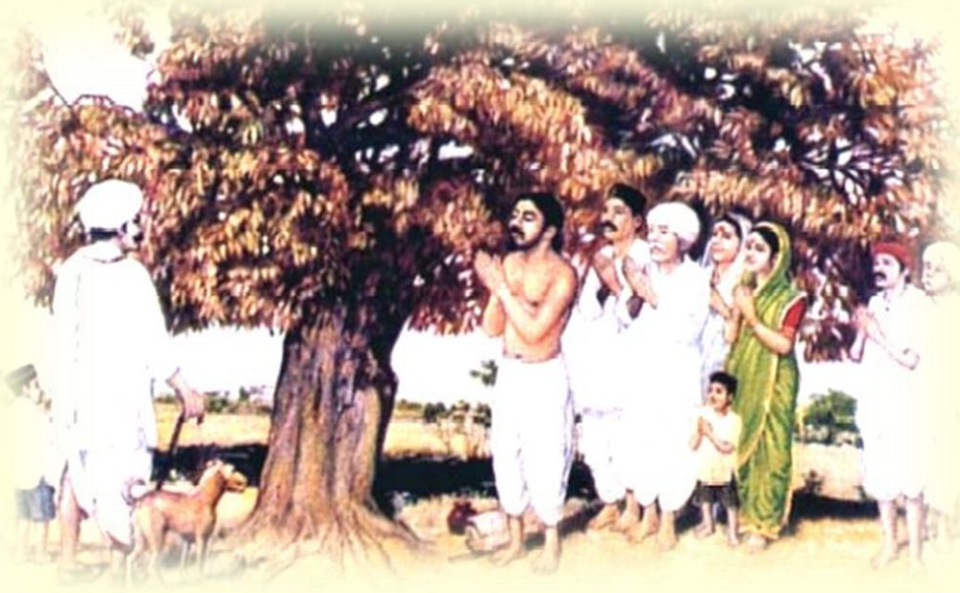
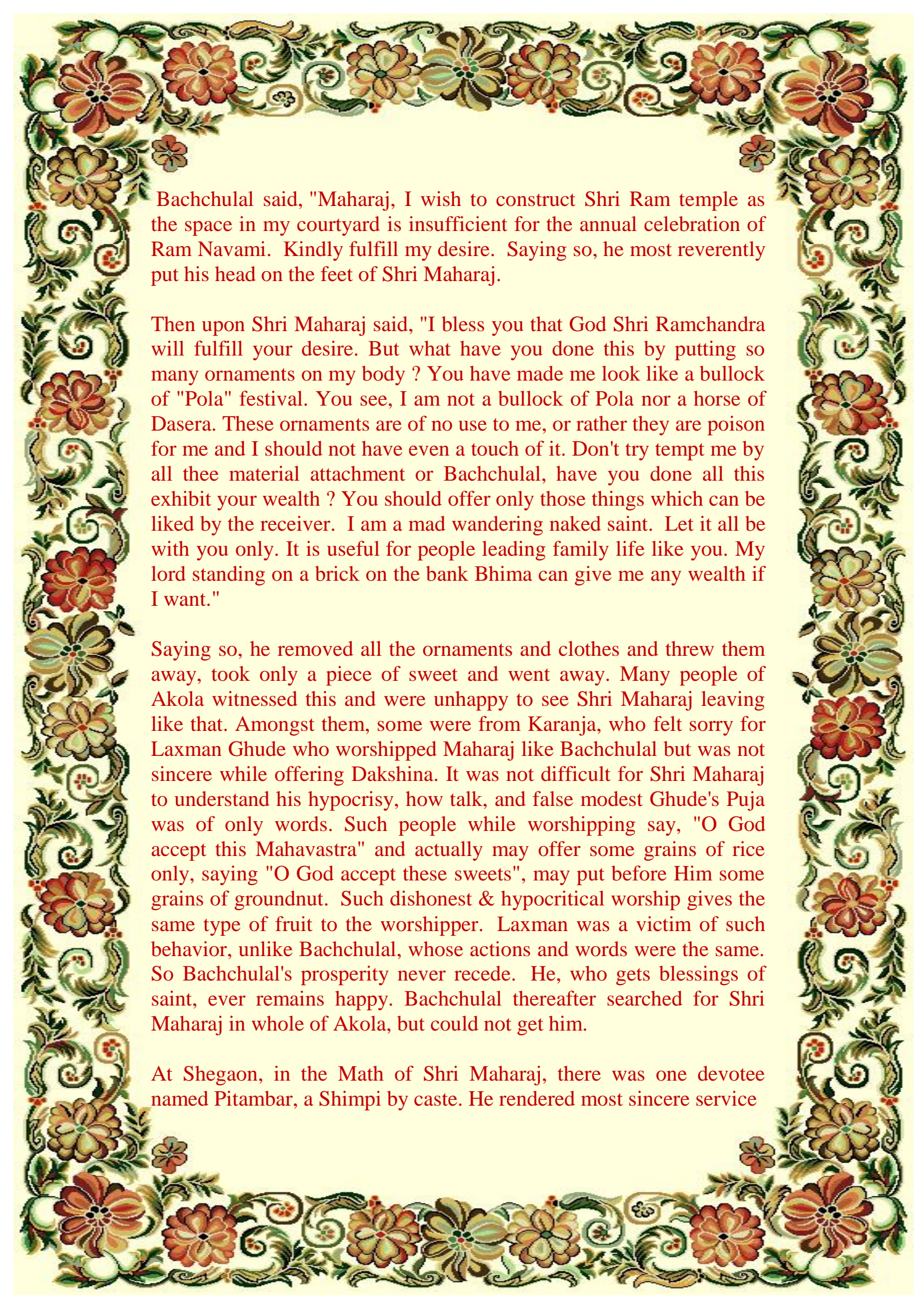


