

## \* CHAPTER THREE \*

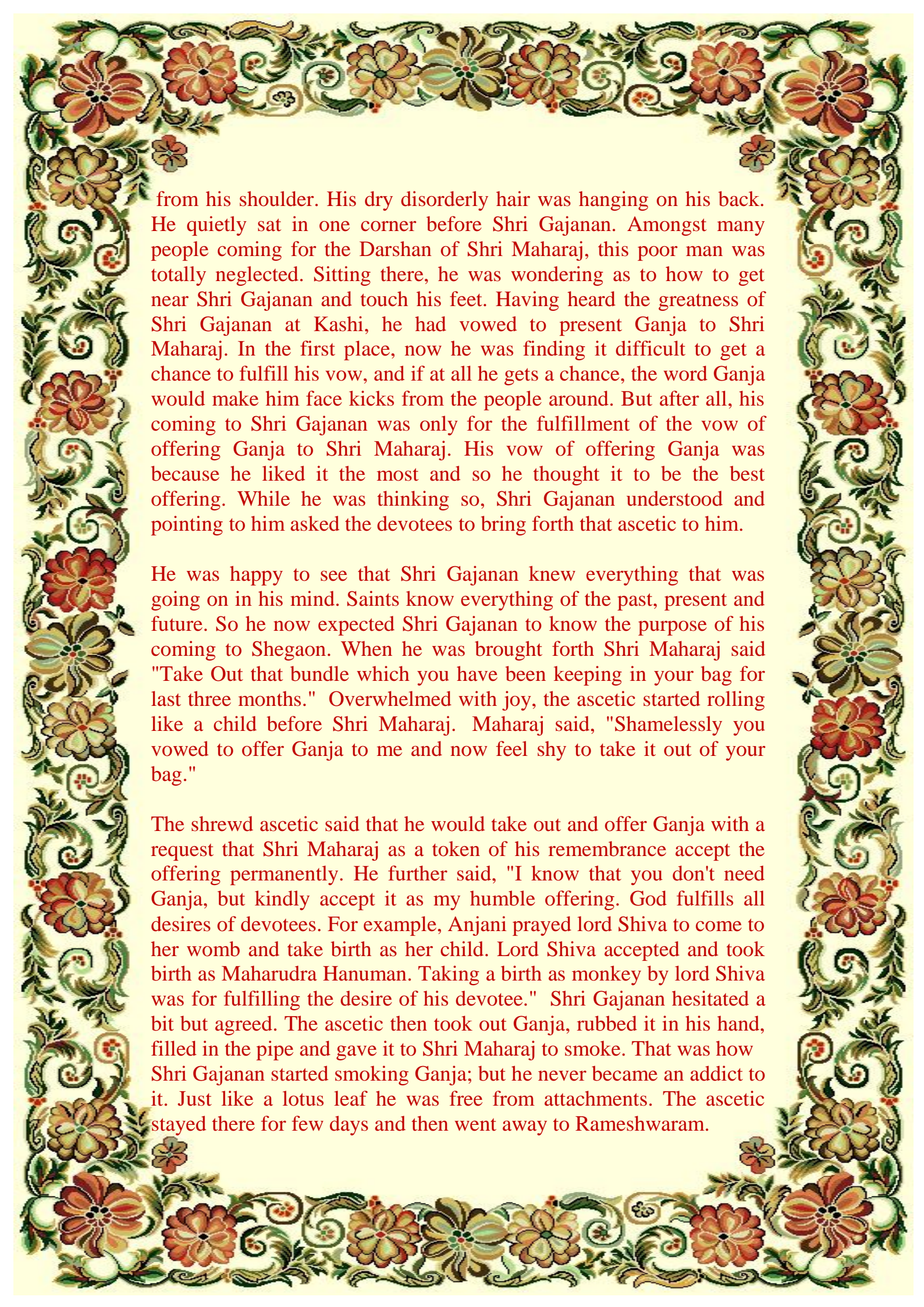


Shri Ganeshay Namaha ! O Sachhidanand Shri Hari, be kind to me as you never had been harsh to the fallen ones. You are ocean of kindness, mother to the sufferers and Kalpataru to your devotees. O Rama, such is your reputation as sung by saints. So, Purushottama, bless this Dasganu also, without delay.

