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Singapore Through 60 Years with Cheers & Tears

*"Blessed is the nation whose God is the
LORD; and the people whom he hath
chosen for his own inheritance."
Psalm 33:12*

Since Sir Stamford Raffles founded Singapore in 1819, much has transpired and changed over these 206 years. Yesterday, **9 Aug 2025 was the 60th Anniversary of Nation Building of Singapore.** It is a meaningful time to rehearse and reflect upon the goodness of the Lord for our tiny island state of just 735 sq kms and with 6 million people.

We received self-governance from the British in 1959 (with subsequent full military British withdrawal in 1971) and independence in 1965 led by the notable then Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew arguably the founding father of this nation. By the mercy of God, this third world country was turned into arguably a first world city and touted as one of the four economic tigers of Asia at one time.

Survival Through the 1960-70s

We (my wife and I) were born in the year our nation joined the Malaysian Federation in 1963, only to be kicked out of the Federation after 2 years in 1965. **The young independent nation was filled with fears when communism was rife and the racial riots was not uncommon, but God in His sovereignty had something planned for this young country to be beyond its expectations as a pluralistic and meritocratic secular society.**

We are blessed by the sound and wise fiscal, monetary and economic policies of the founding fathers of this land, for choosing English as the main language, the requirement to learn a second language (I would not be able to preach in Chinese today if this was not so), building up a strong SAF in defence as early as the 1967 with compulsory National Service for all able bodied man, government housing made affordable for all in SIT and later HDB flats, industrialisation and an export-oriented



economy that also created jobs for many, (Jurong was developed for this purpose and JTC was formed in 1968 and PSA in 1964), zero tolerance for corruption (even cabinet ministers were not spared), good primary, secondary, tertiary and technical education for all, affordable healthcare and a multicultural and racial society living in harmony, allowing different religions to thrive without discrimination against any other. The unseen Hand of God guided this nation in all its feeble efforts and that is the main reason for our successes.

• **Protestant work ethic:** The Puritans believed that hard work was a way of winning God's favor, and wealth accumulated through hard, honest work was seen as a sign of Godliness and was encouraged of all Puritans.

Dr Goh Keng Swee, the nation's economist and former Deputy PM, enlisted the help of a renowned economist, Dr Albert Winsemius - a learned and practical Dutch man. He became our national economic adviser and advised our leaders prudently from 1961-1984 and contributed much to the economic success of this nation. I remember reading an **article written by Prof Lee Soo Ann about Dr Winsemius and his possible religious roots (as Holland was a nation affected by the Protestant Reformation). Could it be his Christian values and convictions that also influenced our nation building indirectly?** Perhaps this would warrant deeper research and study.

All these efforts by the government laid the foundation for our nation by the mercy of God and built upon these 6 decades by succeeding national leaders. We have a viable society with a GDP of US\$90,000 per capita in 2024 though we be a tiny island state with almost no resources except for its people but we maximise it to the fullest as our comparative advantage.

Personal Anecdotes through the 1980s

I graduated in 1987 from NUS with a degree in Economics. The country was still recovering from the recession of 1985 and 86 (and the NWC then under Prof Lim Chong Yah for the first time suggested flexible wage system which later led to a variable component in our remuneration today, etc.), jobs were scarce and many of my peers were jobless for almost a year and those who found jobs started with a pay of about \$800 - \$900 a month. By the mercy of God, I was offered a job within two months in a statutory board (though a week later OUB offered me a bank officer post) and the experience of working in the secular world for 5-1/2 years was in the divine plan of God preparing me for the full-time pastoral ministry as well.

Life was tough during my father's generation (he was a mechanic and worked his way up to be a supervisor) who worked very hard to build up the nation as pioneers and our economy grew. The transportation improved with the MRT incepted in 1987 and more HDB flats, private condominiums, schools, hospitals, Changi airport, community centres, hawker centres and shopping malls besides others were built as we developed into a global financial centre and a viable manufacturing and banking and IT hub. We have one of the best ports, airports and universities in the world though competition is catching up. Our life expectancy has increased to 84.3 in 2025 on the average, inflation was 1.5 to 2.5% in 2025, except that the fertility rate has decreased

drastically to 0.97 in 2024 and we solve this by prudent and measured immigration policy.