* CHAPTER TWELVE *



Shri Ganeshay Namaha ! O Ganapati, Mayureshwar, come, sit in my heart and help me complete this book. You are the giver of knowledge and intelligence and the only one to fulfill the desires of his devotees by removing all the obstacles. Puranas also say so. O Ekdanta, Lambodara, Parvatisuta Bhalchandra, Sindura please get me rid of all anxieties.

There was one Bachchulal Agrawal at Akola - a rich and generous person. He heard about the episode of Laxman Ghude of Karanja which created some doubts in his mind. As he was thinking to find out real fact behind it, Shri Gajana Maharaj himself came to Akola and reached his house. Bachchulal was immensely happy and expressed to Maharaj the desire to worship Him. He gave his consent. Shri Bachchulal made elaborate arrangements for the Puja. First Shri Maharaj was given a Bath with scented water and then offered a fine silken Pitambar, a Kashmiri Shawl and a silken Pheta. A gold chain was placed around his neck and gold rings on all his fingers. A bracelet of diamonds were put on his left arm and perfumes were sprinkled on the body. Then, meals with Jalebi and other sweets was given to him. Thereafter golden Thali full of rupees and Moharas was offered to Shri Maharaj as Dakshina, which amount to about Rs. Ten thousand, and on it was put a coconut. Then with folded hands

