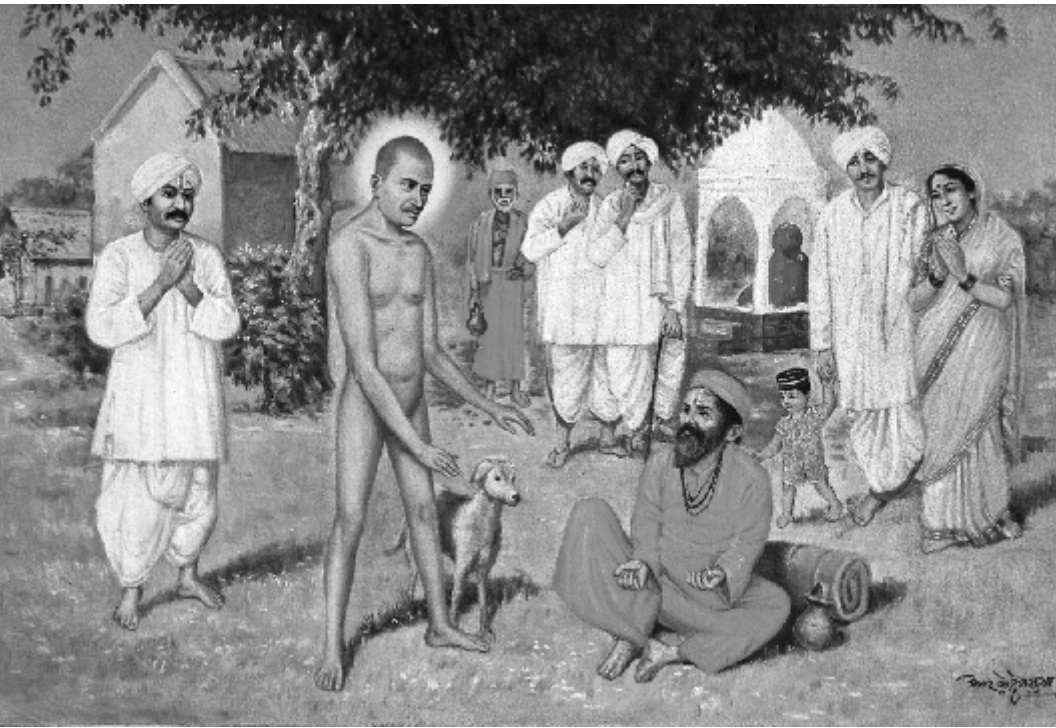


Chapter Thirteen



In spite of the warning, Gangabharati
Grabbed a timely opportunity.
He rushed to the Maharaj
To bow down to him as a last resort.
The Maharaj slapped him on his head
And as he got up many slaps on his face.
After this Maharaj kicked him hard
And spat on his body decaying

Chapter 13

Shree Ganeshay namah

O Shree Hari the Saint Supreme,
Ocean of kindness, beloved of Goap and Gopi's.
God Brahma came to steal cows and calves in Gokul,
To have a fitful darshan of you.
You turned yourself into those forms to please Him.
You killed Kaliya, Serpent of the Yamuna river
To free the Gopi's of his menace forever.
Likewise crush my ignorance to rid me of my fears ... 1

Bankat, Hari and Lakshman, Vithu and Jagdeo as one,
Went around collecting donations
For the monastery of Shree Gajanan.
While many devotees readily subscribed
Some nonbelievers criticized,
'Why should the saint need donations
When he performs sensations? ... 2

Why should he ask for money from others
When he can get it straight from Kuber's coffers?
Jagdeo laughed at their mischief and said,
'The money we need is for your sake.
Maharaj doesn't require a temple or a hood
The construction is for your own good.
This universe is his monastery,
Forests are his gardens of pleasant diversity ... 3

This earth is his bed of limitless spread,
All the eight Siddhis are awaiting his summons.
His splendor is entirely beyond conception
How can a candle help the sun in diffusing darkness?
How can a watchman surpass the king's glory?
One pious deed is enough to fulfill your dreams.
Remedies curing ills are futile for soul's esteem ... 4

Diseases threaten the body not the spirit.
Soul is eternal. It has no birth or demise.
You have to accumulate good deeds and blessings
To enjoy and protect your well being.
If you consider your affluence as a body
And bad habits as a malady,
The disease can be removed indeed
By performing pious deeds ... 5

Thus build up piety to your credit,
With no apprehension in your mind.
Sow seeds of good deeds to reap the benefit.
Don't scatter seeds on a rocky surface.
They will never sprout and will go waste.
Bad habits and thoughts are such spots
Seeds sown there will be eaten by roaches and ants ... 6

There is no piety like reverence to saints.
Shree Gajanan today is a jewel amongst them.
A donation to such a cause will multiply your credit.
A seed sown in soil brings forth more yield.
Similar is the effect of good charity.'
The critics were subdued by this advice.
All arguments go haywire
When confronted with facts and figures ... 7

