

## VIII Bhakti Darsana, Contemplative Devotion

### Verse 1

Meditation on the Self is *bhakti*. That by which the Self is blissful, with that, the knower of the Self always meditates upon the Self by the Self.

7/31/7

Narayana Guru, in his own comments, says “The very nature of the Self consists of Bliss. It goes without saying that it is the high value of Bliss which deserves to be meditated upon. All living beings are naturally disposed to such meditation.” He presents us with a structural image in this verse, with the knower of the Self consisting of a subject and object, both of which are aspects of the Self, dialectically subsumed in the bliss of That. In other words, bliss is the be-all and end-all of existence, that which unifies the bifurcation of subject and object.

Speaking of the be-all, Nitya introduces a term in his commentary that he tried out briefly and then abandoned: be-ness. He was dissatisfied with the participle, being or beingness, as it gives the impression of extension in time, and so isn't ‘now’ enough. He felt ‘be’ alone was more accurate and might break us out of the cliché of beingness that we tend to use without thinking. When I asked him about it, he gave the footnote by way of explanation: “Be-ness is used here in the sense of at-one-ment with the Absolute.” (He was always careful to give the original sense of at-one-ment too, as atonement has picked up some excess baggage

of its own.) Don't be surprised when be-ness or even 'here and be' instead of here and now, pop up.

As long as we're doing definitions, Nitya supplies us with an important distinction here:

In our own times, meditation and contemplation are used as synonyms: both the terms have lost their precise connotation and have become vague in meaning. So it has become necessary to revalue and restate the terms 'meditation' and 'contemplation'. Sequentially, meditation comes as a prelude to contemplation. The way to know something, as Henri Bergson puts it, is not by going around it, but by first entering into it and then being it. Meditation is an active process of applying one's mind to make a total 'imploration' of the depth of whatever is to be known. The state of actually being it is what is achieved by contemplation. It is a passive but steady state. (368)

Here *anusandhanam* is translated as meditation, and bhakti as contemplation. Nitya asserts that the word anusandhanam holds the key to the entire Darsana of bhakti. It means "investigation, inquiry, searching into, close inspection, setting in order, arranging, planning; aiming at." (MW).

Bhakti also has many shades of meaning. It is best known as devotion, and is associated with highly active forms of worship. It all depends on your personal taste as to what you find enchanting. The Narayana Gurukula Gurus tend to prefer quiet appreciation and loving communion over overt displays. We are asked to think of bhakti as love, but as Nataraja Guru reminds us, "Love is a vague word used by unscientific people about a feeling they don't understand." In our study we will try to attain some understanding so we don't get lumped with the lumpen in this matter. If contemplation equals bhakti equals love equals bliss, then we can

at least understand Nataraja Guru's assertion that "All of life is a love affair."

Here again we meet the old Paradox in a new guise. Our bliss leads us to fall in love with so many things, people, places and events. But all the specific manifestations of love are temporary and subject to decrease. We need to continuously relate the specific with the general in the form of Absolute love in order to not become deluded about the origin of the blissful state. There is every temptation to believe the Absolute resides in a specific manifestation and not elsewhere, and feel bereft when that manifestation is not available. Our spiritual growth consists of contemplating all the varied experiences of bliss and continuously relating them to our inner core, so that they gradually expand and run together until they make up the entire fabric of our life. This is at least one of the senses meant by the Gurus when they say bhakti is continuous contemplation on the true nature of the Self.

The Upanishads remind us of this idea by saying the husband doesn't love the wife for the sake of the wife, but for the sake of the love of the Self, and the wife doesn't love the husband for the sake of the husband, but for the sake of the love of the Self. Nataraja Guru paraphrased this by saying "When a man in love sees a woman, what he really sees is his own self. *kami swatam pasyati* – 'a man in love his own self sees.'" Interpersonal love is of course the one where we are maximally fixated on the beloved, so it is rightfully famous. We also are enamored of our children, music, food, beautiful art and scenery, growing plants, and so many other things. All we are asked to do is extend that love to everything, to fill up the empty places in between with more love to make the whole business continuous.

Meditation implies striving to attain, while contemplation resides neutrally in the perfection of the blissful state. The experience of bhakti or love, in whatever context, "is so total and realistic that it does not allow the intrusion of any desire for

anything else. As a result of such a spiritual compulsion to be ever persisting in the union of what is most adored, the absorption of consciousness implied in that state requires no deliberation to maintain the union.” (370) Sitting together in the glow of evening and the inner glow of so many kind hearts was yet another way of basking in the bliss of creation that required no effort to maintain. Aum.

