically requests Krishna to guide
him as to what to be done by calling himself a prapanna. S. Radhakrishnan
translates the sloka thus: “My very being is stricken with the weakness of
(sentimental) pity. With my mind bewildered about my duty, I ask Thee. Tell me,
for certain, which is better. I am Thy pupil; teach me, who am seeking refuge in
Thee” (100). The scholar also gives a pithy, brilliant explication vital to everyone
at all times, all cultures that provides seminal meaning of prapatti. His words
certainly deserve mention:

Arjuna is driven not only by despair, anxiety and doubt but also by an
ardent wish for certainty. To realize one’s unreason is to step towards
one’s development to reason. The consciousness of imperfection indicates that the soul is alive. So long as it is alive, it can improve even as a living body can heal, if it is hurt or cut to a point. The human being is led to a higher condition through a crisis of contrition.

It is the general experience of seekers that they are assailed by doubts and difficulties, even when they are on the threshold of light. The light as it begins to shine in any soul provokes the darkness to resist it. . . . The struggle with darkness will continue until the light fills one’s whole being. Weighed down by wretchedness, confused about what is right and wrong, Arjuna seeks light and guidance from his teacher, the Divine with him, within his self. Man cannot be left to his own devices. When one’s world is in ruins, one can only turn within and seek illumination as the gift of God’s infinite compassion. . . . Like Arjuna, the aspirant must realize his weakness and ignorance and yet be anxious to do God’s will and discover what it is. (100-101)

This is an excellent counseling to the contemporary world caught in the web of dejection, disillusionment, depression and anguish. The present day human beings must analyze their selves, note the infirmities and surrender unto the inner light to redeem themselves and the world around. *Prapatti* is an experience that should be willingly practiced with a conviction. No methodology is prescribed for it. Since it should be thoroughly understood, it becomes imperative to provide scriptural
documents. Vibhishana and Arjuna are the *prapannas* and they stand as perfect testimonies to the above said five required constituents of *prapatti*.

Consequently, who a *prapanna* -- also noted as *saranagata* -- is must be seen. Ramanuja in his *Bhagawad Gita Bashyam* has very clearly used the word ‘saranagathaya’ as the translation for *prapanna*. A *prapanna* is a person who seeks refuge with the protector. Such an absolute surrender gives the *prapanna* lightness of heart and rids him of all worries. The *Prapanna* does this action of surrender to a superior person in whom he has confidence, who would clear all his doubts, relieve him from his angst and safeguard his life. A *prapanna* need not be a person. Animals and birds can also become *prapannas*. Scriptures give examples of an elephant and a crow becoming *prapannas*. Another example of a sub-human surrender is that of a demon Vibhishana. In the *Mahabharata* (Sabra Parva) when Draupadi is humiliated in the open court she entreats Krishna to protect her saying “*Prapannam paahi Govindam kurumadhyevasidatim*”, thereby proclaiming her absolute surrender to Him and Him alone. Srinivasa Das’a *Yatindramata Dipika* in Chapter VIII, slokas 21 and 22 explains *prapanna*, adequately translated by Swami Adidevananda in pages 114 to 116.

Incidentally, the purpose of *prapatti* can be varied to different people. It need not be done for attaining *moksa* or salvation alone. In the *Bhagawad Gita* Chapter VII sloka 16, Lord Krishna gives a list of those who come to Him for help and later surrender to Him. He says: “*catur-vidha bhajante mam janah*
sukrtino ‘rjuna / Arto, jijnasurartharthi jnani ca, Bharata’rsabha”. Swami Sivananda gives the meaning: “Four kinds of virtuous people worship Me, Oh, Arjuna, the distressed, the seeker of knowledge, the seeker of wealth and the wise, Oh, Lord of Bharatas” (271). Sri Aurobindo, in his Essays on the Gita (1976) cryptically explains the four kinds of devotees noted in the Gita:

There are those who turn to Him as a refuge from sorrow and suffering in the world, arta. There are those who seek Him as the giver of good in the world, artharthi. There are those who come to Him in the desire for knowledge, jignasu. And lastly there are those who adore Him with knowledge, jnani. All are approved by the Gita, but only on the last does it lay the seal of its complete sanction.

(271)

S. Radhakrishnan distinguishes the four types of devotees with further clarity. He says:

The afflicted, those in distress, who have suffered losses are one class. Those who are desirous of wealth, dhanakama, who wish to improve their material position are another. The third group are devout and upright and wish to know the truth. They are on the right way. The fourth are the jnanis, they who know. Ramanuja interprets jnana or wisdom as devotion to one alone, ekabhakti. Mahabharata speaks of four classes of devotees of whom three are phalakamah or those desirous of rewards while the best are single-minded
worshippers. Others ask for favours, but the sage asks nothing and refuses nothing. He yields himself completely to the Divine, accepting whatever is given to him. His attitude is one of self-oblivious non-utilitarian worship of God for His own sake. (219)

Worship can be done only if there is adoration of somebody. To adore a person, one should have a thorough knowledge about the person whom he is worshipping. P.N.Srinivasachari views that this knowledge is an integrated whole comprising duty, cognition and devotion. He observes:

