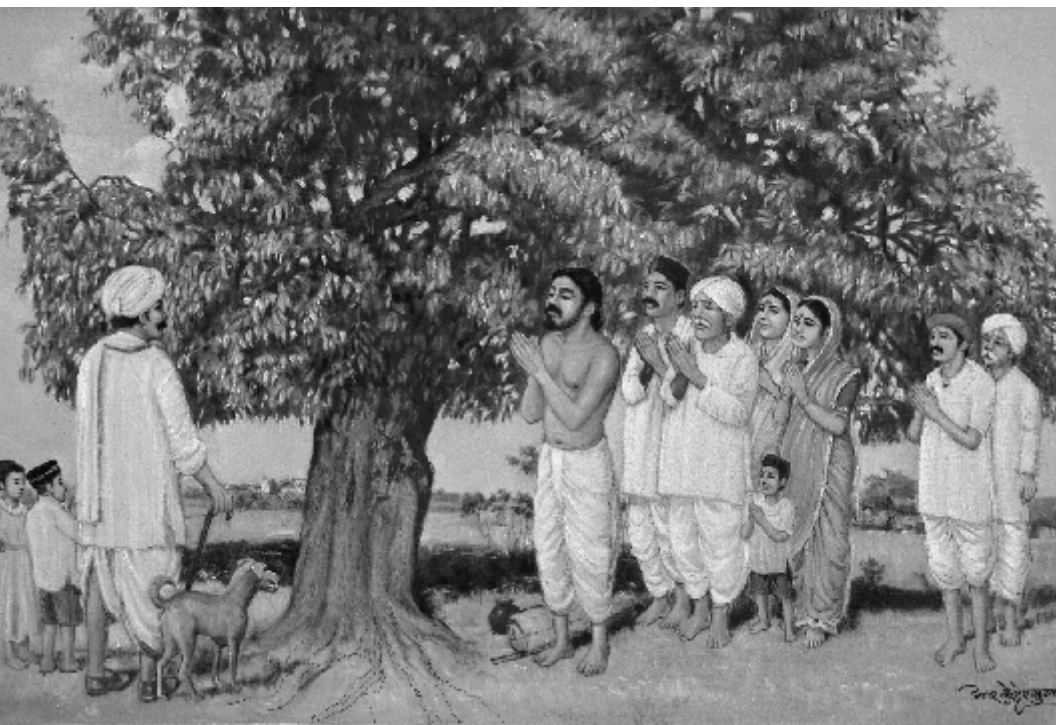


Chapter Twelve



Thus saying he asked the gathering to chant a song
In the name of Shree Gajanan Maharaj of Shegaon.
So the chorus started singing 'Jai Gajanan, Jai Gajanan.'
This went on for some time and Lo! There was a miracle.
Tender leaves started shooting out of the tree.
In a few moments it was all green.
People looked up in wonder.
Some thought it could be a dream

Chapter 12

Shree Ganeshay namah

O guardian of the gathering, Mayureshwar,
Come be with me and help me to complete this thesis .
You deliver knowledge and intelligence
And you alone fulfill the desires of devotees.
You remove all obstacles. The scriptures too narrate so.
O Ekdanta, Lambodar, Parvatisuta,
Bhalachandra, Sindurari
Come relieve me of all my anxieties ... 1

One Bachchulal Agarwal stayed in Akola.
He was a rich and generous person.
He heard of the incident of Ghude of Karanja
Which confounded him with some doubts and suspicion.
As he was thinking about the truth behind it
Maharaj himself came to Akola on a visit.
He reached Bachchulal's residence.
Bachchulal was happy and desired to worship the saint ... 2

When Maharaj gave him consent
Bachchulal made elaborate arrangements
For his bath, anointments and various garments.
A gold chain was put around his neck
And gold rings on all his fingers,
A bracelet of gold was put on his left arm.
And various perfumes on his body were sprinkled.
He was offered sweets of a varied nature ... 3

A golden platter full of Rupees, Coins and Mohors
Was offered as dakshina to the Saint.
It amounted to two thousand Rupees.
He also put a coconut on the plate.
Then with folded hands Bachchulal said,
'Maharaj, I want to construct a Shree Ram temple
As the space in my house is insufficient
To celebrate Ram Navami festival ... 4

Kindly fulfill my desire.'
Saying this he touched the Saint's feet.'
To which Maharaj replied,
'I bless you that God Ramchandra will fulfill your wish
But what have you achieved by decorating me like this?
You have made me look like a bull at 'Pola'.
I am neither that nor a horse at 'Dasara'.
These ornaments are of no use to me ... 5

I shouldn't have a touch of them.
They are all toxic to me.
Don't try to tempt me with all these gimmicks
Or is it Bachchulal that you have done all this
To flaunt your wealth you should offer only those things
That a receiver likes.
I am just a crazy wandering bare bodied ... 6