Shri Gajanan Maharaj stayed at Bankatlal's house. People from distant places also started coming to him for Darshan. Flies gather where there is honey. It requires no invitation.

Now listen to what happened one day. Shri Maharaj was sitting in jubilant mood. It was morning time. Eastern horizon was red and birds were singing. Soft breeze was blowing and old people, sitting in their beds, were chanting God's name. Peeping up of the sun from the east drove away the darkness. Pious married ladies were sprinkling water in their courtyard and calves were running to the cows.


At such a pleasant morning an ascetic came for the Darshan of Shri Gajanan Maharaj. With his worn out clothes he was looking like a beggar. How can such a beggarly looking person expect good reception from the rich people sitting around Shri Maharaj ? He had a small loincloth, a kerchief around his head and a small bag hanging



from his shoulder. His dry disorderly hair was hanging on his back. He quietly sat in one corner before Shri Gajanan. Amongst many people coming for the Darshan of Shri Maharaj, this poor man was totally neglected. Sitting there, he was wondering as to how to get near Shri Gajanan and touch his feet. Having heard the greatness of Shri Gajanan at Kashi, he had vowed to present Ganja to Shri Maharaj. In the first place, now he was finding it difficult to get a chance to fulfill his vow, and if at all he gets a chance, the word Ganja would make him face kicks from the people around. But after all, his coming to Shri Gajanan was only for the fulfillment of the vow of offering Ganja to Shri Maharaj. His vow of offering Ganja was because he liked it the most and so he thought it to be the best offering. While he was thinking so, Shri Gajanan understood and pointing to him asked the devotees to bring forth that ascetic to him.

He was happy to see that Shri Gajanan knew everything that was going on in his mind. Saints know everything of the past, present and future. So he now expected Shri Gajanan to know the purpose of his coming to Shegaon. When he was brought forth Shri Maharaj said "Take Out that bundle which you have been keeping in your bag for last three months." Overwhelmed with joy, the ascetic started rolling like a child before Shri Maharaj. Maharaj said, "Shamelessly you vowed to offer Ganja to me and now feel shy to take it out of your bag."

