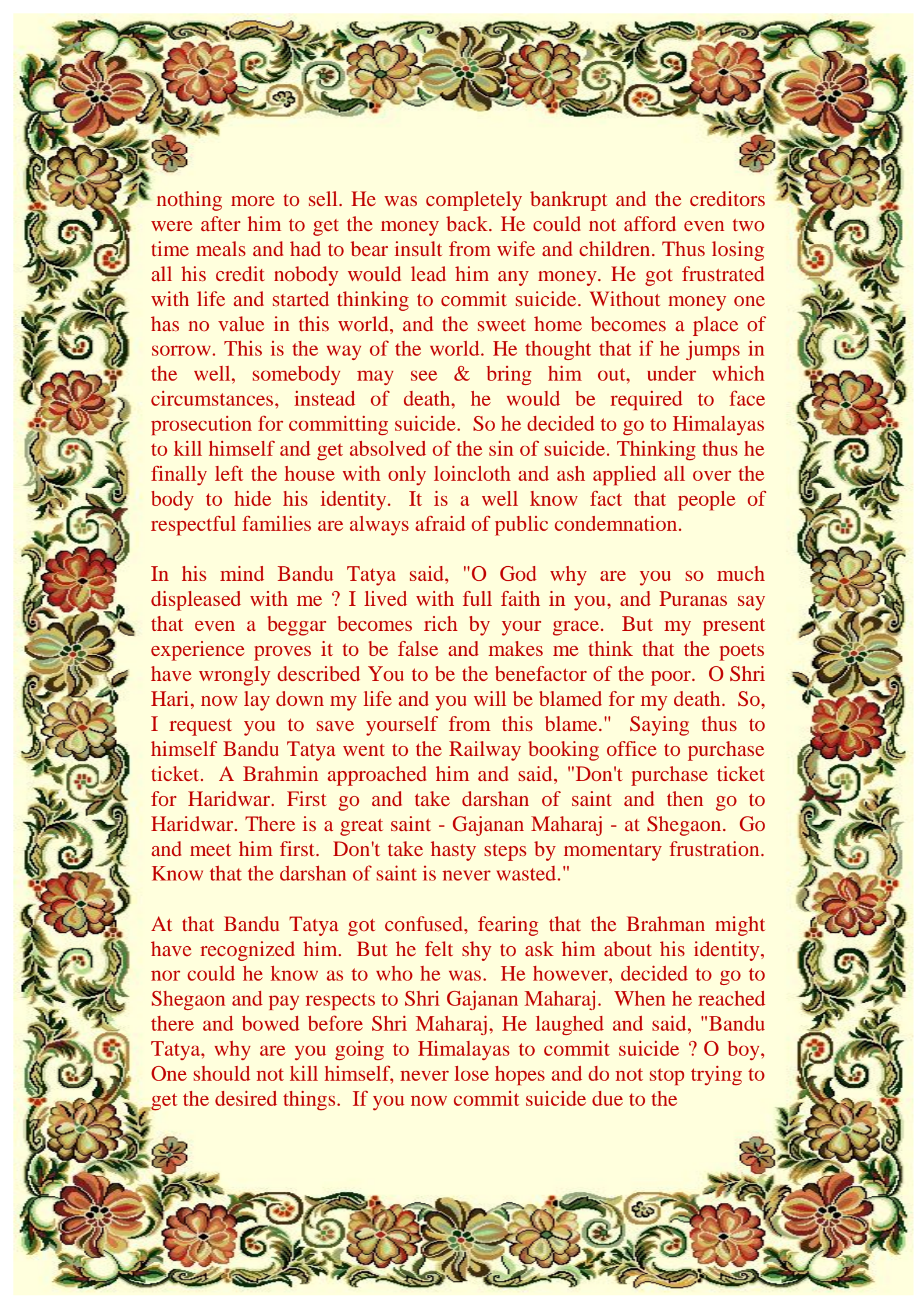


* CHAPTER FOURTEEN *



Shri Ganeshay Namaha ! O Kausalya's son Rama ! O gem of Raghu dynasty, O Sitapati, have compassion for this child of yours. You have liberated Tratika and gave life to Ahilya who was lying in the form of a stone. You have fulfilled the desire of Shabari by visiting her. O son of Dasharatha, You renounce the throne to protect your devotee, and by your grace monkeys got strength. O Killer of Ravana, your mere name made stones to float on sea and it is You, who installed on throne your devotee Bibhishan. Whosoever surrendered at your feet, got rid of poverty, sorrow and calamities. Please remember it and protect this Dasganu. How can a child go away from its mother ? You