Let all these things remain with you.
They are fine for a family holder like you.
If at all I want any riches God Vitthal standing on a rock
On the bank of River Bhima will always fulfill my wishes.'
This is all he had to say.
He removed all decorations and threw them away ... 7

The Saint pulled out all ornaments from his person
And threw them away in all directions.
Same was the case with the clothes offered.
He ate a piece of the sweet and then disappeared.
People of Akola who witnessed this event

Were unhappy to see how he left.
Some of them were from Karanja
Feeling sorry for Ghude's miserly Dakshina ... 8

He worshipped Maharaj like Bachchulal
But was insincere in giving Dakshina at all.
The Saint could understand his hypocrisy,
His tall talk and false modesty.
His worship used big words only.
When he said, 'Take these clothes.'
He offered grains of rice actually.
For sweets he offered peanuts similarly ... 9

A worshipper gets what he deserves
Depending on the sincerity he offers
As it happened in Ghude's efforts,
Unlike Bachchulal who was true to his words.
Bachchulal's prosperity never receded.
Those blessed by saints are ever contented.
He searched for Maharaj in Akola city
But could not find him in the vicinity ... 10

A devotee named Pitamber Shimpi stayed at the monastery
With Gajanan Maharaj in Shegaon city.
He was very sincere in service to Maharaj.
His truthful devotion got him fruitful rewards.
Once he was wearing a dhoti all tattered
Looking at that the Saint uttered,
'Your name is Pitambar
But you don't have even a good dhoti to wear ... 11

At least cover your hips which is seen by others.
It's like a woman named Sonubai
With not even tin ornaments on her
Or Gangabai who is dying for water.
Your dhoti is just fit to be a duster.
Wearing it you expose your posterior.
I am giving you now this dupatta to wear
Never remove it even if anyone insists ever ... 12

Pitambar obediently wore the dupatta
But other devotees did not tolerate it.
Selfishness breeds animosity even in brothers.
In this material world that's the way it is.
This is an unpleasant subject
Like opening the lid of a sewer.
Many claimed to be devotees of the Saint
Yet only a few could stand out of the rest ... 13

It is like a sandalwood tree in the forest.
Rare to find in a jungle quest.
People were jealous. Teasing Pitambar
They said he shouldn't use the Saint's wear.
In reply said Pitambar
He was doing it under the Saint's orders.
This created a rift amongst the devotees.
Maharaj called Pitambar aside ... 14

He said 'Pitambar, go away from here
Like a grown up child drifting away from the mother.
My blessings are always with you Pitambar.
Go and serve the under-privileged brothers.'
With tearful eyes he bowed down to the saint,
His lingering eyes looking back again and again,
He left the monastery and reached Kondoli.
With the saint's name on his lips, he sat under a tree ... 15

He sat there all night. Ants started bothering him
And he had to climb up the tree.
There too he faced the same menace
So he went up branch by branch.
Small or big, a safer place to sit but could not get any.
Some cowherds nearby
Were surprised to see him move like that ... 16

They could not understand
His going from branch to branch like a chimpanzee.
The wonder was that he did not fall
Even from the smallest branch at all.

One of them said that disciples of Maharaj
Can perform marvels like that
And thought that Pitambar could one be ... 17

The cowherds went back to the township
And told the people about the happening.
Curious residents of Kondoli
Gathered under the mango tree
To find out who this person was.
On seeing Pitambar
They thought he was an imposter
Trying to prove that he was the Saint's devotee ... 18

There was one Bhaskar Patil
A true disciple who recently died.
Some said disciples of Maharaj
Do not leave Shegaon at all
Because of the sweets they get to eat,
A daily welcome treat.
Some said before forming any opinion
Ask details about him from the person ... 19

They all thought it better to ask the antecedents.
One of them asked him who he was,
What were his credentials and who was his respected guru.
'I am from Shegaon.' said Pitambar,
My name is Pitambar Shimpi disciple of the saint there.
I am in this town respecting his orders.
I sat under that tree when I came here ... 20

Ants started crawling over my body.
I had thus to go up the tree.'
People got upset and thought him to be fake.
They warned him not to fool them in the Saint's name.
They taunted him saying you speak like a queen
Who is seeking a job to make a living ... 21

One Shamrao Deshmukh of the village said,
'You are an imposter. Listen to me well.

Saint Gajanan Maharaj is God himself.
He made mangoes grow on each bough.
It was out of season though.
Well! He made the fruits, can you at least
Create leaves on these worn out branches
Of Baliram Patil's dry mango tree ... 22

Do it or be prepared to face a thrashing.
If you do, we'll respect you.
It is seen that disciples of great saints
Attain the loftiness of the guru himself.
Now don't delay. Make the tree gleam
With glossy lively and emerald green
As they have earlier been.'
For Pitambar the idea was frightening ... 23

He said, 'Please don't push me in to a quandary
Kindly listen to the entire story.
As you are very well aware
Diamonds and pebbles are found together.
I told you the truth about myself.
I am just a pebble amongst the saint's disciples.
Ignore me but I did not lie a bit.
Pebbles do not lower the value of a diamond pit ... 24

In spite of what I do
I cannot hide the name of my Guru'
There upon Shamrao said,
'Don't talk nonsense. A disciple in trouble
Prays for guru's blessings favorable
To rescue him from such a debacle
In spite of the standing of the disciple
Not being of a requisite level.' ... 25

Pitambar was caught between the devil and the deep sea.
He helplessly worried as to what the future would be.
People gathered around the mango tree
Waiting to see how he tackles this situation knotty.
Pitambar folded his hands and prayed to the Saint.