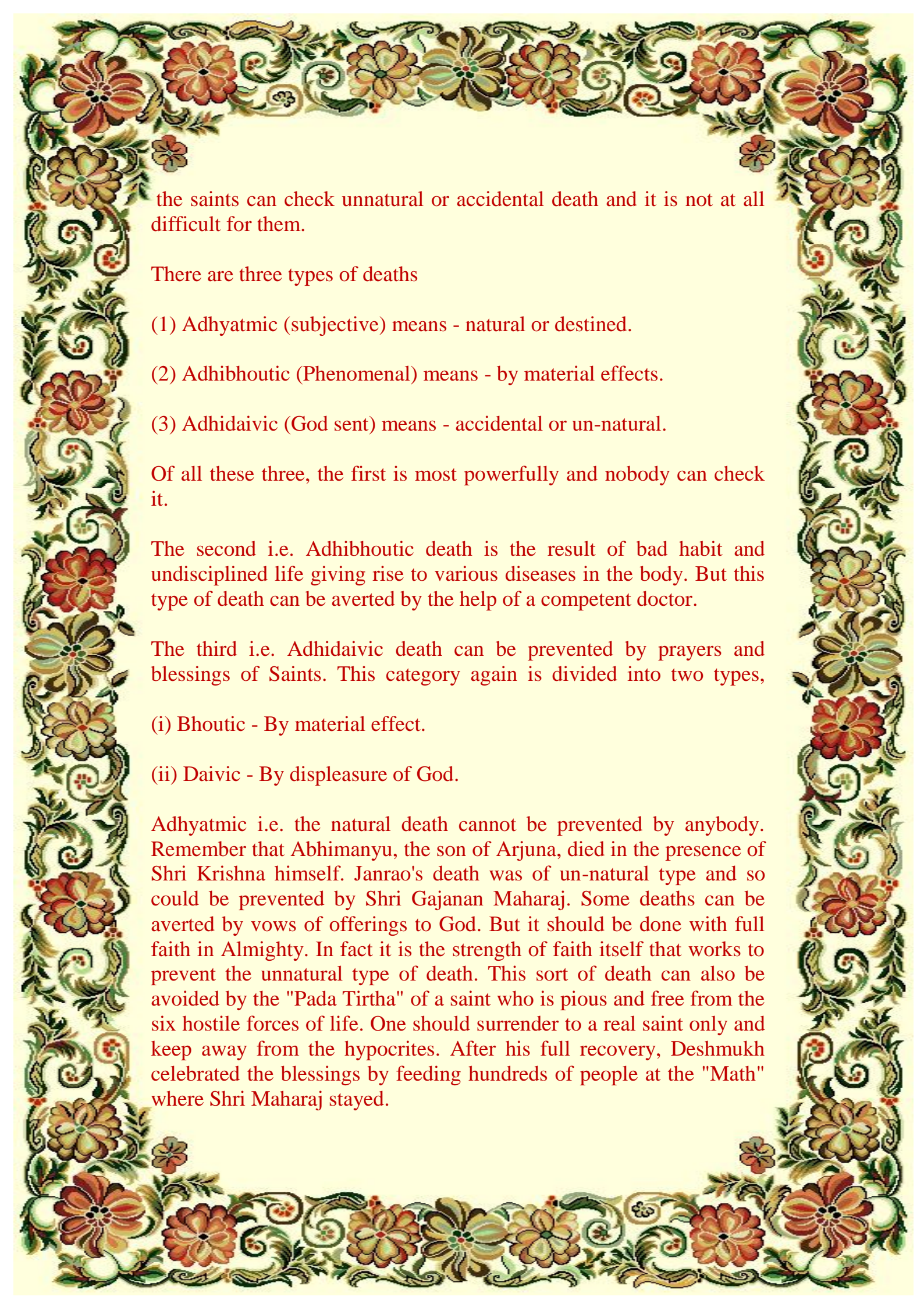
The shrewd ascetic said that he would take out and offer Ganja with a request that Shri Maharaj as a token of his remembrance accept the offering permanently. He further said, "I know that you don't need Ganja, but kindly accept it as my humble offering. God fulfills all desires of devotees. For example, Anjani prayed lord Shiva to come to her womb and take birth as her child. Lord Shiva accepted and took birth as Maharudra Hanuman. Taking a birth as monkey by lord Shiva was for fulfilling the desire of his devotee." Shri Gajanan hesitated a bit but agreed. The ascetic then took out Ganja, rubbed it in his hand, filled in the pipe and gave it to Shri Maharaj to smoke. That was how Shri Gajanan started smoking Ganja; but he never became an addict to it. Just like a lotus leaf he was free from attachments. The ascetic stayed there for few days and then went away to Rameshwaram.



Sometimes Shri Maharaj used to recite "Veda Verses" in sweet clear tones, and at times observed silence. Reciting of his Vedas indicated that he was a Brahmin. Sometimes he used to sing a composition in different "ragas" or go on singing his Mantra "Gan Gan Ganat Bote". At other times he observed silence or quietly slept. Some-times he behaved like a mad man, or wandered in jungles or entered somebody's house unexpectedly.

At Shegaon there was a famous man by name Janrao Deshmukh. He was on deathbed and all the doctors declared him as a hopeless case, and accordingly told his relatives. It was sad news to them. They prayed to God, Promised vows but to no avail. So they thought of the last remedy i.e. of approaching Shri Gajanan Maharaj with belief that saints can perform any miracle. Shri Dnyaneshwar brought Sacchidanand back to life, and the same can be done by Shri Gajanan for Janrao. So one of the relatives went to the house of Bankatlal, where Shri Gajanan was staying, and narrating whole story of Janrao requested him to give "Pada Tirtha" of Shri Gajanan which they would give to Janrao Deshmukh. Shri Bankatlal with the permission of his father Bhavaniram, took a glass of water touched it to feet of Shri Maharaj and told that the Tirtha was being given to Janrao Deshmukh. Shri Gajanan Maharaj gave his consent. Thereafter the Tirtha was given to Janrao Deshmukh who immediately regained consciousness and thereafter slowly recovered from the illness. All the medicines were stopped and Janrao was kept on daily dose of Tirtha from the feet of Shri Maharaj. He gained his normal health within a week and went to Shri Bhavaniram's house for the Darshan of Shri Gajanan Maharaj. Look, the water from the feet of Shri Maharaj had the effect of nectar. This is so because the saints are the gods in "Kaliyug".