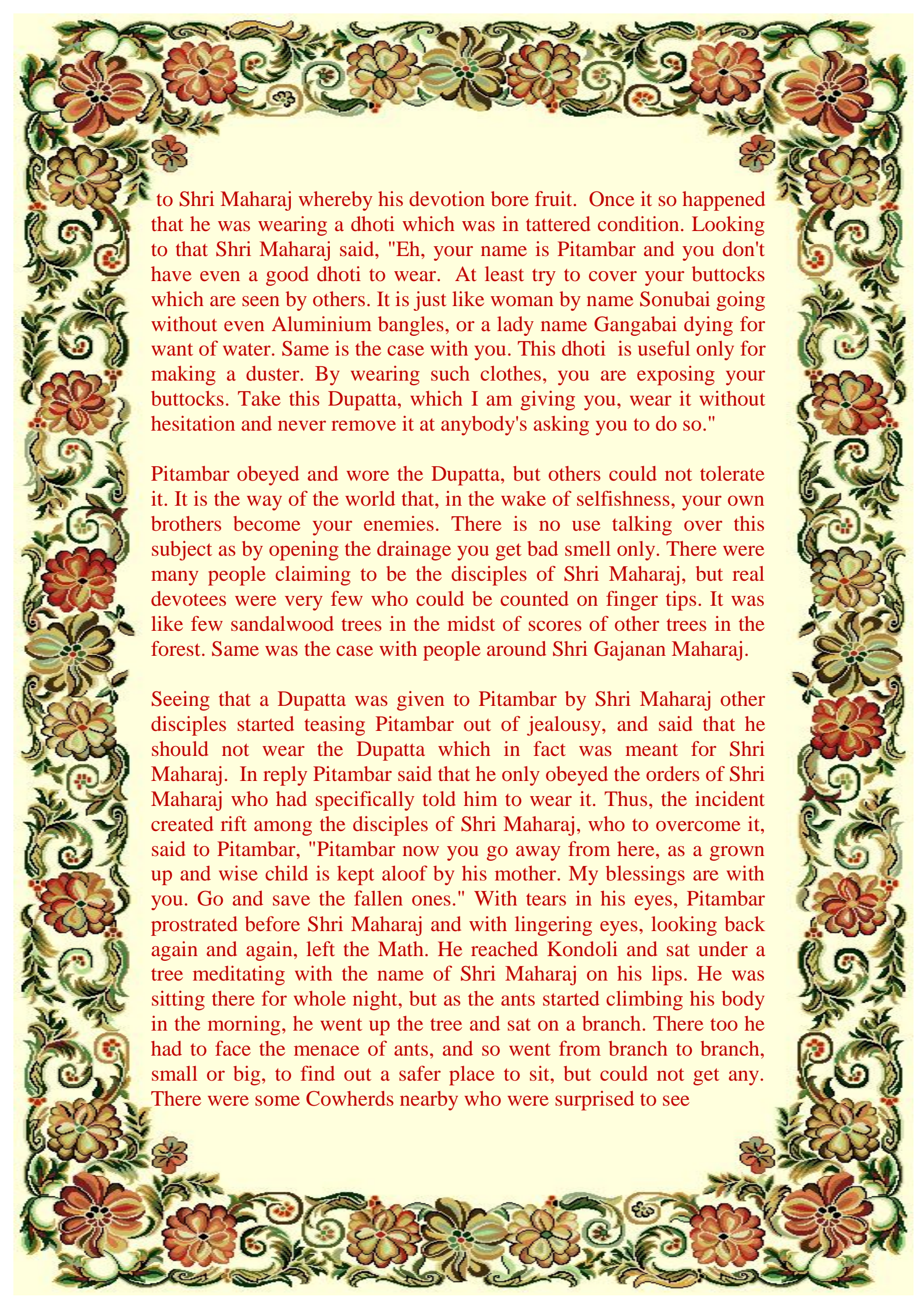


Bachchulal said, "Maharaj, I wish to construct Shri Ram temple as the space in my courtyard is insufficient for the annual celebration of Ram Navami. Kindly fulfill my desire. Saying so, he most reverently put his head on the feet of Shri Maharaj.

Then upon Shri Maharaj said, "I bless you that God Shri Ramchandra will fulfill your desire. But what have you done this by putting so many ornaments on my body ? You have made me look like a bullock of "Pola" festival. You see, I am not a bullock of Pola nor a horse of Dasera. These ornaments are of no use to me, or rather they are poison for me and I should not have even a touch of it. Don't try tempt me by all thee material attachment or Bachchulal, have you done all this exhibit your wealth ? You should offer only those things which can be liked by the receiver. I am a mad wandering naked saint. Let it all be with you only. It is useful for people leading family life like you. My lord standing on a brick on the bank Bhima can give me any wealth if I want."

Saying so, he removed all the ornaments and clothes and threw them away, took only a piece of sweet and went away. Many people of Akola witnessed this and were unhappy to see Shri Maharaj leaving like that. Amongst them, some were from Karanja, who felt sorry for Laxman Ghude who worshipped Maharaj like Bachchulal but was not sincere while offering Dakshina. It was not difficult for Shri Maharaj to understand his hypocrisy, how talk, and false modest Ghude's Puja was of only words. Such people while worshipping say, "O God accept this Mahavastra" and actually may offer some grains of rice only, saying "O God accept these sweets", may put before Him some grains of groundnut. Such dishonest & hypocritical worship gives the same type of fruit to the worshipper. Laxman was a victim of such behavior, unlike Bachchulal, whose actions and words were the same. So Bachchulal's prosperity never recede. He, who gets blessings of saint, ever remains happy. Bachchulal thereafter searched for Shri Maharaj in whole of Akola, but could not get him.