'O Saint, please come to my rescue.
Because of me they are blaming you.
Let the tree sprout foliage and save your greatness ... 26

I am entirely dependent on you.
If I don't get any help now
I may have to face death in the brawl.
You came as Narahari for Bhakta Pralhad.
In case of Janabai, the pillar
On which she was to be killed turned into water.
As Janabai depended on the Omnipresent
Saint! I look to you for help this moment ... 27

There is no difference between God and saint.
Saint is God and God is saint.
I have no special qualities
Except that of being a disciple of your reverence.
Thus now it is your honor which is at stake.
You are the flower, I am the thread.
Flowers make a garland, lending value to the twine.
You are the musk. I am the earth ... 28

I am caught up in this calamity,
Because of your Divinity.
Please don't put me to this test any further.
Come running to me
And get green leaves on the tree to flutter.' ... 29

Thus saying he asked the gathering to chant a song
In the name of Shree Gajanan Maharaj of Shegaon.
So the chorus started singing 'Jai Gajanan, Jai Gajanan.'
This went on for some time and Lo! There was a miracle.
Tender leaves started sprouting from the tree.
In a few moments it was all green.
People looked up in wonder.
Some thought it could be a dream ... 30

They pinched each other to ensure that it was not so.
Some others thought that it was a magic show.

But the doubts were removed as fresh sap oozed
When leaves were plucked by those in the shadow.
They were all convinced that leaves came into being
Due to the grace of Shree Gajanan Maharaj.
This made them accept the greatness of the visitor,
Pitambar a humble disciple from Shegaon ... 31

They all took him to Kondoli
With a hope that Shree Gajanan Maharaj
Will visit the place to see his disciple
As a cow follows her calf.
Swami Samarth Ramdas sent his disciple to Domgaon
For spiritual upliftment of the people there.
Likewise Pitambar was sent
By Shree Gajanan Maharaj here ... 32

It was a lucky augury for Kondoli.
Speaking of the Mango tree,
It still thrives there.
Yielding more mangoes than any other near.
People respected Pitambar
Who established a monastery there.
A piece of diamond has a value everywhere.
Pitambar breathed his last there ... 33

Once in Shegaon the Saint appeared restless.
The disciples wanted to know the reason for this unrest.
The saint said, 'Krishna Patil who has passed away
Comes back to my mind.
He used to offer me seasoned betel nut.
No one is left of his kind.
His son Ram is young. He may serve me in future.
I don't want to stay here hereafter ... 34

People got anxious at this warning
That the Saint may leave the place soon.
They all went and bowed down to him
To stop him from leaving Shegaon town.
Bankatlal, Tarachand, Maroti and Shripatrao

Amongst others came and touched the feet of Maharaj
Saying, 'Don't go away from our midst.
Please stay in this town wherever you wish.' ... 35

Maharaj said that people of Shegaon are divided.
He did not want to stay with any one of them.
He said that if he were to stay in Shegaon
It would be a place which to no one belongs.
This was an awkward situation.
If he did not want to stay with any one
The only alternative was to approach the government
And get a piece of land for the saint ... 36

How can a government ruled by foreign hands
Have respect for the Saints of our land?
Bankat asked the saint not to put them in difficulty
As no one could give any guarantee
Of the Government allotting property
Just on demand to a religious fraternity
Bankatlal with many others requested the Saint
To avoid the problems hard to circumvent ... 37

Maharaj said, 'You are all ignorant.
The land belongs to God, the Omnipresent.
Many kings have come and gone.
Pandurang is the God to whom the land belongs.
Kings owned it by tradition.
There is nothing more than that.
Go and ask Hari Patil to assist you in the attempt.
I feel he will positively get the grant ... 38

People came to Hari Patil for consultation.
Then approached the government with an application.
Mr. Kari, Buldana's district collector
Agreed to allot an acre
He said more land would be allotted
If the acre is properly developed.
The decision of the collector is still on record
This was an effect of a 'word' from Maharaj ... 39

Hari and Bankat started the fund collection.
The requested amount matched the estimation.
Those who helped to begin the collection
Will be narrated in the next chapter.
God always helps Saints.
Vithu Patil of Dongargaon, Lakshman of Wadegaon,
Jagu Aaba of Shegaon were the leaders
In forefront to start the construction ... 40

May the reading of this treatise
Bring happiness to the devotees.