

NECTAR OF DEVOTION

Preface

Closed Book Short

1. What were the names of Rupa Goswami & Sanatana Goswami when they were working as ministers?
2. What is the example Srila Rupa Goswami set for devotees and for humanity in general?
3. Where did Srila Rupa Goswami first meet Lord Caitanya?
4. Give the English meaning of the words: rupanugas, rasa, capala-sukha, bhoga-tyaga and amrta.
5. What is Rasa?
6. What are the differences between mundane rasa and bhakti rasa?
7. What is the prime cause of everything in the world according to Bhagavad-Gita and Srimad-Bhagavatam?
8. What is the root cause of our disappointment?
9. For whom is Nectar of devotion specifically presented?

Closed Book Questions

1. Explain Lord Caitanya's universal principle.
2. Discuss the significance of Srila Rupa Goswami in the cult of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu.
3. With reference to the Nectar of devotion Preface:
 - 3.1 Explain the term Bhakti-rasamṛta-sindhu
 - 3.2 List examples of mundane rasa and discuss your own experience of relishing eternal rasa in Krishna consciousness.

Open Book Essays

1. List reasons revealing Srila Prabhupada's purpose in writing the Nectar of devotion, with reference to the Preface, and discuss how these reasons are relevant for you individually and for society at large.

Introduction

Closed Book Short

1. List the twelve rasas in Sanskrit or English.
2. By what name is Krishna referred to in the mangalacaran?
3. What are the four waves, in English or Sanskrit, of the Eastern part of Nectar of devotion?
4. Give the English meaning of the terms pravrtti and nivrtti.

Closed Book Questions

1. Explain the analogy of sharks.
2. Explain the analogy of the rivers that come down and merge into the ocean.
3. Explain the analogy of volcanic eruptions in the midst of the ocean.
4. Explain the appropriate attitude of a preacher in Krishna Consciousness.
5. Explain the significance Srila Prabhupada gives to the word anusilana.
6. In the definition of pure devotional service, who does the word Krishna refer to?
7. Explain why Kamsa and Sisupala are not considered devotees even though they were constantly thinking about Krishna.
8. According to Narada Pancaratra what is the definition pure Bhakti?

Open Book Essays

1. Present an overview of the Bhakti-rasamṛta-sindhu including vibhagas (divisions) and lahares (waves).
2. Explain in your own words, the definition of pure devotional service with reference to Prabhupada's comments, examples and specific Sanskrit words from the Introduction.
3. Explain how the impersonalists sometimes misunderstand devotional service in regard Krishna, His paraphernalia and pastimes.

Chapter 1

Closed Book Short

1. List, in English or Sanskrit, the six characteristics of pure devotional service.
2. Why is devotional service greater than Krishna?
3. List four examples Prabhupada gives of 'mature' and 'immature' sinful reactions.
4. Why is atonement compared to an elephant bathing?
5. List the three sources of happiness according to the analysis of Srila Rupa Goswami.
6. Who is the symbol of pure devotional service in the highest degree?
7. What is the meaning of the words madana-mohana-mohini.

Closed Book Questions

1. Explain the analogy from Padma Purana illustrating the potency of Krishna consciousness in destroying ignorance.
2. Discuss how the Krishna consciousness movement is the highest welfare activity.
3. Compare Srila Rupa Goswami actual definition of auspiciousness with material welfare activities.
4. What does the comparison between mystic perfections and modern scientific improvements indicate?
5. Explain the analogy the queen and her maidservants.
6. Why the pure devotional service is extremely rare and difficult to achieve?
7. Explain the analogy of the calf footprint.

Open Book Essays

1. Explain, in your own words, each of the six characteristics of pure devotional service and at what stages they manifest with appropriate reference to Chapter 1 of Nectar of devotion. Also discuss the relevance of the six characteristics of pure devotional service in your own practice of Krishna consciousness.
2. Explain in your own words, the four kinds of effects of sin and how pure devotional service has the power to nullify all four kinds of sinful reactions, with reference to Prabhupada's comments, appropriate analogies and other relevant sastric references.
3. Explain, with examples from the text, how pure devotional service attracts Krishna.

Chapter 2

Closed Book Short

1. What are the three categories of devotional service?
2. What is the duty of the acarya, the spiritual master?
3. List the two types of sadhana-bhakti.
4. What are the two defining characteristics of vaidhi sadhana bhakti.
5. What injunction, if followed makes all other rules and regulations fall in line?
6. What are two duties of a brahmana?

