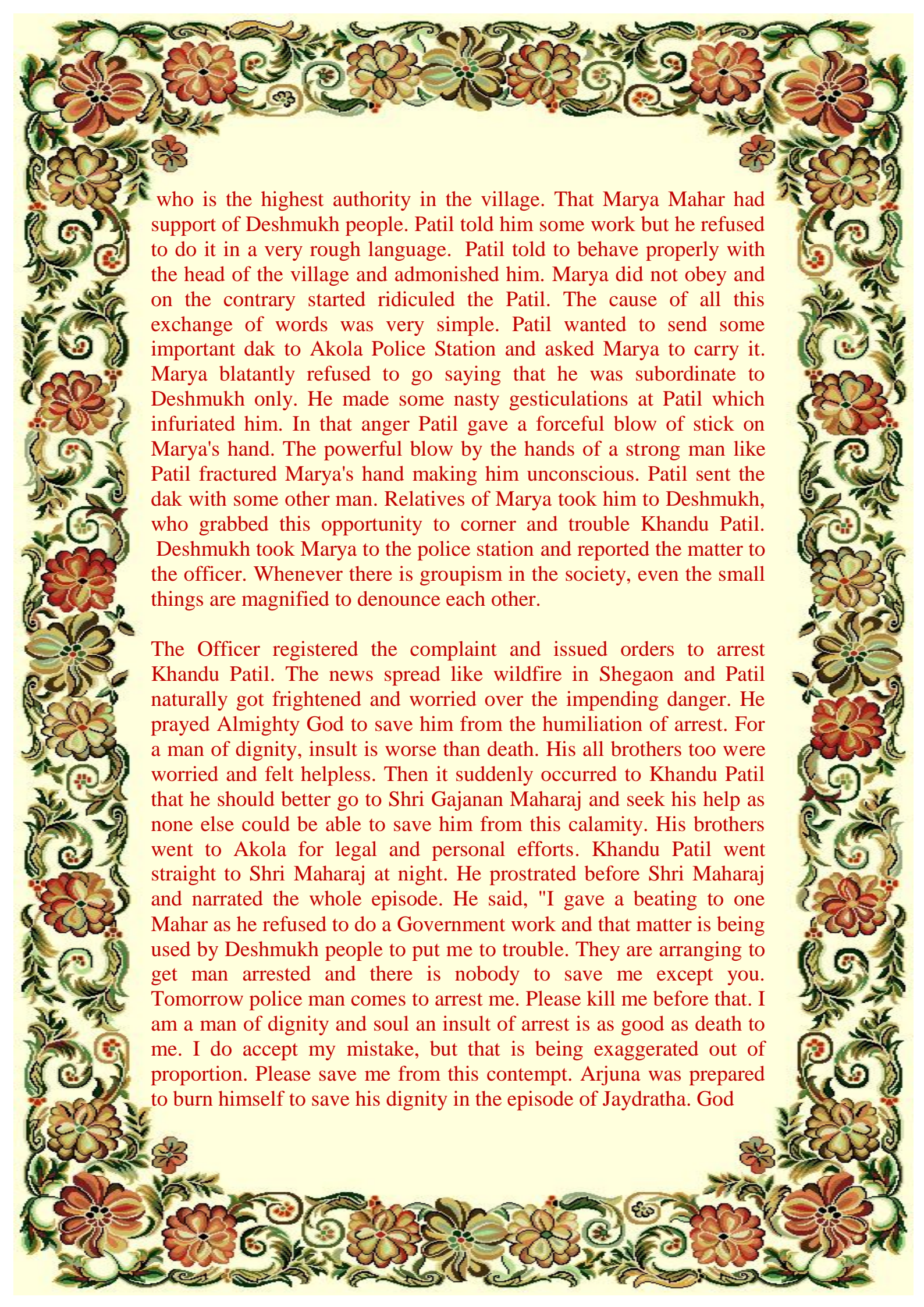


* CHAPTER EIGHT *



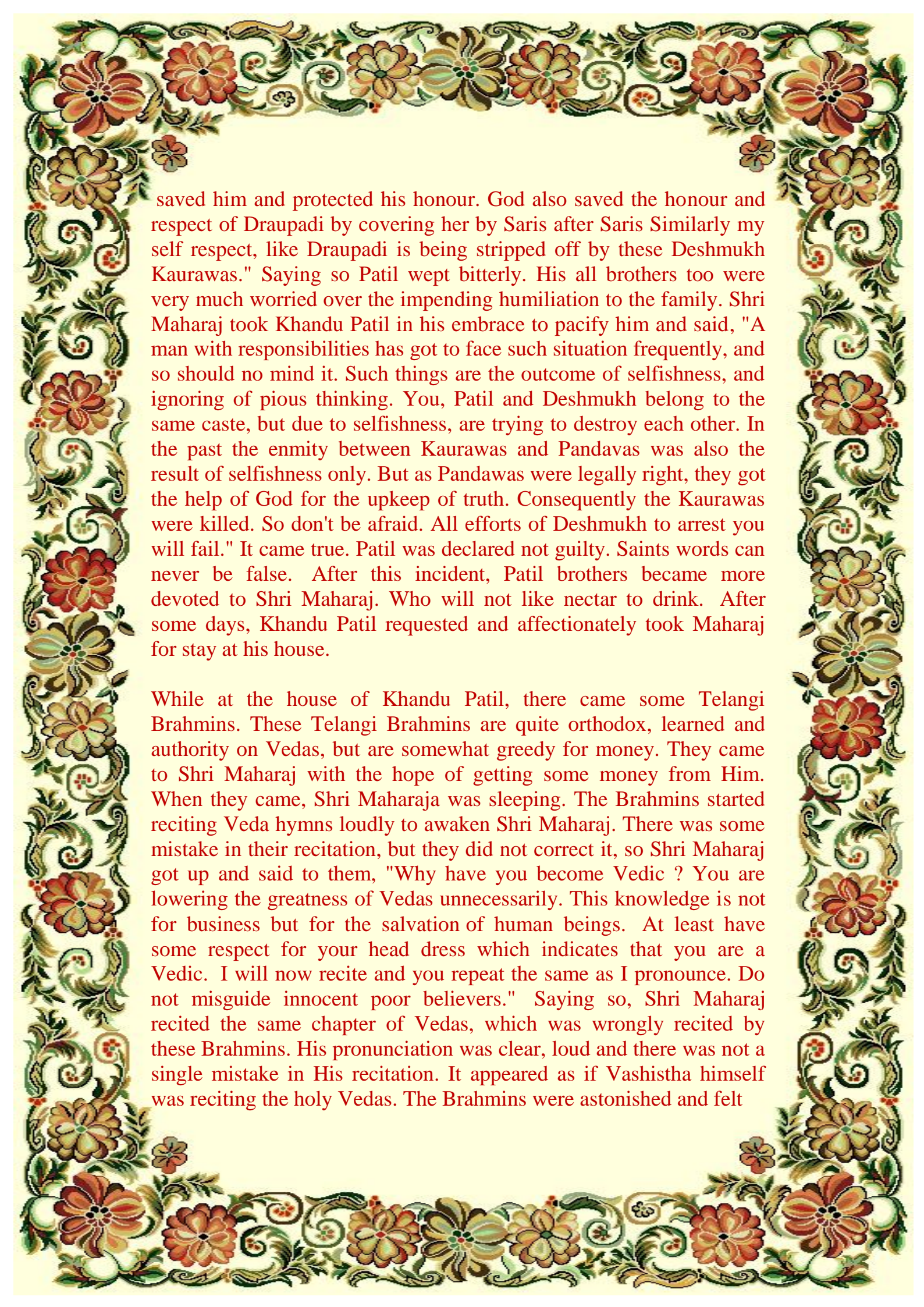
Shri Ganeshay Namaha ! O Son of Vasudeo & Devaki, O Beloved one of Gopa & Gopis, O Killer of demons, bless me Shri Hari. Devotion and penance is required to get your favor, but I am not able to attain any of these. I do in ancient language not know all you gospels, I am also dull and so cannot study that language. Tell me how can a frog get honey of lotus ? If I try to get your favor by feeding people, that too is not possible due to the poverty bestowed upon me by you. Getting your blessings by visiting holy shrines an places is also not possible due to poor health & fading eyesight. Thus I am helpless all round. It is seen that hopes of poor are never fulfilled. Apparent' it is true but, if you wish, your blessings can enable me to attain all the bliss Specialty of yours blessings is that it does not require money to obtain it. When clouds pour water, all the rivers and lakes get filled with it. I am hungry of such blessings from you. Please give me at least a morsel of it and make me happy. A drop of nectar can remove all the diseases. Let it be as it is.