The building up of bhakti is an elaborate process of synthesis, which unites the different mental elements of conation or karma, cognition or jnana and feeling or bhoga and brings them into a higher synthesis of religious aspiration, bhakthirupapanna jnana or knowledge which has become bhakti. The devotional process pulsates with the triple rhythm of Karma Yoga, Jnana Yoga and Bhakti Yoga; and the symmetry of the triadic process set forth in Visistadvaita, by which the atman ascends to the absolute remains unsurpassed in the philosophy of religion. . . . Karma Yoga presupposes the sastraic knowledge of the distinction between the atman and Paramatman . . . Jnana Yoga helps in the process of self-realisation or atmavalokana through self-renunciation.
The knowledge of the atman leads to God-consciousness or bhakti. In Bhakti Yoga the theoretical knowledge of Bhagavan develops into upasana or meditation . . . steady thought of God.

In course of time such a devotional love turns to be supreme devotion taking him to the state of absolute faith or maha viswasam in whom he worships and surrenders unto him with the definite hope that the worshipped will certainly protect him. There happens the absolute surrender or prapatti. Though the path of bhakti leads one to the Divine, there are many setbacks on the way that drag a person down the ladder. The jiva when it slips down the ladder naturally becomes weak and infirm. In spite of the efforts to set things right, the only other course left to them is to surrender their will to His Will. The power in whom absolute faith has been fixed readily comes forward with all compassion and mercy to render help irrespective of one’s status and station in life. Lord Krishna rightly lists out these types of persons who worship Him with full devotion, adore Him, keep absolute faith in Him and surrender unto Him last. Coming back to the Bhagavad Gita, Lord Krishna gives the needed guidance to Arjuna who is now steadfast in his mind to perform his assigned duty. He now thanks Krishna for having cleared all his doubts and assures that he would do as advised: “Nasto moha labdha tvat prasadan maya cyuta / Sthito’smi gatasamdeha karisye vacanam tava” (18:73) -- Destroyed is my illusion as I have gained my memory (knowledge) through Thy grace, Oh, Achyuta. I am
firm. My doubts are gone. I will do according to Thy word (Swami Sivananda 777). The person who surrenders with all faith to the Supreme receives what he needs. In the Lord’s own categorization Arjuna is a jignasu, the one who seeks knowledge.

Subsequently, it is now to be seen in the works of Shakespeare how the concept of prapatti or absolute surrender as detailed in Ramanuja’s philosophy, has been executed. The above said discussion unmistakably indicates that prapatti is an experience to be practiced and evidently it finds a firm place within Sri Vaisnavism. As noted earlier, Shakespeare is neither a hardcore philosopher nor a strictly committed religious person. Aldous Huxley in his posthumously published essay entitled “Shakespeare and Religion” – he had dictated this essay in his deathbed -- in the Show Magazine (1964) tries to designate the dramatist’s religion by defining the term ‘religion’. He observes:

The word is used to designate things as different from one another as Satanism and satori, as fetish-worship and the enlightenment of a Buddha, as the vast politico-theologic of financial organizations known as churches and the intensely private visions of an ecstatic. . .

A sense of the blessed All-Rightness of the Universe is a religious experience and so is the sick soul's sense of self-loathing, of despair, of sin, in a world that is the scene of perpetual perishing and inevitable death. Our many-faceted Shakespeare commented on religion in almost all its aspects. (http://www.sirbacon.org)
He notes what Shakespeare “the detached and amused observer of the Human Comedy, has to say about popular religion-religion as it is apprehended and practiced by the more ignorant and simple-minded members of his society”. The example he chooses is the scene in *Henry V* (II.iii) in which the Hostess touchingly narrates the passing of Sir John Falstaff. She categorically states that he is not in hell and that he “made a finer end, and went away, / an it had been any christom child” (II.iii.8-9). After giving a moving, graphic picture of his last moments, she says:

"How now, Sir John!" quoth I, "what, man! Be o'good cheer." So 'a cried out "God, God, God!" three or four times. Now I, to comfort him, bid him 'a should not think of God; I hoped there was no need to trouble himself with any such thoughts yet. (II.iii.12-15)

This seems to be a humane and comforting impulse from the Hostess to a rakish man in his dying hour, says Harold Goddard (1878-1950) in his *The Meaning of Shakespeare, Vol. 1* (1951). The critic refers to the previous scene (II.ii) wherein King Henry V mentions God three times within twelve lines and comments on this speech along with the last call of Falstaff and thus pin-points Shakespeare’s religion.

The man who invokes God in an unholy war of conquest: the woman who does her best to comfort a conscience-stricken and dying sinner (who has wronged her cruelly) by bidding him not to trouble himself
with thoughts that she knows can bring him only terror! Here it seems as if for once we are close to the heart of Shakespeare’s own religion, . . . Eckhart, the German mystic, declares that the purpose of true religion is “to get rid of God.” Anyone who fails to understand that paradox may well meditate on the last words of Falstaff and Mistress Quickly’s last words to him. How many other wise men have put more directly the truth that Shakespeare dramatizes in this scene. “The learned talk of God and His name is on their lips,” says Langland, “but the poor have him in their hearts.” . . . “Mention but the word divinity, and our sense of the divine is clouded,” says Samuel Butler. God moves in a mysterious way.