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10/17/17

Bhakti Darsana verse 1

Meditation on the Self is *bhakti*.  
That by which the Self is blissful, with that,  
the knower of the Self always meditates  
upon the Self by the Self.

Nataraja Guru’s translation:

*Meditation on the Self is contemplation  
Because the Self consists of Bliss.  
A knower of the Self, meditates by the Self  
Upon the Self for ever.*

On this first day of Diwali, the Indian festival of light or lights, it is only fitting to think about bhakti, conjunction with or merger into light. The artificial lights of the festival symbolize the pure light of creation or wisdom that is synonymous with the Absolute, and the joy felt by viewing various light displays can be used to remind us of our core value of ananda.

Deb talked about how when she first heard Narayana Guru’s claim that the universal goal was happiness, she thought it was a

superficial concept: how trivial to only want to be happy! As she learned more, however, she realized her concept of happiness was too small. The deeper and larger happiness spoken of by the gurus is essentially the same as our true nature. In a way, then, meditation on the Self is a meditation on happiness. Deb invited the class to explore what it means in each of our lives, as we all have unique ways in which our interest becomes absorbed in what we love.

This is the verse where Nitya clarifies the distinction between meditation and contemplation:

Sequentially, meditation comes as a prelude to contemplation. The way to know something, as Henry Bergson puts it, is not by going around it, but by first entering into it and then being it. Meditation is an active process of applying one's mind to make a total 'imploration' of the depth of whatever is to be known. The state of actually being it is what is achieved by contemplation. It is a passive but steady state. In modern days this distinction is seldom thought of, and *dhyana* is often translated as meditation. For the purpose of the present study, we translate *anusandhanam* as meditation and bhakti as contemplation. (368-9)

Paul was especially drawn to the second half of the verse: "the knower of the Self always meditates upon the Self by the Self." In this there is no room for the small 's' self, he mused. Horizontally we are made up of parts; we are built up of elements. To make a breakthrough, we are looking for that which is not a product of perceptible items. He wondered if consciousness wasn't what the Self was all about, and we assured him they were essentially the same idea. The Self is conscious awareness, and conscious awareness is the Self. The trick is we have learned to think of a smaller self, limited to wakeful awareness, as the whole,

so we have de facto ruled out the Self, the totality of consciousness.

I added that although science proclaims that the Self must somehow be a material item, no recipe has been devised to produce it. Consciousness remains an inexplicable miracle. Calling it an epiphenomenon of matter doesn't prove anything except our ignorance. We do have ample evidence that brain damage affects voluntary conscious functioning, but it still may be impossible to determine its relation to the Self. Is the effect simply an interruption of the link between the wakeful and the All, or is it an impacting of the Source Itself? For those who are actively tuning in to the vertical essence of who they are, the horizontal, perceivable aspect steadily seems to become more peripheral to what we are. To express this verticalized state, Nitya coins a new term here, 'be-ness' in place of the more volatile 'beingness':

One knows the Self only when the 'be-ness' of the Self, *sat*, is identical with happiness through and through, and there prevails the knowledge of that happiness with nothing else to limit or shade it to any degree. ('Be-ness' is used here in the same sense of at-one-ment with the Absolute.) It is for this reason that the Guru says the knower of the Self is always in a state of meditating on the Self by the Self. Because of the ever-prevailing happiness, the mind is fully absorbed in that nature of the Self. (369)

That there is more going on than what we perceive through the senses is evidenced by the depth of feeling generated by attunement with the undefined aspects of our being, normally accessed during contemplation. Nitya points to the profundity of such feelings:

This chapter could easily have been called the Vision by Love. In Narada's Bhakti Sutra, bhakti is even defined as absolute love, which can also mean love for the Absolute. Love is a much used and abused term that should be examined carefully in the present context in order to know how and in what sense bhakti is love. (369)

Or as Nataraja Guru once put it, "Love is a vague word used by unscientific people about a feeling they don't understand." He also said, "All of life is a love affair."

Nancy resonated with the idea of bhakti as love immediately. She noted how when we are in love, everything is fine. It's a completely comfortable place to be, and she agreed that meditation and contemplation ideally take us to a place of utter contentment.

