

* CHAPTER NINETEEN *



Shri Ganeshay Namaha ! Jai to the giver of Joy. Jai to Abheda. Let my head always bow before you. O Raghava, Raghupati, please come to bless me without delay. It is not befitting for great ones to be harsh. O Ananta, please give a thought to what I say. O Jagannatha, I call you most earnestly don't disappoint this Dasganu.

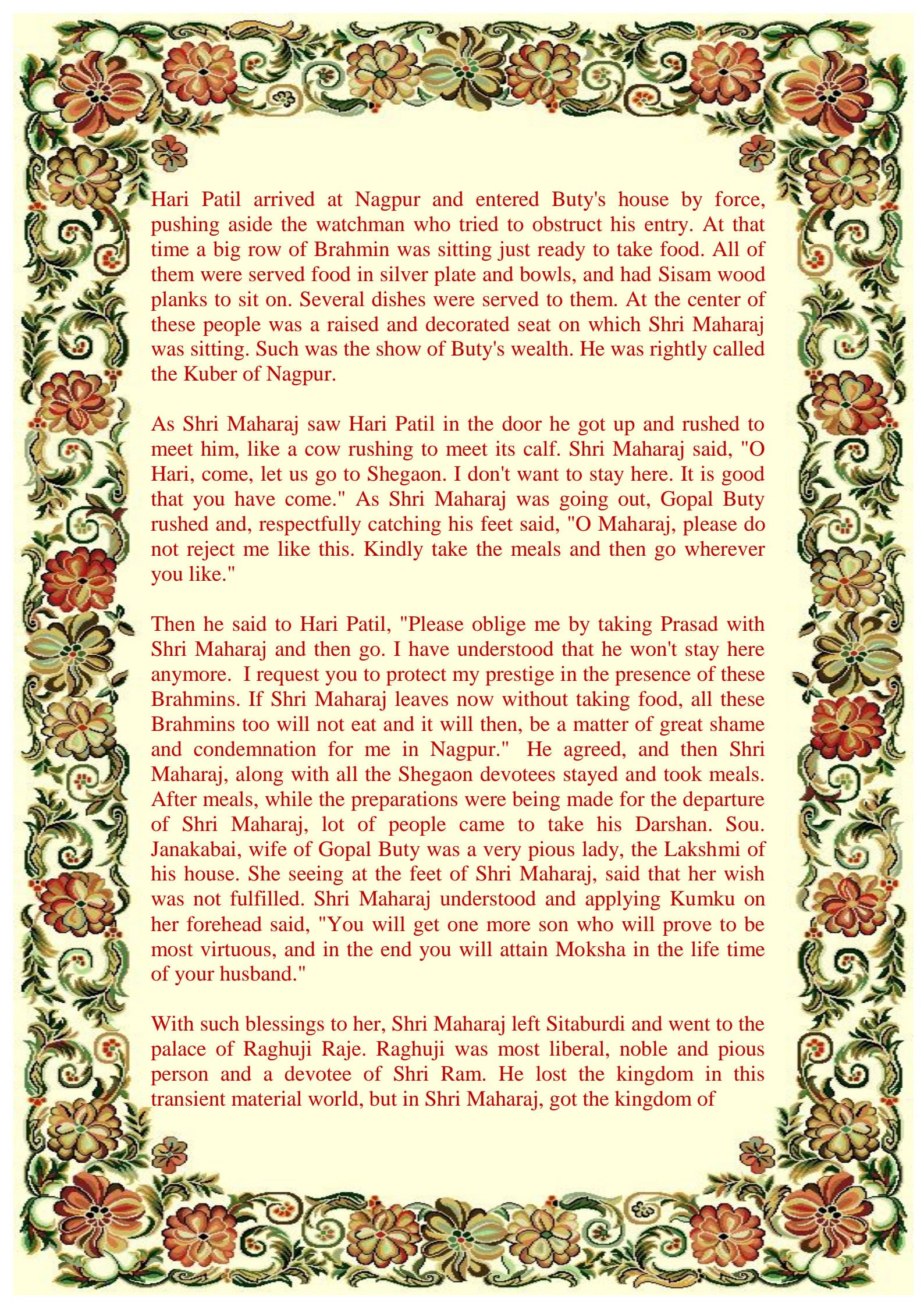
When Shri Maharaj was at Shegaon, one Brahmin named Kashinath Khanderao Garde came for his "Darshan." He prostrated before Shri Maharaj and was very happy to see in him all the signs of a "Jeevan Mukta" as written by his father. He thought himself to be very fortunate to have come from Khamgaon to see Shri Maharaj. While he was thinking so, Shri Maharaj gave him a push by elbow and said, "Go, your desire is fulfilled. The postman is waiting for you with telegram." Kashinath was confused, and could not understand the meaning of what Shri Maharaj said, as he had not come to ask for anything from him. Neither could he dare to ask Shri Maharaj the meaning of what he said. With folded hand he bent before Shri Maharaj and returned to Khamgaon. At Khamgaon a postman was really waiting at his door with a telegram. Hurriedly he took the telegram and saw that it contained the news of his promotion as Munsufi and he was posted to Morshi. Then he understood the meaning of the elbow-push given to him by Shri Maharaj and was



surprise at the knowledge of the saint.

Once Shri Maharaj, on invitation from Shri Buty, went to Nagpur. This Nagpur was once the capital place of Bhosel's kingdom but now has lost all its grandeur. It is the result of losing independence, which turned owner in to beggar, and bestowed greatness on foreigners. Elephants, horses and palanquins have disappeared giving place to motors. Changing times do have such effects and nobody can be blamed for this. Shri Gopal Buty's residence was in Sitaburdi, and Shri Maharaj was kept in that palatial building just like enclosing a tiger in a fort. Shri Buty desired Shri Maharaj to stay with him forever. For Shegaon people, he appeared like Akrura taking away Shrikrishna to Mathura. Without Shri Maharaj, Shegaon became a deserted place and so, all the devotees requested Hari Patil to bring him back to Shegaon. Shegaon without Shri Maharaj was like a body without life in it. The devotees reminded Hari Patil that he was the head of Shegaon and Buty a great "Savkar", and as such only elephant can fight another elephant and not fox like them. Maruti was selected to fight Jambu Mali and Arjuna with Karna. Saying so, they requested Hari Patil to go to Nagpur and bring back Shri Maharaj to Shegaon. In fact Shri Maharaj stayed unwillingly with Shri Buty like Shrikrishna who stayed most unwillingly at Hastinapur. Shri Maharaj repeatedly asked Buty to let him go to Shegaon, but he ignored and did not allow Shri Maharaj to go to Shegaon. Though Buty was pious and good person, he was too proud of his wealth. Along with Shri Maharaj he used to feed scores of people, and the singing of Bhajan was continued throughout the day. But people from Shegaon were not permitted to see Shri Maharaj. Once some people from Shegaon went to bring back Shri Maharaj, but they had to return empty handed.

Now it was the great devotee, Hari Patil, who along with some friends, stark for Nagpur to bring back Shri Maharaj and as he was entering the train Shegaon, there at Nagpur, Shri Maharaj said to Buty, "O Gopala, Hari Patil is coming to Nagpur, so let me go from here before he comes. When he reaches here, all the peace will be lost. Mind that he is an executive officer. Your strength is your wealth but he will take me away on his physical strength."




Hari Patil arrived at Nagpur and entered Buty's house by force, pushing aside the watchman who tried to obstruct his entry. At that time a big row of Brahmin was sitting just ready to take food. All of them were served food in silver plate and bowls, and had Sisam wood planks to sit on. Several dishes were served to them. At the center of these people was a raised and decorated seat on which Shri Maharaj was sitting. Such was the show of Buty's wealth. He was rightly called the Kuber of Nagpur.