With such a happening one may say that nobody should die in Shegaon so long as Shri Gajanan Maharaj is there. But it is not logical. Saints do not prevent death, nor they behave against nature. But they can avoid a death if it is unnatural or accidental. Shri Dnyaneshwar avoided the death of Shri Sacchidanand at Newasha but the same Sacchidanand later on had to die at Alandi. That means,



the saints can check unnatural or accidental death and it is not at all difficult for them.

There are three types of deaths

- (1) Adhyatmic (subjective) means - natural or destined.
- (2) Adhibhoutic (Phenomenal) means - by material effects.
- (3) Adhidaivic (God sent) means - accidental or un-natural.

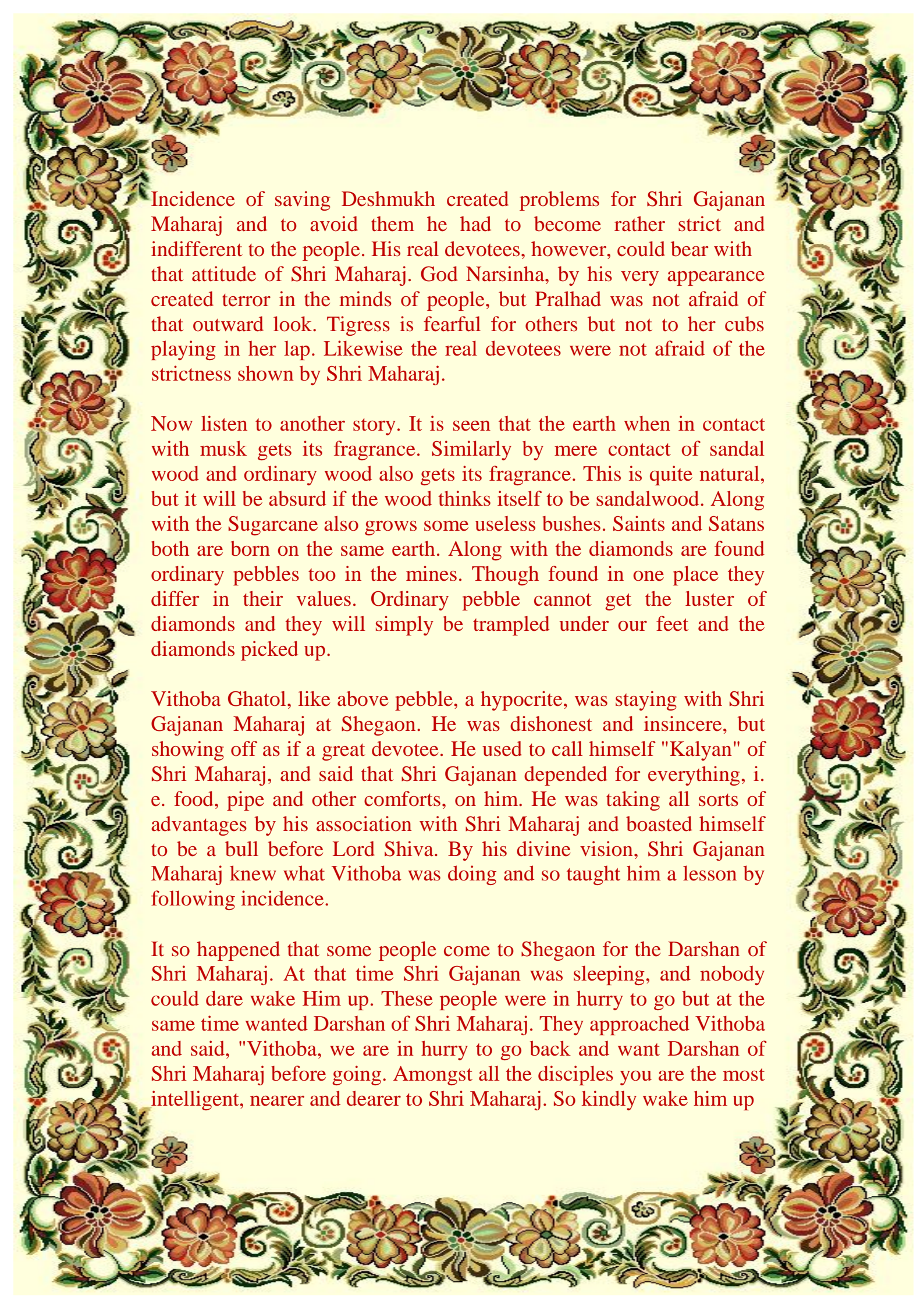
Of all these three, the first is most powerfully and nobody can check it.