We need to pray for our leaders that there be peace and prosperity of our nation that we may live a quiet and peaceable life (1Tim 2:1-5). Pray that it will continue to uphold righteousness, truth and equity and the freedom of religion. There are about 800 churches in this country and about 20% Christians here (including RCs). There is yet much to be done to revive and share the gospel with many who have come to this land for work, studies or business including our foreign workers.



The Post Modern Era & Beyond

We live in an increasingly volatile and uncertain world with wars and rumours of wars and trade conflicts among nations with a challenging time ahead of us. The recent tariffs as started by the US will have a significant economic impact in the free world and the wars in Ukraine and the Middle East will have serious consequences if not defused soon or handled properly but we must acknowledge the Sovereign Hand of God. The advent of AI will change the way we work, live, learn, communicate, play and have our being, not necessarily for the better though efficiently as there are trade-offs. We need to pray for divine guidance and protection for our nation and that our nation will continue to thrive in turbulent times by God's divine mercies. **The pandemics of SARS (2003) and COVID19 (2020) have taught us a humbling lesson that we are vulnerable to the external influences of the world around us and there are no saviours in a hopeless, spiritually fallen and bankrupt world.** By the grace of God, we went through these crises relatively well, though with memories of how it affected the economy, our work, family, daily lives and even our livelihood, but we survived by the mercy of God.

Idol Factory

We need to beware of the insidious idols of our age including the inordinate quest for more wealth, pleasure and prestige in material success and worldly assets (and obsession too with things related to our mobile phones) often at the expense of our faith and family in an increasingly affluent and opulent society We need to be good stewards of our time, talents and treasure for the Lord . Societies thrive in adversity; prosperity without humility may ironically be the curse of our times when we forget God. We are a greying nation with 25 percent to be above 65 yrs of age In 2030 and we need to humbly seek God and get our priorities right (Matt 6:33) and number our days and apply our hearts unto wisdom (Psa 90:12). We need to seek His kingdom first in these perilous days as we witness the signs of the times and the day of His imminent appearing which may be sooner that we thought.

Moving Forward

Our Lord Jesus said that His kingdom is not of this world (John 18:36). The kingdom of Christ is above the earthly political systems or national governments. Christians

are to be concerned with the spiritual realm, not the temporal. There is nothing wrong with Christians being involved in politics who has a special calling, as long as they **remember that we are to be ambassadors for Christ on earth and with a good testimony. That is our primary calling, and our goal is to appeal to others to be reconciled to God through faith in Jesus and to honour Christian principles in our political service.**

Conclusion

As citizens, on this 60th anniversary of Singapore, we offer grateful praise and thank our Almighty God for His sovereignty and absolute power, and we submit to His holy will for our families, church and nation. As believers, **our chief yearning and concern is the eternal glory of God and our freedom to walk and live according to Christian principles and to save souls while there is yet time and opportunity.**

As in the days of King Josiah in 2 King 23, **we need to earnestly pray and work towards the spiritual revival of our nation that many will believe in Christ and repent of our sins and look above and seek Christ as their personal Lord and God who is coming again soon. 'Wilt thou not revive us again: that thy people may rejoice in thee? (Psa 85:6)**

As redeemed and justified children of God and temporary citizens of this ephemeral world, we have a brighter future as we **look vigilantly and expectantly and forward to the imminent coming of the King of kings in the fullness of time when the Almighty Jehovah will rule and judge the world in His *parousia* one day and that may be sooner than we can imagine.**

Jack Sin

SG60 Thanksgiving Offering For SHBPC Church Building Fund

Thankful
Grateful
Blessed

Thankful to God for:

- Our country Singapore, freedom of religion, equality, democracy and much prosperity
- Good government with honesty, integrity and good convictions
- All the privileges as citizens, including the vouchers and SG60 goodies!

2 Tim 2:1&2

➔ Pray & Give Thanks!