As Shri Maharaj saw Hari Patil in the door he got up and rushed to meet him, like a cow rushing to meet its calf. Shri Maharaj said, "O Hari, come, let us go to Shegaon. I don't want to stay here. It is good that you have come." As Shri Maharaj was going out, Gopal Buty rushed and, respectfully catching his feet said, "O Maharaj, please do not reject me like this. Kindly take the meals and then go wherever you like."

Then he said to Hari Patil, "Please oblige me by taking Prasad with Shri Maharaj and then go. I have understood that he won't stay here anymore. I request you to protect my prestige in the presence of these Brahmins. If Shri Maharaj leaves now without taking food, all these Brahmins too will not eat and it will then, be a matter of great shame and condemnation for me in Nagpur." He agreed, and then Shri Maharaj, along with all the Shegaon devotees stayed and took meals. After meals, while the preparations were being made for the departure of Shri Maharaj, lot of people came to take his Darshan. Sou. Janakabai, wife of Gopal Buty was a very pious lady, the Lakshmi of his house. She seeing at the feet of Shri Maharaj, said that her wish was not fulfilled. Shri Maharaj understood and applying Kumku on her forehead said, "You will get one more son who will prove to be most virtuous, and in the end you will attain Moksha in the life time of your husband."

With such blessings to her, Shri Maharaj left Sitaburdi and went to the palace of Raghuji Raje. Raghuji was most liberal, noble and pious person and a devotee of Shri Ram. He lost the kingdom in this transient material world, but in Shri Maharaj, got the kingdom of

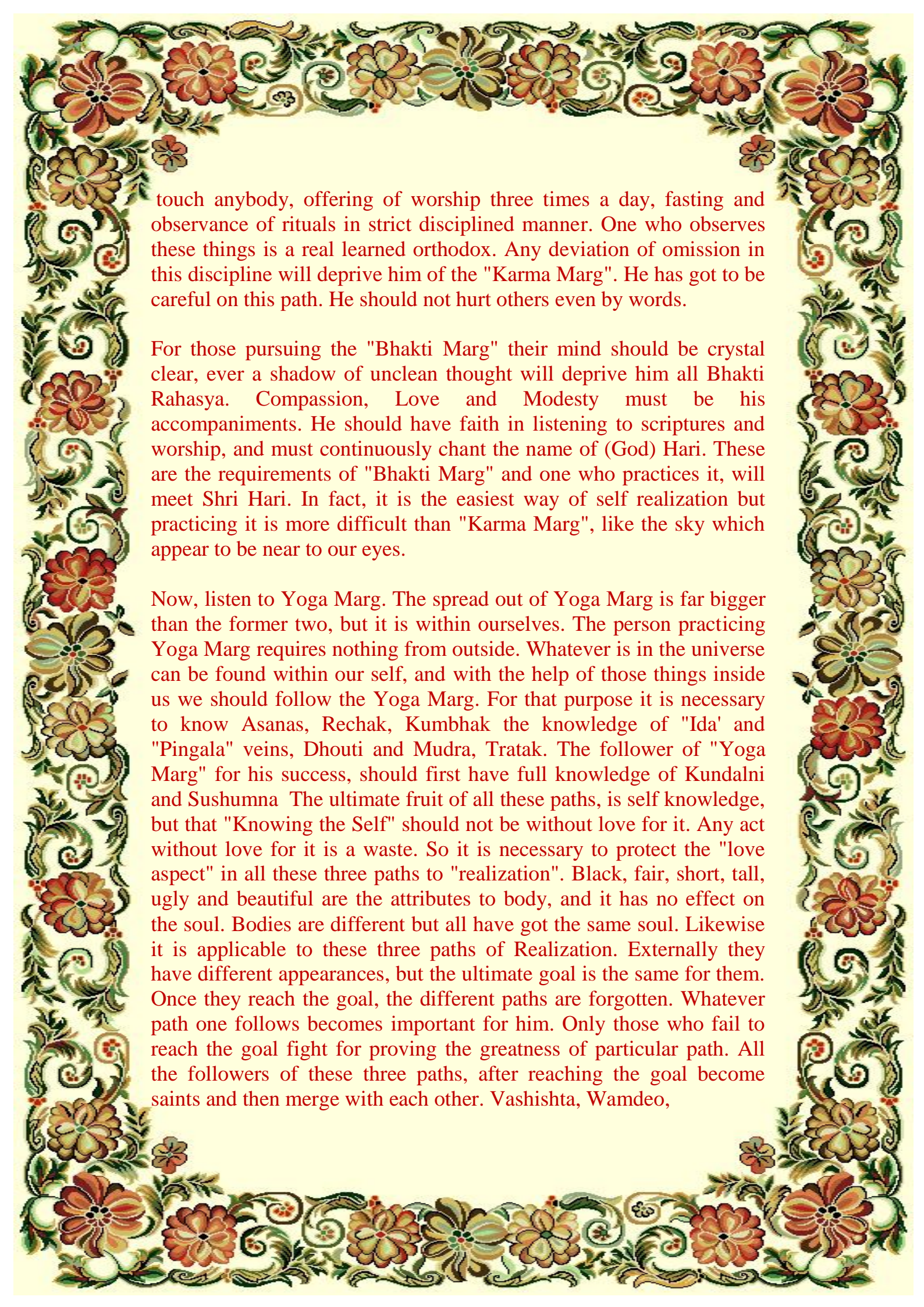


eternal nature. He most devotedly worshipped Shri Maharaj, who then went to Ramtek and after taking Darshan of Shri Ram returned to Shegaon along with Hari Patil.

Once Shri Rangnath, the great saint of Dhar Kalyan came to meet Shri Maharaj at Shegaon. They exchanged their views on Adhyatma in their own way, beyond understanding of others. Shri Wasudevanand Saraswati, born at Mangaon, and living on the bank of Krishna, was a believer in ritualistic worship (Karma Marg). When he was to come to Shegaon, Shri Maharaj said to Balabhau, "O Bala, one of my brothers is coming tomorrow to meet me. See that he is properly respected. He is most orthodox so keep the surrounding clean and see that there should not be even a piece of cloth lying anywhere. If he sees any, he will be annoyed, and angry like Jamadagni. That Karhada Brahmin, always clean, is most learned and will never compromise on discipline of religious rites."

So said Shri Maharaj to Balabhau a day prior to his coming and next day morning the Swamiji arrived at Shegaon. They looked at each other and smiled. Both appeared immensely happy. One was a believer in Karma, while other the king of Yoga. One was a sweet fragrance of Mogra and the other that of Rose. One was the Ganga and other the Godavari. One was the incarnation of Pashupati and other Narayan resting on the bed of Kobra (Shesha). When Swamiji came to the Matha, Shri Gajanan Maharaj was sitting on his cot and clapping with his fingers. When Shri Swamiji arrived, the clapping stopped, the eyes met each other, and Swamiji sought permission, to go. Shri Maharaj said, "Very good" and bent his head in consent. Swamiji went away. But Balabhau was confused and requested Shri Maharaj to remove his doubts. Bala Said, "Both of you have got different spiritual ways, then how do you call him your brother ? Please enlighten me."

