

CONNECT

Shaped by His word; serving His world

SPRING | ISSUE 19 | 2019

BRISBANE SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY WELCOMES REV DR SAMUEL GOH



We are delighted to welcome Rev Dr Samuel Goh to Brisbane School of Theology as Lecturer in Old Testament for both our English and Chinese programs.

Sam comes to us with many years teaching experience from Singapore Bible College, School of Theology and speaks English, Mandarin, Indonesian and Cantonese. He completed his PhD, Old Testament Studies at Queen's University of Belfast in 2008. He has also authored six books (two English and four Chinese), along with many journals. In the foreword to Sam's book, *The Basics of Hebrew Poetry* (2017), Tremper Longman III describes him as "a leading scholar in Old Testament studies."

We caught up with Sam a few days after he arrived to find out a little more about him.

Tell us a bit about yourself and your family.

I was born in Indonesia and moved to Singapore at the age of 27 and am now Singaporean. I am married to Joyce and we have two grown children.

What is your Christian background and experience?

I became a Christian when I was in high school in Indonesia. I studied my Bachelor of

Theology and Master of Divinity at Singapore Bible College and became a pastor at a Bible Presbyterian Church in Singapore for 10 years before commencing teaching at Singapore Bible College in 2003. My wife Joyce has also been on pastoral staff in our home church for the last 12 years.

Why move from Singapore to come to BST?

I felt it was God's leading. Knowing there are 49 Chinese churches here in Brisbane and only one Bible College teaching in Chinese, I felt I could make a difference here and that's what I'm hoping to do.

As a scholar in Old Testament studies, do you have a favourite subject to teach?

I have been teaching The Pentateuch for the last 15 years but my favourite subject to teach and my new love is wisdom literature - the books of Ecclesiastes, Proverbs & Job. I developed for a hobby a, "How to preach the difficult books" workshop and have taught this seminar in both Singapore and Italy.

What are your hobbies/recreational interests? What experiences would you like to have here in Australia?

I enjoy travel, fishing, classic movies and jazz music such as the big band/crooning

classics. I would like to see the native wildlife, kangaroos and koalas, here in Australia. After arriving here, I heard a bird early in the morning, I think it was a kookaburra, which was an unusual sound as I'm not used of hearing birds in Singapore!

What can we be praying for as you settle into your new role and a new country?

Please pray that I can be useful here and become familiar with the culture, expectations and language. Pray for me for the next six months without my wife until she moves here. Pray for myself and my family as this is the first time away from my children.

You'll be leading the Israel study tour next year. What can people expect to experience on such a tour?

This will be my seventh tour to Israel. After visiting Israel, the Bible comes alive! When people visit the places they've read about in the Bible and see things for themselves, they get a renewed love and appreciation for the Bible. I'm very much looking forward to this study tour.

"Please pray that I can be useful here and become familiar with the culture."

If you would like Sam to speak at your church or event, please contact BST at info@bst.qld.edu.au

CHRISTMAS APPEAL

Your gift this Christmas will help provide important new resources for our library as we launch a range of exciting new initiatives at BST in 2020.

Please visit bst.qld.edu.au/donate to give to our Appeal today.





REV DR RICHARD GIBSON

BST PRINCIPAL

ALL SYSTEMS GO H!

It is with great joy and much thankfulness to God for answered prayers that we can announce the arrival of the Rev Dr Samuel Goh at BST. It has been months of patient waiting for a visa to be granted. We are delighted that Sam will be with us for the next four years.

When we began seeking for an Old Testament scholar able to teach in both English-speaking and Mandarin-speaking programs we did not envisage in our wildest dreams that someone of Sam's calibre would apply. Even more surprisingly, he regarded the ministry at BST, especially opportunities to strengthen the teaching of Chinese students and the local Chinese communities, as an exciting new challenge.

God has provided us with a Christian leader with vast

experience in south-east Asia, a great reputation as a teacher and author in Old Testament studies and a preacher in much demand in the region. We are already benefitting from his wisdom, generosity and personal graces as he engages with new colleagues, college staff and students.

Please be praying for Sam and his wife Joyce as they make the transition to this new adventure. Inevitably there is family upheaval and disruption as their two children remain in Singapore and Joyce travels back and forward. Pray that they will bear much fruit for the kingdom in their time in Brisbane and that God will grant them every good gift necessary for serving his people and bringing praise and honour to our Lord Jesus.