A Fruitful Summer of Missions

- Dr Samuel Gan -

This June, July, and August have been an exciting summer with Sovereign Hope BP Church. I'm glad I managed to rush back for the church camp. It was one of the best I've attended so far, full of learning and laughter. We had the perfect balance of learning, sharing, laughter, and making new friends. I laughed so much during the Bible Quiz that I cried – this was a much-needed joy from a semester back in Country X. The laughter helped us bond and form new friendships, especially since the camp was well-attended by many from outside the church and even overseas, fostering new connections.



Rev Tan Eng Boo delivered an excellent series that included some eschatology, providing closure. And thanks to Rev Jack and Joseph for their messages as well that taught us to always FOCUS and persevere. I am thankful I could share Creation Ministries International (CMI) with many people, helping CMI reach more places. Creation Apologetics is my God-given mission, and I'm glad Sovereign Hope BP Church strongly supported it. Now, I am arranging for CMI to visit Rev Tan's Grace BP, after also bringing CMI to Batam Filadelfia BP.

Forest City was a fantastic venue, and God ensured we arrived early and returned swiftly. With the short travel time, it was even more enjoyable. There was so much eating that I think the biggest sin at the church camp was gluttony. Every time I saw food, I'd say, "Eat again!?"—now a standing joke. I am grateful and thankful to have attended this camp and to further the reach of creation apologetics.

Brunei and Miri

A few weeks after the church camp, I had the pleasure of joining the Brunei/Miri mission trip. Zoey and Shaun took excellent care of us. Rev Wong was so excited after the CMI talk in Miri that he scheduled an extra session at his church. The churches in both places experienced their first exposure to creation apologetics. I'm thankful that some will attend the All Asian Creation Conference on 22-23 August and bring the message back home. The CMI materials we brought were so popular that we ran out. I'm very grateful that Rev Peter Wong and Rev Andrew Liu warmly welcomed CMI and future engagements. While some outsiders and new believers struggled with the biblical timeline, they learned there were answers affirming the Genesis account,



highlighting the vital role of creation apologetics in these areas. Thank God for opening doors to Miri and Brunei! May He continue to bless their churches.

Though one ministry engagement was cancelled during this trip, it opened doors for others in Rev Peter's church. Indeed, God works in mysterious ways. I'm glad they benefited from Rev Jack's messages on mental health and their initial encounter with creation apologetics. I'm thankful God used me to introduce creation apologetics to these places and for being part of Rev Jack's team to bless Miri and Brunei.



With Bro Calvin Murthy, with whom I built a close relationship during the Forest City Camp, we had another joyous time in Batam. Visits to the orphanage, schools, and church showed the Batam team's hard work. We were thankful to stay at the newly built guesthouse and see the upcoming building. God has truly blessed the work in Batam.

Batam

Thanks to the opportunity to share at the SH Church camp in Forest City, Preacher Ang Liang gladly welcomed CMI to Filadelfia BP in Batam in August. After returning to China and then Singapore, this was my second mission trip and third overseas engagement—this time to Batam. My last visit there was in 2018 or earlier.



Meeting Bro Edy, I quickly connected full-time pastors in China with his school in Batam. Indeed, God works mysteriously, and some pastors in Country X may send their children to this Christian school. Bro Calvin's singing touched not only the orphanage children but also the church congregation.

Though the messages in Batam required interpretation, the interpreters excelled. The reactions from the congregation and Bible school students brought by Dr. Happy showed their skill. After my creation apologetics sharing, some immediately signed up for the AACC conference. Thank God for bringing CMI to Batam.



The church clearly benefited from our visit. Rev Jack counselled the preachers there for their upcoming marriages, and many deeply appreciated his teaching and message. I'm thankful to be part of the team God sent to Batam.