are my mother, father and Guru (Preceptor). You are the Kalpataru, the tree that meets every desire of devotees. O Rama ! You are the ship to float in this ocean of life.

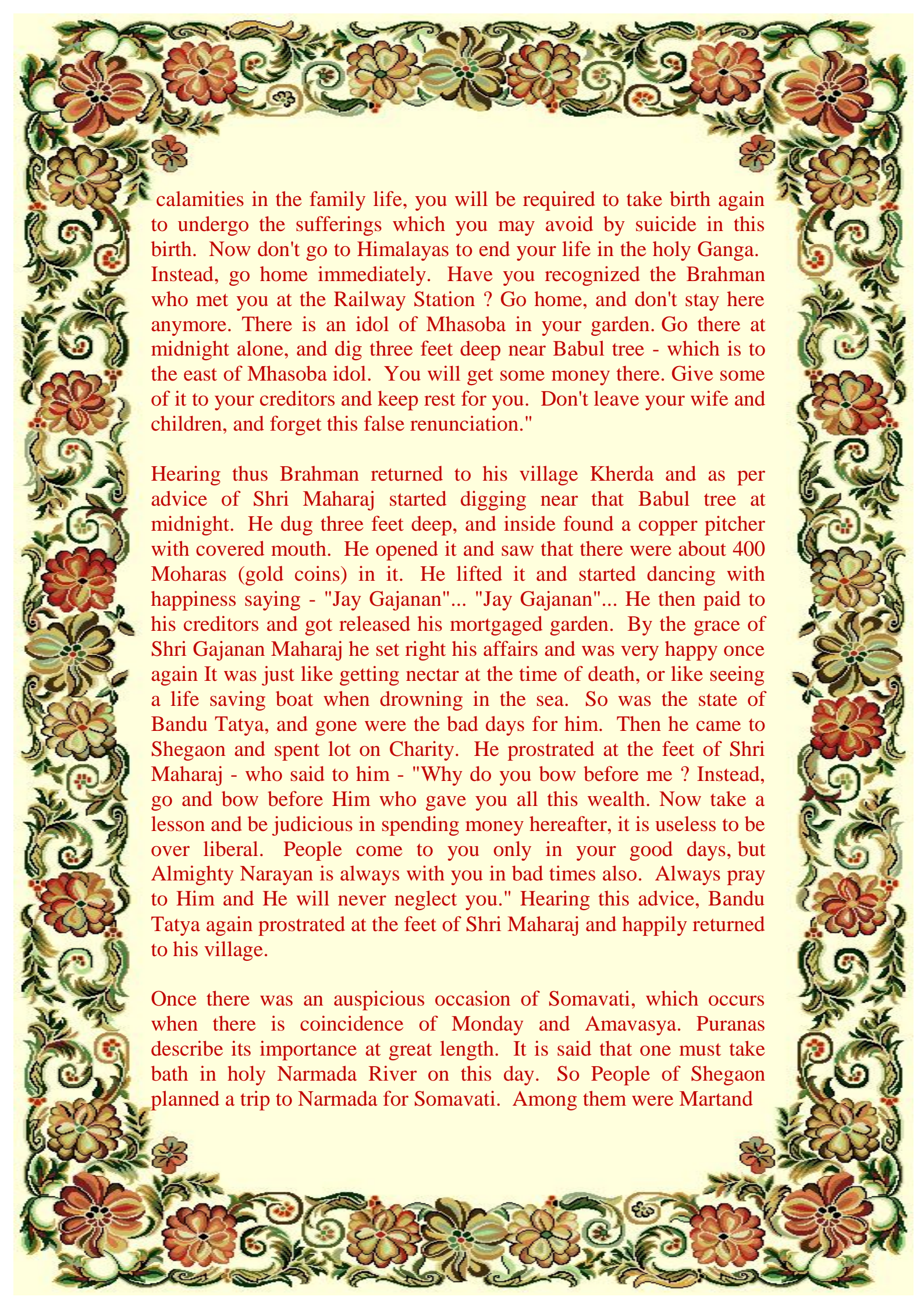
There was a Brahman named Bandu Tatyia at Mehkar. He was most pious and liberal at heart. In family life one comes across many calamities, but even then he does not leave the attachment for life and its pleasures. Many guests used to come to this Bandu Tatyia and he personally looked their comforts. This continued for long and he spent all his money. He even borrowed money from money lenders by mortgaging his house. Due to mounting debts, he felt ashamed to face people. He even sold the utensils in the house and the remained