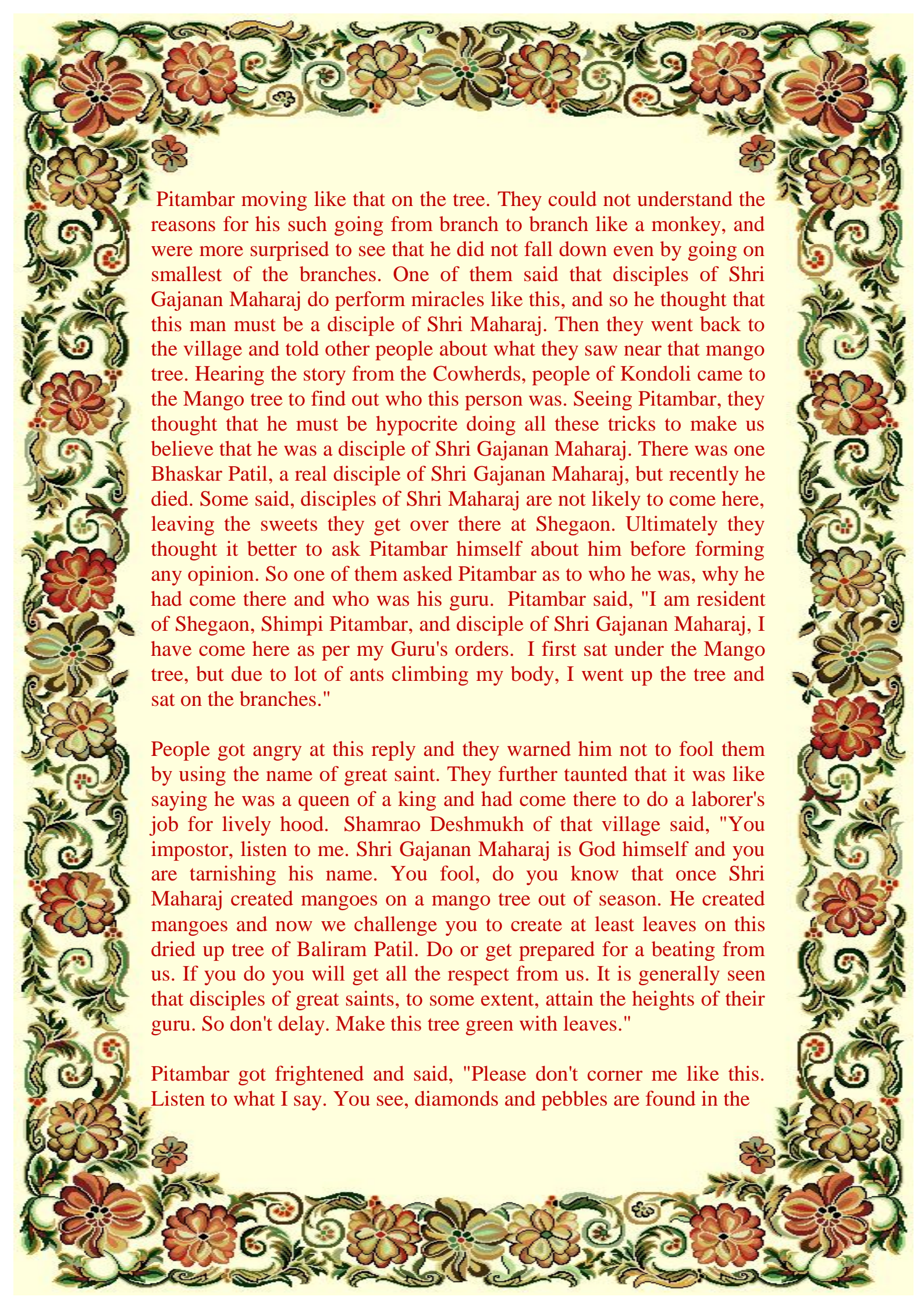
At Shegaon, in the Math of Shri Maharaj, there was one devotee named Pitambar, a Shimpi by caste. He rendered most sincere service



to Shri Maharaj whereby his devotion bore fruit. Once it so happened that he was wearing a dhoti which was in tattered condition. Looking to that Shri Maharaj said, "Eh, your name is Pitambar and you don't have even a good dhoti to wear. At least try to cover your buttocks which are seen by others. It is just like woman by name Sonubai going without even Aluminium bangles, or a lady name Gangabai dying for want of water. Same is the case with you. This dhoti is useful only for making a duster. By wearing such clothes, you are exposing your buttocks. Take this Dupatta, which I am giving you, wear it without hesitation and never remove it at anybody's asking you to do so."