Closed Book Questions

1. Which of the 6 characteristics of devotional service are manifested at each of these 3 levels?
2. Explain the two analogies given to describe sadhana bhakti.
3. Discuss how the following statement reflects the mood and mission of Srila Prabhupada: “Thus the Krishna consciousness movement is so nice that there is no need of even designating oneself brahmana, kshatriya, vaishya, sudra, brahmachari, grihasta, vanaprastha, sannyasa.

Open Book Essays

1. Discuss the import of the following statement in relation to Srila Prabhupada’s mission.
“But even if there is no continuity, if only by chance a person takes interest in a pure devotee’s instruction, he can be accepted and can advance in devotional service.” Give reference to relevant comments from Chapter 2 in your response.
2. Explain, in your own words, the process of sadhana-bhakti, devotional service in practice, with reference to Chapter 2 of Nectar of devotion. In your answer explain the distinction between vaidhi and raganuga sadhana-bhakti. Give reference to given analogies, and relevant comments from Chapter 2 of Nectar of devotion.
3. Explain how always remembering Krishna, and never forgetting Him, is the essence of all rules and regulations. Give reference to Chapter 2 of Nectar of devotion.

Chapter 3

Closed Book Short

1. Which 2 factors determine ones eligibility for vaidhi sadhana bhakti?
2. Who are the 4 types of neophytes who approach Krishna? Give one example from scripture for each of them.
3. Elevation to what position is required to stick to the principle of worshiping the Supreme Personality of Godhead?
4. What did Bilvamangal Thakur say about mukti?

Closed Book Questions

1. What are bhukti and mukti compared to and explain why?
2. Why does a pure devotee not care for mukti?

Open Book Essays

1. Describe the three classes of devotees and their respective characteristics with reference to Nectar of devotion Chapter 3.
2. Explain the eligibility for accepting, practicing and advancing in sadhana-bhakti, with reference to Nectar of devotion Chapter 3.
3. What is the attitude of a sadhaka bhukti and mukti with reference to Nectar of devotion Chapter 3.

Chapter 4

Closed Book Short

1. Why is Prthu Maharaj not interested in impersonal liberation? What does he ask for instead?
2. List, in Sanskrit or English, the five kinds of liberation.
3. What is Hanuman's attitude toward salvation?
4. Persons who have achieved four stages of liberation may also be promoted where?

Closed Book Questions

1. Explain a devotee's attitude towards each of the five kinds of liberation.
2. What did Lord Siva say to Sati about persons who are devoted to Narayana?

Open Book Essays

1. Establish the superiority of devotional service over liberation and describe a devotee's attitude towards liberation with reference to Nectar of devotion Chapter 4.

Chapter 5

Closed Book Short

1. What should a devotee do if he falls down while doing devotional service?

Closed Book Questions

1. Explain the analogy of bell metal and mercury.
2. Discuss the place of prayascitta in the Vaisnava (devotional) cult.

Open Book Essays

1. Explain the independent nature of pure devotional service with reference to Nectar of devotion Chapter 5.
2. Discuss, in your own words, the practice of claiming members from all sections of the Western countries in relation to principles established by Srila Rupa Goswami. Give reference to sastraic evidence, and examples from the previous acaryas from Nectar of devotion Chapter 5.
3. Srila Prabhupada writes: "It is on the basis of his position that anyone can now become a Gaudiya Vaisnava from any part of the world or any part of the universe." Discuss the significance of this statement in relation to Srila Prabhupada's mission. Give reference to Nectar of devotion Chapter 5 in your response.
4. Discuss devotees' possible misapplication of Karabhajana Muni's statement "My dear King, if someone gives up his occupational duties..." and explain the appropriate application.

Chapter 6

Closed Book Short

1. List the first 3 of the 64 items of sadhana in English or Sanskrit.
2. Out of the first 20 items of sadhana, which are considered the most important?
3. List the five most potent items of sadhana.

Closed Book Questions

1. Identify at least 2 items from the 64 items of sadhana bhakti and describe your plan for improving your practice of these items.

Open Book Essays

1. Explain the difference between principle and detail, as referred to in Chapter 6 of Nectar of devotion. Discuss the significance, of this distinction, for ISKCON's future development. Give appropriate reference to Nectar of devotion Chapter 6 in your response.

Chapter 7

Closed Book Short

1. List some qualifications of a guru, as described in Chapter 7.
2. What is the crucial point for advancement in spiritual life?
3. Why can the followers of Buddha not be accepted as devotees?
4. What is the basic principle for observing fasting on Ekadashi?
5. List the two kinds of non-devotees Lord Caitanya mentioned whose association should be avoided?
6. Which 4 books, if one carefully reads, will give him sufficient knowledge to understand the science of Krishna consciousness?