nothing more to sell. He was completely bankrupt and the creditors were after him to get the money back. He could not afford even two time meals and had to bear insult from wife and children. Thus losing all his credit nobody would lead him any money. He got frustrated with life and started thinking to commit suicide. Without money one has no value in this world, and the sweet home becomes a place of sorrow. This is the way of the world. He thought that if he jumps in the well, somebody may see & bring him out, under which circumstances, instead of death, he would be required to face prosecution for committing suicide. So he decided to go to Himalayas to kill himself and get absolved of the sin of suicide. Thinking thus he finally left the house with only loincloth and ash applied all over the body to hide his identity. It is a well know fact that people of respectful families are always afraid of public condemnation.

In his mind Bandu Tatyia said, "O God why are you so much displeased with me ? I lived with full faith in you, and Puranas say that even a beggar becomes rich by your grace. But my present experience proves it to be false and makes me think that the poets have wrongly described You to be the benefactor of the poor. O Shri Hari, now lay down my life and you will be blamed for my death. So, I request you to save yourself from this blame." Saying thus to himself Bandu Tatyia went to the Railway booking office to purchase ticket. A Brahmin approached him and said, "Don't purchase ticket for Haridwar. First go and take darshan of saint and then go to Haridwar. There is a great saint - Gajanan Maharaj - at Shegaon. Go and meet him first. Don't take hasty steps by momentary frustration. Know that the darshan of saint is never wasted."