Pitambar obeyed and wore the Dupatta, but others could not tolerate it. It is the way of the world that, in the wake of selfishness, your own brothers become your enemies. There is no use talking over this subject as by opening the drainage you get bad smell only. There were many people claiming to be the disciples of Shri Maharaj, but real devotees were very few who could be counted on finger tips. It was like few sandalwood trees in the midst of scores of other trees in the forest. Same was the case with people around Shri Gajanan Maharaj.

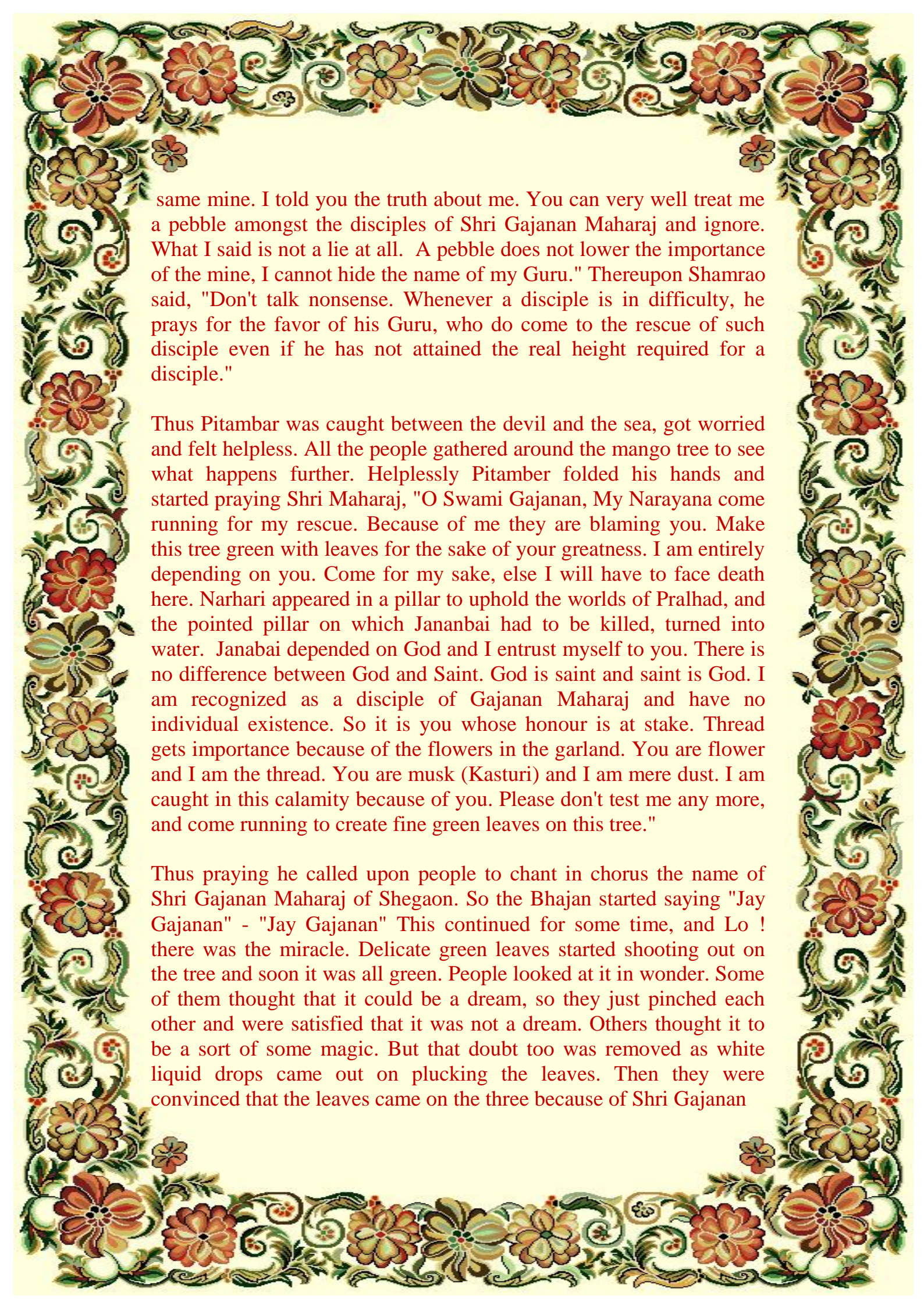
Seeing that a Dupatta was given to Pitambar by Shri Maharaj other disciples started teasing Pitambar out of jealousy, and said that he should not wear the Dupatta which in fact was meant for Shri Maharaj. In reply Pitambar said that he only obeyed the orders of Shri Maharaj who had specifically told him to wear it. Thus, the incident created rift among the disciples of Shri Maharaj, who to overcome it, said to Pitambar, "Pitambar now you go away from here, as a grown up and wise child is kept aloof by his mother. My blessings are with you. Go and save the fallen ones." With tears in his eyes, Pitambar prostrated before Shri Maharaj and with lingering eyes, looking back again and again, left the Math. He reached Kondoli and sat under a tree meditating with the name of Shri Maharaj on his lips. He was sitting there for whole night, but as the ants started climbing his body in the morning, he went up the tree and sat on a branch. There too he had to face the menace of ants, and so went from branch to branch, small or big, to find out a safer place to sit, but could not get any. There were some Cowherds nearby who were surprised to see