(232-33)

Goddard’s explication while presenting religion and God in a different perspective, nevertheless, portrays the Hostess, Mistress Quickly a compassionate woman who seems to realize the truth of God as she understands Falstaff’s final cry. Meister Eckhart (1260-1328), the German theologian and mystic observes: “You may call God love, you may call God goodness. But the best name for God is compassion.” (www.dreamthisday.com/quote-saying).

Further, He gives the essence of the meaning of surrender:

One master [St Augustine] says: 'If I had a God I could understand, I would no longer consider him God'. So, if you understand anything of Him, that is not He; by understanding anything of Him you fall
into misunderstanding, and from this misunderstanding you fall into brutishness, for whatever in creatures is uncomprehending is brutish. So, if you don't want to become brutish, understand nothing of God the unutterable. . . . You should wholly sink away from your you-ness and dissolve into His His-ness, and your 'yours' and His 'His' should become so completely one 'Mine' that with Him you understand His unbecome Is-ness and His nameless Nothing-ness.

(http://www.goodnews.ie/wisdomlineheers.html)

This exposition gives the reader a better understanding not only of the naïve speech of the Hostess but also of what the dramatist thinks of God.

However, from the viewpoint of absolute surrender practiced in the Visistadvaita / Sri Vaisnavism a study can be done in relation to the works of Shakespeare. Shakespeare has spoken about his philosophy only through his characters who can be delegated as ‘distressed’(arti), ‘seekers of wealth’(artharhi) and those ‘with knowledge’(jignasu). They make a surrender to the Supreme when they are in need. Distress is a situation when mental pain is caused by upsetting a person badly. The distressed person is much afflicted and cannot survive himself without outside help. The affected person usually tries to get out of it by some means or other, but when he finds no recourse, he submits to his fate and what happens around him. This occurs especially when the ‘distressed’ is on a ship voyage. Such a ‘distress’ situation is presented in the opening scene of The Tempest. Caroline Spurgeon observes that through
emphasizing the sounds of the persons aboard a wrecking ship, Shakespeare has efficiently represented in literature a vision of ‘distress’.

We can hear the boatswain yelling orders and heartening his men, the shrill whistle of the ship’s master, urged to blow till he bursts his wind, the passengers shrieking their questions or lamenting so loudly that they outcry even the elements and the hoarse shouts of sea-men ending in the chant of prayers punctuated with screams of terror and farewell.  (302)

Along with the passengers aboard, Miranda, Prospero’s daughter at the shore is also distressed by the ‘roar’ of the “wild waters” (1.ii.2) as the helpless cry of the shipwrecked men knocks against her heart. Miranda’s distress is due to anxiety that makes her sad, afraid and powerless. To her, at this moment the superior power is her father and she readily surrenders to him with great compassion for the sake of the sufferers. She pleads to her father:

If by your art, my dearest father, you have

Put the wild waters in this roar, allay them. . . .

O! I have suffered

With those that I saw suffer; . . .

Had I been any god of power, I would

Have sunk the sea within the earth . . . (I. ii. 1-11)
John C Plott in his *The Philosophy of Devotion*, while discussing the different points of view on *daya* or compassion within the *vaishnava* tradition states that according to one view “the Lord only begets wish to relieve the pain of the pained” and by another view, the Lord being “the observer of pain himself feels the same pain by participative appropriation” (233). Plott relates this to the Christian traditions that seem “to soften the paradox, asserting that Christ suffered in his humanity, not in his Divinity. But his heart was in the former, whereas the latter was primarily for teaching traditional doctrine: we therefore emphasize the former” (233). What the scholar comments further seems to explain Miranda’s spontaneous reaction:

Strictly speaking, . . there is nothing in either tradition that asserts actual suffering on the part of God in his own nature – suffering, that is, as pain from evil and as evil; but in both cases, suffering as compassion, as bearing the pain of others in order to relieve them of its evil nature – this is undeniable; evident; and in quote the same motif. (234)

As noted earlier, *daya* or compassion is the foreground to do *prapatti* and *Sri*, the *Daya* incarnate because of her limitless mercy to the erring humanity surrenders to the Lord on their behalf and makes Him hear their woes. This aspect of *purusakara* is well-portrayed in the characterization of Miranda.
Shakespeare presents another shipwreck in the play *Pericles*, that belongs to Shakespeare’s final group of plays. Pericles, the Prince of Tyre as he escapes from King Antiochus, gets caught in the stormy sea. In such a ‘distressed’ condition he has no other way except to resign himself to the laws of nature. He is cast and washed up near the rocky shores of the coast of Pentapolis. With no idea of the place he leaves himself to any event of casualty and surrenders to the laws of nature. He says:

> Yet cease your ire, you angry stars of heaven!
> With rain and thunder, remember earthly man
> Is but a substance that must yield to you.
> And I, as fits my nature, do obey you. . . .
> Let it suffice the greatness of your powers,
> To have bereft a prince of all his fortunes,
> And having thrown him from your watery grave,
> Here to have death is peace, in all he’ll crave.  
  (II.i. 1-11)