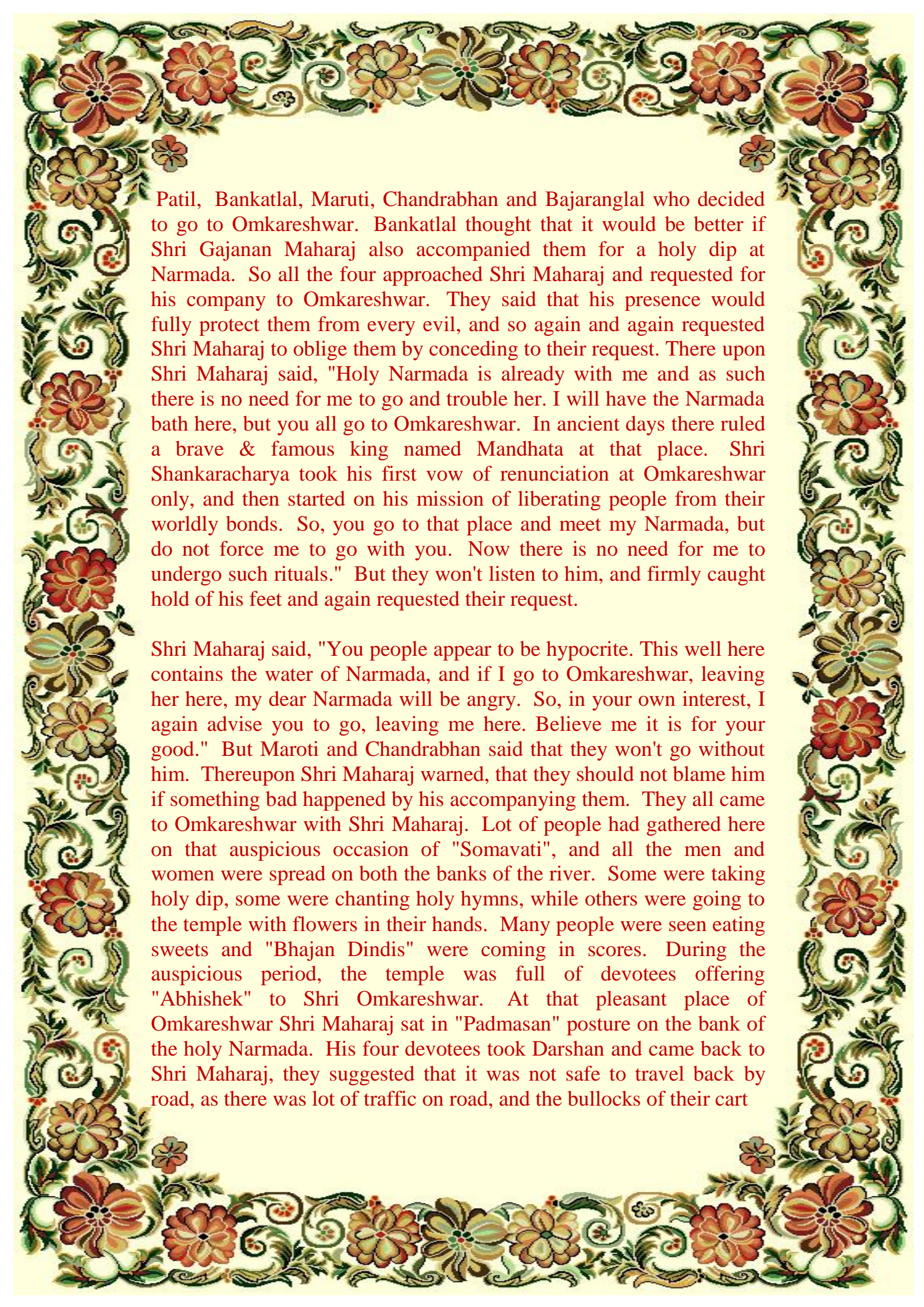
At that Bandu Tatyia got confused, fearing that the Brahman might have recognized him. But he felt shy to ask him about his identity, nor could he know as to who he was. He however, decided to go to Shegaon and pay respects to Shri Gajanan Maharaj. When he reached there and bowed before Shri Maharaj, He laughed and said, "Bandu Tatyia, why are you going to Himalayas to commit suicide ? O boy, One should not kill himself, never lose hopes and do not stop trying to get the desired things. If you now commit suicide due to the



calamities in the family life, you will be required to take birth again to undergo the sufferings which you may avoid by suicide in this birth. Now don't go to Himalayas to end your life in the holy Ganga. Instead, go home immediately. Have you recognized the Brahman who met you at the Railway Station ? Go home, and don't stay here anymore. There is an idol of Mhasoba in your garden. Go there at midnight alone, and dig three feet deep near Babul tree - which is to the east of Mhasoba idol. You will get some money there. Give some of it to your creditors and keep rest for you. Don't leave your wife and children, and forget this false renunciation."