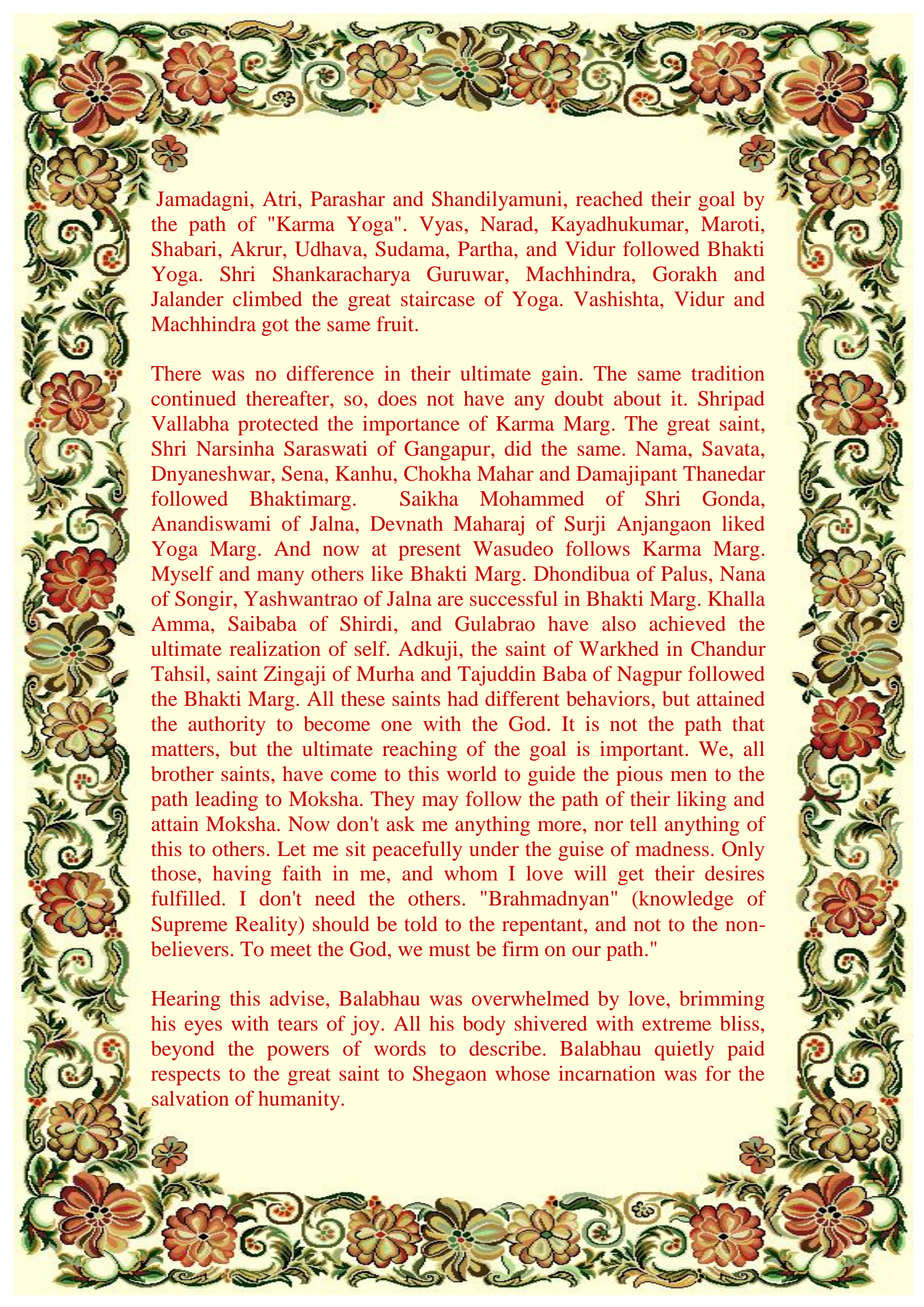
Shri Maharaj said, "Bala you have asked a good question. There are three paths to reach God. All of them take you to the "town" of self-realization. They appear to be different and so, confuses the onlooker. Rituals of "Karma Marg" are to keep clean, wear silk dhotis, not to



touch anybody, offering of worship three times a day, fasting and observance of rituals in strict disciplined manner. One who observes these things is a real learned orthodox. Any deviation or omission in this discipline will deprive him of the "Karma Marg". He has got to be careful on this path. He should not hurt others even by words.

For those pursuing the "Bhakti Marg" their mind should be crystal clear, ever a shadow of unclean thought will deprive him all Bhakti Rahasya. Compassion, Love and Modesty must be his accompaniments. He should have faith in listening to scriptures and worship, and must continuously chant the name of (God) Hari. These are the requirements of "Bhakti Marg" and one who practices it, will meet Shri Hari. In fact, it is the easiest way of self realization but practicing it is more difficult than "Karma Marg", like the sky which appear to be near to our eyes.


Now, listen to Yoga Marg. The spread out of Yoga Marg is far bigger than the former two, but it is within ourselves. The person practicing Yoga Marg requires nothing from outside. Whatever is in the universe can be found within our self, and with the help of those things inside us we should follow the Yoga Marg. For that purpose it is necessary to know Asanas, Rechak, Kumbhak the knowledge of "Ida' and "Pingala" veins, Dhouti and Mudra, Tratak. The follower of "Yoga Marg" for his success, should first have full knowledge of Kundalini and Sushumna. The ultimate fruit of all these paths, is self knowledge, but that "Knowing the Self" should not be without love for it. Any act without love for it is a waste. So it is necessary to protect the "love aspect" in all these three paths to "realization". Black, fair, short, tall, ugly and beautiful are the attributes to body, and it has no effect on the soul. Bodies are different but all have got the same soul. Likewise it is applicable to these three paths of Realization. Externally they have different appearances, but the ultimate goal is the same for them. Once they reach the goal, the different paths are forgotten. Whatever path one follows becomes important for him. Only those who fail to reach the goal fight for proving the greatness of particular path. All the followers of these three paths, after reaching the goal become saints and then merge with each other. Vashishta, Wamdeo,



Jamadagni, Atri, Parashar and Shandilyamuni, reached their goal by the path of "Karma Yoga". Vyas, Narad, Kayadhukumar, Maroti, Shabari, Akrur, Udhava, Sudama, Partha, and Vidur followed Bhakti Yoga. Shri Shankaracharya Guruwar, Machhindra, Gorakh and Jalander climbed the great staircase of Yoga. Vashishta, Vidur and Machhindra got the same fruit.

There was no difference in their ultimate gain. The same tradition continued thereafter, so, does not have any doubt about it. Shripad Vallabha protected the importance of Karma Marg. The great saint, Shri Narsinha Saraswati of Gangapur, did the same. Nama, Savata, Dnyaneshwar, Sena, Kanhu, Chokha Mahar and Damajipant Thanedar followed Bhaktimarg. Saikha Mohammed of Shri Gonda, Anandiswami of Jalna, Devnath Maharaj of Surji Anjangaon liked Yoga Marg. And now at present Wasudeo follows Karma Marg. Myself and many others like Bhakti Marg. Dhondibua of Palus, Nana of Songir, Yashwantrao of Jalna are successful in Bhakti Marg. Khalla Amma, Saibaba of Shirdi, and Gulabrao have also achieved the ultimate realization of self. Adkuji, the saint of Warkhed in Chandur Tahsil, saint Zingaji of Murha and Tajuddin Baba of Nagpur followed the Bhakti Marg. All these saints had different behaviors, but attained the authority to become one with the God. It is not the path that matters, but the ultimate reaching of the goal is important. We, all brother saints, have come to this world to guide the pious men to the path leading to Moksha. They may follow the path of their liking and attain Moksha. Now don't ask me anything more, nor tell anything of this to others. Let me sit peacefully under the guise of madness. Only those, having faith in me, and whom I love will get their desires fulfilled. I don't need the others. "Brahmadnyan" (knowledge of Supreme Reality) should be told to the repentant, and not to the non-believers. To meet the God, we must be firm on our path."

