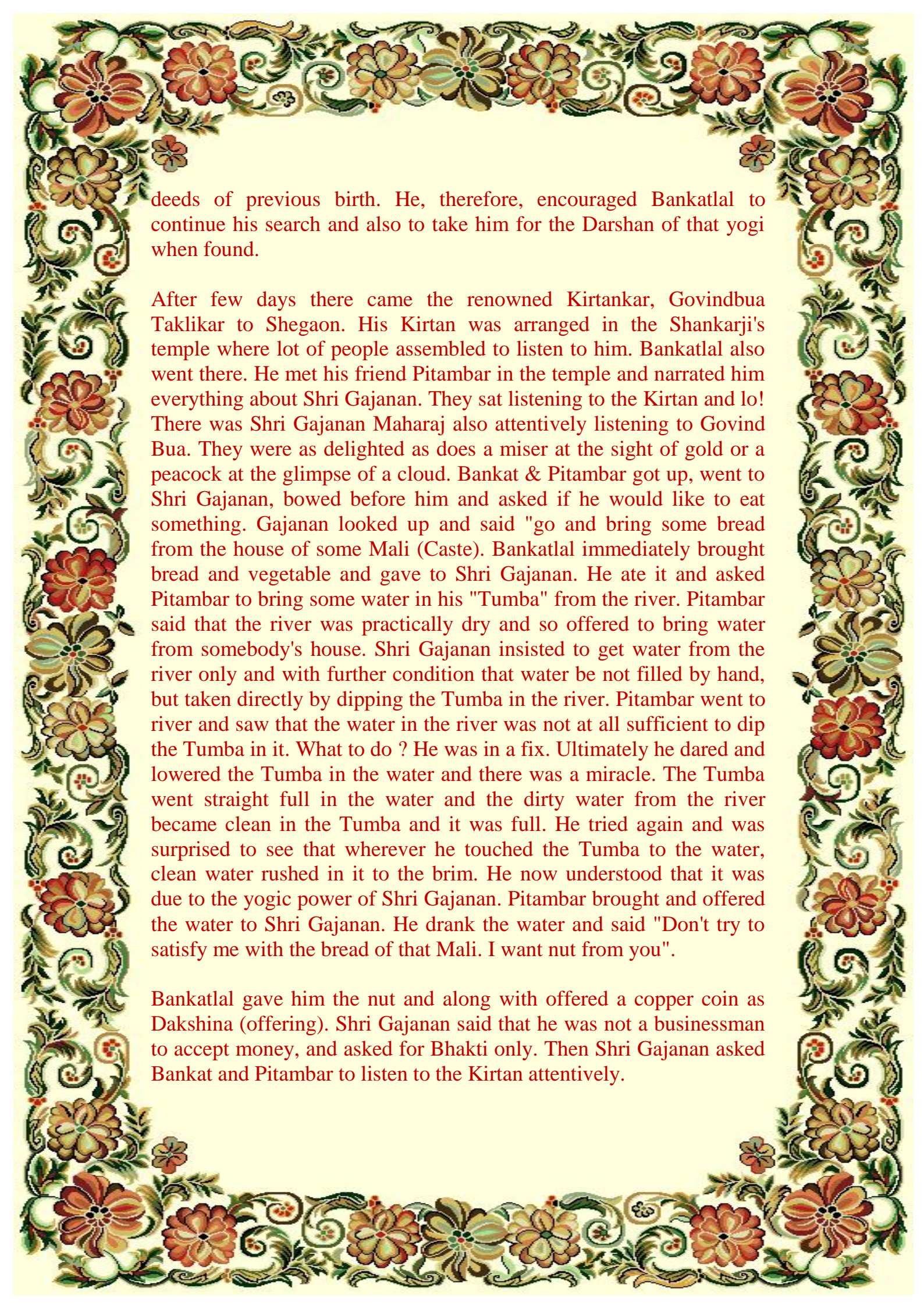


* CHAPTER TWO *



Shri Ganeshay Namaha ! O lord of Rukmini residing on the bank of Chandrabhaga (river), God of Gods, Friend of the poor, kindly look at me. O God ! Everything is futile without your favour. No one cares for a lifeless body. Beauty of a lake is due to the water in it. Juicy core of the fruits gives importance to its husk. Same is of your blessings. Kindly oblige me by removing all my sins, woes and poverty.