In the previous chapter we have seen that Patil and Deshmukh were divided. Whenever there is such division, it destroys all happiness. Tuberculosis to the body and division in the society entail death and all attempts prove futile. On the bank of the lake one Mahar was arguing with Khandu Patil regarding some work given to him by Patil




who is the highest authority in the village. That Marya Mahar had support of Deshmukh people. Patil told him some work but he refused to do it in a very rough language. Patil told to behave properly with the head of the village and admonished him. Marya did not obey and on the contrary started ridiculed the Patil. The cause of all this exchange of words was very simple. Patil wanted to send some important dak to Akola Police Station and asked Marya to carry it. Marya blatantly refused to go saying that he was subordinate to Deshmukh only. He made some nasty gesticulations at Patil which infuriated him. In that anger Patil gave a forceful blow of stick on Marya's hand. The powerful blow by the hands of a strong man like Patil fractured Marya's hand making him unconscious. Patil sent the dak with some other man. Relatives of Marya took him to Deshmukh, who grabbed this opportunity to corner and trouble Khandu Patil. Deshmukh took Marya to the police station and reported the matter to the officer. Whenever there is groupism in the society, even the small things are magnified to denounce each other.

The Officer registered the complaint and issued orders to arrest Khandu Patil. The news spread like wildfire in Shegaon and Patil naturally got frightened and worried over the impending danger. He prayed Almighty God to save him from the humiliation of arrest. For a man of dignity, insult is worse than death. His all brothers too were worried and felt helpless. Then it suddenly occurred to Khandu Patil that he should better go to Shri Gajanan Maharaj and seek his help as none else could be able to save him from this calamity. His brothers went to Akola for legal and personal efforts. Khandu Patil went straight to Shri Maharaj at night. He prostrated before Shri Maharaj and narrated the whole episode. He said, "I gave a beating to one Mahar as he refused to do a Government work and that matter is being used by Deshmukh people to put me to trouble. They are arranging to get man arrested and there is nobody to save me except you. Tomorrow police man comes to arrest me. Please kill me before that. I am a man of dignity and soul an insult of arrest is as good as death to me. I do accept my mistake, but that is being exaggerated out of proportion. Please save me from this contempt. Arjuna was prepared to burn himself to save his dignity in the episode of Jaydratha. God



saved him and protected his honour. God also saved the honour and respect of Draupadi by covering her by Saris after Saris. Similarly my self respect, like Draupadi is being stripped off by these Deshmukh Kaurawas." Saying so Patil wept bitterly. His all brothers too were very much worried over the impending humiliation to the family. Shri Maharaj took Khandu Patil in his embrace to pacify him and said, "A man with responsibilities has got to face such situation frequently, and so should not mind it. Such things are the outcome of selfishness, and ignoring of pious thinking. You, Patil and Deshmukh belong to the same caste, but due to selfishness, are trying to destroy each other. In the past the enmity between Kaurawas and Pandavas was also the result of selfishness only. But as Pandavas were legally right, they got the help of God for the upkeep of truth. Consequently the Kaurawas were killed. So don't be afraid. All efforts of Deshmukh to arrest you will fail." It came true. Patil was declared not guilty. Saints words can never be false. After this incident, Patil brothers became more devoted to Shri Maharaj. Who will not like nectar to drink. After some days, Khandu Patil requested and affectionately took Maharaj for stay at his house.