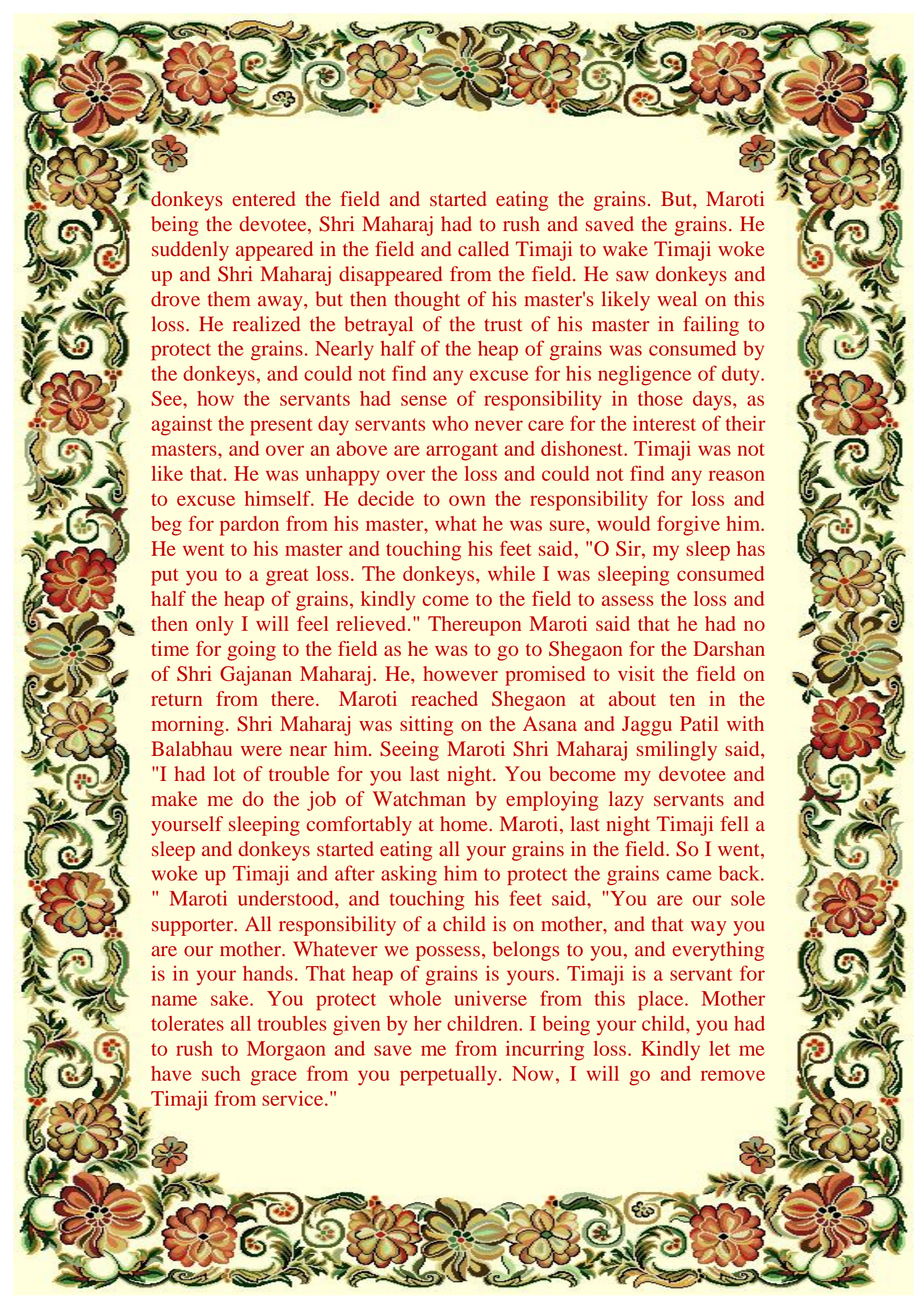
Hearing this advise, Balabhau was overwhelmed by love, brimming his eyes with tears of joy. All his body shivered with extreme bliss, beyond the powers of words to describe. Balabhau quietly paid respects to the great saint to Shegaon whose incarnation was for the salvation of humanity.



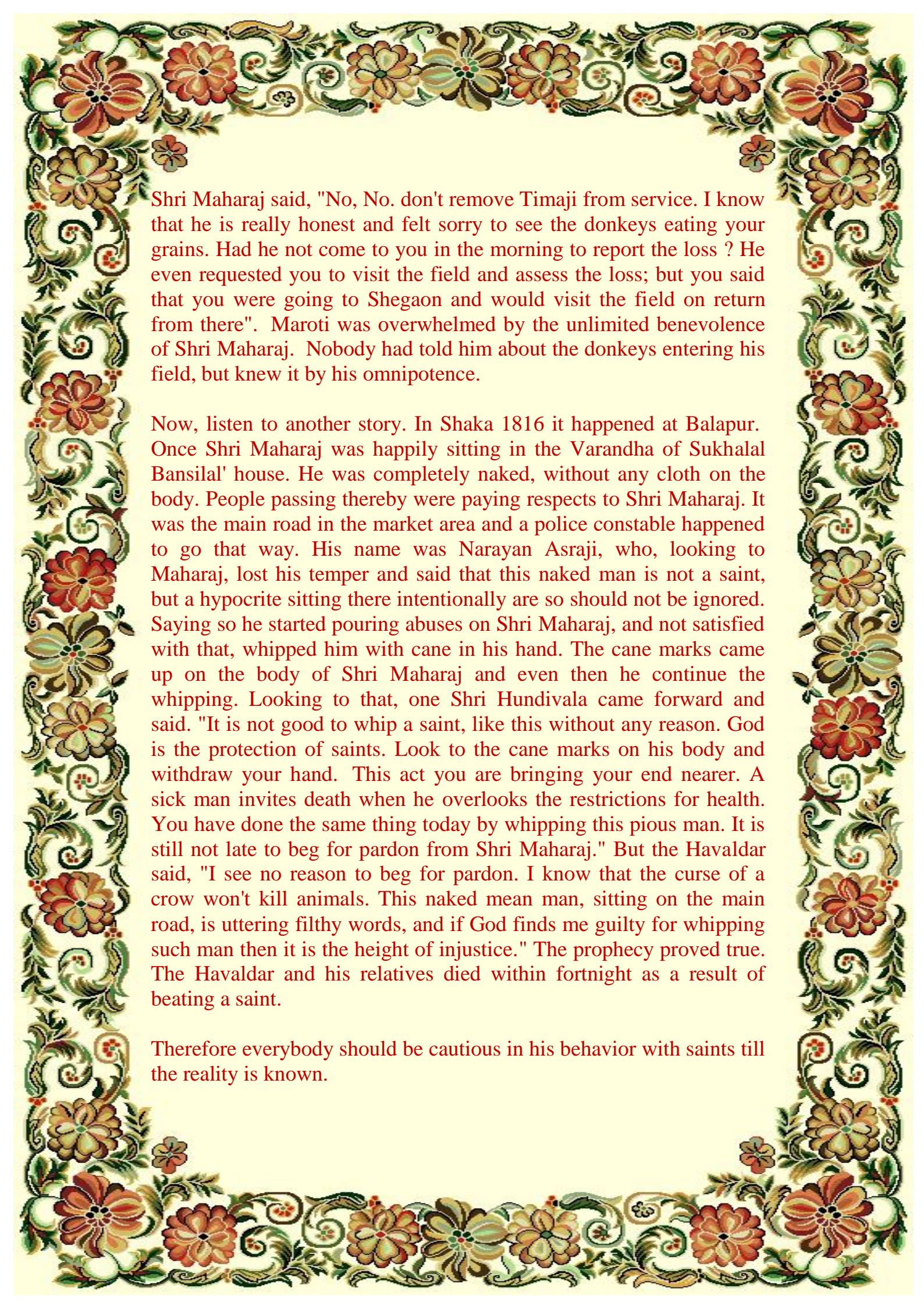
Salubai was a sincere devotee of Shri Maharaj. Once Shri Maharaj said to her, "Salu, take flour and pulse and keep on cooking day and night. Go on feeding all those who come here; by doing so you will be loved by Narayan." That Salubai of Vaizapur is still alive at Shegaon. Pralhadbua Joshi once had an opportunity of blessings from Shri Maharaj but unfortunately lost it.