Contributions poured because of influential people.
Ordinary folks cannot contribute such donations.
A compound wall was soon built around the lot.
People of Shegaon gathered to help the cause.
Bullock carts carried material for construction

Saint Gajanan watched them from his residence.
He thought that the work may gather speed
If he shifts to the site of the construction indeed! ... 8

He jumped on a cart carrying sand
The driver stepped down as He was a Mahar.
'Why so?' asked the saint, 'I don't care
Whether you are untouchable or an esquire.'
The Mahar said, 'It is not appropriate
For me to sit next to a saint.
God Hanuman was a devotee of Shree Ram
But never sat next to Him at all ... 9

'So be it. I don't object.' Said the saint,
'O bullock, just take the cart on the right trail.'
The bullock went as instructed
And arrived at the designated spot
The cart man was walking ahead.
The saint alighted from the cart
And sat in the center of the plot
Where stands his monument today ... 10

This spot falls in between two survey numbers
Forty three and forty five of the lot.
Construction with this as a center
Would mean encroachment on an outer piece of land.
The trust was granted only an acre.
But with such a situation violation would occur.
They did it as the collector had agreed
To allot more after gauging how the work proceeds ... 11

Some mischievous elements
Reported this to the Government.
Devotees were disturbed and informed the saint
That an officer Joshi would enquire in to the incident.
Shree Gajanan Maharaj laughed and said
That the fine imposed would be exempted.
It came to be true. Joshi inspected the matter
And waived the charges in his order ... 12

Hari Patil was especially happy
'Words of Maharaj don't go in vain
Last time in a similar case
The Saint had said - don't be afraid,
And it did come true that I was saved.
Similar incident has recurred today.
His kind words won't go astray.
They can never remain empty.' ... 13

Devotees from far and near gathered together
At the saint's feet and offered prayers.
Some incidents at the new monastery
Soon became note worthy.
A Gosavi named Gangabharati
Came from a village Savadad in Mehekar taluka.
He suffered from leprosy
And had scars all over his body ... 14

The disease had worn out his finger tips
His skin was red and suffered from an itch.
He was totally tired of his sufferings.
He heard of the saint and came for his blessings.
Devotees did not allow him near the Saint.
The disease is contagious as they said.
They advised him to stay away.
Take a glimpse of the saint and get out of the way ... 15

In spite of the warning, Gangabharati
Grabbed a timely opportunity.
He rushed to Maharaj
To bow down to him as a last resort.
Maharaj slapped him on his head
And as he got up he got many slaps on his face.
After this Maharaj kicked him hard
And spat on his body diseased ... 16

Gangabharati took it as a blessing
And spread the spittle as ointment dressing.
Someone standing by criticized him

And asked him to clean himself
With a suggestion not to indulge
In such blind faith again.
He advised Gangabharati to take medicines
Instead of coming to a crazy man like this ... 17

Gangabharati smiled and said,
'Nothing is impure with the saints.
Musk will never release a reeking stench.
What appeared to you as saliva
Is an ointment for my skin.
It smells like musk.
If you so like, come touch and smell it.
It appeared to you thus as you don't need it ... 18

You don't understand the greatness of Maharaj.
To prove what I say, let us go to the place
Where he takes his daily bath.
There from I take mud and anoint myself
And watch what happens next.'
For Gangabharati it turned into an ointment.
It remained as mud in the critic's extent
Making him realize the greatness of the saint ... 19

No one in the congregation
Allowed Gangabharati to sit near Gajanan.
He had a melodious voice.
He sang devotional songs of his choice.
This continued for a fortnight
And then a miracle came to sight.
The rash on skin had vanished.
Earlobes returned to normal size ... 20

Cracks on the feet were all gone.
Stench of the person was a thing of the past.
He went on singing devotional songs
Which pleased the audience all day long.
Anusuya, his wife and son Santosh
Came to Shegaon to take him home.

By the grace of the saint you are cured they said
With his permission let us go back to our village ... 21

Gangabharati said, 'Don't pray to me.
I no more belong to you. I swear.
Maharaj has slapped me and brought me to my senses
Saying that I shouldn't degrade the saffron robe I wear.
I have a new vision to understand the strife.
I desire to stay away from family life.
Santosh you better go home with your mother
Obey her and take good care of her ... 22

Be like Pundarika in serving her with love.
That will bring you blessings from God Vasudeo.
If I come back the disease will catch me again
So refrain from forcing me in vain.
Till now I belonged to you I agree
But from now on I will devote myself to the Divinity
To free myself from the cycle of birth and death.
This change in me is due to the Maharaj's grace ... 23

Please don't tempt me anymore.'
Saying this he sent them back to Savadad
And stayed on in Shegaon since then
Singing daily evening prayers
Sitting before Maharaj and the followers.
This was an enchantment for everyone.
He was completely cured of the disease.
And then went to Malkapur as the Saint wished ... 24