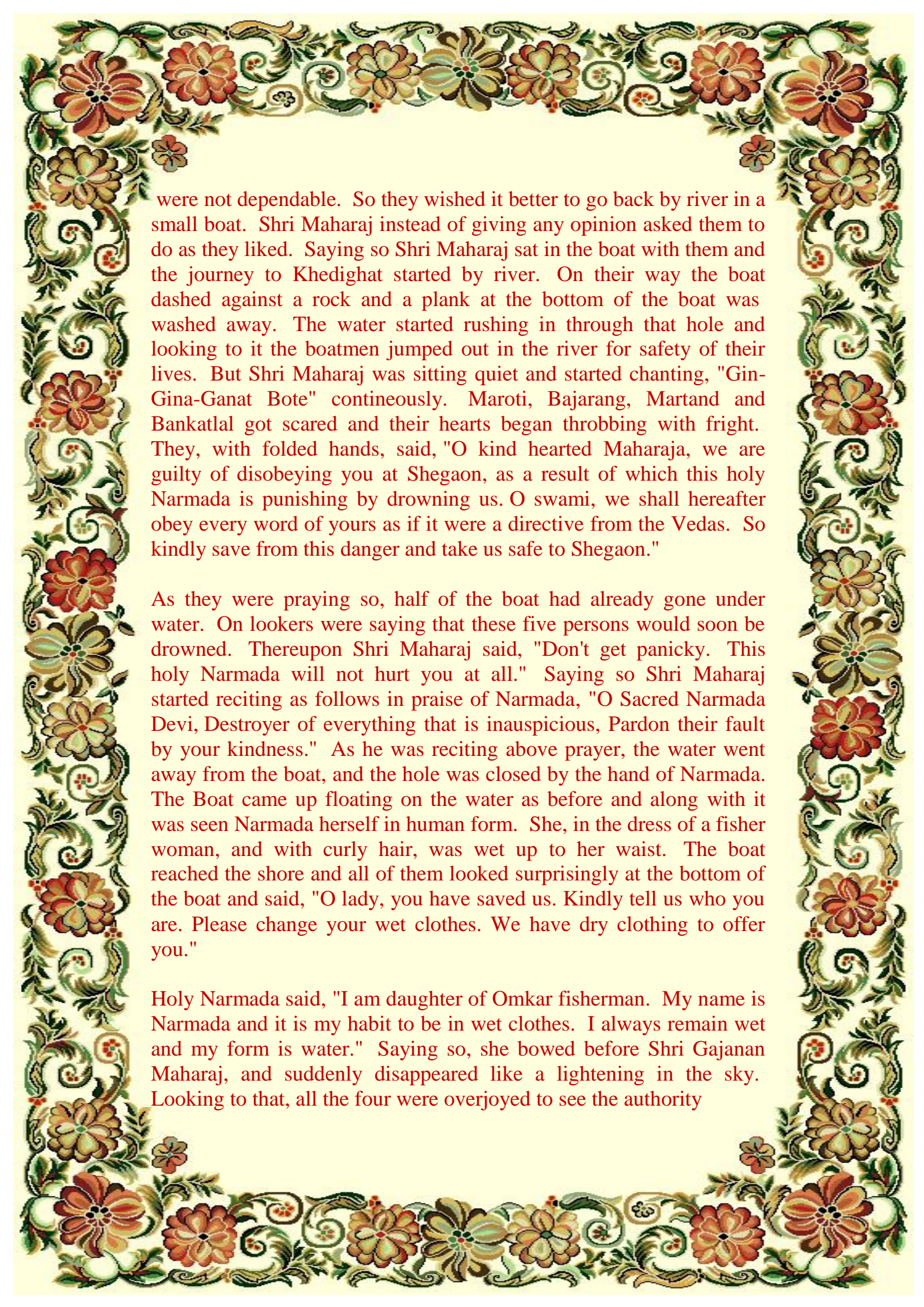
Hearing thus Brahman returned to his village Kherda and as per advice of Shri Maharaj started digging near that Babul tree at midnight. He dug three feet deep, and inside found a copper pitcher with covered mouth. He opened it and saw that there were about 400 Moharas (gold coins) in it. He lifted it and started dancing with happiness saying - "Jay Gajanan"... "Jay Gajanan"... He then paid to his creditors and got released his mortgaged garden. By the grace of Shri Gajanan Maharaj he set right his affairs and was very happy once again It was just like getting nectar at the time of death, or like seeing a life saving boat when drowning in the sea. So was the state of Bandu Tatya, and gone were the bad days for him. Then he came to Shegaon and spent lot on Charity. He prostrated at the feet of Shri Maharaj - who said to him - "Why do you bow before me ? Instead, go and bow before Him who gave you all this wealth. Now take a lesson and be judicious in spending money hereafter, it is useless to be over liberal. People come to you only in your good days, but Almighty Narayan is always with you in bad times also. Always pray to Him and He will never neglect you." Hearing this advice, Bandu Tatya again prostrated at the feet of Shri Maharaj and happily returned to his village.

