

*Brahman and Shakti are identical,
like fire and its power to burn.
When we talk of fire we automatically mean
also its power to burn.
Again, the fire's power to burn
implies the fire itself.
If you accept the one you must accept the other.
— Sri Ramakrishna*

Breaker of This World's Chain

*Interpretation by Swami Prabhavananda and Christopher Isherwood
of **Khandana Bhava Bandana** by Swami Vivekananda*

Breaker of this world's chain, we adore Thee,
whom all men love.

Spotless, taking man's form, O Purifier,
Thou art above the gunas three,
Knowledge divine, not flesh;
Thou whom the cosmos wears,
a diamond at its heart.

Let us look deep in Thine eyes;
they are bright with the wisdom of God,
That can wake us from maya's spell.

Let us hold fast to Thy feet,
treading the waves of the world to safety.

Oh, drunk with love, God-drunken Lover,
in Thee all paths of all yogas meet.

Lord of the worlds, Thou art ours,
who wert born a child of our time;
easy of access to us.

O Merciful, if we take any hold upon God in our prayer,
it is by Thy grace alone,
Since all Thine austerities were practiced for our sake.

How great was Thy sacrifice,
freely choosing Thy birth in this prison, our Iron Age,
To unchain us and set us free.

Perfect, whom lust could not taint,
nor passion nor gold draw near,
O Master of all who renounce,
fill our hearts full of love for Thee.

Thou hast finished with fear and with doubt,
standing firm in the vision of God;
Refuge to all who have cast fame, fortune,
and friends away.

Without question Thou shelterest us,
and the world's great sea in its wrath
Seems shrunk to the puddle that
fills a hoof-print in the clay.

Speech cannot hold Thee, nor mind,
yet without Thee we think not nor speak.
Love, who art partial to none,
we are equal before Thy sight.

Taker-away of our pain, we salute Thee,
though we are blind.
Come to the heart's black cave, and illumine,
Thou light of the light.