Pitambar moving like that on the tree. They could not understand the reasons for his such going from branch to branch like a monkey, and were more surprised to see that he did not fall down even by going on smallest of the branches. One of them said that disciples of Shri Gajanan Maharaj do perform miracles like this, and so he thought that this man must be a disciple of Shri Maharaj. Then they went back to the village and told other people about what they saw near that mango tree. Hearing the story from the Cowherds, people of Kondoli came to the Mango tree to find out who this person was. Seeing Pitambar, they thought that he must be hypocrite doing all these tricks to make us believe that he was a disciple of Shri Gajanan Maharaj. There was one Bhaskar Patil, a real disciple of Shri Gajanan Maharaj, but recently he died. Some said, disciples of Shri Maharaj are not likely to come here, leaving the sweets they get over there at Shegaon. Ultimately they thought it better to ask Pitambar himself about him before forming any opinion. So one of them asked Pitambar as to who he was, why he had come there and who was his guru. Pitambar said, "I am resident of Shegaon, Shimpi Pitambar, and disciple of Shri Gajanan Maharaj, I have come here as per my Guru's orders. I first sat under the Mango tree, but due to lot of ants climbing my body, I went up the tree and sat on the branches."

People got angry at this reply and they warned him not to fool them by using the name of great saint. They further taunted that it was like saying he was a queen of a king and had come there to do a laborer's job for lively hood. Shamrao Deshmukh of that village said, "You impostor, listen to me. Shri Gajanan Maharaj is God himself and you are tarnishing his name. You fool, do you know that once Shri Maharaj created mangoes on a mango tree out of season. He created mangoes and now we challenge you to create at least leaves on this dried up tree of Baliram Patil. Do or get prepared for a beating from us. If you do you will get all the respect from us. It is generally seen that disciples of great saints, to some extent, attain the heights of their guru. So don't delay. Make this tree green with leaves."