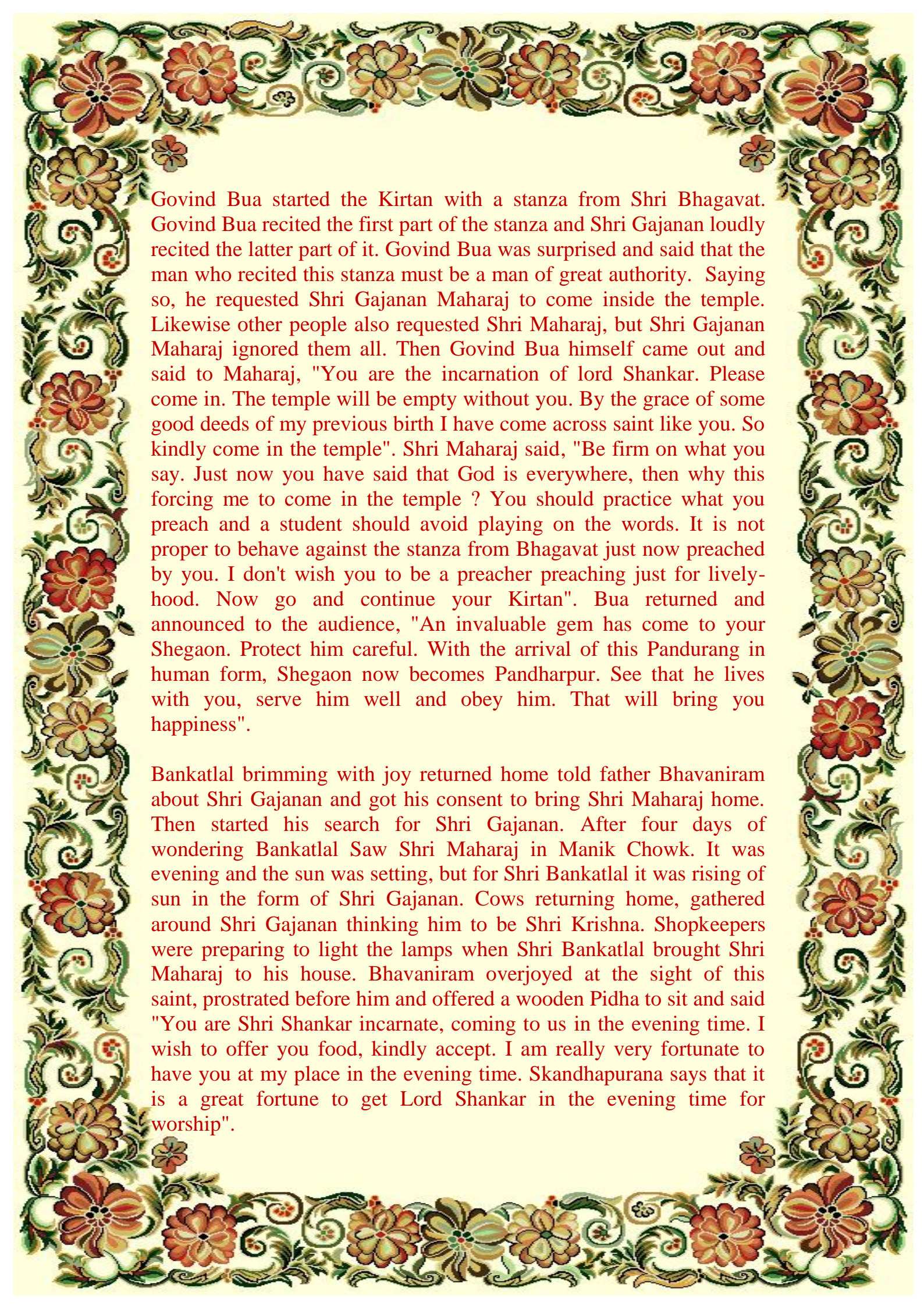
In the last chapter we have seen that Shri Gajanan suddenly left Bankatlal and went away. Since then Shri Bankatlal was craving to see Shri Gajanan again. Forgetting all worldly things like food and water he was constantly thinking of Shri Gajanan only, like a calf for its mother. But he could not share his mental condition with anybody not even with his father. His search continued throughout Shegaon but could not find Shri Gajanan. His father however, noticed the anxiety and despair writ large on the face of his young son. He asked him the reason for his unhappiness specially because God had blessed them abundantly with everything required for a happy life. Bankatlal did not reply and continued his search for Shri Gajanan. At last Bankatlal told everything of Shri Gajanan and his search for him to a neighbour Ramajipant Deshmukh, a pious old man. Hearing the details from Bankatlal, Ramajipant said that he must be some yogi, and meeting with such yogis is possible only if one has to his credit lot of good



deeds of previous birth. He, therefore, encouraged Bankatlal to continue his search and also to take him for the Darshan of that yogi when found.

