


* CHAPTER ONE *



Shri Ganeshay Namaha ! Shri Ganesha, you are famous for your generosity and valour. O Gouriputra, all intellectuals and saints first remember you before starting any work. With your powerful blessings all obstructions are just like cotton before fire. So I solemnly bow at your feet and invoke your blessings to bring out of my narration the best and the sweetest poetic presentation. I am ignorant, dull and have no qualities of a poet. But if you bless me my work will be done.

Now my obeisance to "Adi Maya Saraswati Sharada" who is born of Brahma and who is a great inspiration of poets. Next my obeisance is to Jagadamba whom I pray for upholding of my self-respect. Her blessings are so great that with her "Ashis" even a lame will climb a mountain and a dumb become a good orator. In keeping with that reputation kindly help Dasganu to write this book of Shri Gajanan. Now I beseech the "Puran Purush" Panduranga of Pandharpur, to have an obliging glance at me. You are the sole supporter of this universe and occupy every animate and inanimate object here. You are the creator of everything, omnipotent and you command all actions. You are this world, the life in this world and also the ultimate power. You are Saguna, Nirguna, my father and also my mother. O Purushottama you are so great that I am too small to comprehend you. Shri Rama blessed and monkeys gained strength. Same thing happened with the




Cowherd boys of Gokula. Saints have said that money is not required to get your favour but a complete surrender at your feet earns the support from you. That is why I have come to your door. Please do not disappoint me. O Panduranga of Pandharpur, kindly help me to write this great saint's biography, by taking your seat in me.

O Bhavanivara, Nilkantha, Gangadhara, Onkarrupa. Trimbakeshwara bless me. "Paras" changes iron into gold. Now your favour is "Paras" and I am iron. Kindly help and do not disappoint me. Nothing is impossible for you and so everything is in your hands. Kindly come quickly and help this child of yours to compose this book. Now my obeisance to my family Deity who resides at Kolhapur and beseech her to bless me with everything auspicious. O Durgamata Bhavani of Tuljapur, I invoke your blessings by having your hand on my head. Then an obeisance to Dattatraya and request him for inspiration to sing in praise of Gajanan.

Now I bow to the Saints of Saints Shri Shandilya, Shri Vashishta, Shri Goutam, Shri Parashar and Shri Shankaracharya the sun in the sky of wisdom. My obeisance to all saints and sages who should, by holding my hand, get this writing done. Shri Gahani, Nivrutti, Shri Dyaneshwar, Shri Tukaram and Ramdas are dependable ships in the ocean of life. I bow to them.

O Saibaba of Shirdi and Waman Shastri (Shri Dasganu's Guru) kindly free me of all fears. By the kind grace of you all only, I shall be able to write this book. So be kind to me. Only the real affection can teach to speak; and my relation with you is that of a child with the mother. Pen writes letters, but it is not its strength, pen is only a means for the writing work. Dasganu is pen and I beseech all saints to hold it to write and make this biography melodious.

Now listeners, get ready and listen single mindedly to the biography of a saint for your good. On this earth, saints are Gods, ocean of renunciation, and giver of Moksha. Saints are the embodiment of all that is good, sacred and full on sanctity. Now calmly listen to the life story of such a Saint. Saints never deceive anybody. They are full of wisdom that guides us to the path of truth. God himself is indebted to




those who surrender at the feet of saints. Now with open mind listen to the biography of Shri Gajanan Maharaj.

No other country is so fortunate as Bharat in being a birthplace of many saints and therefore it was never short of any happiness so far. It is because, since time immemorial, our land continuously had the touch of sacred feet of saints. Shri Narad, Dhruva, Kayadhukumar, Uddhava, Sudama, Subhadra, Anjanikumar, Dharma Raja, Jagatguru Shankaracharya, Were all born in this country. Madhawa, Vallabha, Ramanuja, the able defenders of our religion, too were born here. The greatness of Narsi Mehta, Tulsidas, Kabir, Kamal, Surdas and Gourang Prabhu is quite beyond my power to describe.

Intense devotion of Princess Mirabai made lord Vishnu to swallow poison for her. Shri Goraknath, Macchindra and Jalander, the supreme yogis, are described in detail in the sacred book "Navanath". Shri Namdeo, Narahari, Janabai, Kanho, Sakhubai, Chokha, Savata, Kurmadas and Damajipanth won over Shri Hari by "Bhakti" only. God became "Mahar" for Damajipant. Since Mahipati has already written the biographies of Mukundraj, Janardan, Bodhala, Nipat and Niranjan, I do not repeat them here. I only suggest you to read the sacred books "Bhakti Vijay" and "Bhaktimala". After that I have composed songs in praise of three saints and equal to them is Shri Gajanan Maharaj who greatly influenced the public. With my good fortune, I am now getting an opportunity to write this detailed biography of this great saint. In fact, he was the first to be seen by me at Akot, but his biography is being written by me last for the following reasons. First we prepare a plain garland and the middle gem (Merumani) in it is attached at last. So the story of Shri Gajanan Maharaj is like that Merumani.

Shegaon, a small village in Khamgaon Taluqua of Berar is a great market center. Though a small village, it gained importance due to this Saint and became a world famous place. In this Shegaon Lake, a lotus in the form of Shri Gajanan Maharaj has sprung up and its fragrance spread all over the universe. Shri Gajanan Maharaj is a diamond of Shegaon mine and I, with my limited intelligence, wish to narrate his glory. Please listen to it and do not forget that you can




attain "Moksha" by complete surrender at his feet. Shri Gajanan biography is like a cloud and you the peacocks. The rain in the form of Shri Gajanan stories will make you dance in gaiety. People of Shegaon are really fortunate to get Shri Gajanan Maharaj. Good deeds only can invoke blessings of Saints who are superior even to Gods.