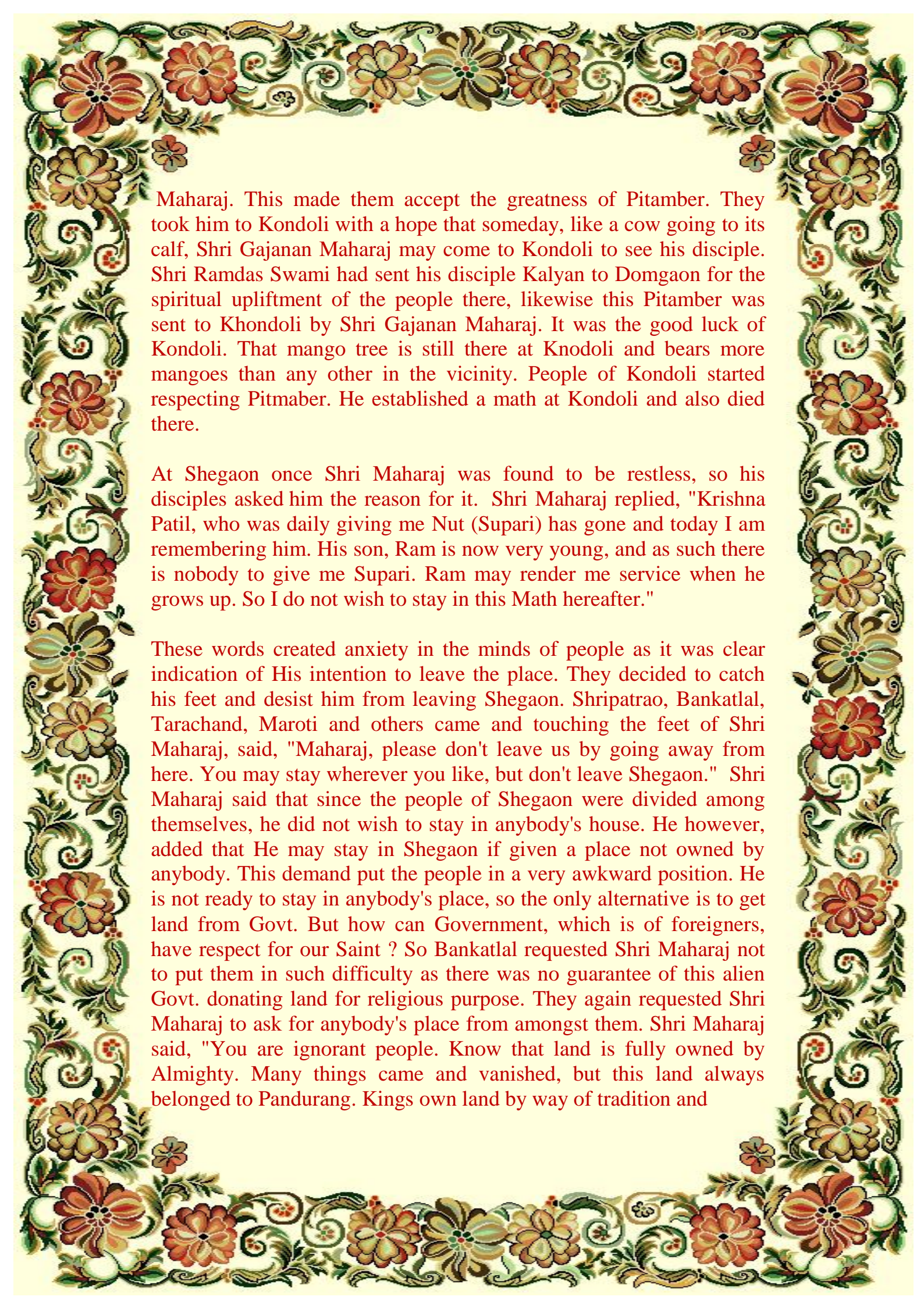
Pitambar got frightened and said, "Please don't corner me like this. Listen to what I say. You see, diamonds and pebbles are found in the



same mine. I told you the truth about me. You can very well treat me a pebble amongst the disciples of Shri Gajanan Maharaj and ignore. What I said is not a lie at all. A pebble does not lower the importance of the mine, I cannot hide the name of my Guru." Thereupon Shamrao said, "Don't talk nonsense. Whenever a disciple is in difficulty, he prays for the favor of his Guru, who do come to the rescue of such disciple even if he has not attained the real height required for a disciple."