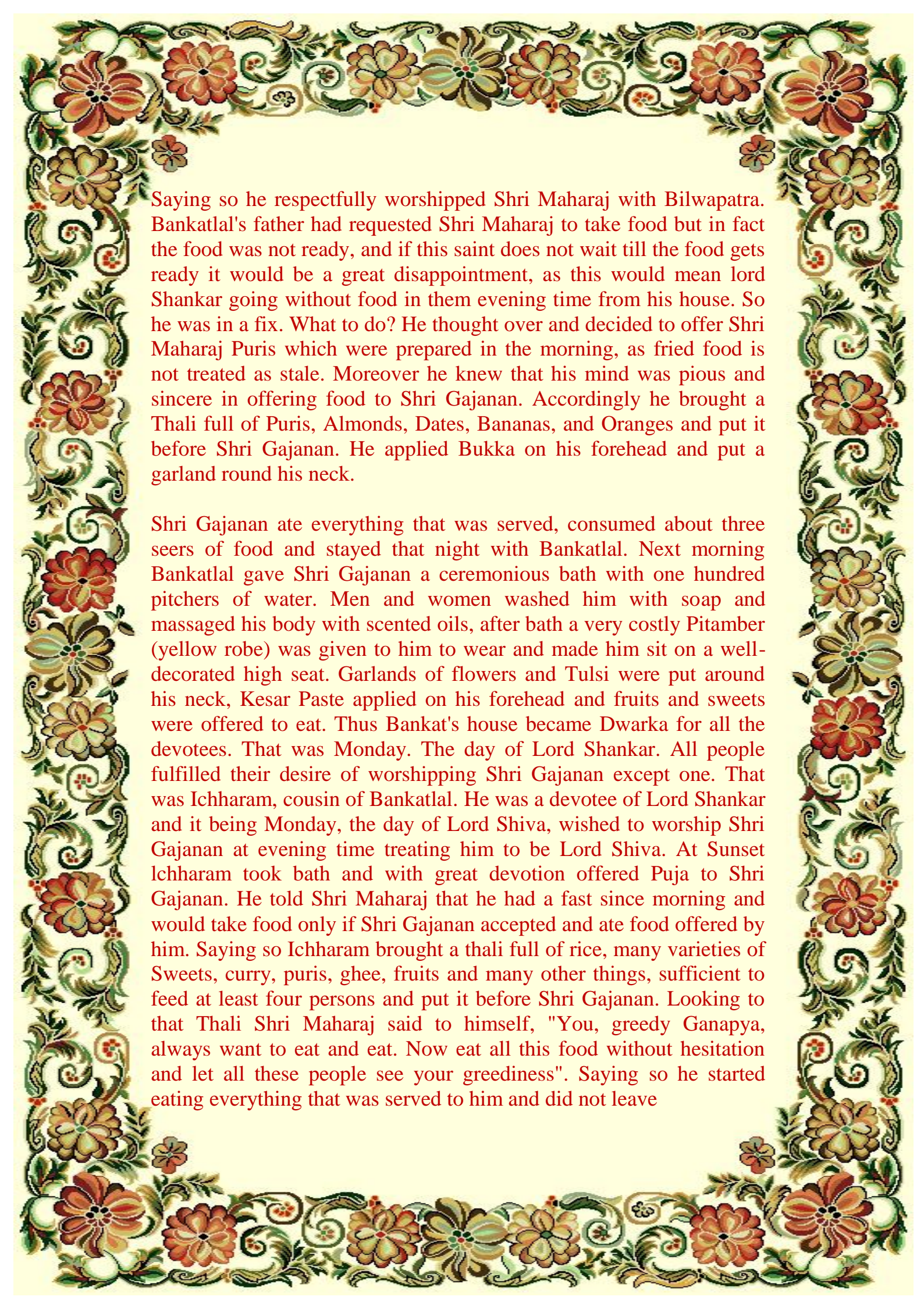
After few days there came the renowned Kirtankar, Govindbua Taklikar to Shegaon. His Kirtan was arranged in the Shankarji's temple where lot of people assembled to listen to him. Bankatlal also went there. He met his friend Pitambar in the temple and narrated him everything about Shri Gajanan. They sat listening to the Kirtan and lo! There was Shri Gajanan Maharaj also attentively listening to Govind Bua. They were as delighted as does a miser at the sight of gold or a peacock at the glimpse of a cloud. Bankat & Pitambar got up, went to Shri Gajanan, bowed before him and asked if he would like to eat something. Gajanan looked up and said "go and bring some bread from the house of some Mali (Caste). Bankatlal immediately brought bread and vegetable and gave to Shri Gajanan. He ate it and asked Pitambar to bring some water in his "Tumba" from the river. Pitambar said that the river was practically dry and so offered to bring water from somebody's house. Shri Gajanan insisted to get water from the river only and with further condition that water be not filled by hand, but taken directly by dipping the Tumba in the river. Pitambar went to river and saw that the water in the river was not at all sufficient to dip the Tumba in it. What to do ? He was in a fix. Ultimately he dared and lowered the Tumba in the water and there was a miracle. The Tumba went straight full in the water and the dirty water from the river became clean in the Tumba and it was full. He tried again and was surprised to see that wherever he touched the Tumba to the water, clean water rushed in it to the brim. He now understood that it was due to the yogic power of Shri Gajanan. Pitambar brought and offered the water to Shri Gajanan. He drank the water and said "Don't try to satisfy me with the bread of that Mali. I want nut from you".