While at the house of Khandu Patil, there came some Telangi Brahmins. These Telangi Brahmins are quite orthodox, learned and authority on Vedas, but are somewhat greedy for money. They came to Shri Maharaj with the hope of getting some money from Him. When they came, Shri Maharaj was sleeping. The Brahmins started reciting Veda hymns loudly to awaken Shri Maharaj. There was some mistake in their recitation, but they did not correct it, so Shri Maharaj got up and said to them, "Why have you become Vedic? You are lowering the greatness of Vedas unnecessarily. This knowledge is not for business but for the salvation of human beings. At least have some respect for your head dress which indicates that you are a Vedic. I will now recite and you repeat the same as I pronounce. Do not misguide innocent poor believers." Saying so, Shri Maharaj recited the same chapter of Vedas, which was wrongly recited by these Brahmins. His pronunciation was clear, loud and there was not a single mistake in His recitation. It appeared as if Vashistha himself was reciting the holy Vedas. The Brahmins were astonished and felt



shy even lift their faces. It was like a candle before sun shine. Brahmins first thought Shri Maharaj a mad person, but now found Him to be learned giant. They were convinced that all the four Vedas were on the tip of His tongue. They thought that Shri Maharaj is a God incarnate and must be a Brahmin by caste, a yogi free of any bondage or attachment, and because of their good deeds of previous life, were fortunate to get "Darshan" of such Godly saint. Shri Maharaj asked Khandu Patil to give them a rupee each as "Dakshina". Brahmins accepted the dakshina and happily went away.

Shri Maharaj, like a true saint disliked too much of attachment of Shegaon people. In the north of Shegaon there was a garden where vegetables were grown in abundance. Under the cool dark shade of a Nimb tree, there was a temple of Lord Shiva in the Garden. Krishnaji Patil owned it. Shri Maharaj went there and sat on a platform under a tree near Shiva temple and said to Krishnaji, "I have come to your garden to stay here for a few days near Lord Shiva. Lord Shiva is the God of all Gods and since He liked to stay in your garden, I too wish to be near Him. So erect a small shade for me here." Krishnaji, thereupon got erected a tine shade on the platform. The Garden became a holy place due to the presence of Shri Maharaj there. It is like, a place of king's stay becoming the capital of the Kingdom. Bhasker & Tukaram Kokatya stayed with Shri Maharaj to render Him necessary service. Krishnaji used to attend personally for food etc to Shri Maharaj, and took his meals only after Shri Maharaj had His.

While in the garden, there came 15 to 20 ascetics who had already heard about Shri Gajanan Maharaj. They told Krishanji Patil that they were on pilgrimage and were on the way to Rameshwar, with the holy water of Ganga with them. They also said that they were the disciples of Shri Brahmagiri Maharaj, who was also with them, and with him had visited on foot the holy places like Gangotri, Jamnotri, Hinglaj Girnar and Dakur. They further said, "Our Brahmagiri, who enslaved God Himself, has come to you probably, due to your good deeds of past life. So feed us "Shira Puri" and give some Ganja to smoke. We shall stay here for three days and leave on the fourth day. Do not hesitate to take this opportunity to serve us, instead of that mad man