The second i.e. Adhibhoutic death is the result of bad habit and undisciplined life giving rise to various diseases in the body. But this type of death can be averted by the help of a competent doctor.

The third i.e. Adhidaivic death can be prevented by prayers and blessings of Saints. This category again is divided into two types,

- (i) Bhoutic - By material effect.
- (ii) Daivic - By displeasure of God.

Adhyatmic i.e. the natural death cannot be prevented by anybody. Remember that Abhimanyu, the son of Arjuna, died in the presence of Shri Krishna himself. Janrao's death was of un-natural type and so could be prevented by Shri Gajanan Maharaj. Some deaths can be averted by vows of offerings to God. But it should be done with full faith in Almighty. In fact it is the strength of faith itself that works to prevent the unnatural type of death. This sort of death can also be avoided by the "Pada Tirtha" of a saint who is pious and free from the six hostile forces of life. One should surrender to a real saint only and keep away from the hypocrites. After his full recovery, Deshmukh celebrated the blessings by feeding hundreds of people at the "Math" where Shri Maharaj stayed.



Incidence of saving Deshmukh created problems for Shri Gajanan Maharaj and to avoid them he had to become rather strict and indifferent to the people. His real devotees, however, could bear with that attitude of Shri Maharaj. God Narsinha, by his very appearance created terror in the minds of people, but Pralhad was not afraid of that outward look. Tigress is fearful for others but not to her cubs playing in her lap. Likewise the real devotees were not afraid of the strictness shown by Shri Maharaj.

Now listen to another story. It is seen that the earth when in contact with musk gets its fragrance. Similarly by mere contact of sandal wood and ordinary wood also gets its fragrance. This is quite natural, but it will be absurd if the wood thinks itself to be sandalwood. Along with the Sugarcane also grows some useless bushes. Saints and Satans both are born on the same earth. Along with the diamonds are found ordinary pebbles too in the mines. Though found in one place they differ in their values. Ordinary pebble cannot get the luster of diamonds and they will simply be trampled under our feet and the diamonds picked up.

Vithoba Ghatol, like above pebble, a hypocrite, was staying with Shri Gajanan Maharaj at Shegaon. He was dishonest and insincere, but showing off as if a great devotee. He used to call himself "Kalyan" of Shri Maharaj, and said that Shri Gajanan depended for everything, i. e. food, pipe and other comforts, on him. He was taking all sorts of advantages by his association with Shri Maharaj and boasted himself to be a bull before Lord Shiva. By his divine vision, Shri Gajanan Maharaj knew what Vithoba was doing and so taught him a lesson by following incidence.

It so happened that some people come to Shegaon for the Darshan of Shri Maharaj. At that time Shri Gajanan was sleeping, and nobody could dare wake Him up. These people were in hurry to go but at the same time wanted Darshan of Shri Maharaj. They approached Vithoba and said, "Vithoba, we are in hurry to go back and want Darshan of Shri Maharaj before going. Amongst all the disciples you are the most intelligent, nearer and dearer to Shri Maharaj. So kindly wake him up

and let us have his Darshan". This request flattered Vithoba and he immediately went and woke up Shri Maharaj. People got Darshan but it invited calamity for Vithoba. Shri Gajanan got a stick and thrashed Vithoba severely with it and said, "You rascal, you have started business here, and if I tolerate you, I shall be guilty before God. So, I must punish you: Wine should not be treated as sweet drink, poison should not be touched, and thieves should not be made friends". Saying so, He knocked him again with the stick. Vithoba ran away and never returned again. This is how the real saints behave.

May this Gajanan Vijay Grantha be a saviour to all devotees.

"Shubham Bhavatu"  
"Shri Hari Hararpanamastu"

Here is the End of Chapter Three.



Compiled by : Shравan Pande, Shegaon, India.