The only solace is that he has not been buried in a watery grave. His submission without showing any opposition to the laws of nature can only be termed as surrendering oneself to the fate. He is now sure of his death in this wilderness, which he considers as the design of fate. At this moment, he in a depressed state due to the recent stressful experience, feel helpless and hopeless. It is said that the key to recovery from depression is to ask for help. Isolation fuels depression;
so a depressed person must reach out to others. The blessing comes to Pericles in the form of three fishermen who save him from cold and death. His humble surrender to the ultimate powers gets rewarded. He wants to survive, requests assistance from them and also for warm clothes. The question of status -- a king asking help from fishermen -- does not arise here. His prayers are answered. It may be argued that because of the compelling moment Pericles surrenders to the situation. Though this is partly true, one cannot reject the fact that this episode in Pericles’ life is a perfect paradigm to be related to the constituents or angas of prapatti indicated earlier. P.N. Srinivasachari points to the sixth anga of prapatti, namely, atmaniksepa “which consists in self-oblation to the sesi [Lord] with the conviction that such self-donation is itself a gift of God’s grace” (391). He continues to say:

_Prappati_ as the religion of _atmaniksepa_ is also considered under the three aspects of _phala samarpana, bhora samarpana_ and _svarupa samarpana_ or the renunciation of the hedonistic, the moralistic and the egoistic views of life. Of these, _phala samarpana_ or _phalatyaga_ is the abandonment of the hedonistic motive that self-satisfaction or happiness is the supreme end of _prappati_. . . _bharasamarpana_ is the renunciation of the sense of responsibility involved in the saving act. . . _svarupatyaga_ is not only the elimination of _ahankara_ but is also the gift of the self or _atman_ to God who is its real owner. (392-93)
Washed ashore in Pentapolis, Pericles hears the simple talk of the illiterate fishermen who interestingly compare the whales in the sea to the men living in land and is surprised at their clear judgment. The fishes in the sea live, says the first fisherman,

as men do a-land the great ones eat up the little ones: I can compare our rich misers to nothing so fitly as to a whale; a’ plays and tumbles, driving the poor fry before him, and at last devours them all at a mouthful: such whales have I heard on o’ the land, who never leave gaping till they’ve swallowed the whole parish, church, steeple, bells, and all. (II.i.30-37)

Pericles not only appreciates this plain opinion but also approves of it which brings in a realization, hitherto perhaps, unknown to him that leads him to surrender to these clean folks. He ruminates to himself:

How from the finny subject of the sea
These fishers tell the infirmities of men;
And from their watery empire recollect
All that may men approve or men detect! (II.i.51-54)

The knowledge that comes to Pericles unawares takes him to a higher impersonal level and from then on he will take sure steps towards progression in spiritual action. To quote Sri Aurobindo’s words from the *Essays on the Gita*:
The soul of the liberated man is free in its impersonality, even while he contributes to the action as its means and its occasion his instrumental personal self-creation and the special will and power in his nature. That will and power is now not separately, egoistically his own, but a force of the suprapersonal Divine who acts in this becoming of his own self. This is high secret and mystery of the action of the liberated man. It is the result of a growing of the human soul into a divine Light and of the union of its nature with a highest universal nature. (444)

As affirmed by Sri Aurobindo, there lies a greater motion, “the inner surrender of all our actions to the Divinity within us . . . [the] infinite Nature that impels our works and a divine Will in and above her that demands action of us” (443). This infinite Nature propels Hermione to present herself boldly as she stands abused by her husband in the open court. Shakespeare’s last plays heralded by Pericles are followed by The Winter’s Tale, Cymbeline and The Tempest. In The Winter’s Tale, Hermione, the Queen of Leontes, Sicilia’s King makes an absolute surrender to their God Apollo, when her jealous husband groundlessly accuses his heavily pregnant wife of having an affair with his friend Polixenes, the King of Bohemia who was on a friendly visit to his country. His paranoid anger persuades him to drag Hermione for a public trial in the Court of Justice for offences like adultery and treason. In the meantime a baby girl is born to her and the King orders the new born to be thrown on a desert shore. When
the officer reads the indictment she pleads innocence with full belief in the Almighty.

Since what I am to say must be but that
Which contradicts my accusation, and
The testimony on my part no other
But what comes from myself, it shall scarce boot me
To say ‘Not guilty’. Mine integrity,
Being countered falsehood, shall as I express it
Be so received.  

She has to refute the harsh accusations made against her. Since she has no other evidence to prove her point she has to speak for herself. As her integrity itself is tinted as her wickedness, whatever she says will be construed as untrue. She laments:

. . . But thus if powers divine

Behold our human actions – as they do –

I doubt not then but innocence shall make

False accusation blush and tyranny

Tremble at patience. 