Once in the month of Paush
Zyamsingh came to Shegaon
And requested the saint to visit his village Mundagaon.
He reminded the saint of the promise made
To visit his village.
Accordingly he had come to take him home.
Maharaj went with him where a big crowd had gathered
To greet him on the village outskirts ... 25

Zyamsingh arranged a grand feast
To celebrate the saint's visit
Mundgaon became the second Paithan
Where Eknath was treated with such a great aplomb.
In the presence of Shree Gajanan
Many visiting parties arranged bhajans
Cooks got busy in making Prasad
For the devotees of Maharaj ... 26

When the preparations were half way through
Maharaj halted the process though
Saying, 'Zyamsingh, Today is a void day
The fourteenth day of the waxing moon.
Better arrange the feeding tomorrow
On the festival of full moon.'
Zyamsingh said that the food was all set
And devotees had gathered to participate in feast.' ... 27

Maharaj said, 'What you say
Is correct in your own way
But this is not an appropriate day
Acceptable to God. Please obey.
The food will go waste as I see
That's what you don't want it to be.
You wish the events go as per your desire
But it doesn't seem to be possible here ... 28

Even then people squatted down for food.
Suddenly the sky changed its mood.
Clouds gathered and poured rain.
Then a thunder storm lashed again.
Wind and lightening uprooted many trees
Water went running as in streams.
It came in to the plates served for the day
And all the food was swept away ... 29

Zyamsingh approached the saint and said,
'The devotees are all disappointed
By these untimely rains.

I hope this does not recur tomorrow.
This is not our rainy season we all know.
It appears the storm lashed this region
Only to spoil the food preparation.
Our crops may be destroyed by such precipitation ... 30

People will taunt me by asking,
'Is this a reward your piety brings?'
The saint said it won't happen the next day
He just looked up at the clouds and they cleared.
They all vanished and the sky was clear.
Sun brightened up the entire atmosphere.
Such was the supremacy of the saint's stare.
Next day the devotees enjoyed the fare ... 31

The tradition of feeding people on this day
Continues at Mundgaon even today.
Zyamsingh surrendered all his estate
At the feet of the revered saint.
Many residents of Mundgaon village
Became disciples of Gajanan the Saint.
Pundalik Bhokre was one amongst the people.
A sturdy young man of principle ... 32

He was the only son of Ukirda the farmer.
The name Ukirda may sound peculiar.
Such names are given to children to ensure their survival
As Pentayya in Telangana
And Kerpunja in Maharashtra elsewhere.
Pundalik visited Shegaon on eleventh day of the waning
moon
Like devotees visiting Pandharpur Alandi and Dehu ... 33

Once, an epidemic of plague spread over Berar.
People fled their houses and went to live on the fields afar.
The symptoms of the disease are that the patient shivers
And then develops a very high temperature.
His eyes become red in color,
Followed by a gland in the joint anywhere.

The patient then loses his cognizance
And finally succumbs to the infection ... 34

This was never a disease of our land
It prevailed over the European continent
And travelled to India on a weird journey
To soon infect our beloved country.
People abandoned their houses
And resided on fields to protect themselves.
This killer disease invaded Mundgaon
When Pundalik was to visit Shegaon ... 35

When he left for Shegaon with his father
He was feeling feverish with a shiver.
After going ten miles on the road
He could not walk any more.
A gland appeared in his armpit.
He couldn't walk a step more on the street.
His father was very much concerned
And asked his son about his condition ... 36

Pundalik explained to him the state of affairs
His weakness, gland in the armpit and high fever.
Folding his hands he prayed to the saint,
'O Gajanan, please see that my routine visit
On the scheduled day is not disturbed a bit.
Let me reach and touch your feet today.
Then I don't care if Death takes me away.
Please protect me till I reach you all the way ... 37

Visits to shrines and holy places
Are possible only if the traveler is in good health.
Looking at Pundalik's sick state
His father felt sorry immensely.
He prayed to God to save his only son
And offered a bullock cart to reach Shegaon soon.
Pundalik replied, 'No. I must go on foot only.
I will make it walking slowly ... 38

He said, 'If I die take my body to Shegaon.
Don't worry about me at all.'
He walked the distance in great pain
And reached the feet of the saint.
And in front of him he fell prostrate.
Looking at Pundalik the saint pressed
His own armpit with his hand and said,
'Pundalik your malady is over. Don't now fret' ... 39

When Maharaj said this,
The gland in Pundalik's armpit suddenly vanished.
The feeling of weakness also disappeared
When Maharaj ate morsels of food sent by his mother.
Pundalik started feeling better.
This was the reward for his devotion.
A great example for non believers.
Absolute devotion brings in desired results ... 40

Pundalik returned to Mundgaon after this visit.
Reading about him will avert all your perils.
This is a real biography and not a concoction.
Everything narrated is what actually happened.
There is no reason for anyone
To doubt the blessings of Gajanan.
May this treatise about the saint
Bring the readers all happiness ... 41