Nitya presents some of the parameters of a careful examination of love such as he recommended:

In the context of love it is only normal to think of the reciprocation of giving and receiving love between the lover and the beloved. The terms lover and beloved are also mutually exchangeable. What characterizes a loving couple is their ever-abiding need for togetherness and the undiminishing appreciation of each other as the most lovable and truly loved reality of their beingness of a here and be state. This overwhelming recognition of 'be-ness' transcends the fragmentation of time, and thus the experience is so total and realistic that it does not allow the intrusion of any desire for anything else. As a result of such a spiritual compulsion to be ever persisting in the union with what is most adored, the absorption of consciousness implied in that state requires no deliberation to maintain the union. Only where there is such an irrevocable persistence of absorbing interest does the word *anusandhanam* become meaningful. (369-70)

I thought that the image of lover and beloved was potentially misleading, as not too many personal relationships remain at a peak of mutual absorption for extended periods. It sounds like true love should be eternally satisfying, but in actuality our love partners and Platonic friendships, while ideally deeper, are rather like other horizontal expressions of beauty: art forms, literature, scenery, philosophy, science, and so on. In all of them we are absorbed for a period and then we need a rest from the intensity. I thought having an icon or a deity to worship was a much easier and more accessible form of bhakti, and might have made a better example in hinting at an eternal prospect.

Paul bailed me out by noting how in a loving relationship the love between the partners lifts them out of the sense of 'I' and 'you' into a central truth that is the neutral intermediate ground of Love. When love is truly authentic, the duality of it disappears into the "absorbing interest" of the state enjoyed. Then there is no more horizontal or vertical: each is immersed in the other. Jan echoed the necessity of being so absorbed as to forget yourself, if only briefly. Nancy concurred that the peaceful neutrality of true love is really beautiful, and we attain that *in* our relationships, and not so easily apart from them. Dynamic interaction is essential to a meaningful experience. She shaded Paul's idea, saying that optimal experiences take place within the horizontal but include the vertical.

Deb added that the vertical is what you really love when you love, and what transforms the horizontal into something lovable. Still, we give credit to the horizontal, to what we see. She mentioned the absolute tear from the last class, and Moni added an absolute rose as an adorable attraction. Once again, the absoluteness of these are dependent on the state of mind of the observer. We might be enchanted by a rose or a smile or a tear, and a differently interested person might have no reaction or a negative



one. Appearances aside, the source of ananda is within the knower or the experiencer and not in the object.

Where we repeatedly fail is in mistaking the non-Self for the Self. This means we are busy seeking new roses to admire, instead of going within to regain contact with our true nature, which is love, in the imperience called bhakti. It's not an experience, it's an imperience. This is the ultimate challenge for the seeker, so simple as to be nearly impossible. Our true nature is ananda, and yet we look for it where it is not, in the vagaries of our world. If we regained it inside, it would accompany us every minute of our lives, but we content ourselves with the occasional stimulation of transient experiences. Paul was incredulous: "You mean 24/7??" Well, yes.

Nancy agreed wholeheartedly. She said the vertical is always there, so we don't have to take steps to get to it. It isn't a skill to be mastered. All we have to do is increase our awareness to include it.

One of the definitions of the vertical is it is the essential, the essence. When the broad expanse of the horizontal world is reduced to its absolute essence, we arrive at a thin vertical line, the thread that runs through our entire life from beginning to end, whether or not there is an actual beginning or end.

We who had secure childhoods resided in our innate bliss at least from conception and gestation through birth and early outer life, which subjectively feels like millions of years. Forever. Because of this, we know our bliss intimately. Only as older children were we taught that our native state was not enough: we are meant to forgo it and presume we are inadequate. We are set forth as individuals on a search for it in the horizontal dimensions, where it is not. Hey, exploring the horizontal is amazing and even necessary. What isn't necessary is abandoning our innate nature. Why not take it along? I suppose that's what makes life the grand drama it is. Forgetting gives us the incentive to seek and find what we already are. In doing so we can't help but become more

conscious of it. Bliss can't just be taken for granted, as it was for that eternity in utero. By losing it and finding it again we learn how precious, how essential, it really is.

Coming back to our Self is rejuvenating. The root of that word means youth. Rejuvenation is being made young again, or more broadly "to restore to a former state; make fresh or new again."