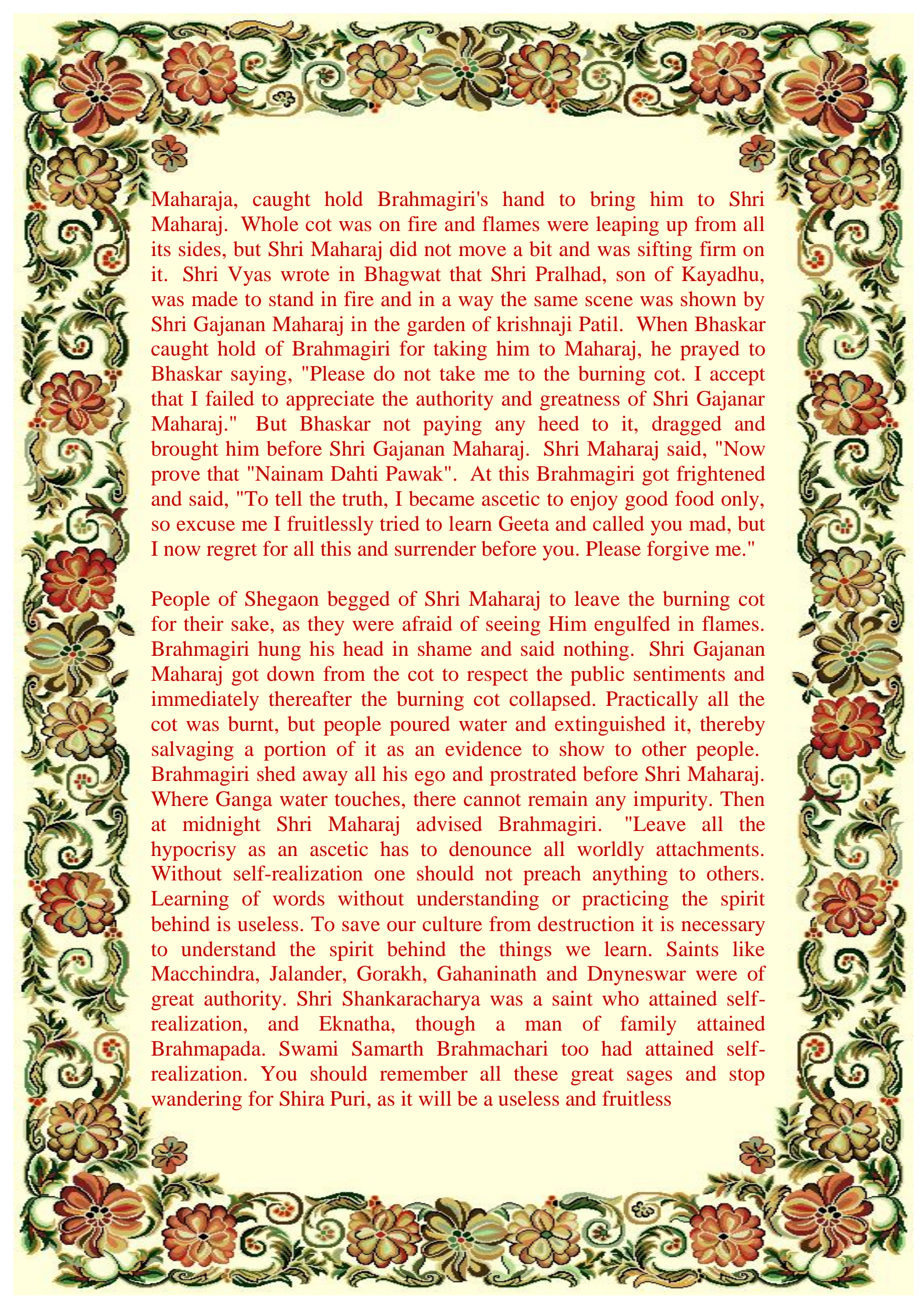


whom you are feeding here. Otherwise it will be like kicking a cow and feeding a donkey. We are ascetics who have renounced everything and also know all the Vedas. If you like come and listen to our discourses." Krishnaji Said, "I will entertain you with Shira Puri tomorrow, and for today take these breads and besan. You will get lot of Ganja to smoke as Shri Shiva Himself is sitting there in the form of Shri Gajanan Maharaj."

It was noon time and the ascetics took the meals of bread-besan near the well. In the evening they sat under the shade before Shri Gajanan Maharaj and their Mahant, Shri Brahmagiri, started reading Geeta. The ascetics and some people from the town were listening to the discourse of Brahmagiri, who started to preach on the first stanza of Nainam Chhindanti. The Brahmagiri was a pure hypocrite with no personal spiritual attainment. The people there, were naturally not impressed by his talk and said that he was only playing with the words. When his discourse was over, all the people went to Shri Gajanan Maharaj for His Darshan. They said, "We heard philosophy over there, but see here in Shri Maharaj the reality itself. There we heard the history and here is the man himself."

The ascetics who were smoking Ganja were irritated by these remarks. Shri Maharaj Himself was sitting on a cot and Bhaskar was giving him Ganja pipe to smoke. A spark from the pipe fell on the cot and slowly smoke started coming out of it and a little while after whole cot was in flames. Looking to that, Bhasker requested Shri Maharaj to leave the cot and come down, saying that the cot was of teak wood and won't extinguish without water. Thereupon Shri Maharaj said, "Don't bring water to extinguish the fire, O ! Brahmagiri Maharaj come and sit with me on this cot. You know all Geeta with its meaning and now the time has come for its test. Prove that the fire won't burn Brahma. You have given discourse on "Nainam Chhindanti" for an hour, so you should not be afraid of sitting with me on this burning cot. Bhaskar, go and bring him with due respect to sit with me here".

