

THE QUINTESSENCE OF KNOWLEDGE: "THE CHOSEN ONE"

Dr. (Smt.) Rajalakshmi Parthasarathy Shashtiabdapoorthi Endowment Lecture 2020

The students and staff of PSBB considered themselves fortunate to be the 'chosen ones' when they attended the annual Dr. (Smt.) Rajalakshmi Parthasarathy Shashtiabdapoorthi Endowment Lecture online on 27th November 2020. Shri. Dushyanth Sridhar, an Indic speaker, writer, and entrepreneur was the chief guest who treated the students and staff to a scintillating lecture.

Commemorating the birth anniversary of Dr.Mrs.Y.G.P. the founder of the PSBB Group of Schools ,the lecture was live-streamed through the online video sharing platform YouTube, and students of Std. 9, 10, 11 and 12, of the PSBB Group of Schools, watched the same through the web-based video conferencing tool Zoom.

The event started with an invocation to the Almighty rendered by Shreyaas Sanjeev of Class 10, PSBB Nungambakkam, following which, the compere Ms. Sheela Prakash, an alumna of PSBB Siruseri, explained the theme of the endowment lecture. Aishwarya Anand, an alumna of PSBB Nungambakkam, welcomed the chief guest Mr.DushyanthSridhar, the Dean and Director of the PSBB Group of Schools Mrs. Sheela Rajendra, Management Representative of the PSBB Group of Schools Mr.Y.G. Rajendra, and various other dignitaries, trustees, and special invitees, to the program. Siddddharth Sanjai, an alumnus of PSBB K.K. Nagar introduced the chief guest. Shri. Dushyanth Sridhar, a Bits Pilani alumnus, who had worked in the corporate sector, before becoming a public speaker, 'upanyaskar' and writer, on topics related to Sanatana Dharma. He renders discourses in English and Tamil, on various topics and has delivered more than 300 discourses in 22 countries beyond India.

Mr. Dushyanth, who started the lecture with his salutations to Dr. Mrs. Y.G.P, untangled the mystery of who the "Chosen One "was - Arjuna, a revered character from the great Indian epic, Mahabharata. He traced Arjuna's journey from his birth to explain how he was the "Chosen One" at every stage due to his stellar qualities and unique character traits.

Mr.Sridhar explained how King Pandu of the Chandra/Lunar Dynasty, who was cursed by Rishi Kindama not to be blessed with any offspring, asked his wife Kunti to use the boon given to her by Durvasa Maharishi, to invoke God in order to be blessed with a child. Kunti invoked three deities, namely Dharma Devata, from whom the eldest son Yudhishtira was born, Vayu Devata, through whom she was blessed with Bheema, and finally Indra Devta, who gave her Arjuna, also called Indraputra.

Even when Arjuna was born, the rishis who were in the forest, gathered together to witness the birth of Arjuna, as he was the "Chosen One". Mr. Dushyanth then narrated the story of how Arjuna was the "Chosen One" as a student as well when he studied along with the other Pandavas and the 100 Kauravas under Rishi Dronacharya along with Drona's own son Ashwaththama. Arjuna proved his excellence in archery to his teacher. His immense focus

and the ability to narrow down his target made him the best archer. He was also able to use the knowledge he had suitably, to acquire more knowledge.

Mr. Dushyanth also elucidated upon the fact that Arjuna had been the “Chosen One” as a student, when he had strategized the defeat of King Drupada as Gurudakshina, for his Guru and said that Drupada wanted his daughter Draupadi to marry Arjuna, after having seen his skill and valor, making Arjuna the “Chosen One” in marriage as well. However, Arjuna was also the “Chosen One” for a curse that he got from Urvashi when he went to Indraloka to get missiles from Indra, and refused to marry Urvashi. She cursed him to become a woman for one year.

Mr. Dushyanth remarked that the curse came in use when the Pandavas went incognito during the Agnyaathavaasam period . He went on to explain that Arjuna was again the “Chosen One” when he was the first to receive the chance to choose between Krishna or Krishna’s army for the big battle. He was also the “Chosen One” to have received the quintessence of Vedic Knowledge and Upanishads from Shri Krishna Bhagavan himself in the battlefield of Kurukshetra, in the form of the Bhagavad Gita. He was chosen by Krishna as the recipient of the Vedic knowledge, as Arjuna was ‘Gudakeshaha’ (one that has won oversleep). He had the ability to assimilate knowledge and utilize it most effectively.

Mr. Dushyanth then finally revealed why Arjuna was the “Chosen One” in all aspects.He explained that Arjuna was the “Chosen One” as he always knew what he was doing, knew who his real friends were, had great ‘bhakti’ towards his Guru,Dhronacharya and great respect for the women around him. His belief in his skills, loyalty in his friendship with Krishna above anything else, and respect for all those around him, made Arjuna the “Chosen One for Knowledge”. Mr. Dushyanth then concluded his speech by talking about the importance of mutual respect for one another, irrespective of caste, creed, religion, and gender. He also enlightened the audience about his new initiative called ‘Abhinava E-Pathshala’, where he had launched courses in simple Tamil, to understand the Vedic Traditions.

After the lecture, the Bala Bhavan Endowment Scholarship was given to students of the PSBB Group of Schools. Mrs. Sheela Rajendra then shared her thoughts with the audience. She cherished her memories with Dr. Mrs. Y.G.P.on the momentous occassion and commended Mr. Dushyanth’s lecture on “The Chosen One”. She, as well as the students of the PSBB Group of Schools, found the topic and the message conveyed to be intriguing, illuminating, and enlightening. She stated that Dr. Mrs. Y.G.P had founded the school to make every student of PSBB realize the true spirit of Indian culture while enjoying modern education in the school. She requested students not to ignore their ancient and cultural roots and conveyed her best wishes to the Class 12 students who will be graduating in 2021.

The event concluded on a bright note with Malavika Kannan, an alumna of PSBB KK Nagar proposing the vote of thanks, and a prayer by Tejas Venkataraman of 12 C, PSBB Nungambakkam.



**Reporter
Cyber Pigeons
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