Closed Book Questions

1. Explain the significance of the first 3 items of sadhana bhakti and discuss their relevance in your own practice of Krishna consciousness.
2. When Lord Caitanya was asked to define the behaviour of a Vaisnava, explain how did He reply?
3. Briefly describe Rupa Goswami's instruction regarding the attitude of a devotee towards demigods.
4. Explain the two analogies quoted describing associating with non-devotees and demigod-worshippers.

Open Book Essays

1. Discuss the relevance of 'Not accepting unfit disciples and constructing many temples' for ISKCON's leadership.
2. Select items, from Chapter 7, which elucidate appropriate conduct for an advanced devotee. Give reference to appropriate statements from Chapter 7 in your response.

Chapter 8

Closed Book Short

1. List 5 Seva Aparadha mentioned in chapter 8, which are particularly relevant to you.
2. What are the consequences of becoming an offender to the holy names?
3. How can an offender unto the offender unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead be delivered?

Closed Book Questions

1. What are the two types of offences, which is more serious and why?
2. Explain the importance of carefully avoiding offenses in your practice of Krishna consciousness.

Open Book Essays

1. Identify some of the offences which by avoiding would substantially help your practice of Krishna consciousness and make a plan for improving your avoidance of the seva aparadha.
2. Discuss how ones attitude, to avoiding the offenses, impacts one's progress in Krishna consciousness.
3. Select some offences you feel particularly challenged by and discuss your plans for avoiding them.

Chapter 9

Closed Book Short

1. What is the result of decorating one's body with Vaisnava tilaka?
2. According to the Padma Purana, what is the result of wearing tulasi beads on the neck and marking twelve places of their bodies as Vishnu?
3. What is the price for entrance to the kingdom of God?
4. List, in English or Sanskrit, and explain the 3 kinds of prayers of submission.
5. Give the English meaning of laulyam and lalasangamayi.
6. What is the result of drinking caranamrta?
7. Who are the impersonalists who became devotees after smelling the remnants of flowers and incense in the temple?
8. According to the Skanda Purana what is the result of seeing the face of the Lord while arati is going on?
9. According to the Agni Purana, who can obtain the results of Kriya yoga?

Closed Book Questions

1. Explain how we should deal with blasphemy towards oneself, the Lord & His devotees.
2. Explain the example of Jagai and Madhai, given in this chapter, in relation to blasphemy of devotees.
3. Explain the analogy of birds of sinful activities.
4. Discuss at least 2 passages from Chapter 9 that inspire you to participate the worship of the Lord in the temple.

Open Book Essays

1. Discuss how Chapter 9 inspires you in your life of prayer. Give reference to appropriate statements from Chapter 9.
2. Discuss the importance of temple worship with reference to appropriate statements from Chapter 9.

Chapter 10

Closed Book Short

1. What statement from Srimad Bhagavatam is mentioned as the 'guide for all devotees'?
2. Give the English meaning of daya-bhak.
3. According to Srila Rupa Goswami, what are the 3 or 4 objects of meditation?

Closed Book Questions

1. Explain the analogy of a snake bite in relation to hearing.
2. Explain the difference between remembrance and meditation.
3. Discuss general principles drawn from the example of the South Indian brahmana and explain how these can be applied personally.

Open Book Essays

1. Describe the importance of hearing, for quick spiritual advancement, with reference to appropriate statements
2. Describe in your own words, with reference to Prabhupada's statements in Chapter 10 of Nectar of devotion, the appropriate attitude towards suffering in one's life. Discuss, with relevant personal examples, how development of this attitude can help you deal with suffering in your life.

Chapter 11

Closed Book Short

1. According to Vaisnava acaryas, how is servitorship defined?
2. Explain the difference between the two types friendship.
3. Which two of the nine types of devotional service are rarely seen?
4. What are the 3 types of self-surrender?
5. Give the English meaning of atma-nivedanam and saranagati.
6. List at least 4 ways we can serve tulasi.

Closed Book Questions

1. Explain why a preacher considered, a friend of Lord Krishna.

Open Book Essays

1. Discuss, with reference to Chapter 11, the relationship between varnasrama dharma and the practice of servitorship.
2. Describe some glories of serving Tulasi with reference to Chapter 11.

Chapter 12

Closed Book Short

1. Give the meaning of “revealed scripture” according to Chapter 12.
2. A person who keeps Vaisnava literature at home always has what?
3. What is even higher than the worship of the Lord?
4. What is the meaning of Urja Vrata?

