

Prapatti by Sri M.G. Prasad, New Jersey

It is our common experience that our universe and cosmos is full of infinite wonders, no matter where and when we look. It is the purpose of our precious human life to seek and realize the Supreme Being, Who creates, sustains and dissolves these wonders all the time. The scriptures refer to Him as Lord Sriman Naarayana. The universe with all sentient and non-sentient things forms His body. An effective process to achieve the realization of Lord Naarayana as the Supreme Being and experience of eternal Bliss is referred as Prapatti or Sharanaagati. This process is non-discriminatory and open to all. However this process has six requirements and they are given in a verse below.

**|| Aanukoolasya Samkalpaha Praatikoolasya varjanam Rakshishyateeti
Vishvaasaha Goptritvaranam tathaa Aatmanikshepa Kaarpanye Shadvidhaa
Sharanaaga- tihi ||**

The *Aanukoolasya samkalpaha* refers to doing whatever is agreeable and conforms to the will of the Lord Sriman Naarayana. Then *Praatikoolasya varjanam* refers to not doing anything that is disagreeable and which displeases the Lord Sriman Naarayana. Then *Kaarpanya* refers to helplessness that results from one's own realization that one is utterly incapable to protect oneself. Then *Rakshishyateeti Vishvaasaha* refers to the uncompromising faith at all times and all situations in the saving Grace of the Lord Sriman Naarayana. Then *Goptritvaranam* refers to the knowledge and action of sincere seeking of the protection of the Lord Sriman Naarayana. Then the *Aatmanikshepa* refers to the total surrender of the self at the holy feet of Lord Sriman Naarayana. Although six components are described here, it is seen that the *Aatmanikshepa* is the main purpose for which the other five components referred above integrally support the main purpose of the surrender of the self. The five components are the natural conditions that have to manifest in the individual for the surrender of the self at the holy feet of the Lord Sriman Naarayana, which is referred as Prapatti or Sharanaagati

There are infinitely large number of literary works on this subject matter. As an example there is the stotra composition namely Sri Venkatesha Prapatti recited as part of Venkatesha Suprabhatam (morning prayers) at Tirupati Temple in India and at innumerable number of other temples and homes. This suprabhatam is composed by Sri Hastyadrinatha (Prativadi Bha-yamkara) or Annan during 1361 AD -1454 AD. In this composition Venkatesha Prapatti, the poet beautifully describes the Lord as Omniscient, an Ocean of compassion, Protector of the universe and all things, Ocean of virtuous qualities etc. The poet declares that surrender to His holy feet is a sure means of saving oneself. Sharanaagati Gadya, a beautiful prose of Sri Ramanuja Acharya is another example. There has been innumerable number of devotees who have achieved this goal of Supreme Bliss through Prapatti. May we all pray for the Grace of Lord Sriman Narayana.

(Reference: The Philosophy of Sadhana in Visistadvaita by Dr. N.S. Anantha Rangacharya, Bangalore, 2006)