There was one Tulsiram at Jalamb near Khamgaon. His son, Atmaram was very intelligent. He had special liking for Vedas, and so had gone to Kashi for its study. Daily bath at Bhagirathi River, food of Madhukari (Alms) and going to Guru for the studies of Vedas was his daily routine. Contrary to this is the behavior of present day students, who waste their time in all types of entertainments instead of studies. Can they gain any knowledge by such behavior ? Atmaram was not like that. He knew his responsibility well. After completing the studies, he returned home and first went to Shegaon to pay his respects to Shri Maharaj. Atmaram now knew Vedas but Shri Maharaj was the Sun of knowledge. He recited Vedas along with Atmaram, and corrected him whenever necessary. It was a surprise for all to see Shri Maharaj reciting Vedas. Atmaram continued to stay with Shri Maharaj. How can a honey bee leave the honey ? Daily he used to come to Shegaon from Jalamb and offer his services. So much was his devotion that when Shri Maharaj left material world, Atmaram stayed at Shegaon only for daily worship of the Samadhi. And did not accept any remuneration for this service, but on the contrary go away his own property, which was a house and some land, to the trust of temple. It is not the value of the offering one makes, but the devotion which counts. Shabari gained the grace of Shri Ram by offering jujube fruits (be only. same thing happened here also.) Swami Dattatray Kedar, Narayan Jamkar, and Dudhahari bua who lived milk only, all of them had sincere devotion for Shri Maharaj.

Now listen to the story of Marutipant Patwari of Morgaon Bhakre in Balapur Taluka. That Marutipant had Timaji Mali in his service for protection of the crow in the field. One night, while keeping watch on the heap of grains in the field he fell asleep. At that time some



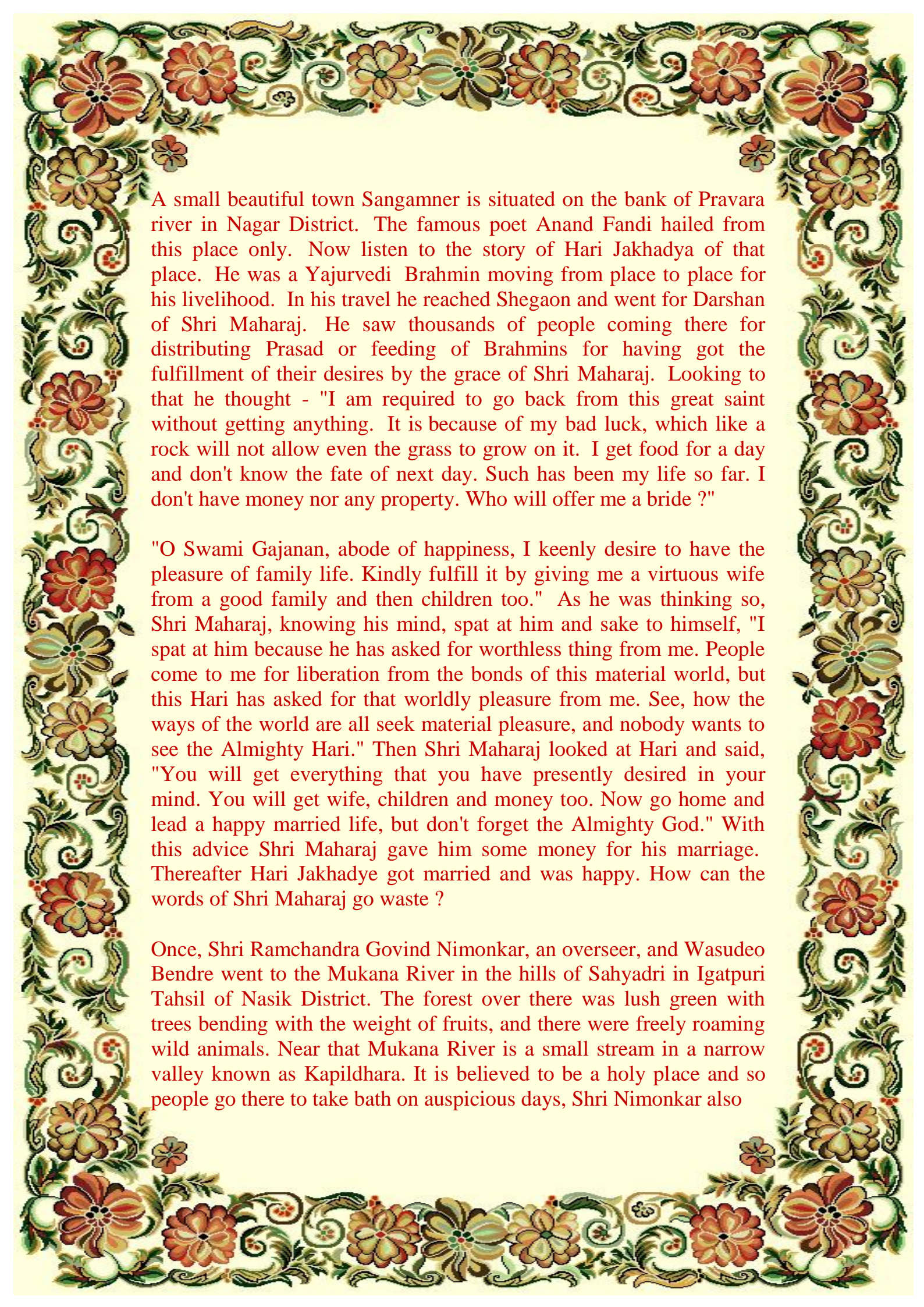
donkeys entered the field and started eating the grains. But, Maroti being the devotee, Shri Maharaj had to rush and saved the grains. He suddenly appeared in the field and called Timaji to wake Timaji woke up and Shri Maharaj disappeared from the field. He saw donkeys and drove them away, but then thought of his master's likely weal on this loss. He realized the betrayal of the trust of his master in failing to protect the grains. Nearly half of the heap of grains was consumed by the donkeys, and could not find any excuse for his negligence of duty. See, how the servants had sense of responsibility in those days, as against the present day servants who never care for the interest of their masters, and over an above are arrogant and dishonest. Timaji was not like that. He was unhappy over the loss and could not find any reason to excuse himself. He decide to own the responsibility for loss and beg for pardon from his master, what he was sure, would forgive him. He went to his master and touching his feet said, "O Sir, my sleep has put you to a great loss. The donkeys, while I was sleeping consumed half the heap of grains, kindly come to the field to assess the loss and then only I will feel relieved." Thereupon Maroti said that he had no time for going to the field as he was to go to Shegaon for the Darshan of Shri Gajanan Maharaj. He, however promised to visit the field on return from there. Maroti reached Shegaon at about ten in the morning. Shri Maharaj was sitting on the Asana and Jaggu Patil with Balabhau were near him. Seeing Maroti Shri Maharaj smilingly said, "I had lot of trouble for you last night. You become my devotee and make me do the job of Watchman by employing lazy servants and yourself sleeping comfortably at home. Maroti, last night Timaji fell a sleep and donkeys started eating all your grains in the field. So I went, woke up Timaji and after asking him to protect the grains came back. " Maroti understood, and touching his feet said, "You are our sole supporter. All responsibility of a child is on mother, and that way you are our mother. Whatever we possess, belongs to you, and everything is in your hands. That heap of grains is yours. Timaji is a servant for name sake. You protect whole universe from this place. Mother tolerates all troubles given by her children. I being your child, you had to rush to Morgaon and save me from incurring loss. Kindly let me have such grace from you perpetually. Now, I will go and remove Timaji from service."



Shri Maharaj said, "No, No. don't remove Timaji from service. I know that he is really honest and felt sorry to see the donkeys eating your grains. Had he not come to you in the morning to report the loss ? He even requested you to visit the field and assess the loss; but you said that you were going to Shegaon and would visit the field on return from there". Maroti was overwhelmed by the unlimited benevolence of Shri Maharaj. Nobody had told him about the donkeys entering his field, but knew it by his omnipotence.