Jan saw how our authenticity is intimately connected with our true nature, that "thing" we are setting our sights on. She reprised the sentence on absorption: "Only where there is such an irrevocable persistence of absorbing interest does the word *anusandhanam* (meditation) become meaningful." Meditation springs from an easy and natural state to resonate with a "spiritual compulsion to be ever persisting in the union with what is most adored." In other words, our love for what we are attracted to reignites our memory of who we are. Jan wasn't sure that such a state would be long lasting, but we have the assurances of the gurus that it is. Since it is who we truly are, it will last as long as we do. If it comes and goes, we are dealing with the non-Self, not the Self. In fact that's precisely how we know the difference.

Nitya himself was a fine example: he was always at his best, at the top of his game, even when his body was wracked with pain. He was ever ready to help, he knew what each of his disciples needed, and how to compassionately bring it out in them. He had endless energy to give and write and speak about truth and how it related to all of us. He was a bright light surrounded by dim bulbs, always generous to try to ramp up our brightness in any way that would work. Once again, we weren't being asked to build a tower of Babel to reach the sky, but to remember who we were:

An individual mind finds rest only when it returns to its original state. It is conjunction with the non-Self that creates restlessness or disturbance in the self. In individual cases of

suffering one can always notice an incidence of the self identifying itself with what it is not, such as when one says, “I am sick.” This is a clear case of mistaking a miserable condition of the body for the nature of the Self. (369)

Nitya exemplified this by being amazingly detached about his various illnesses and chronic injuries, which were far from trivial. As Moni recalled, residing in his core was something he gradually learned, as he was not always perfectly steady. Plus, he had a guru who would bash him around mercilessly if he ever became static. Jan is right that we begin with occasional connections that enchant us, and then we can build on them. The promise of a realized person is that our efforts can indeed become a permanent flame giving off spiritual heat and light most or all of the time.

Jan’s example from last week also perfectly speaks to the present verse. She woke up one morning feeling happy for no reason. Or, any reasons buried in her unconscious were invisible to her. Her happiness had no cause: it was simply who she was, and by being happy she was only being her true self. Her habits probably took her away from that place as she went about her day, and she may have wondered what she could do to bring her back to it. But it’s a matter of removing the accumulated impediments to being herself, not of attaining something that she isn’t already.

Deb thought of Narayana Guru’s famous and radical gesture of mounting a mirror in a temple. The norm was to go in and worship a deity, who would be represented by a sculpture at the center of the temple. His radical upgrade was to set a mirror in place of the deity. The clear message was: You are the divine. Look into yourself to find what you seek. When we visited Somanahalli Gurukula in 1979 we were in the place where Nataraja Guru had set a mirror out in a field, so the whole world was reflected in it, with the viewer in the center. It was a lovely iteration, but the

monkeys kept breaking it, so eventually it was moved into a small shed, which lacked the cosmic feel of the field.

In connection with the mirror idea, Nitya quotes a parallel verse from the Bhagavad Gita:

But for him who happens to be attached to the Self alone,  
Who finds full satisfaction in the Self –  
for such a man who is happy in the Self as such, too,  
there is nothing that he should do. (III: 17)

Here's part of my commentary on this Gita verse, emphasizing the liberating aspect:

Once anyone attains a bipolar relationship with the Absolute—the capital S self—there is true freedom. The chains of obligation are broken and need not be reforged. For such a seer “there is nothing he *should* do.” Anything may be done, but there is no requirement, because the spirit of the Absolute unfolds at all times with perfection. There is no need for any ritual or the propitiation of any god, as they are extraneous to the direct absorption in truth. They do serve as symbolic touchstones for some people, and as such will be tolerated and even encouraged, but in themselves they are not necessary.

We might add three famous verses from the Gita's sixth chapter, dealing with meditation:

5) By the Self the Self must be upheld; the Self should not be let down; the Self indeed is its own dear relative; the Self indeed is the enemy of the Self.

6) The Self is dear to one (possessed) of Self, by whom even the Self by the Self has been won; for one not (possessed) of

Self, the Self would be in conflict with the very Self, as if an enemy.

7) To one of conquered Self, who rests in peace, the Supreme is in a state of neutral balance in heat-cold, happiness-suffering, honor-disgrace.

