Chapter 2

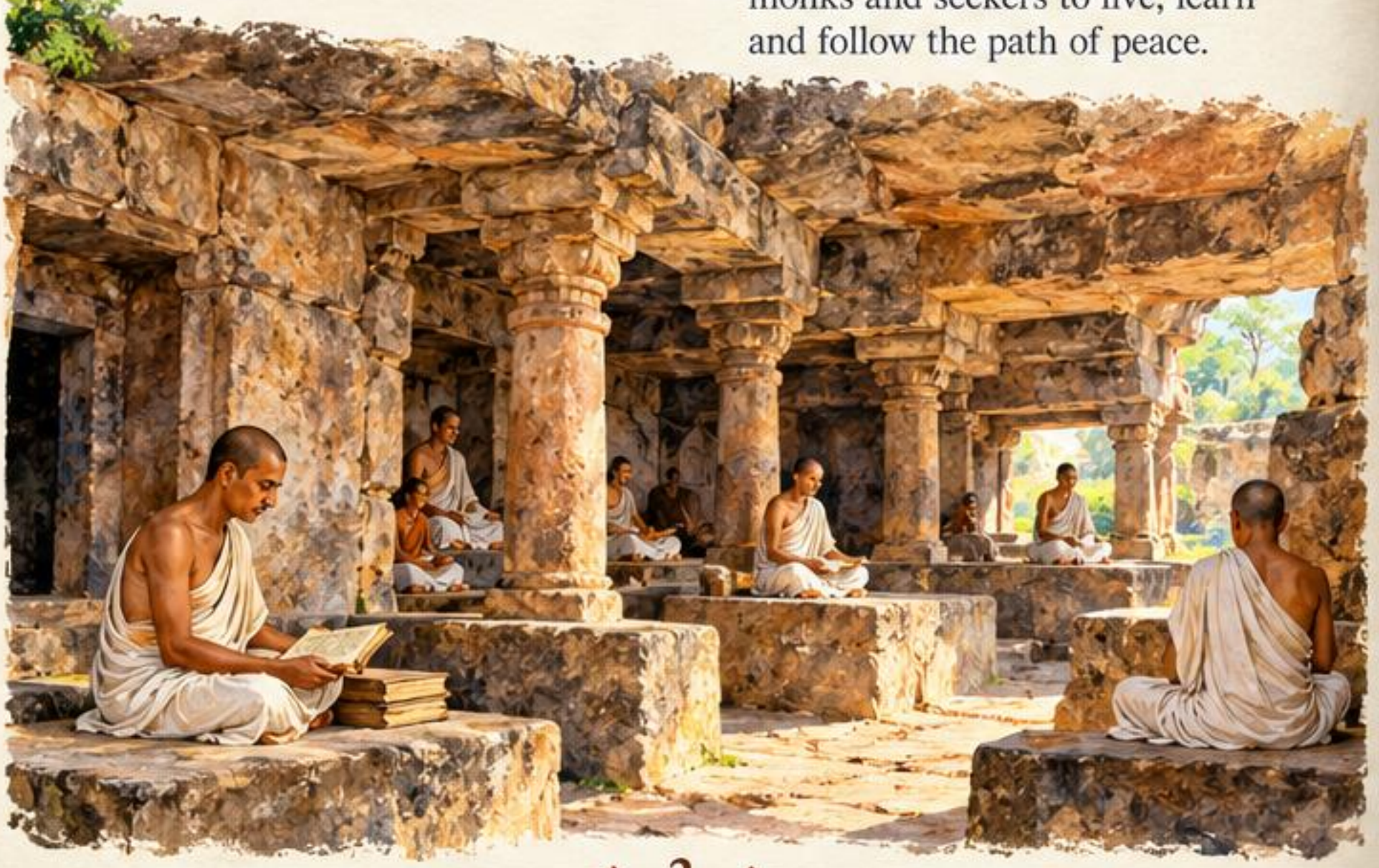
Life Inside the Caves

The caves of Khandagiri and Udayagiri were home to Jain monks and ascetics who lived a simple and disciplined life. They chose these hills for their natural beauty, peaceful environment and seclusion, which helped them focus on meditation and spiritual growth.

The rock-cut chambers provided shelter from the heat and rain. Many caves have small rooms, verandas and stone platforms where the monks could sit, meditate, study sacred texts and rest.

The monks followed a very simple lifestyle. They lived with minimal possessions, practiced self-discipline and spent most of their time in prayer, meditation and learning. They also taught moral values such as non-violence, truth and simplicity to people who visited the caves.

Some larger caves may have been used for group discussions, teaching and religious gatherings. The peaceful surroundings, fresh air and natural rock shelters made these hills an ideal place for a community of monks and seekers to live, learn and follow the path of peace.



Chapter 3

Art Carved in Stone

The caves of Khandagiri and Udayagiri are not only places of meditation but also remarkable examples of ancient art and architecture. The rock-cut façades, pillars and panels are beautifully carved with detailed sculptures that reflect the artistic skills and creativity of the time.

The carvings include scenes from daily life, royal processions, animals such as elephants, lions and horses, dancers, musicians and figures of men and women. Some caves have intricate floral patterns, geometric designs and decorative motifs that show the fine craftsmanship of ancient artisans.

Several caves also have inscriptions in the Brahmi script. These inscriptions provide valuable information about the kings, monks and the purpose of the caves. They help us understand the history, language and culture of that period.

The sculptures on the cave walls give us a glimpse into the beliefs, traditions and way of life of the people who lived here. They show scenes of devotion, nature, royal life and social activities, revealing a harmonious blend of spirituality, culture and art.

The art carved in stone at Khandagiri and Udayagiri continues to inspire visitors even today, standing as a timeless testimony to the rich artistic heritage of Odisha.