But, the divine power is steadily watching the human actions and so she has no doubt then that innocence will make false accusations blush in shame and tyranny quiver before patience. Her absolute faith in the inherent divinity in her,
the free perfect working at that moment surrenders “altogether the action and its
origination to the divine Master . . . progressively taken up by a supreme
Presence . . the soul drawn into deep intimacy and close unity with an inner
Power and Godhead” (Essays on the Gita 444) as the work originates directly
from the greater Self. This is the moment of her spiritual birth delivered in the
pangs of utmost sorrow, pain and deep distress. Because of her utter innocence
she is not at all afraid of the capital punishment hanging over her head. She is
prepared to lay down her life since she has lost all the cherishable things. When
Leontes pronounces the judgment, “. . . so thou / Shalt feel our justice, in
whose easiest passage / Look for no less than death” (III. ii . 90 – 92) she is not
perturbed, but bravely faces the king and the courtiers. She is undoubtedly in a
‘distressed’, condition with dagger dangling on her head. She pleads innocence
but not pardon, surrenders to none except to their God, Apollo. She asserts that
she is at no fault; her honour, however, must be saved, respected. As a righteous
person, she is fully eligible for surrender to the Lord. She assertively states: “Sir,
spare your threats. / The bug which you would fright me with, I seek” (III. ii.
93- 94). She boldly tells him that his threat on her life is the one eagerly awaited
by her. She lists out the reasons for this:

The crown and comfort of my life, your favour,
I do give lost, for I do feel it gone,
But know not how it went. My second joy,
And first fruits of my body, from his presence
I am barr’d, like one infectious. My third comfort,
Starr’d most unluckily, is from my breast –
The innocent milk in it most innocent mouth –
Haled out to murder.
Myself on every post
Proclaimed a strumpet; with immodest hatred
The child-bed privilege denied, which ‘longs
To women of all fashion; (III.ii.96–106)

The most cherished highest position and comfort of her life is her husband’s love that is lost, the first child whom any mother considers as her most joyous treasure has been barred to be seen, the new born baby has been thrown out to be murdered and above all she has been proclaimed a prostitute by every public post and has been denied the privilege of child-rearing, the natural right of any woman. She stands helpless in distress with agony, shame, unworthiness and humiliated to the maximum. Her only help now is Apollo, their God. With absolute faith in Him and seeking Him as her savior she declares: “. . . I tell you / ‘Tis rigour and not law. Your honours all / I do refer me to the oracle: / Apollo be my judge”. (III.ii.112–15) Her surrender to the Universal Rakshaka, with an unshakeable confidence makes the people support her; all the lords accept her plea and her case is referred to the Temple of Apollo. The Divine Message comes: “Hermione is chaste: Polixenes blameless” (III. ii.132).
In spite of the pronouncement from the Apollo Temple, the head-strong Leontes continues the legal proceedings against Hermione. But he realizes his mistake only on receiving the sad news that his son is dead. He now loudly cries: “Apollo is angry, and the heavens themselves / Do strike at my injustice” (III. ii.145 - 146). Hermione’s prayers and absolute surrender get answered. The Hindu mind is at once reminded of Sita in the *Ramayana* and Draupadi in the *Mahabharata*. Sita emerges untarnished in the fire-trial by obeying her husband’s verdict and making a surrender to the Fire-god. Draupadi is disgraced in the open court because her husband loses her in a dice-game. She makes an absolute surrender to the Lord. Her honour is protected. G. Wilson Knight in *Shakespeare’s Dramatic Challenge* (1977) remarks:

In *Pericles* and *The Winter’s Tale*, what Nietzsche (Friedrich Nietzsche) would call the ‘Dionysian’ plunge into the womb of Being or Nirvana, is given a more Apollonian emphasis in Pericles’ reunion with his wife and daughter, and the statue scene of Hermione’s resurrection. (148)

In the later plays of which *The Winters’ Tale* is one, Shakespeare must have realized that death is not the answer for problems and that a more amicable way could be traced. This maturity provides a happy, peaceful ending to these plays. In the trial scene of *The Winter’s Tale*, Hermione is the winner though Leontes announces his legal verdict, the capital punishment to her. While he arrogantly
alleges his authority, she calmly avows her faith. Never can a brute power win; only the divine power stands aloft in the end, though the triumph comes a little late. The nomenclature of the Supreme power and the appropriation may be different in different cultures; but the belief that with absolute surrender to the Supreme, one is sure to get relief stands proved. To formulate the prapatti or saranagati notion, Ramanuja largely depends on the twin epics of India and the Female Heroes of the epics -- Sita and Draupadi help him to concretize the conception since they are Mercy incarnate. Hermione is no less than these two magnificent women. Her exile for sixteen long years perhaps makes her wiser and elevates her self to a superior level. Miranda, Pericles and Hermione suffer in different distress situations as they make their surrender to a higher force. Hermione’s anguish is far deeper than the other two since she undergoes a public ignominy. No other female protagonist of Shakespeare endures such a humiliation and indignity. Faith in the Supreme Power provides her sustenance.