Now, listen to another story. In Shaka 1816 it happened at Balapur. Once Shri Maharaj was happily sitting in the Varandha of Sukhalal Bansilal' house. He was completely naked, without any cloth on the body. People passing thereby were paying respects to Shri Maharaj. It was the main road in the market area and a police constable happened to go that way. His name was Narayan Asraji, who, looking to Maharaj, lost his temper and said that this naked man is not a saint, but a hypocrite sitting there intentionally and so should not be ignored. Saying so he started pouring abuses on Shri Maharaj, and not satisfied with that, whipped him with cane in his hand. The cane marks came up on the body of Shri Maharaj and even then he continued the whipping. Looking to that, one Shri Hundivala came forward and said. "It is not good to whip a saint, like this without any reason. God is the protection of saints. Look to the cane marks on his body and withdraw your hand. This act you are bringing your end nearer. A sick man invites death when he overlooks the restrictions for health. You have done the same thing today by whipping this pious man. It is still not late to beg for pardon from Shri Maharaj." But the Havaladar said, "I see no reason to beg for pardon. I know that the curse of a crow won't kill animals. This naked mean man, sitting on the main road, is uttering filthy words, and if God finds me guilty for whipping such man then it is the height of injustice." The prophecy proved true. The Havaladar and his relatives died within fortnight as a result of beating a saint.


Therefore everybody should be cautious in his behavior with saints till the reality is known.



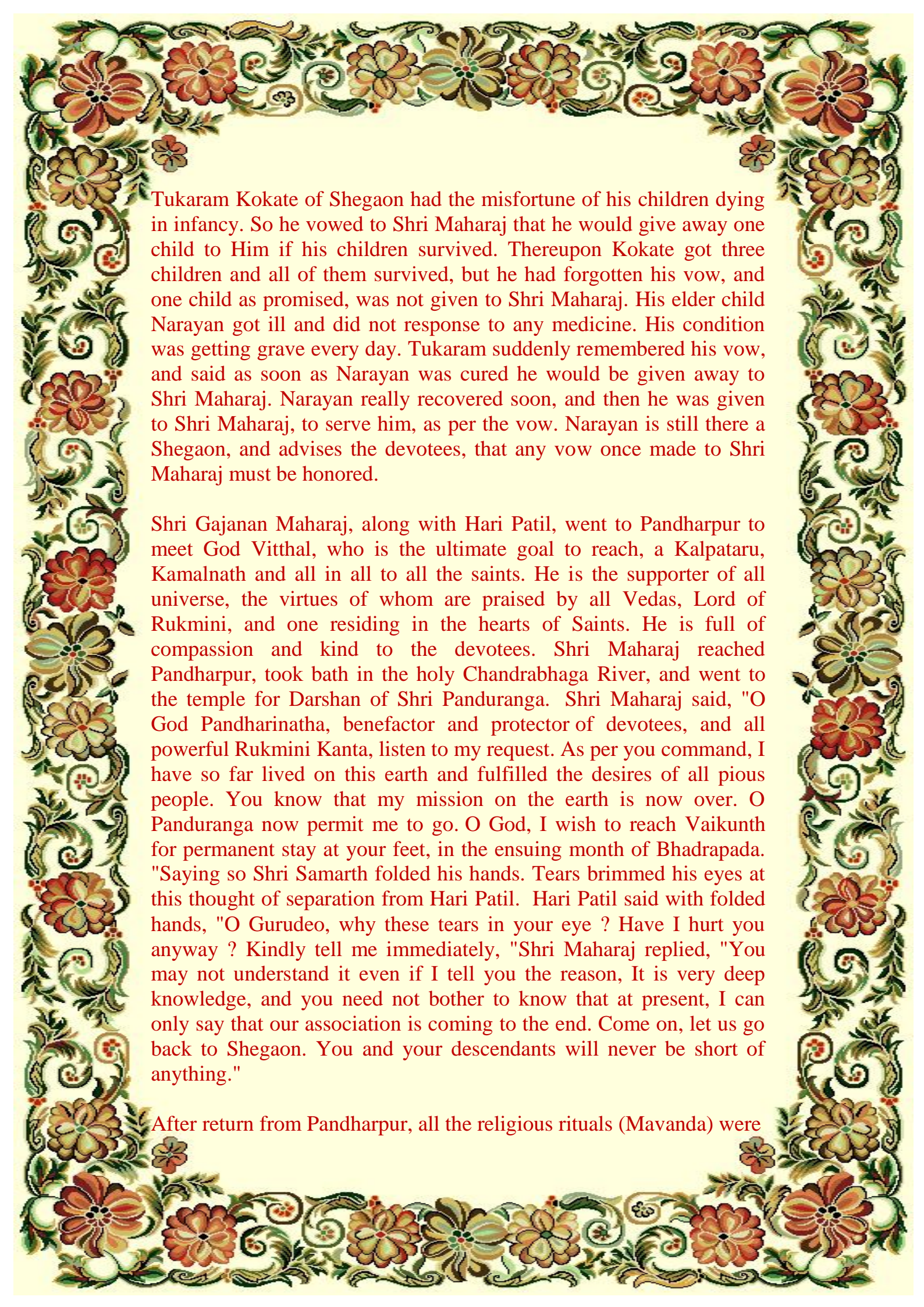
A small beautiful town Sangamner is situated on the bank of Pravara river in Nagar District. The famous poet Anand Fandi hailed from this place only. Now listen to the story of Hari Jakhadya of that place. He was a Yajurvedi Brahmin moving from place to place for his livelihood. In his travel he reached Shegaon and went for Darshan of Shri Maharaj. He saw thousands of people coming there for distributing Prasad or feeding of Brahmins for having got the fulfillment of their desires by the grace of Shri Maharaj. Looking to that he thought - "I am required to go back from this great saint without getting anything. It is because of my bad luck, which like a rock will not allow even the grass to grow on it. I get food for a day and don't know the fate of next day. Such has been my life so far. I don't have money nor any property. Who will offer me a bride ?"

"O Swami Gajanan, abode of happiness, I keenly desire to have the pleasure of family life. Kindly fulfill it by giving me a virtuous wife from a good family and then children too." As he was thinking so, Shri Maharaj, knowing his mind, spat at him and sake to himself, "I spat at him because he has asked for worthless thing from me. People come to me for liberation from the bonds of this material world, but this Hari has asked for that worldly pleasure from me. See, how the ways of the world are all seek material pleasure, and nobody wants to see the Almighty Hari." Then Shri Maharaj looked at Hari and said, "You will get everything that you have presently desired in your mind. You will get wife, children and money too. Now go home and lead a happy married life, but don't forget the Almighty God." With this advice Shri Maharaj gave him some money for his marriage. Thereafter Hari Jakhadye got married and was happy. How can the words of Shri Maharaj go waste ?

Once, Shri Ramchandra Govind Nimonkar, an overseer, and Wasudeo Bendre went to the Mukana River in the hills of Sahyadri in Igatpuri Tahsil of Nasik District. The forest over there was lush green with trees bending with the weight of fruits, and there were freely roaming wild animals. Near that Mukana River is a small stream in a narrow valley known as Kapildhara. It is believed to be a holy place and so people go there to take bath on auspicious days, Shri Nimonkar also