It was Kartik Ekadashi day when Ramchandra Patil met me at Pandharpur and requested to write the biography of Shri Gajanan Maharaj. It was in fact my long cherished desire to sing in praise of Shri Gajanan, but was not getting the opportunity. Shri Maharaj seem to have understood my wish and so made Ramchandra Patil a tool for fulfillment of that desire. Nobody can know the designs of great saints like Shri Gajanan Maharaj who was a gem amongst the saints. Historically, nothing is known about his caste, creed or place of origin, like Brahma whose origin nobody knows. Like a brilliant diamond we should only appreciate its brilliance and not bother about the mine of its origin.

Shri Gajanan Maharaj appeared at Shegaon on 7th Vadya Magh of 1800 Saka. Some say that he came from Sajjangad the place of Shri Ramdas Swami. Though there is no sufficient proof to accept this fact, it may have some sense in it.

There was wide spread corruption and misery and it is possible that Shri Ramdas Swami, for the good of the people, took rebirth as Gajanan Maharaj. Yogis can enter anybody and many saints have done so in the past. Gorakh was born in dustbin, Kanifa in the ear of elephant and Changdeo in the "Narayan Doha" all unlike the traditional human birth. Same may be the case of Shri Gajanan Maharaj the king of Yogis. It will be seen from his further actions that Shri Maharaj had detailed knowledge of all yogic exercises. Yoga has got a unique importance incomparable with anything else.

Shri Gajanan appeared in Shegaon on 7th Vadya Magh for liberation of the sinners. It so happened that there was one pious Brahmin named Devidas Paturkar at Shegaon and to celebrate the puberty function of his son he had arranged lunch for his friends. The leftover food from the plates was thrown outside the house and Shri Gajanan



Maharaj was seen sitting near that food. He had a worn out old shirt on his body, a dry gourd for drinking water, a pipe of clay for smoking and nothing else. His body was lustrous like the rising sun and eyes concentrated at the tip of nose indicative of his yogic strength. Sitting by the roadside he was picking particles of food thrown there. His action in picking up the food particles from the leaf plates lying on road was to convey to the common man that food is Brahma. "Shruti" and "Upanishad" say the same thing. Bankatlal Agrawal and Damodar Pant were surprised to see his behavior. They thought that had this man been really hungry he would have begged for it and Shri Paturkar, a pious man, also would have given him the food, Bankatlal said to his friend, "Let us watch his further actions. Vyasa has said in Bhagawat that real saints, many times, behave like mad men, and this can be a case like that".

Thousands of people must have passed that way but only these two persons were attracted to observe this person. Only wise and experts can detect diamond lying in the heap of pebbles. Bankatlal asked him as to why he was eating food lying on road and volunteered to serve good food. In reply Shri Gajanan simply looked at them. They were delighted to see his broad chest, Muscular shoulders, eyes concentrated at the tip of nose, and gay face. They respectfully bowed to him and asked Damodar pant to immediately bring dish of food. Shri Damodar pant brought and put it before Shri Maharaj. He having no likes and dislikes, mixed all the food & sweets together and satisfied his hunger.

It was like an emperor being presented with a small village. So was this food to Shri Gajanan who had already satisfied himself by consuming "Brahma Rasa". Bankatlal was sorry to have called him a mad man. It was very hot noontime and even the birds did not dare come out of their nests. Under such hot sun Shri Gajanan was sitting fearlessly and was full of joy as if he was Brahma himself.

So Shri Maharaj had taken food but Damodarpant observed that there was no water in his Tumba. Bankatlal Said "Maharaj, if you permit I will bring water for you". Shri Maharaj smiled and said, "If you wish, go and bring water. Brahma is everywhere and he won't differentiate

between you and me, but we have to follow the worldly traditions. So when food is taken body needs water too".

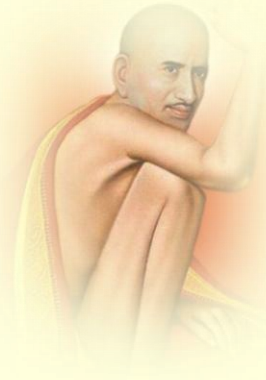
Bankatlal felt happy over this reply and rushed to bring water for Shri Maharaj. Meantime Shri Maharaj went to the roadside tank where water was stored for the cattle and satisfied the thirst with that water Bankatlal returned with a jar of cold water and requested Shri Maharaj not to drink the dirty water from that tank. Shri Gajanan said, "Everything in the universe is pervaded by Brahma without any differentiation of clean or dirty, good or bad. Brahma is in clean water as well as in dirty water and one drink it is also occupied by Brahma himself. You should try to understand the omnipotent nature of God and also to know the origin of this world. Instead of this you are involving yourself in worldly attachments".

Hearing so from Shri Maharaj, both Bankatlal and Damodarant bent down to prostrate before Shri Maharaj, Knowing their intentions Shri Maharaj ran away with the speed of wind.

May this "Gajanan Vijay" Granth bring happiness to all.

"Shubham Bhavatu"
"Shri Hari Hararpanamastu"

Here is the End of Chapter One.



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