This is so important! By thinking of happiness or realization as residing outside ourselves, we subtly turn our self into the enemy: something to be overcome so we can obtain what we imagine to be the ideal. It is so easy, yet paradoxically so impossible, to turn to our inner being for our supreme consolation! We must uphold the Self by the Self, instead of undermining it. Nitya puts our dilemma in terms that are the key to understanding the meaning of Darsanamala:

All beings are always driven by their own nature to seek a union that can give at-one-ment with supreme happiness. Unfortunately, on the periphery of life the unreal is very often mistaken for the real; hence every identification with an imaginary source of bliss is automatically repulsed by the inevitable disillusionment that follows on the heels of identification. (370)

I'll include a very poignant example of this in Part II, from *Lincoln in the Bardo*, by George Saunders, which just won an important literary prize.

Narayana Guru is quoting Shankara when he begins the verse with "Meditation on the Self is bhakti," adding in the next verse, "Constant meditation on brahma [the Absolute] is known as bhakti because it is blissful." Nitya suggests this is the means to comprehend the entire chapter:

Sankara defines bhakti in the *Vivekachudamani (The Crest Jewel of Wisdom Discrimination)* as *sva svarupa anusandhanam bhaktih*, which means ‘contemplation is the continuous meditation on one’s own true nature’. The word *anusandhanam* holds in it the entire key to Bhakti Darsana. (369)

I pointed out that we often fall short because we meditate only on the good half, the approved half, of the Absolute. Because we disapprove of bad behavior, we shy away from including it in our meditations. Moni agreed that, as bhakti is absolute love, there is no good or bad in it. Deb added that the Bhakti Darsana opens us to identifying with a greater existence, and as we do that our ignorance disappears, or anyway shrinks.

Paul wondered how it would help him cope with the challenge of a family member who was being a major pain at the moment. This is a crucial aspect, and we’ll be looking into it as we go along. For now I offered that the meditation would be to try to grasp what the daughter’s motivations might be, while striving to subtract the hurt feelings a father is bound to have. They aren’t helpful in choosing a course of action. A neutral meditator will try hard to see why a person is doing what they do, and why they are acting as they do toward them. In doing that, our inner intelligence will often make useful suggestions. What interferes are our own wishes, and on top of those our hurt feelings. The ideal parent acts from as neutral a place as possible, acknowledging the problems without reacting to them, and sitting poised in a quiet place. It isn’t a recipe for inaction, but an invitation for additional wisdom to play its part. Anyway it’s worth a try.

Deb talked about how in an earlier period of intense social upheaval, when she was drenched in news of so many horrors and tragedies, she nearly succumbed to despair. Those like her who longed to change the world for the better were spinning our wheels

and getting nowhere, it seemed. The question burning in every heart was how to fight the evils taking place. At some point she realized that keeping joy alive was the most revolutionary thing she could actually do. It was revolutionary precisely because so much was pitted against it. Her advice then and now was to allow yourself to live your joy. It's what everyone wants, and what is very seldom attained.

Karen chimed in that we are bombarded by so much information about the horrors happening everywhere, we have to be sure not to let it steal our joy. In that spirit let us close with a most poetic flight of Guru Nitya, as he concludes his comments:

The fact that the search for happiness is never given up even for a split second shows how dear the value of happiness is. Such being the universal urge to be happy, it is not surprising that a seer of the Self sees the Self as bliss through and through, and that such a knower is held in total union with what he has envisioned by his magnificent obsession for the hidden splendor of his own blissful beingness.

## **Part II**

Swami Vidyananda's commentary:

*Bhakti* is meditation on the Self. The *Bhagavad Gita* (III. 17) underlines the truth that a man who is always interested in the Self and satisfied in it has nothing else to do. Shankara in the *Vivekachudmani* (verse 32) also says that *bhakti* is the meditation on the true form of one's Self. The reason why such great importance is given to contemplation on the Self is stated in this verse by the fact that the very nature of the Self consists of Bliss. It goes without saying that it is the high value of Bliss which deserves to be meditated upon. All living beings are naturally

disposed to such meditation. Therefore, the quality of representing this high value is what makes the Self fit to be meditated upon. In the world all people who have attained to Self-realization are in truth those who contemplate the Self.

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After everyone left last night I curled up on the sofa to read more of *War and Peace*, and the chapter immediately seemed to be a continuation of the class. Here's what I read from the end of Book Two, Part 3, chapter 19:

After dinner Natasha, at Prince Andrew's request, went to the clavichord and began singing. Prince Andrew stood by a window talking to the ladies and listened to her. In the midst of a phrase he ceased speaking and suddenly felt tears choking him, a thing he had thought impossible for him. He looked at Natasha as she sang, and something new and joyful stirred in his soul. He felt happy and at the same time sad. He had absolutely nothing to weep about yet he was ready to weep. What about? His former love? The little princess? His disillusionments?... His hopes for the future?... Yes and no. The chief reason was a sudden, vivid sense of the terrible contrast between something infinitely great and illimitable within him and that limited and material something that he, and even she, was. This contrast weighed on and yet cheered him while she sang.