Bankatlal gave him the nut and along with offered a copper coin as Dakshina (offering). Shri Gajanan said that he was not a businessman to accept money, and asked for Bhakti only. Then Shri Gajanan asked Bankat and Pitambar to listen to the Kirtan attentively.




Govind Bua started the Kirtan with a stanza from Shri Bhagavat. Govind Bua recited the first part of the stanza and Shri Gajanan loudly recited the latter part of it. Govind Bua was surprised and said that the man who recited this stanza must be a man of great authority. Saying so, he requested Shri Gajanan Maharaj to come inside the temple. Likewise other people also requested Shri Maharaj, but Shri Gajanan Maharaj ignored them all. Then Govind Bua himself came out and said to Maharaj, "You are the incarnation of lord Shankar. Please come in. The temple will be empty without you. By the grace of some good deeds of my previous birth I have come across saint like you. So kindly come in the temple". Shri Maharaj said, "Be firm on what you say. Just now you have said that God is everywhere, then why this forcing me to come in the temple ? You should practice what you preach and a student should avoid playing on the words. It is not proper to behave against the stanza from Bhagavat just now preached by you. I don't wish you to be a preacher preaching just for livelihood. Now go and continue your Kirtan". Bua returned and announced to the audience, "An invaluable gem has come to your Shegaon. Protect him careful. With the arrival of this Pandurang in human form, Shegaon now becomes Pandharpur. See that he lives with you, serve him well and obey him. That will bring you happiness".

Bankatlal brimming with joy returned home told father Bhavaniram about Shri Gajanan and got his consent to bring Shri Maharaj home. Then started his search for Shri Gajanan. After four days of wondering Bankatlal Saw Shri Maharaj in Manik Chowk. It was evening and the sun was setting, but for Shri Bankatlal it was rising of sun in the form of Shri Gajanan. Cows returning home, gathered around Shri Gajanan thinking him to be Shri Krishna. Shopkeepers were preparing to light the lamps when Shri Bankatlal brought Shri Maharaj to his house. Bhavaniram overjoyed at the sight of this saint, prostrated before him and offered a wooden Pidha to sit and said "You are Shri Shankar incarnate, coming to us in the evening time. I wish to offer you food, kindly accept. I am really very fortunate to have you at my place in the evening time. Skandhapurana says that it is a great fortune to get Lord Shankar in the evening time for worship".