EVEN MORE IN STORE IN 2020

2020 promises to be a big year at BST for other reasons. The college is launching a range of new initiatives. You can find more details on our new website.

We will be offering a three-semester (one semester per year), ACT accredited course taught by Peter Moore to equip people for supervising and mentoring people in ministry.

In partnership with Living Wholeness Institute, we will be offering three multi-level training courses to equip people in caring for people around them. The Wholeness, God-Centred Change and Integrating Faith and Practice (for mental health professionals).

Courses are designed to cater for a range of levels of confidence and skill in supporting others.

We are also planning to introduce a course in the prevention of and response to child abuse in Christian communities. We hope this will enable churches, mission agencies and other Christian organisations to make a more informed and effective response to this urgent issue.

"Courses are designed to cater for a range of levels of confidence and skill in supporting others."

MISSION EXPOSURE WEEK

BY BETH WHEATLEY

Coming to BST I knew that I would have to take part in Mission Exposure Week, and had honestly been dreading it since I first enrolled. I had never been on missions before, but knew the experience would involve a lot of things that would take me far out of my comfort zone. Despite my attitude leading up to Mission Exposure Week, I knew that I wouldn't regret going.

Our mission was through St Bart's Anglican Church in Toowoomba. As someone who has only been briefly involved in church ministry, it was eye-opening to see how much preparation was involved in the different ministries, particularly the children's ministry. One aspect of preparation consistent throughout all of the different ministries was the involvement of prayer - every meeting began with prayer, and before every event the team involved prayed together. It was encouraging to see how the focus was kept on God.

Another great part of the week was serving together with our group from BST. The week presented opportunities

to get to know people from college better, with everyone facing different challenges and coming into the week with different levels of experience. This led to some great conversations and an opportunity to see everyone thrive in their individual areas.

The week included being involved in a number of areas that weren't my strengths, such as being interviewed in front of a group of people more than once, leading a small group during kid's church, and being part of the music team. God was extremely faithful and sustained me through all of the challenges.

Despite my nervousness about leaving my comfort zone, almost none of that nervousness followed me into the week. God gave me so much peace that I felt prepared to do many things that would usually scare me, and that I never thought I would do. It was because of God's strength that I was able to experience so much, which also led to much personal and spiritual growth and made the week a rewarding and memorable experience.

"God gave me so much peace that I felt prepared to do many things that would usually scare me."



BST GRADUATES

ANITA CROWN—CLASS OF 2017



Anita Crown graduated from BST in 2017 with an Advanced Diploma of Ministry. Shortly afterwards, she left for Thailand to work as a missionary with OMF. Anita shares with us her experience over the last six months.

Six months ago, after finishing my first year of Language studies, I joined the urban poor church planting team in Bangkok (called 'Rak Chumchon'). Our team consists of both foreign missionaries and Thai workers. "Rak Chumchon" translates "Love the people in the neighborhood". And that is what our team in partnership with Bangkok churches is doing here. Loving people in the urban poor communities by visiting them, supporting them, bringing the Gospel, providing activities for the kids and meeting with interested people to learn together from God's word.

Every week our team visits slums and urban poor communities in the Don Muang area of Bangkok. They vary in terms of level of poverty and issues and so how we serve the people in these neighbourhoods also varies. From Kids Club in a community centre to visiting homes and chatting with folk, praying for them, sharing the gospel and providing practical assistance.

While I've been studying Thai now for 18 months and can communicate and contribute to conversations, I'm far from being able to share the gospel in a clear and

effective way. This can be discouraging and even frustrating at times when you want to be able to connect and share with people in this way.

In one of the slums we visit, there isn't much space to do activities for the kids so we bring the kids to the home of another family who we have been visiting regularly. We provide activities for the kids including a story from the Bible, craft and games. In this family, Grandma is the main caregiver as Mum is out of the picture and Dad is not a stable part of their lives. This situation is not uncommon in the communities we visit. Working and taking care of the kids has put

"My desire is to see Thai people in urban poor communities transformed by the gospel"

a lot of strain on Grandma who was recently hospitalised with high blood pressure. Because of the relationship we had built with her we were able to visit her in hospital and pray with her.

Our next visit to this family, it was just myself and my Thai teammate visiting. I was prepared with lots of activities for the kids who were happily occupied. This gave my Thai co-worker an opportunity to share encouragements from God's word with Grandma and answer any questions she had. He sensed an increased openness from her as they shared. Praise God.