Thus Pitambar was caught between the devil and the sea, got worried and felt helpless. All the people gathered around the mango tree to see what happens further. Helplessly Pitamber folded his hands and started praying Shri Maharaj, "O Swami Gajanan, My Narayana come running for my rescue. Because of me they are blaming you. Make this tree green with leaves for the sake of your greatness. I am entirely depending on you. Come for my sake, else I will have to face death here. Narhari appeared in a pillar to uphold the worlds of Pralhad, and the pointed pillar on which Jananbai had to be killed, turned into water. Janabai depended on God and I entrust myself to you. There is no difference between God and Saint. God is saint and saint is God. I am recognized as a disciple of Gajanan Maharaj and have no individual existence. So it is you whose honour is at stake. Thread gets importance because of the flowers in the garland. You are flower and I am the thread. You are musk (Kasturi) and I am mere dust. I am caught in this calamity because of you. Please don't test me any more, and come running to create fine green leaves on this tree."

Thus praying he called upon people to chant in chorus the name of Shri Gajanan Maharaj of Shegaon. So the Bhajan started saying "Jay Gajanan" - "Jay Gajanan" This continued for some time, and Lo ! there was the miracle. Delicate green leaves started shooting out on the tree and soon it was all green. People looked at it in wonder. Some of them thought that it could be a dream, so they just pinched each other and were satisfied that it was not a dream. Others thought it to be a sort of some magic. But that doubt too was removed as white liquid drops came out on plucking the leaves. Then they were convinced that the leaves came on the tree because of Shri Gajanan



Maharaj. This made them accept the greatness of Pitamber. They took him to Kondoli with a hope that someday, like a cow going to its calf, Shri Gajanan Maharaj may come to Kondoli to see his disciple. Shri Ramdas Swami had sent his disciple Kalyan to Domgaon for the spiritual upliftment of the people there, likewise this Pitamber was sent to Khondoli by Shri Gajanan Maharaj. It was the good luck of Kondoli. That mango tree is still there at Knodoli and bears more mangoes than any other in the vicinity. People of Kondoli started respecting Pitmaber. He established a math at Kondoli and also died there.

At Shegaon once Shri Maharaj was found to be restless, so his disciples asked him the reason for it. Shri Maharaj replied, "Krishna Patil, who was daily giving me Nut (Supari) has gone and today I am remembering him. His son, Ram is now very young, and as such there is nobody to give me Supari. Ram may render me service when he grows up. So I do not wish to stay in this Math hereafter."

These words created anxiety in the minds of people as it was clear indication of His intention to leave the place. They decided to catch his feet and desist him from leaving Shegaon. Shripatrao, Bankatlal, Tarachand, Maroti and others came and touching the feet of Shri Maharaj, said, "Maharaj, please don't leave us by going away from here. You may stay wherever you like, but don't leave Shegaon." Shri Maharaj said that since the people of Shegaon were divided among themselves, he did not wish to stay in anybody's house. He however, added that He may stay in Shegaon if given a place not owned by anybody. This demand put the people in a very awkward position. He is not ready to stay in anybody's place, so the only alternative is to get land from Govt. But how can Government, which is of foreigners, have respect for our Saint ? So Bankatlal requested Shri Maharaj not to put them in such difficulty as there was no guarantee of this alien Govt. donating land for religious purpose. They again requested Shri Maharaj to ask for anybody's place from amongst them. Shri Maharaj said, "You are ignorant people. Know that land is fully owned by Almighty. Many things came and vanished, but this land always belonged to Pandurang. Kings own land by way of tradition and

nothing more than that. Go and try at the hands of Hari Patil. You will succeed in getting the land from Government."

People came to Hari Patil and after consultation with him applied to the Government for land. Mr. Kari was district Collector at Buldana. He agreed and gave one acre of land on that application. In his order he had said that initially sanctioned only one acre of land, but if they use and develop it properly within year, more land would be sanctioned. That decision of the Collector is still there on record. This was all due to the "word" of Shri Maharaj. Then Hari and Bankatlal started collection of funds and the required amount was soon collected. Thereafter started the construction. Subsequent story will be narrated in the next chapter. God is always ready to fulfill the wish of saints. Vithu Patil of Dongaonkar, Laxman Patil of Wadegaon and Jagu Aba of Shegaon were the leaders to collect the donations.

O listeners, listen to this Gajanan Vijay classic single mindedly for your own emancipation. May all happiness come to you.

"Shubham Bhavatu"
"Shri Hari Hararpanamastu"

Here is the End of Chapter Twelve.



Compiled by : Shравan Pande, Shegaon, India.