Once there was an auspicious occasion of Somavati, which occurs when there is coincidence of Monday and Amavasya. Puranas describe its importance at great length. It is said that one must take bath in holy Narmada River on this day. So People of Shegaon planned a trip to Narmada for Somavati. Among them were Martand



Patil, Bankatlal, Maruti, Chandrabhan and Bajaranglal who decided to go to Omkareshwar. Bankatlal thought that it would be better if Shri Gajanan Maharaj also accompanied them for a holy dip at Narmada. So all the four approached Shri Maharaj and requested for his company to Omkareshwar. They said that his presence would fully protect them from every evil, and so again and again requested Shri Maharaj to oblige them by conceding to their request. There upon Shri Maharaj said, "Holy Narmada is already with me and as such there is no need for me to go and trouble her. I will have the Narmada bath here, but you all go to Omkareshwar. In ancient days there ruled a brave & famous king named Mandhata at that place. Shri Shankaracharya took his first vow of renunciation at Omkareshwar only, and then started on his mission of liberating people from their worldly bonds. So, you go to that place and meet my Narmada, but do not force me to go with you. Now there is no need for me to undergo such rituals." But they won't listen to him, and firmly caught hold of his feet and again requested their request.


Shri Maharaj said, "You people appear to be hypocrite. This well here contains the water of Narmada, and if I go to Omkareshwar, leaving her here, my dear Narmada will be angry. So, in your own interest, I again advise you to go, leaving me here. Believe me it is for your good." But Maroti and Chandrabhan said that they won't go without him. Thereupon Shri Maharaj warned, that they should not blame him if something bad happened by his accompanying them. They all came to Omkareshwar with Shri Maharaj. Lot of people had gathered here on that auspicious occasion of "Somavati", and all the men and women were spread on both the banks of the river. Some were taking holy dip, some were chanting holy hymns, while others were going to the temple with flowers in their hands. Many people were seen eating sweets and "Bhajan Dindis" were coming in scores. During the auspicious period, the temple was full of devotees offering "Abhishek" to Shri Omkareshwar. At that pleasant place of Omkareshwar Shri Maharaj sat in "Padmasan" posture on the bank of the holy Narmada. His four devotees took Darshan and came back to Shri Maharaj, they suggested that it was not safe to travel back by road, as there was lot of traffic on road, and the bullocks of their cart



were not dependable. So they wished it better to go back by river in a small boat. Shri Maharaj instead of giving any opinion asked them to do as they liked. Saying so Shri Maharaj sat in the boat with them and the journey to Khedighat started by river. On their way the boat dashed against a rock and a plank at the bottom of the boat was washed away. The water started rushing in through that hole and looking to it the boatmen jumped out in the river for safety of their lives. But Shri Maharaj was sitting quiet and started chanting, "Gin-Gina-Ganat Bote" contineously. Maroti, Bajarang, Martand and Bankatlal got scared and their hearts began throbbing with fright. They, with folded hands, said, "O kind hearted Maharaja, we are guilty of disobeying you at Shegaon, as a result of which this holy Narmada is punishing by drowning us. O swami, we shall hereafter obey every word of yours as if it were a directive from the Vedas. So kindly save from this danger and take us safe to Shegaon."

As they were praying so, half of the boat had already gone under water. On lookers were saying that these five persons would soon be drowned. Thereupon Shri Maharaj said, "Don't get panicky. This holy Narmada will not hurt you at all." Saying so Shri Maharaj started reciting as follows in praise of Narmada, "O Sacred Narmada Devi, Destroyer of everything that is inauspicious, Pardon their fault by your kindness." As he was reciting above prayer, the water went away from the boat, and the hole was closed by the hand of Narmada. The Boat came up floating on the water as before and along with it was seen Narmada herself in human form. She, in the dress of a fisher woman, and with curly hair, was wet up to her waist. The boat reached the shore and all of them looked surprisingly at the bottom of the boat and said, "O lady, you have saved us. Kindly tell us who you are. Please change your wet clothes. We have dry clothing to offer you."

