

**Report on the 5th International Gita Conference  
"Faith and Global Peace"  
August 18th and 19th, 2007, Durham, UK**

Jaya Guru Datta.

Due to the Lords grace I was able to attend this conference, and at the break between the discussion of chapter 2 and 3 of the Gita in the Newsletter, I hope I can convey some of the vibrant energy of those two days to you - and I'd like to strongly recommend you to make an extra effort to join the 6th Gita Conference next year.

Dasha.

So before this one the International Gita Foundation Trust under the auspices of Dr. Nath already organized four annual conferences, all held in India. Now for the first time a location on another continent was chosen, and most likely next year will see the conference being held in New York. In the UK the conference was organized jointly by the Gita Trust and Kalapremi, an arts development organization, and I congratulate them both on the fine organization which created an inspiring and spiritually refreshing and uplifting atmosphere for all the attendants. My sincere thanks go to all the women and men involved who made this a big success for more than 300 people.



Now I can't do justice to all the speakers in a short report, so I beg the pardon of those not mentioned hereafter - they all were most valuable to create the overall outcome. However let me single out some personal highlights. Whenever in the following there is a quote from a speaker, then it is taken from the Souvenir book released at the conference.

So the motto as stated on the front page of the Souvenir was:

"In all beings separated into different categories, that knowledge which sees the One inseparable reality, know that to be the pure knowledge."

(Gita, Chapter 18, Verse 20)

This topic of Oneness in all religions was the central theme especially of the second day, where it was displayed on stage by representatives of a variety of churches and religions - in the morning we had speakers of acclaimed reputation, in the afternoon we had teenagers talking about the role of the youth towards Global Peace. And two things really made me happy:

(1) To hear and to see that they all were as sincere on their own path as they had a loving understanding for the different roads taken by the others to achieve the same goal uniting them all.

(2) To experience that for the Youth Forum in the afternoon the conference hall was even more crowded than ever before at the conference (the different parts could be booked separately).

Let me quote from the paper by Miss Lalita Kameswari from India, 19 years old and winner of the Gita competition the year before, invited to the conference by the Trust:

"Youth of our nation is experiencing today the need for an ideal which consistently motivates them for a self-sacrificing and dynamic action. It is natural for the youth to have the daring to plan, an irresistible urge and energy to work, the enthusiasm to conceive, . . . , an avalanche of power and strength, energy and vitality . . . but then how to train our mind in the very midst of confusing situations, how to juggle explosive conditions, threatening challenges and suffocative situations? This is what is exhaustively explained in Gita."

In my humble opinion the conference really succeeded in taking up this very important point of transferring the ancient knowledge of the Gita to the young people today. And as this is what the future of all of us will be based upon, therefore I started my report with it and congratulate the organizers on their achievement.

But as the youth as well as we all need guidance, for the conference it was but natural to start with messages and blessings by the dignitaries:

H.H. Sri Ganapati Sachchidananda Swamiji

H.H. Sri Jagadguru Taralabalu Swamy

H.H. Sri Sukhabodhananda Swamy (to the right)

H.H. Sri Japananada Swamy (to the left)



From the talks please let me single out H.H. Sri Sukhabodhananda Swamy. He gave a scintillating speech on "Problems are inevitable - Suffering is optional" or put in another way: "Learn to have fun with a problem - that's how to treat a problem wisely." Thereby we may reach peace of mind and follow "the principal message of Bhagavad Gita being 'Sama' or 'Equal' to diverse emotions." He demonstrated his approach very vividly throughout his talk by explaining the essence of the Gita on the fingers of just one hand: four fingers standing for the four ways of Yoga, then the forefinger bowing down to the thumb for the Mudra to represent life as whole and complete in every moment. Sri Sukhabodhananda was a great example himself that "to be spiritual" means "to heighten the spirit".

Then in the evening we had another great example of this from Bhakti Bharati Pujya Shri Prema Pandurang and Party. She gave an equally scintillating "Musical Discourse" on Sri Krishna and the Gita - making all the audience forget that we had had a full day with about nine hours of talks already. It was as inspiring for the mind as it was a joy for the eyes, the ears and the heart. And it made us remember that the Gita is not a "text" but it is a beautiful poem and a "celestial song".

So let me end with a quote from Dr. Nath:

"Wherever there is hatred let us sow the seed of love,  
Wherever there is animosity, let us sow the seed of friendship,  
Whenever we see ignorance, pain and sorrow, let us show compassion."

With deeply felt gratitude for the conference and for the blessings of being able to attend it. Dasha.



Thanks to Dr. Nath (on the left with his wife; myself on the right) for the photos.

Links:

Conference Program: [www.kalapremi.org/doc/faith\\_conference\\_2007.pdf](http://www.kalapremi.org/doc/faith_conference_2007.pdf)

The International Gita Foundation Trust: [www.gitainternational.org](http://www.gitainternational.org)

Sri Sukhabodhananda Swamy: [www.swamisukhabodhananda.org](http://www.swamisukhabodhananda.org)

Bhakti Bharati Pujya Shri Prema Pandurang: [www.kshetropasna.com](http://www.kshetropasna.com)