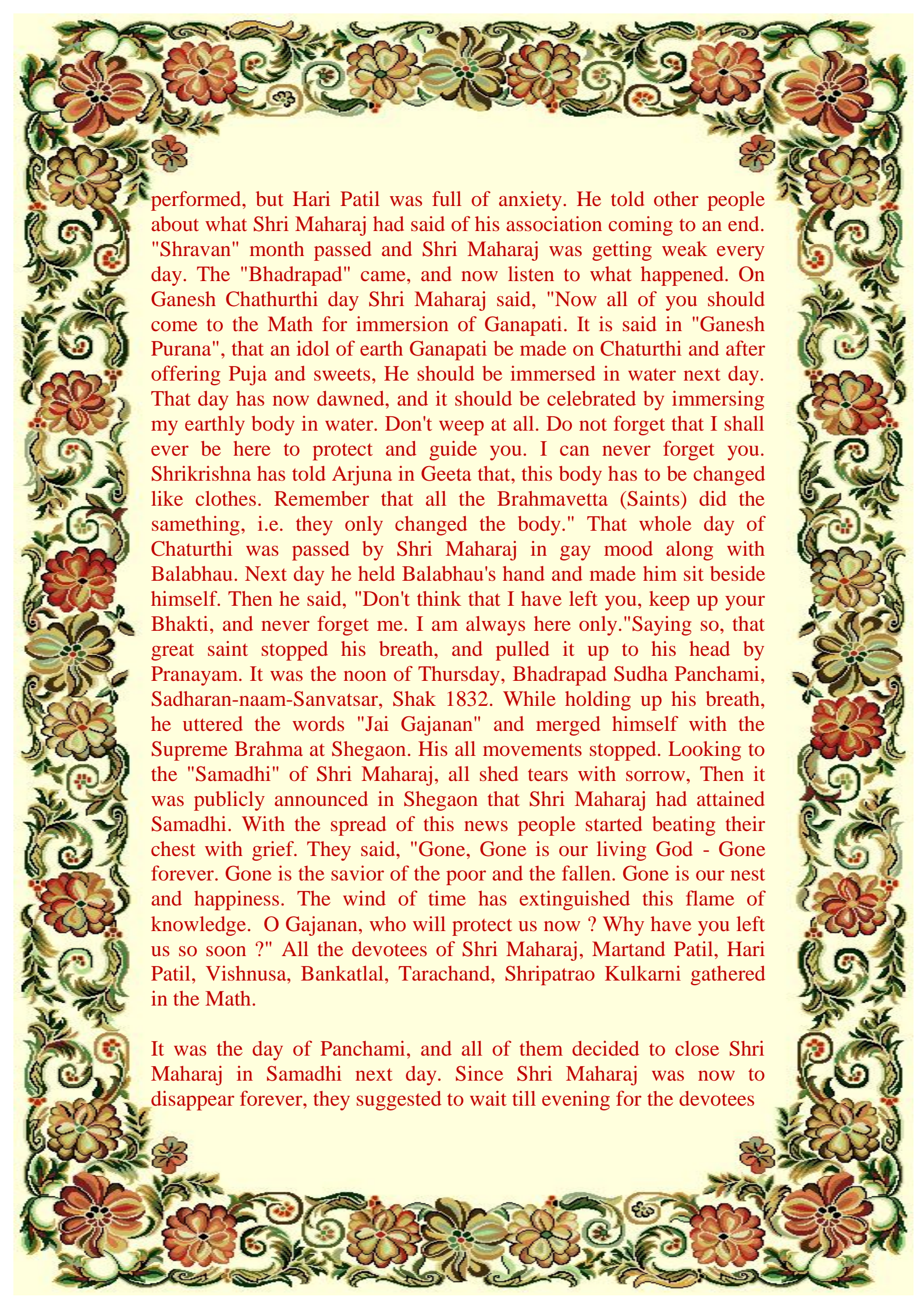
went there on one such auspicious day. He had some elementary knowledge of yoga and was very keen to develop it further, and as such was enquiring with every ascetic he meet at that place. They all said "No" to him, and so very much disappointed. He with folded hands, implored God to show him a person who could teach yoga. Suddenly, at Kapildhara, he saw a man with long arms reaching his knees who appeared to be a sage. This tall man, with calm face, was sitting in meditation. Nimonkar prostrated before him and waited till evening to see him open the eyes. But the yogi won't open eyes nor spoke anything. For whole day he was without food. As evening was approaching, all the other ascetics at Kapildhara were returning. So Shri Nimonkar, with folded hands, implored the sage to teach him yoga. The sage give him a picture and said, "Your wish will be fulfilled by this picture on which is written a Mantra (hymn) of sixteen words. Keep on chanting it continuously and by its power you may learn some yoga. Yoga Marg is the most difficult amongst all Yogas. A small insect cannot go around Himalaya, nor a sea shell worm climb the Meru Mountain. You may try Yoga by remaining a strict bachelor and cleaning your inner body by "Dhouti" and "Nouti". If you do it sincerely, you shall be able to perform some Asana. Now don't ask me any questions, and take this Prasad." Saying so, he gave him a red pebble, and disappeared. The same Yogi met Nimonkar again on the bank of Godavari at Nasik. Nimonkar went running to him and touching his feet, said, "Sir, you seem to be fed up with me. Last time you went away without telling your name and whereabouts." Shri Maharaj said, "I told you my name by giving you a red pebble. God Ganesh from Narmada is always red but you being dull, could not understand it. I am from Shegaon, and my name is Gajanan. You come with me to the house of Shri Dhupal, where we shall meet again." Saying so, Shri Maharaj disappeared and Nimonkar could not see him. Then he went to Dhupal's house, where he was very happy to see Shri Maharaj sitting there. Mentally he bowed to shri Maharaj and told to Dhupal, everything that had happened from Kapildhara to Nasik. Shri Dhupal was very glad to hear all that, and then praised Shri Maharaj again and again for his all divine powers. He advised Nimonkar to worship that red pebble devotedly every day and perform Yogasanas before it. Thus, Shri Nimonkar learnt Yogasana by the grace of Shri Maharaj.



Tukaram Kokate of Shegaon had the misfortune of his children dying in infancy. So he vowed to Shri Maharaj that he would give away one child to Him if his children survived. Thereupon Kokate got three children and all of them survived, but he had forgotten his vow, and one child as promised, was not given to Shri Maharaj. His elder child Narayan got ill and did not response to any medicine. His condition was getting grave every day. Tukaram suddenly remembered his vow, and said as soon as Narayan was cured he would be given away to Shri Maharaj. Narayan really recovered soon, and then he was given to Shri Maharaj, to serve him, as per the vow. Narayan is still there a Shegaon, and advises the devotees, that any vow once made to Shri Maharaj must be honored.