Closed Book Questions

1. Discuss Rupa Goswami’s explanation of the value of serving a devotee.
2. Explain the analogy of the ripened fruit given in Chapter 12.
3. Explain the analogies of the crystal stone and the honorary degree.

Open Book Essays

1. Describe some of the glories of executing devotional service during the month of Kartik. Give reference to Nectar of devotion Chapter 12 in your response.

Chapter 13

Closed Book Short

1. What example does Srila Prabhupada give to show that the results of devotional service described in the Nectar of devotion, Ch 13, are not overestimations?

Closed Book Questions

1. List the 5 most potent items of Sadhana Bhakti and explain why they are considered most potent.
2. Discuss the role of the five most important items of sadhana-bhakti in community development in ISKCON.
3. Address the argument that the results of devotional service described in the Nectar of devotion. Ch 13, appear to be overestimations.
4. Explain Lord Caitanya’s rejecting varnasrama-dharma, in His discussion with Srila Ramananda Raya, and discuss the simultaneous importance of applying varnasrama-dharma in the practice of sadhana bhakti.
5. Identify at least 3 items, from the 64 items of Sadhana Bhakti, which if you improved your practice of, could significantly enhance your Krishna consciousness. (Nectar of devotion Chapters 6-13)

Open Book Essays

1. Describe the significance of the five most important items of sadhana-bhakti, with reference to Chapters 12 & 13 of Nectar of devotion. Discuss in your own words, specific ways you could improve your practice of the five most important items of sadhana-bhakti.
2. Discuss the relevance of Varnasrama dharma in the practice of sadhana bhakti with reference to Prabhupada’s statements in Chapter 13, Nectar of devotion.

Chapter 14

Closed Book Short

1. Explain the meaning of yukta vairagya.
2. List the nine processes of devotional service (nava-vidha-bhakti), and give one example of a devotee who achieved perfection by following each of these processes.
3. Explain the significance of the example of Maharaj Ambarisa's practice of devotional service, as described in Chapter 14.

Closed Book Questions

1. Explain how attachment to jyana-vairagya may hinder progress in bhakti.
2. Explain the differences between yukta vairagya and false renunciation (phalgu vairagya).
3. Why is it unnecessary for a devotee to separately cultivate non-violence and vegetarianism?
4. Identify one of your goals, for personal spiritual growth, and explain how your practice of at least 3 specific items sadhana will help you can achieve that goal.

Open Book Essays

1. Discuss, with examples, how Srila Prabhupada's mission reflects the principle of yukta-vairagya. Give reference to specific statements from Chapter 14 of Nectar of devotion in your response.
2. Discuss the effect of practicing the five most potent items of sadhana on you individually and on the community of devotees. Give reference to relevant statements from Chapter 6-14 of Nectar of devotion in your response.

Chapter 15

Closed Book Short

1. Where can examples of spontaneous devotional service easily be seen?
2. How has Srila Rupa Goswami defined raganuga-bhakti ?
3. What are the two categories of Raganuga Bhakti?
4. How does Srila Rupa Goswami describe Kubja's love for Krishna?

Closed Book Questions

1. Briefly explain the terms Ragatmika Bhakti and Raganuga Bhakti.
2. Explain the difference between the destinations attained by the impersonalists and devotees respectively, with reference to the examples given in this chapter.
3. Why the gopis ecstatic love for Krishna is sometimes described by scholars as being like the “lusty desire” of the material world?
4. Explain, with reference to the attitudes of Kamsa and Sisupala, the statement “To enter the kingdom and to enter the king's palace are not the same thing.”

Open Book Essays

1. Explain, with reference to Chapter 15 of the Nectar of devotion, how the “lusty attitude” of the gopis does not refer to any sort of sex indulgence.

Chapter 16

Closed Book Short

2. In which two places is spontaneous love of Krishna, in the parental relationship, found?
3. At what stage is eagerness to follow in the footsteps of the denizens of Vraja possible?
4. Who are the prakṛta-sahajiyas?
5. Why the attempt to directly become the father of Krishna is not recommended?
6. Give the English meaning of the words Pusti Marga?

Closed Book Questions

1. Briefly explain the practice of raganuga-bhakti
2. Explain the statement, with reference to the practice of raganuga-bhakti: “A devotee who is actually advanced in Krishna consciousness, who is constantly engaged in devotional service, should not manifest himself, even though he has attained perfection.
3. Briefly explain why we should be careful about the so-called siddha-pranali
4. Briefly describe the conjugal love which is technically called keli.
5. What does the Padma Puraṇa explain about how a devotee in the form of a man can desire to become a gopi.
6. What are the two categories of conjugal love and the respective destinations of devotees who have developed them?