Holy Narmada said, "I am daughter of Omkar fisherman. My name is Narmada and it is my habit to be in wet clothes. I always remain wet and my form is water." Saying so, she bowed before Shri Gajanan Maharaj, and suddenly disappeared like a lightening in the sky. Looking to that, all the four were overjoyed to see the authority



wieded by Shri Maharaj, as the holy Narmada herself came for his Darshan. Even then Bankat asked Shri Maharaj to tell them as to who the lady was. Shri Maharaj said, "What you are asking has already been told by Narmada to you. The fisherman Omkar, is this Omkareshwar. When She said that the water is her form means she herself is Narmada river. Do not have any doubt in your mind. She always extends her helping hand to her devotees in times of danger. So, say loudly "Jay" to her with a prayer requesting to save us in times of danger." Hearing this, Bankatlal and the three other again and again prostrated before Shri Maharaj. They returned to Shegaon and with great happiness narrated the incident to the people there.

Once Sadashiv Ranganath Wanawale, alongwith his friend came to Shegaon for the Darshan of Shri Gajanan Maharaj. This Sadashiv with nick name as Taty, was disciple of Shri Madhaonath Maharaj of Chitrakut, who had mastered the art of yoga and had a large following in Malwa. When Sadashiv came for the darshan of Shri Gajanan Maharaj, he was taking his meals. At the sight of Sadashiv Shri Maharaj remembered Shri Madhaonath Maharaj. Saints know each other even without meeting. Shri Maharaj said, "Bring those disciples of Shri Nath before me. His Guru just went away after taking meals with me. Had they come a bit earlier, they would have met their Guru here only. Now they have come after their Guru went away without taking "Pan". Being the children of a brother, Shri Maharaj embraced Wanawale and gave him traditional reception. Then he gave him two leaves of betel for giving to Shri Nath and asked to convey message as follows without change of word as, "We had meals together but you forgot your pan here." We have now brought for you.

Wanawale heard it and returned with those two leaves of betel. He narrated the detailed talk at Shegaon to Shri Nath and asked if he had really gone to Shegaon that day. Shri Nath said, "What Shri Gajanan said is true. His remembering me at the time of meals is our meeting. We meet each other like that quite frequently. Don't have any doubt about it. Remembering each other is our meeting. Though we have different bodies, our life breath is the same. This is a deep knowledge and you may require some time to understand it. It is good that you

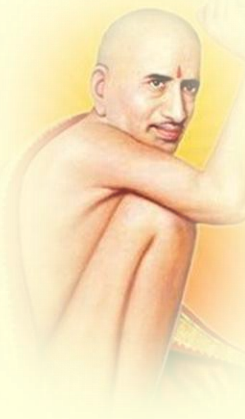
brought the Pan which I had forgotten at Shegaon." Then Shri Nath took betel leaves, crushed and ate it. He also gave some to Wanawale as Prasad.

Shri Dnyaneshwar Maharaj, in his "Changdeo Pasasti," has described in detail the way saints meet each other. One should read that to understand their manner of meeting. It is interesting to know that Yogis meet each other from any distance without leaving their places. Shaikh Mohamed was in Shrigonda and Shri Tukaram at Dehu, but when the Pandal at Dehu where Shri Tukaram was doing Kirtan caught fire, Shaikh Mohamed extinguished it from Shrigonda. This has been narrated by Mahipal in "Bhaktivijay". Shri Manik Prabhu saved Patil's son from drowning in a well, by reaching Hali village. Only true yogis can perform such miracles. Yoga is more powerful than anything else. So learn Yoga to make the nation strong.

May the affectionate devotees with full faith, listen to this Gajanan Vijay epic. Let Joy be to all. Obeisance to Hara and Hari.

"Shubham Bhavatu"
"Shri Hari Hararpanamastu"

Here is the End of Chapter Fourteen.



Compiled by : Shravan Pande, Shegaon, India.