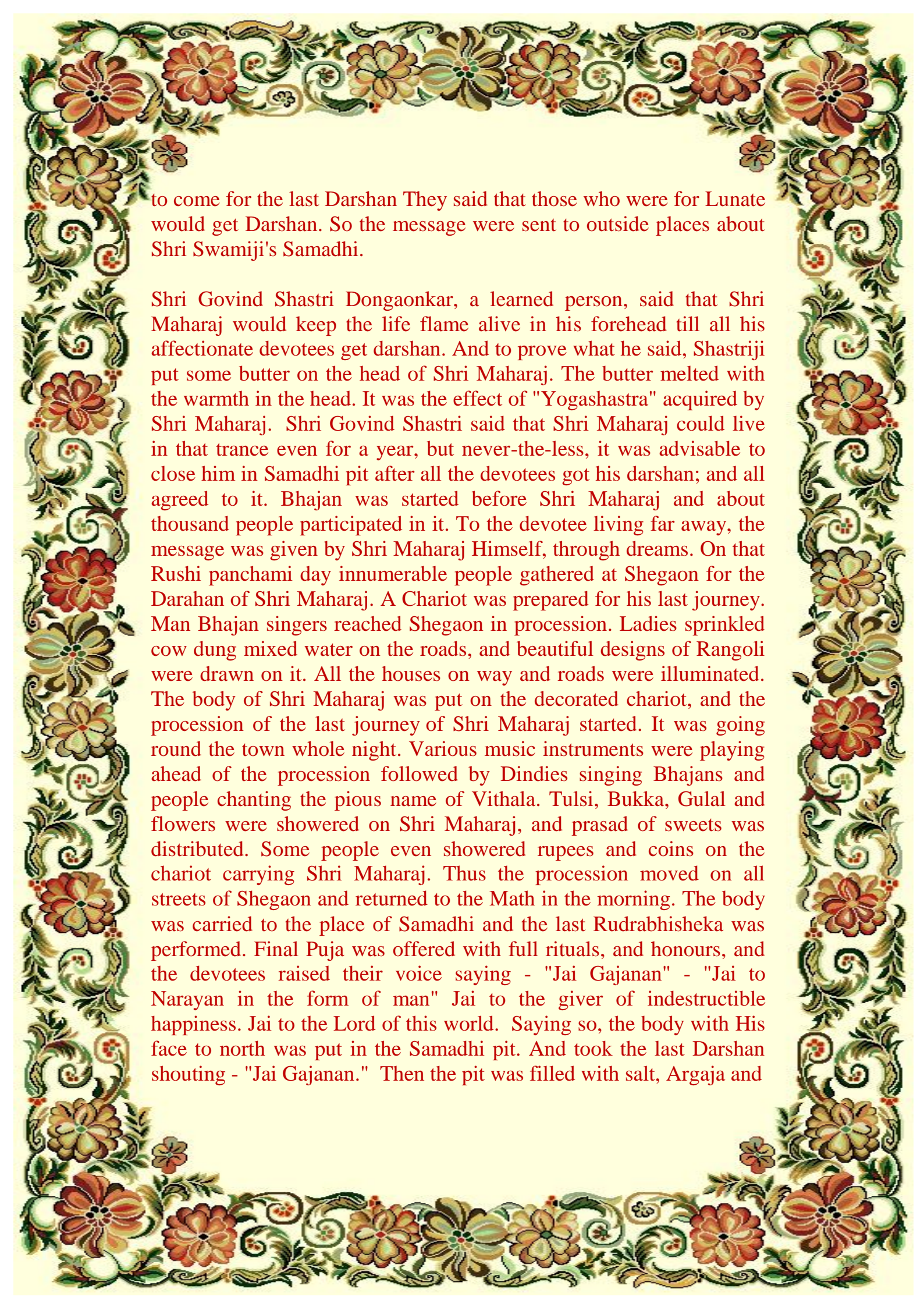
Shri Gajanan Maharaj, along with Hari Patil, went to Pandharpur to meet God Vitthal, who is the ultimate goal to reach, a Kalpataru, Kamalnath and all in all to all the saints. He is the supporter of all universe, the virtues of whom are praised by all Vedas, Lord of Rukmini, and one residing in the hearts of Saints. He is full of compassion and kind to the devotees. Shri Maharaj reached Pandharpur, took bath in the holy Chandrabhaga River, and went to the temple for Darshan of Shri Panduranga. Shri Maharaj said, "O God Pandharinatha, benefactor and protector of devotees, and all powerful Rukmini Kanta, listen to my request. As per you command, I have so far lived on this earth and fulfilled the desires of all pious people. You know that my mission on the earth is now over. O Panduranga now permit me to go. O God, I wish to reach Vaikunth for permanent stay at your feet, in the ensuing month of Bhadrapada. "Saying so Shri Samarth folded his hands. Tears brimmed his eyes at this thought of separation from Hari Patil. Hari Patil said with folded hands, "O Gurudeo, why these tears in your eye ? Have I hurt you anyway ? Kindly tell me immediately, "Shri Maharaj replied, "You may not understand it even if I tell you the reason, It is very deep knowledge, and you need not bother to know that at present, I can only say that our association is coming to the end. Come on, let us go back to Shegaon. You and your descendants will never be short of anything."

After return from Pandharpur, all the religious rituals (Mavanda) were



performed, but Hari Patil was full of anxiety. He told other people about what Shri Maharaj had said of his association coming to an end. "Shravan" month passed and Shri Maharaj was getting weak every day. The "Bhadrapad" came, and now listen to what happened. On Ganesh Chaturthi day Shri Maharaj said, "Now all of you should come to the Math for immersion of Ganapati. It is said in "Ganesh Purana", that an idol of earth Ganapati be made on Chaturthi and after offering Puja and sweets, He should be immersed in water next day. That day has now dawned, and it should be celebrated by immersing my earthly body in water. Don't weep at all. Do not forget that I shall ever be here to protect and guide you. I can never forget you. Shrikrishna has told Arjuna in Geeta that, this body has to be changed like clothes. Remember that all the Brahmavetta (Saints) did the something, i.e. they only changed the body." That whole day of Chaturthi was passed by Shri Maharaj in gay mood along with Balabhau. Next day he held Balabhau's hand and made him sit beside himself. Then he said, "Don't think that I have left you, keep up your Bhakti, and never forget me. I am always here only." Saying so, that great saint stopped his breath, and pulled it up to his head by Pranayam. It was the noon of Thursday, Bhadrapad Sudha Panchami, Sadharan-naam-Sanvatsar, Shak 1832. While holding up his breath, he uttered the words "Jai Gajanan" and merged himself with the Supreme Brahma at Shegaon. His all movements stopped. Looking to the "Samadhi" of Shri Maharaj, all shed tears with sorrow, Then it was publicly announced in Shegaon that Shri Maharaj had attained Samadhi. With the spread of this news people started beating their chest with grief. They said, "Gone, Gone is our living God - Gone forever. Gone is the savior of the poor and the fallen. Gone is our nest and happiness. The wind of time has extinguished this flame of knowledge. O Gajanan, who will protect us now ? Why have you left us so soon ?" All the devotees of Shri Maharaj, Martand Patil, Hari Patil, Vishnusa, Bankatlal, Tarachand, Shripatrao Kulkarni gathered in the Math.

It was the day of Panchami, and all of them decided to close Shri Maharaj in Samadhi next day. Since Shri Maharaj was now to disappear forever, they suggested to wait till evening for the devotees



to come for the last Darshan They said that those who were for Lunate would get Darshan. So the message were sent to outside places about Shri Swamiji's Samadhi.

Shri Govind Shastri Dongaonkar, a learned person, said that Shri Maharaj would keep the life flame alive in his forehead till all his affectionate devotees get darshan. And to prove what he said, Shastriji put some butter on the head of Shri Maharaj. The butter melted with the warmth in the head. It was the effect of "Yogashastra" acquired by Shri Maharaj. Shri Govind Shastri said that Shri Maharaj could live in that trance even for a year, but never-the-less, it was advisable to close him in Samadhi pit after all the devotees got his darshan; and all agreed to it. Bhajan was started before Shri Maharaj and about thousand people participated in it. To the devotee living far away, the message was given by Shri Maharaj Himself, through dreams. On that Rushi panchami day innumerable people gathered at Shegaon for the Darahan of Shri Maharaj. A Chariot was prepared for his last journey. Man Bhajan singers reached Shegaon in procession. Ladies sprinkled cow dung mixed water on the roads, and beautiful designs of Rangoli were drawn on it. All the houses on way and roads were illuminated. The body of Shri Maharaj was put on the decorated chariot, and the procession of the last journey of Shri Maharaj started. It was going round the town whole night. Various music instruments were playing ahead of the procession followed by Dindies singing Bhajans and people chanting the pious name of Vithala. Tulsi, Bukka, Gulal and flowers were showered on Shri Maharaj, and prasad of sweets was distributed. Some people even showered rupees and coins on the chariot carrying Shri Maharaj. Thus the procession moved on all streets of Shegaon and returned to the Math in the morning. The body was carried to the place of Samadhi and the last Rudrabhisheka was performed. Final Puja was offered with full rituals, and honours, and the devotees raised their voice saying - "Jai Gajanan" - "Jai to Narayan in the form of man" Jai to the giver of indestructible happiness. Jai to the Lord of this world. Saying so, the body with His face to north was put in the Samadhi pit. And took the last Darshan shouting - "Jai Gajanan." Then the pit was filled with salt, Argaja and

Abir, and with heavy hearts, devotees closed the Samadhi with a big flat stone. Shri Maharaj is still there. For ten days all were offered food daily as prasad of Shri Maharaj. Innumerable people got that prasad. The greatness and the authority of the saint is really supreme, and even an emperor is insignificant before him.

So, let this Gajanan Vijay epic, narrated by Shri Dasganu, show the right path to the devotees and help them develop Hari Bhakti.

"Shubham Bhavatu"
"Shri Hari Hararpanamastu"

Here is the End of Chapter Nineteen.



Compiled by : Shravan Pande, Shegaon, India.

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