I learnt a lot that evening. My desire is to see Thai people in urban poor communities transformed by the gospel. That afternoon my Thai teammate did what I couldn't do. My contribution at this early stage in ministry can feel so small. But what a privilege to play whatever role I can in support and encouragement of local Thai Christians to faithfully take the gospel to their own people.



Pray for our team of missionaries and Thais as we work together to bring the gospel to the community. Pray for the Thai church in Bangkok to have a growing vision to reach the urban poor communities. And pray for me as a new missionary as I live in an urban poor context and adapt to a new language and culture to serve faithfully and with humility, the people God places in my path.

If you would like to receive Anita's newsletters, please contact au@omfmail.com.



CHRISTIAN MENTORING COURSE COMMENCING AT BST IN 2020

We're excited to be offering a Christian Mentoring Course commencing in 2020, which consists of a series of three units taught at BST over three years. Each unit consists of three workshops, including a residential component.

Together they build competence for Christian mentoring at an advanced level.

The course will be taught by mentors Rev Dr Peter Moore and Kylie Brown.

To find out more go to bst.qld.edu.au/courses or call the office on **07 3870 8355**.



ISRAEL STUDY TOUR 29 AUGUST-12 SEPTEMBER 2020

Join us for this very special study tour to Israel in 2020! Led by Rev Dr Sam Goh, the tour will be visiting both Old and New Testament biblical sites.

To find out more or register your interest email: info@bst.qld.edu.au.





MILLENNIALS

AND THE FUTURE ASIAN CHURCH

In his provocative book, *The Future is Asian* (2019), Parag Khanna argues that while the nineteenth century could be characterised as the 'European' century, and the twentieth century the 'American' century, the twenty first century will be shown to have been the 'Asian' century.

He notes that Asia represents half of the world's GDP, has several of the world's largest economies, more than half of the world's population, many of the largest banks and technology companies, and, the majority of the world's megacities. What Khanna could have added is that not only is the future Asian politically and economically, but also in regards Christianity. In the past 100 years, the percentage of Christians in Europe has more than halved, dropping from 66% to 26%, while the number in Asia-Pacific has almost tripled from 4.5% to 13%.

If the future is increasingly Asian, then the future of the church lies in the hands of Asian millennials - those currently aged in their 20's and 30's- as they are the future leaders,

decision-makers and financial supporters of the Asian Church. Let me share some brief thoughts from what I gleaned from Asian millennials themselves while in Singapore in August on what they are like and what are they looking for in a church.

Millennials are the first generation that has grown up with technology and the internet. They are EPIC (experiential, participatory, image-rich, connected).

They tend to look for instant gratification and don't like to wait (so order in food rather than cook; use Spotify rather than wait for a particular song on the radio). Compared to their parent's, millennials are more ambitious, experiential, and have a greater risk appetite. They don't like being told what to do.

"If the future is increasingly Asian, then the future of the church lies in the hands of Asian millennials"

Rather, they want to be told the goal/ destination and they will work out how to get there.

Continue reading Andrew Prince's blog at bst.qld.edu.au/blog



E V E N T S

END OF YEAR COLLEGE DINNER

WEDNESDAY

20 NOVEMBER 2019
6-9PM

Join us for "BST's BBQ Banquet Under the Stars" as we celebrate the end of the college year together. Tickets are \$30 per person.

Location: BST Campus

INTENSIVE:

Christian Mentoring

MONDAY-THURSDAY

20-23 JANUARY
9AM-5PM

This unit is designed to contribute to your professional and vocational formation in ministry by addressing the concept and practice of Christian mentoring as a specialist area within your ministry.

Location: TBC

Speaker: Peter Moore & Kylie Brown

MTS INTENSIVE:

Transformational Teaching

MONDAY-FRIDAY

24-28 FEBRUARY 2020
8:30AM-3PM

Jay Sedwick from Dallas Theological Seminary is one of the world's leading authorities in the field of Christian Education. Transformative Teaching offers insights into the process of Christian Education from the school classroom to the lecture theatre.

Location: BST Campus & Online
Speaker: Jay Sedwick

INTENSIVE:

Pastoral Care

WED-FRI, MON-TUES

25-27, 30-31 MARCH 2020
8AM-5PM

The focus for this course is the development of a biblically determined theological understanding of pastoral ministry and proactive Christian care in the various stages of life, leading to Christian commitment and discipleship.

Location: BST Campus
Speaker: Susanne Nikles

To register for these events, visit bst.qld.edu.au/events
For more information on upcoming events or contact us on (07) 3870 8355.