Personal Reflections

As I discussed with Rev Jack Sin in January 2024, he has truly stepped into Dr. Tow's role in advancing CMI. I joined the BP church in 2014 under Dr. Tow's "orders," but it wasn't until Sovereign Hope that I felt I was fulfilling God's mission for me and Dr. Tow's guidance. On behalf of the CMI Core Committee team, we are very grateful for opportunities in Bangalore, Burma, Brunei, Miri, Batam, and other BP churches in Singapore, as well as for being the keynote speaker for the AACC 2025 in Singapore and inviting CMI multiple times to SH BP. Resistance from some new believers and outsiders shows the need for creation apologetics in these places. I'm glad God used me to break ground here, and may He continue to spread creation apologetics through AACC attendees, furthering the work in their regions. Though Sovereign Hope is a small church, its impact is large, and God has used SH BP to advance this mission. When I meet Dr. Tow, I'll tell him of Rev Jack's help.



I'm thankful that when I first met Rev Jack in Jan 2024, he invited me to visit SHBPC which I did in Feb 2024. Since then, despite being mostly away from Singapore for work and serving in Country X, Rev Jack embraced my overseas commitments and included me in mission trips. True to the mission God gave me for creation apologetics in 2014, I'm grateful for CMI's progress in the last year and my involvement in online prayer meetings and Chinese fellowships, connecting with friends in and outside Singapore. I joined SHBPC as a member in Feb 2025. May God continue to bless Pastor, Angie, and Sovereign Hope BPC. And may God enable me to be a contributing member of Sovereign Hope BPC.



Memory Verse

1Thes 4:16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

Announcements

1. Welcome to our Worship Service! If you are here for the first time, do leave us your contact numbers in our guest book before you leave. Those who share the church vision to acquire a place of worship in due time, may designate your offerings to the SHBPC Church Building Fund.
2. Pastor brings us God's Word this morning on "***Anticipating Christ's Second Coming (1Thes 4:13-18)***", continuing the new quarterly series on "***Sacred Meditations on Christ and the Coming of the Anti-Christ (1 & 2 Thess)***".
3. Next Sunday, Pastor will bring us God's Word on "***An Important Apocalyptic Warning (1Thes 5:1-11)***".
4. Combined Sunday School class by Dr Samuel Gan on "***Life – Viruses & the Immune System in the Bible***".
5. Chinese Fellowship meets on every Sunday night at 7pm via Zoom with both local and overseas brethren. We have systematic studies on New Testament Foundations and the Psalms. [Zoom ID:883 9662 4157 Passcode: 218178].
6. Do send your prayer items to Pastor and join us for Church Prayer Meeting on Wed at 8pm via Zoom. The prayer list is available in church. [Zoom ID:863 7527 5431 Passcode: 625551].
7. SHBPC **Annual Congregation Meeting cum Election** will be held on **Sun 31 Aug 2025** after the worship service. Nomination for office-bearers are open till 17 Aug. Forms are available from Dn Yue Kay. All members are to pray and attend.
8. The **All Asian Creation Conference "Teaching Genesis 1-11 History & Science" 22 & 23 Aug** at the Salvation Army Hall (Upper Bukit Timah). Keynote speakers: **Dr Don Batten** (CMI), **Rev Dr Jack Sin** (Sovereign Hope BPC), **Dr Andy McIntosh** (University of Leeds), **Dr Mona Bias** (East Asia School of Theology). Other session speakers from Australia, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Mongolia, South Korea, Taiwan, United Kingdom and USA. Register directly on the website www.creation.com/aacc.
9. Pray for:
 - **Church ACM cum Elections on 31 Aug**
 - **Joseph & Rachel:** GPS Outreach at Ang Mo Kio
 - **Lily Almon:** Singapore Citizenship Application
 - **Travel:** Ps Babu [22-25/8, Singapore], **Dr Sam** [26/8, Wenzhou],
 - **Medical:** **Pit Yuen** [Radiotherapy from 19/8], **Agnes' Parents** [health & salvation], **Mrs Philip Heng** [stroke recovery]
10. Love gifts, Offering and Tithes to the Lord can be given in the following ways:
 - **Cheque** payable to **Sovereign Hope Bible Presbyterian Church** and mail to church address. (Kindly write the full name of the church as indicated.)
 - **Fund transfer** to Church **UOB** Account **392-308-825-1**
 - **PayNow** to Church UEN: **T19SS0116FSOV**Kindly indicate "**Church Building Fund**" if you would like to designate towards this cause.