Saying so he respectfully worshipped Shri Maharaj with Bilwapatra. Bankatlal's father had requested Shri Maharaj to take food but in fact the food was not ready, and if this saint does not wait till the food gets ready it would be a great disappointment, as this would mean lord Shankar going without food in their evening time from his house. So he was in a fix. What to do? He thought over and decided to offer Shri Maharaj Puris which were prepared in the morning, as fried food is not treated as stale. Moreover he knew that his mind was pious and sincere in offering food to Shri Gajanan. Accordingly he brought a Thali full of Puris, Almonds, Dates, Bananas, and Oranges and put it before Shri Gajanan. He applied Bukka on his forehead and put a garland round his neck.

Shri Gajanan ate everything that was served, consumed about three seers of food and stayed that night with Bankatlal. Next morning Bankatlal gave Shri Gajanan a ceremonious bath with one hundred pitchers of water. Men and women washed him with soap and massaged his body with scented oils, after bath a very costly Pitamber (yellow robe) was given to him to wear and made him sit on a well-decorated high seat. Garlands of flowers and Tulsi were put around his neck, Kesar Paste applied on his forehead and fruits and sweets were offered to eat. Thus Bankat's house became Dwarka for all the devotees. That was Monday. The day of Lord Shankar. All people fulfilled their desire of worshipping Shri Gajanan except one. That was Ichharam, cousin of Bankatlal. He was a devotee of Lord Shankar and it being Monday, the day of Lord Shiva, wished to worship Shri Gajanan at evening time treating him to be Lord Shiva. At Sunset Ichharam took bath and with great devotion offered Puja to Shri Gajanan. He told Shri Maharaj that he had a fast since morning and would take food only if Shri Gajanan accepted and ate food offered by him. Saying so Ichharam brought a thali full of rice, many varieties of Sweets, curry, puris, ghee, fruits and many other things, sufficient to feed at least four persons and put it before Shri Gajanan. Looking to that Thali Shri Maharaj said to himself, "You, greedy Ganapya, always want to eat and eat. Now eat all this food without hesitation and let all these people see your greediness". Saying so he started eating everything that was served to him and did not leave



even a grain of salt in the Thali. Then to show the result of forceful eating, Shri Gajanan vomited everything that he ate.

Shri Ramdas Swami once did same thing, it so happened that he felt craze to eat Sweet Kheer. He asked for it and ate to his full. Overeating resulted in vomiting. Shri Ramdas started eating back what he vomited just to win over the desire. Similarly Shri Gajanan, though quite strong to digest anything, vomited only to teach lesson to those who pressurize for eating. Thereafter the devotees cleaned the place, gave bath to Shri Gajanan and made him sit on a raised seat. Many people came to pay respect to Gajanan.

They started singing devotional songs. Shri Maharaj was very happy to listen them and within that mood began chanting to himself "Gan Ganat Bote" in tune with the Bhajan. It continued whole night. Because of his above utterance of "Gan Gan Ganat Bote" people started calling him as "Gajanan". In fact he himself being Brahma needs no name. Yogis are perpetually engrossed in their yogis trance and the joy that they derive out of that has no comparison. As people go to Pandharpur in Ashadha, to Nasik in Sinhastha or to Haridwar for Kumbhamela, so they started going to Shegaon for Shri Gajanan Maharaj. Swami Samarth Gajanan, himself Vithal Narayan, is standing like a rock of determination at Shegaon. His words were the bank of holy Godavari, the joy begotten out of it was Haridwar and the whole Shegaon was crowded by People to meet Shri Gajanan in this temple which was Bankatlal's house. Thus innumerable people were coming to Bankatlal's house for Darshan of Shri Gajanan. One who has attained Brahmipada has no caste. The rays of the sun equally bless everything and everybody. Fresh batches of people were coming daily to Shegaon and food was served to hundreds of people. In fact it is all beyond the power of description of a small fly like me. Everything is being said and narrated by Shri Gajanan himself by using me as a tool for that purpose. His life story is vast and I fall too short to describe it. However, I now narrate to you his daily routine. At times he took good bath and sometimes used to drink dirty water. His daily routine was most uncertain like the speed of air. He loved smoking but had no craving for it. Now listen to the next chapter with faith.

Dasganu desires this book to be an ideal guide for the devotees.

"Shubham Bhavatu"
"Shri Hari Hararpanamastu"

Here is the End of Chapter Two.



Compiled by : Shravan Pande, Shegaon, India.