Bhaskar was a well built strong man and at the orders of Shri



Maharaja, caught hold Brahmagiri's hand to bring him to Shri Maharaj. Whole cot was on fire and flames were leaping up from all its sides, but Shri Maharaj did not move a bit and was sifting firm on it. Shri Vyas wrote in Bhagwat that Shri Pralhad, son of Kayadhu, was made to stand in fire and in a way the same scene was shown by Shri Gajanan Maharaj in the garden of krishnaji Patil. When Bhaskar caught hold of Brahmagiri for taking him to Maharaj, he prayed to Bhaskar saying, "Please do not take me to the burning cot. I accept that I failed to appreciate the authority and greatness of Shri Gajanan Maharaj." But Bhaskar not paying any heed to it, dragged and brought him before Shri Gajanan Maharaj. Shri Maharaj said, "Now prove that "Nainam Dahti Pawak". At this Brahmagiri got frightened and said, "To tell the truth, I became ascetic to enjoy good food only, so excuse me I fruitlessly tried to learn Geeta and called you mad, but I now regret for all this and surrender before you. Please forgive me."

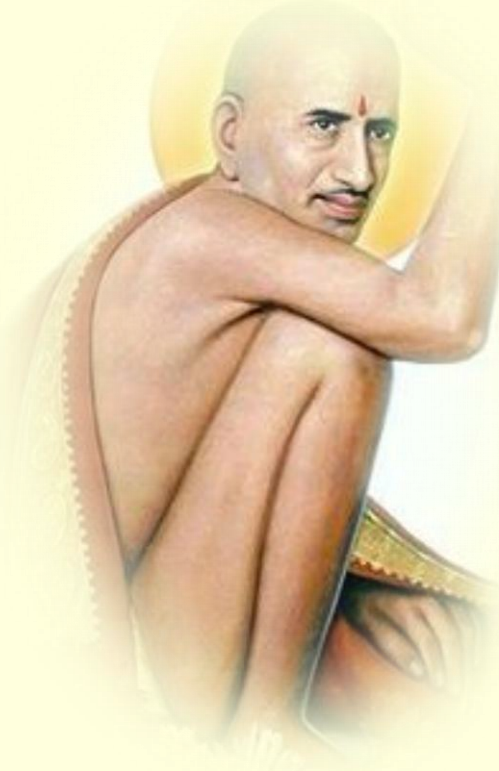
People of Shegaon begged of Shri Maharaj to leave the burning cot for their sake, as they were afraid of seeing Him engulfed in flames. Brahmagiri hung his head in shame and said nothing. Shri Gajanan Maharaj got down from the cot to respect the public sentiments and immediately thereafter the burning cot collapsed. Practically all the cot was burnt, but people poured water and extinguished it, thereby salvaging a portion of it as an evidence to show to other people. Brahmagiri shed away all his ego and prostrated before Shri Maharaj. Where Ganga water touches, there cannot remain any impurity. Then at midnight Shri Maharaj advised Brahmagiri. "Leave all the hypocrisy as an ascetic has to denounce all worldly attachments. Without self-realization one should not preach anything to others. Learning of words without understanding or practicing the spirit behind is useless. To save our culture from destruction it is necessary to understand the spirit behind the things we learn. Saints like Macchindra, Jalander, Gorakh, Gahaninath and Dnyeswar were of great authority. Shri Shankaracharya was a saint who attained self-realization, and Eknatha, though a man of family attained Brahmipada. Swami Samarth Brahmachari too had attained self-realization. You should remember all these great sages and stop wandering for Shira Puri, as it will be a useless and fruitless

wandering. Brahmagiri calmly listened to all this advise and felt real detachment for the material things". Early next morning he left the place along with his disciples without meeting anybody. Next day when people heard of the happening in the garden they came to see the burnt cot.

Dasganu desires this "Gajanan Vijay Granth" to liberate all from the material attachments. Obeisance to Hara and Hari. Let Purity come to all.

"Shubham Bhavatu"
"Shri Hari Hararpanamastu"

Here is the End of Chapter Eight.



Compiled by : Shravan Pande, Shegaon, India.