From those of the ‘distressed’ or the artis, the discussion must go to artharthi -- those who surrender to Him with self-interest seeking good or material wealth. The main focus of the play, The Merchant of Venice, is acquiring wealth and thereby acquiescing love. The play then, deals with the twin themes, money and love. March Shell in his informative book Money, Language and Thought (1982) makes a survey of this play in one chapter and observes:
Generation, or production, is the principal topic of Shakespeare’s *The Merchant of Venice*. In this play the quest for material and spiritual riches – for money and love – involves two related conceptual difficulties: the similarity between natural sexual generation and monetary generation, and the apparent commensurability (even identity) of men and money. . . . The play generates a grand political and economic critique of human production . . . Antonio is an unfortunate “royal merchant” whose purse is exhausted . . . offers to aid Bassanio with “[his] purse, [his] person” . . . All that Antonio can do is borrow a purse for his friend by hazarding a vital part of his person. (48)

Shakespeare has portrayed Bassanio, friend of Antonio, a wealthy merchant of Venice as one who approaches Antonio as the only redeemer for his financial troubles. To Bassanio he is the Supreme Power to haul him out of his financial miseries. During his first meeting with Antonio in the beginning of the play, the conversation revolves around materialistic aspects only. He laments about losing all his property by extravagant spending. “To you Antonio / I owe the most in money and love” (I. 1.132 – 133). He continues his prelude for money by saying: “And from your love I have a warranty / To unburden all my plots and purposes / How to get clear all the debts I owe” (134 -136). Bassanio’s obvious intention is to get monetary help from Antonio. Next are the words spoken by Antonio that reveal his true friendship:
I pray you good Bassanio, let me know it.
And if it stand as you yourself still do
Within the eye of honour, be assured
My purse, my person, my extremest means
Lie all unlocked for your occasions. (I. i. 137-41)

John Russell Brown in the introduction of the Arden Edition of *The Merchant of Venice* comments:

The story does not allow Bassanio to show the same nobility in friendship as Antonio does. He is dependent on his friend and can only say that he would do brave things for his sake. Shakespeare has however protected him from the charge of thoughtlessness. (xlvi)

While talking about Portia, whom he proposes to woo, Bassanio’s unconcealed focus is on her money first. He says: “In Belmont is a lady richly left” (I.i.163). This is a clear proof that he is a seeker of wealth and material prosperity. To attain this he surrenders to Antonio, though not in explicit term, but by requesting him to give him one more chance to come up in life. He concludes by saying: “. . . bring you latter hazard back again, / And thankfully rest debtor for the first”(I. i.153–4). He is sure of returning the debt given to him for the second time and will continue to remain a debtor for the first help. After describing the lady of Belmont, he concludes:
O my Antonio, had I but the means
To hold a rival place with one of them
I have a mind presages me such thrift
That I should questionless be fortunate. (I. ii. 175–178)

Bassanio’s aim is only to fulfil his needs. But the compassionate Antonio agrees to sign a bond in which he risks his own life. Bassanio’s lament makes Antonio take the hazard of signing the bond since he is unable to see his friend’s suffering and more because the friend has approached him in all faith that he would help him out of his financial crisis. He signs the bond containing the words:

If you repay me not on such a day,

. . . let the forfeit

Be nominated for an equal pound

Of your fair flesh, to be cut off and taken,

In what part of your body it pleaseth me. (I. iii.138–143)

Bassanio gets the benefit of monetary and materialistic pleasures out of the immense compassion of Antonio. The Lord’s assurance is that He would save anybody who surrenders unto Him and would fulfill their wishes on any of the four accounts; this is the anchor of hope for any jiva. Whoever be the faithful saranagatha, their wish is fulfilled – whether it is for life, for saving their modesty, for reaching very high positions or for material prosperity. The well-known instance is the artharathi Sudhama, popularly identified as the poverty-
stricken Kuchela in dire need of money and material prosperity. He does not ask explicitly anything from his friend Krishna, but the Lord, being the indweller of all beings understands his needs and the desires of his family. He answers his faithful prayers by showering prosperity on them. Shakespeare’s Antonio has been portrayed as a person volunteering his help by merely reading the mind of Bassanio. If a man of this empirical world has such an understanding, mind-reading and helping nature, none can measure the capacity of the indweller who is the personification of compassion and mercy. That the Supreme Self abides in the individual self and divinizes it has been vouched by the scriptures. Srinivasachari observes:

The moral idea of **Brahman** as the **Parama Purusa** or the pure and perfect self, who abides in the **jiva** as its **antaryamin** or indwelling Self is to transfigure its mind-body into a living temple of the Lord or **Brahmapuri**, and brahmanise the **jiva**. . . . The infinite that is the abode of the entire universe has its home in the infinitesimal ether of the heart without being spatialised or conditioned and untainted even by a shadow of evil with a view to infinities and perfect the self. (142-143)

Antonio, undoubtedly is a divinized being, whose compassion readily gushes out to help his needy friend even by risking his own person. The **artharthi** here, unknowingly surrenders to the Supreme Indweller, Who instantaneously manifests Himself in the individual.
The third category of *saranagathas*, according to the *Bhagavad Gita* is *jignasu*, one who is desirous of getting *atma jnana*. Swami Sivananda gives the meaning of the word ‘*jignasu*’ in his book *Bhagawad Gita* (1957) as an ‘enquirer’ and explains thus: “He is dissatisfied with this world. There is a void in his life. He always feels that sensual pleasures are the highest form of happiness and there is yet pure external bliss unmixed with grief and pain which is to be found within” (271–272). Many characters of Shakespeare undergo suffering of one sort or other in their lives leading them sometimes to calamity and sorrow or at times to redress and joy. The anguish of the ego-centric Prospero, the Duke of Milan in *The Tempest* is self-inflicted. He is a scholar, inquisitive and thirsty of knowledge. He admits about his yearning after knowledge that perpetrates the weakness of neglecting his duties as an administrator. He tells his daughter Miranda:

And Prospero. The prime duke, being so reputed
In dignity and for the liberal arts
Without a parallel. Those being all my study
The government I cast upon my brother
And to my state grew stranger, being transported
And rapt in secret studies.