As soon as Natasha had finished she went up to him and asked how he liked her voice. She asked this and then became confused, feeling that she ought not to have asked it. He smiled, looking at her, and said he liked her singing as he liked everything she did.

Prince Andrew left the Rostovs' late in the evening. He went to bed from habit, but soon realized that he could not sleep. Having lit his candle he sat up in bed, then got up, then lay down again not



at all troubled by his sleeplessness: his soul was as fresh and joyful as if he had stepped out of a stuffy room into God's own fresh air. It did not enter his head that he was in love with Natasha; he was not thinking about her, but only picturing her to himself, and in consequence all life appeared in a new light. "Why do I strive, why do I toil in this narrow, confined frame, when life, all life with all its joys, is open to me?" said he to himself. And for the first time for a very long while he began making happy plans for the future. He decided that he must attend to his son's education by finding a tutor and putting the boy in his charge, then he ought to retire from the service and go abroad, and see England, Switzerland and Italy. "I must use my freedom while I feel so much strength and youth in me," he said to himself. "Pierre was right when he said one must believe in the possibility of happiness in order to be happy, and now I do believe in it. Let the dead bury their dead, but while one has life one must live and be happy!" thought he.

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Just today I was in the chiropractor's waiting room and read this excerpt from the very moving *Lincoln in the Bardo*, by George Saunders. The book just received the Man Booker Prize, and his acceptance speech includes a wonderful bit (similar to what we heard in Portland last week) about how to live honorably in strange times such as ours:

If you haven't noticed, we live in a strange time, so the question at the heart of the matter is pretty simple, Do we respond to fear with exclusion and negative projection and violence? Or do we take that ancient great leap of faith and do our best to respond with love? And with faith in the idea that what seems other is actually not other at all, but just us on a different day. In the US we're hearing a lot about the need to

protect culture. Well this tonight is culture, it is international culture, it is compassionate culture, it is activist culture. It is a room full of believers in the word, in beauty and ambiguity and in trying to see the other person's point of view, even when that is hard.

This from the book struck me as cautioning against dependence on maya for our peace of mind, even as we cherish every passing moment and love with all our hearts. President Lincoln is in the crypt mourning his dead son:

*I was in error when I saw him as fixed and stable and thought I would have him forever. He was never fixed, nor stable, but always just a passing, temporary energy-burst. I had reason to know this. Had he not looked this way at birth, that way at four, another way at seven, been made entirely anew at nine? He had never stayed the same, even instant to instant.*

*He came out of nothingness, took form, was loved, was always bound to return to nothingness.*

*Only I did not think it would be so soon.*

*Or that he would precede us.*

*Two passing temporarinesses developed feelings for one another.*

*Two puffs of smoke became mutually fond.*

*I mistook him for a solidity, and now must pay.*

*I am not stable and Mary not stable and the very buildings and monuments here not stable and the greater city not stable and the wide world not stable. All alter, are altering, in every instant.*

(244)

### **Part III**

Jay sent a nice response:

Dear Scott:

This is an interesting and absorbing class note. As I read it I had some thoughts which I thought to share with you.

“...although science proclaims that the Self must somehow be a material item, no recipe has been devised to produce it.” Yes, this is an interesting observation. As I have known, they are trying to give Self a physical attribute, like micro-tubules in the cells. I also thought that this was a totally baseless idea.

“...which can also mean love for the Absolute...” Bhakti is SAMARPAN that is dissolving one’s self into the ultimate or Self. A good example is that of princess and poet Mirabai.

As a human being we live mostly in horizontal, all our relations and interactions are mutual give and take. These create boundaries in space and time and hence are far remote to the vertical.

Horizontal living is like a routine flow of air around us. It takes a force of *anusandhanam* to lift this air to form a tornado into the vertical. It is like getting into another orbit. As our physical experience tells us that we may try to get in this vertical orbit by jumping or even taking a flight, but we fall back. We do not sustain the height and do not get into vertical, unless we apply enough force to do away with the gravity, which in philosophical sense may be called as our worldly attachments.