Open Book Essays

- 1) With reference to Chapters 15 and 16 of Nectar of devotion, in your own words, discuss the relevance of the practice of raganuga-bhakti for ISKCON devotees.

Chapter 17

Closed Book Short

1. What are the two ways you can achieve bhava bhakti?
2. What are the three ways special mercy is given, which result in the apparent accidental development of ecstatic feelings?

Open Book Essays

1. Explain the two ways in which elevation to the ecstatic stage of life is possible and discuss the significance of Srila Prabhupada’s statements, in this regard, from Nectar of devotion Chapter 17.
2. “Elevation to the ecstatic stage of life is generally attained through association with pure devotees, while elevation to that stage by the special mercy of Krishna or His devotee is very rare.” Explain the significance of this statement for practitioner of Krishna consciousness, with reference to relevant statements from Srila Prabhupada’s Nectar of devotion Chapter 17.
3. Why should a devotee endeavour to attain bhava bhakti through sadhana when it is also possible to achieve it through mercy? Explain with reference to Srila Prabhupada’s statements, in this regard, from Nectar of devotion Chapter 17.

Chapter 18

Closed Book Short

1. List five of the nine characteristics of a person who has developed ecstatic love for Krishna, in English or Sanskrit.
2. What is the analogy given in regard to the price of achieving success in devotional service?

Closed Book Questions

1. Describe the quality of perseverance, and discuss the example of the devotee given.
2. Explain why Srila Rupa goswami has given the nine characteristics of a devotee actually at the stage of bhava bhakti.
3. Explain how the two devotees mentioned exemplify pridelessness.
4. Explain the analogy of spots on the moon.
5. Explain what is asa-bandha.
6. How can one advance from shadow attachment (raty-abhasa) to genuine bhava?
7. What can destroy any real or imitative bhava?

Open Book Essays

1. Give at least 4 instances, from Srila Prabhupada's life, where he exemplifies the symptoms of bhava bhakti.
2. Explain the two types of imitative attachment and how it can be transformed in to genuine attachment. Give reference from chapter 18 of Nectar of devotion.

Chapter 19

Closed Book Short

1. List in Sanskrit or English the two types of prema-bhakti.
2. List in Sanskrit or English the nine stages from sraddha to prema.

Closed Book Questions

1. Describe at least 2 distinctive features of prema bhakti.
2. Explain the 2 ways to achieve prema bhakti.

Open Book Essays

1. Select two devotees, given as examples of prema bhakti in this chapter that inspire you, and explain why.

Nectar of devotion Thematic Questions

Closed Book Thematic Questions

1. Srila Prabhupada writes in the Preface of Nectar of devotion “Bhakti-rasa, however, the mellow relished in the transcendental loving service of the Lord, does not finish with the end of life. Discuss how your taste for Bhakti-rasa has deepened as a result of your study of Nectar of devotion. Give reference to appropriate statements from Nectar of devotion, Chapters 1-19, in your response.
2. Srila Prabhupada writes in the Preface of Nectar of devotion, “The Nectar of devotion will give us practical hints how we can live in this material world perfectly engaged in devotional service and thus fulfil all our desires in this life and the next.” Discuss practical changes you've made in your life as a result of studying the Nectar of devotion. Give at least 4 specific references to the Bhaktisastri books in your response.
3. Identify at least 3 Vaisnava qualities found in the Nectar of devotion that you consider particularly important for ISKCON preachers and leaders. Discuss why.

Open Book Thematic Questions

1. Srila Prabhupada writes in the Preface of Nectar of devotion, “Every service has some attractive feature which drives the servitor progressively on and on.” Discuss how your attraction to serving Krishna has developed as a result of your study of Nectar of devotion. Give reference to appropriate statements from Nectar of devotion, Chapters 1-19, in your response.
2. Describe how the practice of sadhana-bhakti brings one to the stage of bhava-bhakti. Give reference to appropriate statements from Nectar of devotion, Chapters 1-19, and Bhagavad Gita, in your response.
3. Srila Prabhupada writes in the Preface of Nectar of devotion, “The Nectar of devotion teaches us the science of loving every one of the living entities perfectly by the easy method of loving Krishna. Discuss how your relationships with devotees and people in general has developed as a result of your study of Nectar of devotion. Give reference to appropriate statements from Nectar of devotion, Chapters 1-19, and Bhagavad Gita, in your response.
4. Discuss how your appreciation of Srila Prabhupada’s mood and mission has deepened as a result of studying the Nectar of devotion. Give appropriate reference to the Nectar of devotion in your reply.