. . . my library

Was dukedom large enough. (I. ii.86–91, 125-126)
During Shakespeare’s time it was a commonly accepted fact that a knowledgeable person try to achieve mastery in the art of conjuring and bring natural powers under his control. Prospero is portrayed as one such person. His enthrallment in studying and gaining knowledge leads him to the misery of losing his dukedom itself. However, Prospero realizes his mistakes, of neglecting his assigned duty as a duke and due to this, corrupting the mind of his brother. Ratri Ray in *William Shakespeare’s The Tempest* (2007) records:

Shakespeare shows that the neglect of duties for the sake of studies is also to be condemned, for this is no less of a self-indulgence than indulging in luxurious life, or in amorous pursuits. Prospero, looking back at this part of his life, severely condemns on two accounts, first because he neglected his own duties and secondly because this offered temptation to his brother. . . . In other words, he had not been a good administrator and had brought misfortunes upon himself by reposing trust on a person unworthy of it. (92)

Nevertheless, his studies prepare him for greater actions to evolve out as a real human being. Ratri Ray observes further: “The twelve years of enforced exile on the island, with the care of a helpless infant brought about a great change in him. Not only did he come to realize the special importance of repentance leading to forgiveness. In the island he showed his potentialities for development, not as a scholar, but as a human being”(92-93). Alan Hobson also remarks: “From his
great knowledge acquired during the years of irresponsibility came his great skill and power in the year of responsibility” (94).

Attention is drawn to the various actions of Prospero, as a beloved father and as a worldly man to get back his lost dukedom. He raises a storm to bring to shore all his ‘enemies’ but his maturity makes him give assurance to his daughter that no harm would be done to anybody. Prospero’s harshness to spirits like Ariel, Caliban and humans like Naples’ Prince Ferdinand – all make one to think that he is a task master with revenge in his heart. But from the state of a jignasu he has evolved to the state of a jnani, who at last renounces everything and releases all from his bondage showing mercy on them. He prays to the unknown to free him from all his crimes. Alan Gibson in *Full Circle* describes his last words that come out as a culmination of his creative experience:

Shakespeare’s last word is a moral injunction, the meaning of which he has explored for many years both through characters who affirm and characters who deny it. Even if the metaphysical context of the words be ignored, a reader who can translate the specialized language into his own idiom will recognize on the one hand Shakespeare’s sense of causal necessity and of the darkness of man’s heart, and on the other hand his affirmations of the saving bonds of love. The moral implications are not merely for the adherents of a
particular religious group, or for those who have beliefs about personal immortality. (221)

His surrender of his earthly powers brings the play to a beautiful harmony. His act of relinquishment of all his powers becomes his absolute surrender of his ego and of himself. G. Wilson Knight in his essay “Shakespeare and Religion” published in 1964 and which is included in the volume *Shakespeare and Religion: Essays of Forty Years* (1967) traces out the dramatist’s Christian leanings in his last plays and states that in *Pericles* and *The Winter’s Tale* correspondences with the New Testament are obvious, but they are not explicitly Christian as in the last play *Henry VIII*. He further says: “Rather, by his own dramatic explorations Shakespeare has wrenched from the great enigma, death, a conclusion that corroborates, without copying, the Christian revelation” (235). The critic views that these understandings must be brought to *The Tempest* and in particular Prospero’s “great speech on earthly transience” in Act IV Scene 1, the lines commencing “These our actors / As I told you, were all spirits” and ending with the famous quote, “We are such stuff / As dreams are made on, and our little life / Is rounded with a sleep”. Wilson Knight’s concluding remarks must be mentioned:

Though agnostic and non-committal, the words nevertheless expand our perceptions beyond all normal experience. And the Tempest has more in it than this: it simultaneously sums Shakespeare’s life-work
and shows man wielding powers beyond the human; aureoled, by magic certainly, perhaps by the divine. (236)

Another significant aspect in Shakespeare’s critical canon to be considered is that this “Shakespearean superman” is more or less an autobiographical figure. Ratri Ray makes a reference to poet Thomas Campbell (1777-1844) “who first suggested this view and many later critics accepted it: Prospero, who controls this comprehensive Shakespearean world, automatically reflects Shakespeare himself. It is specially with reference to his renunciation of his magical powers that this interpretation is thought to be relevant.” (94). This voluntary gesture gains grandeur and must be appreciated as he has been wielding superior power in the island. Apart from this, says Ratri Ray, other features of his character, the magician, the ruler, the scholar and the man, must also be taken into account:

All these four different aspects . . . unite to create the wonderful character that he is. . . . the development of character from a withdrawn, negligent ruler into a man who has learnt the value of repentance and forgiveness is clearly seen. It is his ability to forgive his enemies and renounce his powers that gives a sublime quality to his character. . . . The memory of his wrong is still green in his mind, but he does not dwell on revenge. . . . This highly Christian sentiment is clearly expressed in the fifth Act. (95)
The play “thus shows a regeneration, not only through a younger generation, but regeneration in Prospero himself” (75). He does not retire from worldly life and by renouncing his magical powers, he readily accepts his duties of dukedom in a spirit of humility: “And hence retire to my Milan, where / Every third thought should be my grave”. Shakespeare emphasizes this attitude of spiritual maturity in the ‘Epilogue’ also. The critic makes a concise remark about the transformation of Prospero:

This new Prospero is one who has realized the importance of working among and through other human beings in ordinary society. His power in the island had been absolute, but over non-human creatures. Now he has to go back to his dukedom and mingle with ordinary men. (76)

This jnani is totally different from the banished Prospero twelve years ago, having purged off the ego and pride and attained an awesome nobility by relinquishing even his cherished art of conjuring. With a calm mind-set he is prepared to accept his karma. T. Spencer in his Shakespeare and the Nature of Man (1942) forwards a similar observation: “His wisdom makes him return to his rightful place as a governor of himself and, as a governor, through his dukedom, of other human beings as well” (199). In other words, Prospero gets a self-realization and makes an absolute surrender to the Supreme Power by abandoning the trivial magical ability.
Prospero, the prapanna seems to satisfy the five constituents of prapatti noted above. S.S. Raghavachar explicates these accessory factors and indicates that the first aspect, anukulyasya-sankalpa has a broader purpose, which seems to describe Prospero’s regeneration. He says: “The person who resorts to God in this [anukulyasya-samkalpa] way must resolve to be in conformity to the divine will and strive to co-operate in all that God designs. This includes the entire kingdom of souls that are objects of God’s compassion and the prapanna must make his love cover the entire universe” (59). The scholar further enunciates the meaning of prapatti:

Aided by these accessory factors, the devotee must place his spiritual responsibility and burden in God’s hands. This is transfer of responsibility, called bhara-samarpana or bhara-nyasa or atmaniksepa. This factor is the core or the principal element in prapatti. . . . The jiva has to will his will away at the feet of the Lord. It is a giving up of responsibility and giving it up to God. It is a negative-positive process. Individual effort is terminated so that divine effort may replace it. Trustful passivity succeeds surrender. . . . Such is the outline of the plan of sadhana according to Visistadvaita. . . . The Principle of ‘synthesis and subordination’ seems to govern the conception . . . The two ultimate factors in sadhana are the grace of God and human effort, and both of them are necessary and function in unison. Between them human effort is
accessory to the operation of grace. In *karma-yoga*, there is the
dedication of works to God, and in the process we have both the
inner element of understanding, *jnana*, and the outer expression in
action. Between the two, action is the body and the *jnana*-factor is
the soul of the full *karma-yoga*. (60)

This lengthy elucidation should be rounded off with the indisputable
authority. Lord Krishna in the *Bhagavad Gita* Chapter II talks in detail the
‘Samkhya Yoga’ or the Yoga of Knowledge, wherein he also describes who a
*jnani* or *sthitaprajnan* is in the slokas 55 to 71. Sloka 71 records: “*vihaya kaman
yah sarvan pumams carati nihsprhah / nirmamo niramkarah sa santim
adhigacchati* – He who abandons all desires and acts free from longing, without
any sense of mineness or egotism, he attains to peace” (Radhakrishnan 128).
Earlier in the same chapter, Krishna stresses on doing work without concern for
the results. The famous sloka 47 reads thus:

“*karmanyeva ‘dhikaras te ma phalesu kaddacana / ma karmaphalahetur bhur ma
te sango ‘stv akarmani’*. This verse “contains the essential principle of
disinterestedness. . . .Nothing matters except the good will, the willing
fulfillment of the purpose of God” (119). Sri Aurobindo’s masterly erudition in
the *Essays on the Gita* also illuminates the denotation of *prapatti*:

Yoga is meant union through divine works done without desire, with
equality of soul to all things and all men, as a sacrifice to the
Supreme while knowledge is that on which this desirelessness, this equality, this power of sacrifice is founded. . . . As the works grow more and more desireless, equal-minded, sacrificial in spirit, the knowledge increases; with the increase of the knowledge the soul becomes firmer in the desireless sacrificial equality of works. The sacrifice of knowledge, says the Gita therefore, is greater than any material sacrifice. (191)

That person is a prapanna who conducts his yoga of works desirelessly. “The Divine then takes the burden of works from him; the Supreme becomes the doer and the act and the result” (192). He of course does a perfect, absolute equality of self-surrender, “to be made one self with God above and God in man and God in the world [that] is the sense of liberation and the secret of perfection” (201). Prapatti connotes the synthesis of the divine and the human, “the opening of the will to the reception of the fullness of grace” (Plott 195), the ultimate Prayer. Shakespeare points to this utmost Prayer in the ‘Epilogue’ of his play The Tempest and thus makes his prapatti to the humanity in whom he sees Divinity:

And my ending is despair

Unless I be reliev’d by prayer,

Which pierces so that it assaults

Mercy itself and frees all faults.

As you from crimes would pardon’d be

Let your indulgence set me free. (V.i.370-75)